

## Thai News Update: 25 October 2018

### **1. Direct Indian Flights To Phuket Set To Boost Tourism**

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

India holds great potential for Phuket, says the chairman of Royal Phuket Marina as GoAir is the first airline to fly directly to Phuket. Five direct flights a week from Mumbai and Delhi began this month. Jeh Wadia, managing director of GoAir, said: “Phuket is our first international route. The level of interest from Indian travellers has been excellent. Thanks to Gulu Lalvani [chairman of Royal Phuket Marina], who convinced me to open up Phuket to the Indian market, we are making Phuket our Thai hub.

### **2. Apple To Open First Thailand Store On November 10**

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

Apple's first store in Thailand is scheduled to open on November 10 in Bangkok at Iconsiam. Apple Thailand confirmed the date in a statement on 25 October. The company said the riverside store could provide inspirations for a lot of people to learn about technology. Apart from selling Apple products, the store will also have a Genius Bar to provide help to Apple users regarding services and software.

### **3. Thailand Aims To Tap New Export Markets**

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

The Commerce Ministry intends to turn a crisis into opportunity by tapping new markets that have emerged as a result of the escalating US-China trade war. The ministry aims to push exports to the United States through food diplomacy while also aiming to boost its food and agricultural exports to Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV). The export growth target for 2018 has been set at 8 per cent. “To expand exports of these goods, Thailand needs to start targeting niche markets. The demand for organic, healthy and environmentally friendly goods is growing in the CLMV region and globally,” Banjongjitt said.

#### **4. New Hybrid Ministry Approved**

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

The cabinet on 24 October approved the establishment of the Higher Education, Research & Development Ministry, which merges the existing Science and Technology Ministry, Office of the Higher Education Commission, the National Research Council of Thailand, and the Thailand Research Fund. Science and Technology Minister Suvit Maesincee said the government aims to support higher education institutes to improve their academic capabilities, upgrade the efficiency of annual R&D spending to meet the demands of industries, and promote high development. On July 3, the cabinet approved in principle to set up the new ministry, which would comprise 11 state units related to R&D under the Science and Technology Ministry, 84 state universities and 73 private universities.

#### **5. SCG Reports Nine-Month Revenue Uptick**

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

SET-listed Siam Cement Group (SCG), Thailand's biggest cement maker and industrial conglomerate, is concerned about the impact of the tariff war and uncertainties in the global economy, aiming to revise the investment plan for 2019. The company plans to spend roughly 40-50 billion baht this year and 50-60 billion baht in 2019. This move comes after operating results for the first nine months this year saw higher revenue but lower profit.

#### **6. Honor Raises Local Investment**

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

Honor, a Chinese smartphone brand, is increasing investment in the Thai market by 50% to become a top-four player by 2021. Thailand is projected to become a top 10 market for Honor by 2020, with the top 10 contributing half of total revenue outside of China for the company. The company increased local investment by 50% from its earlier target to improve market share, as rivals slow their investment in the market. Over the next 3-4 years, Honor aims to have more than a 10% market share to be among the top four players, and making Thailand one of its 10 largest overseas markets.

## **7. Optimism For Rice Export Forecast Maintained**

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

Despite September's export slump, the government remains upbeat about achieving 11 million tonnes of milled rice exports this year on high demand. Adul Chotinisakorn, director-general of the Foreign Trade Department, said rice export prospects are still promising for the last quarter, with continued import orders, particularly with government-to-government (G2G) deals with China, the Philippines and Japan. (G2G) deals with China, the Philippines and Japan.