

Thai News Update: 5 October 2020

1. Thai 'safari' welcomes city visitors

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

Prachuap Khiri Khan's Kui Buri National Park has always been popular among nature lovers, but now it's also an attractive choice for domestic visitors from city areas no longer able to travel abroad for this holidays. Dubbed "Thailand's Safari", the 969 sq km area not only offers a sanctuary for animals in danger of extinction but also for the century-old fragrant trees that were used in the funerals of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great and his late sister Her Royal Highness Princess Galyani Vadhana, among others. The adventure begins at the national park's entrance with the Chan Hom Nature Trail. The 1.3-kilometre walk boasts over 200,000 fragrant trees called Mai Chan Hom or kalamet.

2. Donki aims to have 20 more branches in next 5 years

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

Donki, or Don Quijote, a Japanese retail store chain, is joining hands with two partners -- Sahapat and TOA Venture Holding -- to open two more branches next year, aiming to achieve a total of 25 new branches in Thailand in the next five years. The Donki chain in Thailand is 60 per cent owned by Donki (Thailand)'s parent Pan Pacific Retail Management (Thailand), while Saha Group owns 22 per cent and TOA Venture Holding owns 18 per cent. The company plans to open two new branches in 2021 and will open at least 20 stores by the end of 2025. "We estimate that 15 of these stores will be the new branch of 'Don Don Donki', while five branches will be under different names to introduce the company's other products," he added.

3. GPSC to start selling battery products early next year

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

Global Power Synergy Public Company (GPSC), the power flagship of PTT Group, will start marketing activities for its battery products early next year, chief executive officer Chawalit Tippawanich said. GPSC has signed a Bt1.1 billion contract with Japanese construction firm, Thai Takasago, to develop Thailand's first semi solid lithium ion battery plant on a 12-rai plot in Map Ta Phut Industrial Estate. The plant, with an initial total capacity of 30 megawatt hour (MWh), is due to commence operations by yearend. GPSC aims to penetrate the high-end energy storage market in Thailand and Asean with plans to expand its production capacity to 100MWh to support future demands.

4. BOT mulls extension of debt moratorium for some sectors

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

The Bank of Thailand (BOT) is considering extending the debt moratorium for some business groups, such as those related to the tourism industry like hotels. The move would be in line with the intent expressed by BOT Governor Veerathai Santiprabhob to extend the debt moratorium for another six months, which will be reviewed twice or extended until the end of 2021. One of the BOT's concerns is about the debt quality of financial institutions, as 12.5 million debtors are part of the debt restructuring project. Interest payments worth Bt7.2 trillion have been suspended until October.

5. Bank of Thailand Launches World's First Government Savings Bond on IBM Blockchain Technology

Source: PRNEnews wire ([Link](#))

IBM (NYSE: IBM) on 5 October announced that Bank of Thailand (BOT), the central bank, has successfully launched the world's first blockchain-based platform for government savings bonds issuing a total of \$1.6B USD within two weeks. Leveraging blockchain technology on the highly secured IBM Cloud, the platform allows investors to benefit from speedy bond issuance, reducing a process that previously took 15 days to two days. The efficiency provided by blockchain also reduces operational complexity and the overall cost of issuing bonds. According to The Thai Bond Market Association, the outstanding Thai bond market stood at \$421B USD as of December 2019. Government bonds dominate the Thai market, with outstanding value of \$157B USD in 2019 1, accounting for 37% of the total outstanding Thai bond market. In the past, the sale of government savings bonds was a complex, multiparty, time-consuming process that relied on a non-real-time system, with duplicated validation steps and manual reconciliation prone to data errors.

6. Hospitality, retail trade show returns to Bitec

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

Good news for all hospitality and foodservice owners and professionals. The 14th edition of "Thailand Retail, Food and Hospitality Service 2020" will return with special promotions from 200 exhibitors at Bitec Hall 102, Bang Na-Trat Road, between Oct 14-17 from 10am to 7pm. Organised by Kavin Intertrade, the international trade show will bring an array of latest equipment, supplies, food and drink ingredients for hotels, resorts, serviced apartments, food chains and restaurants as well as coffee, bakery and ice cream shops. Among them will be kitchen equipment, stoves, bakery ovens, refrigerated equipment, bakery equipment, utensils,

tableware, POS, coffee machines and beans, cleaning equipment and supplies, and different types of food, bakery and drink packaging.