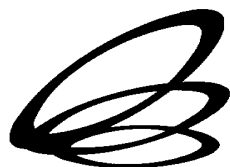


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Strong Business Matching Results at Thailand Subcon Show Despite Covid-19, BOI Says

Subcon Thailand 2020, ASEAN's largest international industrial subcontracting trade show, held last week in Bangkok under a new “hybrid” virtual-physical format, proved a success with local and foreign exhibitors, and buyers, who participated in 1,277 business matching sessions worth at least 3.89 billion baht (USD123 million) in expected business value, according to data gathered by the Thailand Board of Investment (BOI).

Subcon 2020 was held from September 23 to 26 at Bitec Bangkok after being delayed from its initial May schedule as Thailand implemented a strict lock-down that received praised for successfully controlling the COVID-19 outbreak. The event is co-organized by the BOI, the Thai Subcontracting Promotion Association and event organizer Informa Markets, in conjunction with Intermach, the leading industrial machinery exhibition in South East Asia.

"This is better than expected and its quite a success especially when you consider that the schedule of the event was confirmed only two months ago and the time we had to publicize it was quite limited," said Sonklin Ploymee, Director of the BOI's Industrial Linkage Development Division. "This was the first time we organized business matching online so we did not expect that so many buyers would register in advance, showing a strong need to enter our business matching activities."

The foreign participation to Subcon included companies from Japan, China, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Korea, Vietnam, Italy, UK, India, and the US, mostly from the automotive and car parts, electronics, medical equipment, and machinery sectors, said Ms Sonklin, who from October 1st will become Deputy Secretary General of the BOI.

"This is the first time we had Chinese companies taking part to business matching at Subcon, and also the first time we linked the Thai and Vietnam supply chains, showing our strength as the regional hub of subcontracting," she said. "Vietnam-based companies were mostly on the buy side."

Some 121 exhibitors presented their technology, equipment and services in 183 booths, Ms Sonklin said, adding that the show was attended by 12,487 visitors in line with expectations. A total of 103 buyers invited by the BOI registered to take part to business matching sessions during the show, including 79 companies who took part online and 24 onsite. Of the total 1,277 business matching sessions, 1,140 were held onsite and 137 online, she said. The estimated business value does not yet include the result of the online sessions which is still being evaluated.

In one of the largest business linkage opportunities at the event, China's Great Wall Motor, which will be starting automobile production in Thailand next year, met with Thailand-based suppliers and part makers in a conference organized by the BOI. Taking advantage of Thailand's comprehensive supply chain in the automotive sector, Great Wall told part makers at the event that it plans to ramp up local content from 45 percent next year to as much as 90 percent within 5 years.

"Despite COVID-19 and travel restriction for foreign visitors, the show was a big hit and successfully delivered business opportunity, business linkage and business collaboration between exhibitors, buyers, and entrepreneurs," Informa Markets said on its website in a statement about the 2020 edition of Intermach and Subcon.

The next edition of the shows will be held from 12-15 May 2021, the organizers said.

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