

Thai News Update: 6 November 2020

1. Lazada accelerates AI and logistics for EEC services

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

Lazada, an Asean e-commerce arm of Alibaba, is gearing up efforts to invest in artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, logistics operations in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC), and an array of new services to become a lifestyle app that goes beyond a shopping platform. "Thailand's e-commerce arena is an emerging market. We are committed to this market, which is among the leaders in Asean," said Jack Zhang, chief executive of Lazada Thailand. Lazada will continue to improve data analytics as well as logistics operations, particularly in the EEC, where its distribution centre has been built, he said.

2. Phuket's push for foreign visitors

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

Phuket has been hit hard by Covid-19's impact on its tourism, but can still look at the economic challenge as a golden opportunity to develop its own basic infrastructure, says Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Don Pramudwinai. This would help the province pursue its goal of being a global centre for the hospitality business in the post-pandemic era, he said. Speaking after a recent meeting with diplomats from Asian and European countries who are based in Phuket, Mr Don said the province will still be able to welcome a large number of tourists as soon as the Covid-19 situation improves. This is because Phuket has pristine natural resources, accommodation facilities and local hospitality.

3. Thailand set to sign RCEP trade deal

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

Thailand will attend the signing of the long-awaited Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) at the 37th Asean Summit under the chairmanship of Vietnam next week. It will be the first-ever virtual signing of an agreement Asean has undertaken, a Foreign Ministry official said on Thursday. The bloc and its dialogue partners are scheduled to convene via a teleconference from Nov 9-15. The theme of the virtual summit is "Cohesive and Responsive Asean" and is being held online because of the coronavirus outbreak.

4. Isan property market holding steady

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

The residential markets in Khon Kaen, Nakhon Ratchasima and Udon Thani are projected to remain steady as the provincial economy is less vulnerable to the pandemic, according to

developers. Napong Paripontpochanapisuti, managing director of Ocean Property, which is developing a condo project in Khon Kaen, said the condo market in the province was marginally impacted by the pandemic. "Not only Khon Kaen, but all provinces in the Northeast do not rely on the foreign tourism sector," he said. "Local businesses are very strong. In Khon Kaen, there are two core businesses: education and medical services."

5. New Thai-made rapid Covid test to slash screening costs

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

Thailand has developed its first rapid test for Covid-19 that provides results within a day, boosting the country's fight against the disease. Developed by the Medical Sciences Department, the new tests could cost as little as Bt100 each once commercially produced, compared to Bt300-Bt500 for imported versions. The Thai-made rapid test kits use the immunoaffinity method to read serum samples from plasma and blood from the fingertips, explained Supakit Sirilak, department acting director-general.

6. Commerce minister mulls opening service sector to foreign investment

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

The Commerce Ministry is mulling whether to open more service-sector businesses to foreign investors, lured by promises of more investment and high-paid jobs. Foreign investors led by Stanley Kang, chairman of the Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce in Thailand (JFCCT), met with Commerce Minister Jurin Laksanavisit for talks on lifting restrictions in the Foreign Act Business on 5 November. Foreign investors want rules changed so they can take 100-percentage ownership of service-sector businesses in List 3 (protected for Thais) under the Foreign Business Act, Jurin said after the meeting.