

## Thai News Update: 4 October 2019

### **1. Bangkok lands at 75 in smart city index**

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

Bangkok was ranked 75 out of 102 cities worldwide in the smart city rankings, according to IMD Smart City (SCI) Index 2019. It was the first edition of the index, jointly commissioned by World Competitiveness Center's Smart City Observatory, under the IMD Business School in Switzerland and Singapore, and Singapore University of Technology and Design. The top 10 smart cities are Singapore, Zurich, Oslo, Geneva, Copenhagen, Auckland, Taipei, Helsinki, Bilbao and Dusseldorf. The SCI focuses on how citizens perceive the scope and impact of efforts to make their cities "smart", balancing "economic and technological aspects" with "humane dimensions".

### **2. KMIT introduces three innovations to improve Thailand's street food**

**Source: Thai PBS World ([Link](#))**

King Mongkut Institute of Technology's Lat Krabang campus has introduced three culinary innovations to enhance the safety of street food and promote tourism, including a robot that cooks barbequed pork. The institute has also developed cooking courses for beginners and vendors who want to improve the quality, taste and hygiene of street food. The prototype robotic arm, which was designed by the medical and environmental equipment research lab at the Faculty of Science, can barbeque pork so vendors don't have to tend the grill all the time and can do other things, said Associate Professor Anupong Songprapa. He explained that the robot was programmed to know how long it takes to cook the meat thoroughly without overcooking. Another innovation is a fruit vending cart, which is fully equipped with a refrigeration system to preserve the fruit and a water filtering system to ensure that the water used to clean the fruit is hygienic.

### **3. ‘Fly me to Thailand’ unveiled for short-haul markets**

**Source: Travel Daily Media ([Link](#))**

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and Bangkok Airways have launched a new ‘Fly me to Thailand’ promotion, offering privileges, gift cards, discounts and many more special deals for travellers from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV) as well as Malaysia, Singapore and India. Klissada Ratanapruk, executive director of ASEAN South Asia and South Pacific Region at TAT said: “Thailand is entering this year’s high season from October onwards, so it is an opportune time to offer special privileges for tourists from our neighbouring ASEAN countries as well as from our long-standing, short-haul friend, India. The special offers from operators of tourism products and services across the country will also help enhance the awareness of the amazing variety of Thai travel experiences.”

### **4. MoU signed to boost Thai-Myanmar border trade**

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

Commerce Minister Jurin Laksanawisit said his ministry will be coordinating between businesses in Thailand and Myanmar to strengthen border trade and boost bilateral ties. Myanmar and Thailand also signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on October 1 to boost the transfer of goods across the second Thai-Myanmar Friendship Bridge, which Jurin said should be turned into a permanent crossing point between the two countries by October 30, pending Cabinet approval. The bridge over Moei River connects Tak’s Mae Sot district and Myawaddy in Myanmar. As for border businesses asking for the bridge to be kept open until midnight, he said the Foreign Ministry will have discuss this option with its counterpart in Myanmar.

### **5. AIS launches a new 'green' mission to dispose personal electronic waste safely**

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

Advanced Info Service Plc (AIS) launched its “Mission Green 2020” environment protection campaign on 3 October 3 in a move to mark its 30th anniversary next year. Under the campaign, AIS is encouraging people to drop off their electronic waste such as broken earphones, AC adapters, Bluetooth devices, power banks and old mobile phones at e-waste bins in AIS shops or

at all Central department stores. The bins are equipped with IoT (internet of things) technology to collect and dispose electronic waste. Somchai Lertsuitwong, chief executive officer for AIS, said this campaign aims to cut one million units of carbon dioxide equivalent and eliminate at least 100,000 pieces of electronic waste by 2020.

#### **6. Chevron exit negotiations set**

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

The Energy Ministry will negotiate with US energy company Chevron to decommission offshore gas platforms in the Erawan field to avoid arbitration. Permanent energy secretary Kulit Sombatsiri said the ministry ordered the Mineral Fuels Department to talk with Chevron last week after the company temporarily suspended plans to seek arbitration to allow more time for talks with the government. The department is requiring Chevron to pay for all decommissioning costs, about US\$2.5 billion (76.4 billion baht), for digging and drilling platforms in the Gulf of Thailand.

#### **7. THAI Smile expanding India routes**

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

THAI Smile, a wholly owned subsidiary of Thai International Airways, is set to add more direct flights to India to cash in on growing visitor numbers. The inaugural direct flight for Ahmedabad-Bangkok, the airline's seventh route in India, will take off from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Airport in route to Suvarnabhumi on Oct 28. The route is scheduled to have four flights a week. Chief executive Charita Leelayudth said THAI Smile is expanding routes to India and offers 38 weekly flights to seven cities: Gaya, Varanasi, Jaipur, Lucknow, Mumbai, Kolkata and Ahmedabad. "We have enjoyed growth of both inbound and outbound passengers, leading to an increased cabin factor on every route," Ms Charita said. "In some periods this year, the number rose to more than 85%. Overall, THAI Smile has seen growth of around 20% on Indian routes, reflecting more Indian arrivals in Thailand."

#### **8. New bridge boosts Thai-Myanmar ties**

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

Bilateral border trade between Thailand and Myanmar is expected to flourish after the second Thai-Myanmar Friendship Bridge becomes fully operational, starting from Oct 30. Niyom Wairatpanich, vice-chairman of the Thai Chamber of Commerce, said the bridge is vital to boost border trade between the two countries, increasing trade flow and logistics services through Mae Sot. Thailand's border trade with Myanmar totalled 193 billion baht last year, up 4.9% from a year before. Border trade through Mae Sot amounted to 80 billion baht in 2018. Thailand's overall border trade with all four neighbours rose 4% last year to 1.12 trillion baht, with exports making up 651 billion baht, down 0.5%, and imports worth 474 billion, up 11%.