

# SME WEEKLY NEWS

(3 February 2020 - 7 February 2020)

Countries	Highlights
<p><b>MALAYSIA</b></p> <p><b>SME Corp, Huawei exchange MoC on SME AI programme</b></p>	<p>SME Corp. Malaysia and Huawei Malaysia have exchanged a Memorandum of Collaboration (MoC) on the SME Adopt and Innovate (SME AI) programme. Through this collaboration, SME Corp Malaysia and Huawei Technologies have jointly developed the SME AI programme, aimed to drive SMEs further into digitalisation by leveraging on Huawei's digital expertise. SME Corp Malaysia is confident that Huawei Cloud and AI, coupled with 5G technology will enable SME growth in the digital sphere and towards realising Digital Malaysia. Both parties will work closely to develop impactful programmes to facilitate SME adoption and innovation in digitalisation initiatives. Bridging programmes as well as a 'Training-of-Trainers' will be implemented to nurture and groom subject matter experts for advisory roles in digital adoption and innovation for SMEs. Besides providing a matching grant together with Huawei solutions for SMEs to use in their business, the collaboration will also engage with local digital innovation by using Huawei Cloud and AI to assist SMEs to create their innovative product. Huawei will also help to promote and bundle SME digital solutions from the program to telco.</p> <p><i>(Source: The Borneo Post, 4 February 2020)</i></p>
<p><b>CAMBODIA</b></p> <p><b>Pilot project to boost e-commerce for Kingdom's SMEs</b></p>	<p>The Ministry of Commerce has launched Go4eCam, a pilot project that aims to realise the benefit of e-commerce for the nation's SMEs, a sector that is currently playing an important role in the country's economic growth. The project is jointly piloted and funded by international development partners and the government. Called the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF), it is a multi-donor trust fund that provides financial and technical support to build trade capacity in all 48 least-developed countries, a list that includes Cambodia, and is a major fund supporter of the project. Minister Commerce Ministry said the project is a new initiative, aimed at benefiting the Kingdom's SME sector, enabling it to catch up with global markets and a wider range of consumers through the use of technology. "Helping SMEs to engage with an e-commerce platform of course will increase sales and allow for business expansion that will also lead to job creation. The project is part of the Trade Integration Strategy (CTIS) 2019-2023, which will allow the Kingdom to transform to a digital economy and to become a country that will be driven by the 4.0 revolution.</p> <p><i>(Source: Khmer Times, 4 February 2020)</i></p>
<p><b>THAILAND</b></p> <p><b>Thailand rolls out new investment measures to boost economy</b></p>	<p>The Board of Investment (BOI) approved a wide range of measures to accelerate investment and support all key sectors of the economy, from large-scale projects, to SMEs, as well as incentives to help strengthen the grassroots economy, and the tourism industry. Among others, to encourage private sector to participate more actively in improving the competitiveness of the grassroots economy, the BOI approved an extension of the promotion measures allowing companies to enjoy tax benefits when they invest in projects supporting the grassroots economy through enhancing the competitiveness of co-operatives and village enterprises. Also, businesses currently enjoying corporate income tax exemption privileges can claim additional tax benefits if they invest or spend on supporting the grassroots economy. To support the tourism sector and encourage the development of environmentally friendly infrastructure in touristic areas, the BOI also approved to extend the tax privileges already granted to investments in cable car projects in tourist sites to include electricity-powered tramways with investments worth at least 100 million baht. The BOI also approved a relaxation of the conditions for the hotel business, particularly for SME operators. Enhanced tax incentives are also given to hotels in the 55 provinces which are less known tourism destinations.</p> <p><i>(Source: Thailand Business News, 6 February 2020)</i></p>

## HOME CAREGIVING SERVICES PLATFORM GOES TO PENANG

ON-DEMAND home caregiving services platform called Homage has expanded into Penang following its launch in the Klang Valley region a year ago. The platform pairs seniors with care professionals and manages care visits via a mobile app where families can get real-time updates wherever they are.

Homage's services cover all of Penang Island and most parts of mainland Penang, including Bukit Mertajam, Butterworth, Simpang Ampat and Tasek Gelugor. They aim to expand their reach to all of mainland Penang within the next few months. The company notes that its expansion into Penang is timely and will help fill the gap for personalised care services in a state which has over 10% of the population aged 60 and above.



“Over the next decade, Malaysia will be classified as an ageing nation and so our entry into Penang marks our commitment to provide seniors in Malaysia with smart, quality home care solutions that can be tailored to each of their specific needs,” says its CEO and co-founder, Gillian Tee. “With the increasing trend of ageing Malaysian, we see that more people would prefer ageing in place as an alternative, in lieu of living far away from their own family or relying on aged care establishments, which we anticipate will increase the burden on Malaysia’s healthcare infrastructure.



“Homage is bridging this gap, where we provide professional home care services while also reducing hospitalisation needs,” she adds. Since its launch in Malaysia, Homage has mobilised over 200 care professionals who have provided 1,000 caregiving hours a month across Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. The company is also currently looking for more nurses and caregivers in Penang to join its team.

*(Source: The Star, 3 February 2020)*

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