

Thai News Update: 15 October 2020

1. India urged to return to Asia-Pacific free trade talks

Source: Bangkok ([Link](#))

Ministers from 15 Asia-Pacific countries negotiating a sprawling free trade agreement urged India on 14 October to return to the talks as they are aiming to sign a deal by the end of the year, a Japanese official said. India, seeking safeguards amid concerns that opening up its market would raise its trade deficit with China, has skipped all negotiations for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership framework this year. From Japan, Hiroshi Kajiyama, minister of economy, trade and industry, took part in the ministerial videoconference, the third this year and the first since August. This time, the ministers did not issue a joint statement.

2. Employment key to reopening economy

Source: Bangkok Post ([Link](#))

Finance Minister Arkhom Termpittayapaisith has instructed ministry departments to devise measures to tackle unemployment and propel the economic recovery in preparation for a full reopening of Thailand's economy. "Businesses without money cannot hire people, therefore one of the measures to tackle unemployment is to maintain existing employment. The government can support these businesses by offering training programmes," said Mr Arkhom.

3. Krungsri launches real-time money transfer between Thailand and Laos

Source: The Nation ([Link](#))

Krungsri (Bank of Ayudhya) has joined with Lao Development Bank to launch Krungsri-LDB Global Transfer, a service for real-time money transfers between Thailand and Laos. Offered through Krungri Biz Online (KBOL), the service is designed to enable individuals and small businesses to better respond to business and customer needs, conveniently and safely.

4. CP Foods strikes public-private 'Green' collaboration pact

Source: Bangkok Post ([Link](#))

The Natural Resources and Environment Ministry's Department of Royal Forest and Thailand Greenhouse Gas Management Organisation (TGO) have signed a cooperation pact on "Climate change prevention through Forest Rehabilitation" with Charoen Pokphand Foods PCL (CP Foods), aiming to jointly engage in the second phase of the preserve, rehabilitate and regrow project covering 26,000 rai of terrestrial and mangrove forests for sustainable food security and balance of nature. The signing of the cooperation was presided over by Natural Resources and

Environment Minister Mr. Varawut Silpa-archa. Accompanying him were Permanent Secretary Jatuporn Buruspat, high-ranking ministry officials and TGO executives.

5. Chiang Mai University research team successfully creates new rice breeds using ion beams

Source: Bangkok Post ([Link](#))

Chiang Mai University's Institute of Scientific and Technological Research has been successful in using ion beam to induce mutation in existing rice breeds to create new ones that provide better yield and are resilient against diseases and pests, researcher Dr Boonyarak Panchaisri said. "Our research team has been working for more than 10 years with Dr Thirapat Wilaithong from the university's Physics Excellence Centre who developed a particle accelerator to create ion beam to induce rice mutation," Boonyarak said. "We were able to create three new rice breeds, namely FRK-1 fragrant rice for consumption, MYS-4 rice for the starch industry and OSSY-23 rice for animal feed. These breeds give better yield and can withstand several diseases as well as pests."

6. Too early to predict emergency decree's effects on economy: Arkhom

Source: The Nation ([Link](#))

Finance Minister Arkhom Termpittayapaisith said on 15 October that it was too early to tell how the state of emergency will affect the economy. He added that the authorities have deemed it necessary to take control of the situation or extensive rallies could have an impact on the business sector. Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha declared a state of emergency in Bangkok effective from 4am on 15 October to control the escalating pro-democracy protest.