

# SME WEEKLY NEWS

(24 October 2016 – 28 October 2016)

Countries	Highlights
<p><b>MALAYSIA</b></p> <p><b>PNB working on mechanism for investing in SMEs</b></p>	<p>Permodalan Nasional Bhd (PNB) is reviewing asset allocation and working on detail mechanism for investment coverage in SMEs. According to Tan Sri Abdul Wahid Omar, PNB supported more investment in these companies. The Small- and Mid-Cap PLC Research Scheme that would be introduced to conduct research on 300 companies would help boost their liquidity. Wahid said the Government had also taken prudent measures to support businesses and SMEs through its continued commitment in fiscal consolidation. This is to ensure that credit rating is not affected as the potential of downgrade is always there and if that happens cost of borrowing will go up.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: The Star Online, 29 October 2016)</i></p>
<p><b>INDONESIA</b></p> <p><b>DBS Bank Indonesia launches SME-focused DBS BusinessClass app in Jakarta</b></p>	<p>DBS' social platform for SMEs, BusinessClass, has finally come to Indonesia. Given that Indonesia is home to 60 million SMEs and 137 million Internet users, PT DBS Bank Indonesia believes that now is the perfect time to convince more Indonesian SME players to go online. With the recently launched BusinessClass mobile application, DBS wants to increase the chances of Indonesian SMEs connecting with the 15,000 other SME players across Southeast Asia, as well as with business advisors in the region. The platform allows users to connect and network, consult with available business advisors, check and attend networking events, get updates on market and industry news, as well as access banking features on the go. The platform currently has 927 members from Indonesia, with 45 business advisors. With the launch of the BusinessClass app combined with other SME-focused initiatives, they hope to increase DBS Bank Indonesia's SME banking revenue by 20% by the end of the year.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: Digital News Asia, 26 October 2016)</i></p>
<p><b>THAILAND</b></p> <p><b>Alibaba scheme to help Thai SMEs navigate B2B</b></p>	<p>Two state banks and state agencies have joined with Alibaba in setting up a scheme to promote Thai SMEs abroad through e-commerce platform. SME Development Bank, the Export-Import Bank of Thailand (Exim Bank) and the Industrial Promotion Department have agreed to assist the first 20 potential SMEs to penetrate the business-to-business (B2B) export markets. These 20 pilot companies that have been selected from the two banks' clients will be allowed to take e-commerce courses and learn how to use the e-commerce platform with Alibaba's staff for free. They will get the chance to study the customers' data of Alibaba to better help them understand their demands. The targeted 20 pilot firms are those selling innovative products, which must have a shelf life of at least one year. Their financial and accounting management must also be at an appropriate level. The pilot project is aiming to inspire other SMEs to expand their markets overseas through B2B.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: Bangkok Post, 28 October 2016)</i></p>

**PHILIPPINES**

**Loanpinas seeks to expand pool of SME lenders**

A local foundation for entrepreneurship wants to triple its lending database for its online loan portal for SMEs by 2017 to heighten competition among banks and financial institutions. SME advocate Foundation for Filipino Entrepreneurship, Inc. (FFEI), in partnership with business information provider Dun & Bradstreet Philippines (D&B), launched an online lending portal for SMEs called Loanpinas.com. The country's first business-to-business portal provides private banks and financial institutions willing to loan to SMEs access to its online database of currently more than 300,000 businesses in the country. Similarly, SMEs, as the borrowers, may simply register and post their loan requests on the portal. Currently, there are 13 participating lenders that can directly offer their loan products through the online lending portal to their potential SME borrowers.

*(Source: Business World Online, 24 October 2016)*

## YOUNG & ON FIRE



Young millionaire, Datuk Aliff Syukri has always dreamed of being financially independent. Being dyslexic, he was not academically-inclined, so he turned his attention to building a business. “It was my ambitious drive that made me what I am today,” says the founder of D’Herbs, a health and beauty company. According Datuk Aliff Syukri, there is no fast track to success. He started off as a night market trader, selling beauty products from Thailand and Indonesia, with an initial capital of RM450. He was only 19 then, married and struggling to start a new life with his family.

Ten years after that, the 29-year-old is the managing director of a company with annual revenue close to RM10mil. It took a lot of guts to sell something that people had no knowledge of, but he was determined. Word started to get around, and within two years Aliff was going places with his cosmetic products. In 2010, Aliff formed D’Herbs Healthy Marketing and worked hard to establish the brand name. He also hired a few professionals, including a chemist to join his company. He pumped in RM100,000 to produce his first self-manufactured product a collagen lipstick. When he turned 23, Aliff had already made his first million. By 2010, D’Herbs had come up with four products: foundation, slimming product, women’s health drink and collagen lipstick. Before 2012 was out, the company had gone on to produce more than 30 products. By using a powerful advertising strategy, D’Herbs managed to get the public attention in less than two years. “When we introduced our 50th product, we managed to penetrate Brunei and Indonesia,” says Aliff, who started getting more coverage when he introduced the tagline “Terlajak Laris” for D’Herbs.

These days, Aliff keeps aside RM30million for media promotions. D’Herbs now has more than 100 products, 6,000 dealers, 30,000 agents, a chain of 45 stores all over Malaysia, a factory, a staff of 300, eight subsidiaries and a good R&D team, which includes three chemists who plan and strategise D’Herbs’ future course. D’Herbs is also sold at D’Mart shops in more than 194 branches, all over Malaysia. Monthly sales is around RM800,000. The private limited company is today known as D’Herbs Holdings. The successful entrepreneur has authored two best-selling books so far. He has also spent more than RM10mil sponsoring popular programmes on TV, including the recent *Akademi Fantasia*.

(Source: *The Star*, 24 October 2016)

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