

Thai News Update: 5 November 2020

1. Nok Air gets green light to restructure debt

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

Thai budget carrier Nok Airlines Plc obtained court approval to proceed with a debt rehabilitation plan as it weathers a slump in passenger demand due to the coronavirus pandemic. The nation's Central Bankruptcy Court said Nok Air should submit its plan by the first quarter of next year, the company said in an exchange filing on 4 November. The pandemic has devastated global aviation, forcing airlines to suspend flights, lay off employees and seek financial help from governments and investors. Thai Airways International Plc, which holds a 13% stake in Nok Air, has also received court approval to restructure its 350 billion baht of debt as the virus wreaks havoc on the tourism-dependent nation.

2. BOI approves new EV incentives package plus projects worth Bt35bn

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

The Board of Investment (BOI) on 4 November approved a package of incentives for Thailand's electric-vehicle (EV) manufacturing supply chain, with a focus on critical parts including batteries. The board also approved EV-related projects worth Bt35.7 billion in several sectors. After a board meeting chaired by PM Prayut Chan-ocha, BOI secretary-general Duangjai Asawachintachit said the package would accelerate the development of EV production in Thailand and allow the sector to move into higher gear. The EV incentive measures replace the first package which expired in 2018.

3. Environment Board approves urgent plan to tackle PM2.5

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

The National Environment Board on 4 November approved an urgent plan to tackle PM2.5 air pollution, which is once again rising to hazardous levels in Bangkok and other large cities. The plan contains 12 measures and will be submitted to Cabinet soon, said Pollution Control Department chief Athaphon Charoenchansa. The board, chaired Deputy PM General Prawit Wongsuwan, has set up a pollution information centre. It will work in the same manner as the Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration, with a spokesperson reporting on the pollution situation, and a subcommittee tasked with combating forest fires in 17 northern provinces through November.

4. Ministry discounts 13,000 household items to cut cost of living

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

The Commerce Ministry has reduced the prices of more than 13,000 household goods under the seventh round of monthly discounts to help cut the cost of living for people during the Covid-19 crisis. The government-subsidised discounts began in April under a collaboration with manufacturers, distributors and shops nationwide. Products in six categories are discounted: Food and beverages; frozen cooked food; sauces; daily-use products; soaps and body cleansers; and washing products.

5. FDI requests to BoI fall 29% into September

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

Foreign direct investment (FDI) applications fell 29% in the first nine months of this year to 118.5 billion, as investors were deterred by the pandemic. The Board of Investment reported on 4 November the number of foreign direct investment applications totalled 657 projects, compared with 665 projects in the same period of last year. Japan remains Thailand's biggest investor, with 139 projects worth 37.5 billion baht, followed by China's 21.2 billion baht for 129 projects. The Netherlands brought in 62 projects worth 17.5 billion baht, while Singapore applied for 76 projects worth 12 billion baht and Taiwanese investors applied with 37 projects worth 9.5 billion baht.

6. Line Shopping turns to entertainment

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

Line Shopping, an online shopping platform of Line app, is pivoting towards entertainment, shopper engagement and convenient commerce as part of its strategies to catch the wave of social commerce in Thailand. The move is meant to support the platform's social commerce ecosystem with fun chat and new shopping experiences through various features. Line Shopping has drawn 50,000 shops to its platform. Lertad Supadhiloke, head of e-Commerce of Line Thailand, said the company targets to become the social commerce platform leader in Thailand in three years in terms of market share, up from top three at present.