

SME WEEKLY NEWS

(30 September 2019 – 4 October 2019)

Countries	Highlights
<p>MALAYSIA</p> <p>CIMB allocates RM100 million for renewable energy financing for SMEs</p>	<p>CIMB Bank Bhd today launched its renewable energy financing for SMEs in Malaysia, part of its RM15-billion SME allocation for 2019-2020 and CIMB Group's sustainability commitment. CIMB Bank has allocated RM100 million to the CIMB SME Renewable Energy Financing programme. One of the first initiatives under this programme is to provide smaller SMEs with full financing to cover the cost of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems and installation on their rooftops. The financing initiative offers packages from as low as RM20,000 and up to RM1 million, in support of the government's Net Energy Metering (NEM) scheme, whereby excess energy can be exported to the national grid. CIMB Bank said SMEs need to first obtain the NEM approval from Sustainable Energy Development Authority (SEDA), to be eligible for CIMB's Renewable Energy Financing. The financing initiative provides a practical solution to enable even the smaller and micro SMEs to purchase solar PV systems to save on their electricity bills, and contribute to planet earth's well-being.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: News Straits Times, 1 October 2019)</i></p>
<p>CAMBODIA</p> <p>Grab unveils programmes to bridge tech skills gap</p>	<p>Grab announced its 'Grab for Good' initiative, which aims to bring digital literacy and greater inclusion to 3 million Southeast Asians by 2025. The programme also seeks to empower micro-entrepreneurs and small businesses by helping them digitalise workflows and processes. The final goal is to help 5 million firms adapt to the digital age. The 'Grab for Good' initiative is a partnership of the ride-hailing firm with governments in the region as well as with members of the private and the non-profit sectors. Through partnerships with educational institutions, non-profits and leading technology companies, it will also train at least 20,000 students on tech-related skills. The Singapore-based firm also unveiled a partnership with Microsoft dubbed 'Tech for Good'. It seeks to bridge the tech skills gap in Southeast Asia with programmes that target Grab's driver-partners and their families. The two initiatives are the start of a multi-year plan to equip individuals and small businesses with the necessary technical skills and tools to thrive in the digital economy.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: Khmer Times, 30 September 2019)</i></p>
<p>MYANMAR</p> <p>WaveMoney, Yoma Bank collaborate to extend collateral-free loans</p>	<p>Wave Money has officially announced a collaboration with Yoma Bank Ltd to boost the development of MSMEs in Myanmar. Through the collaboration, Yoma Bank provides unsecured, instant credit to Wave Money agents to help these agents operate their businesses more productively. Wave Money is a joint venture between telco company, Telenor and Yoma Bank to provide mobile financial services via a nationwide agent network or via a wave mobile account. Wave Money agents will be able to apply for the SMART Credit loan facility, which requires no collateral, quickly and easily at interest rate of 16%. Wave Money's agents can apply online for the loan, which will be disbursed within one business day. The digital credit product for small businesses is the first of its kind in Myanmar. The loan amount will be based on the agents' Wave Money transaction volume and since it is applied for online, it will not require going to a bank branch, collateral, guarantors, or extensive documentation. So far, Yoma Bank has disbursed over K40 billion to over 8000 Wave Agents.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: Myanmar Times, 30 September 2019)</i></p>

STEPPING INTO BIGGER THINGS

BEN Eng may be the second generation helming frozen seafood producer Fusipim Sdn Bhd, but his rise to the top was anything but an express route. When he came onboard the company in 2003, the food science graduate struck it out as a salesman. Once he felt the sales team was able to move forward on their own, he looked into a field he was trained in – quality control.

Product quality and safety are important in food production, he notes, particularly as food-related regulations get tighter and the market becomes more competitive. This also led to the setting up of another team – the R&D department – to continue innovating and developing new products for the company to stay ahead of the competition.

Eng went on to become the factory manager, overseeing efforts to automate its production lines. The company, founded by his father, a fisherman, has grown from a cottage fish ball maker to a frozen seafood exporter. When he could make a good business from his new skills, he went ahead and registered Fusipim as a company in the late 1980s. In the early 90s, the manufacturer started modernising its operations, adding on more production lines as it catered to a growing market.

According to Eng, demand for frozen products has increased over the years, mainly due to a shift in preference from canned food. Fusipim produces a variety of frozen goods such as fish balls, tofu and pau as well as batter mixes. At the moment, 70% of its sales is derived from the local market, with strong presence in retail & wholesale market, and now targeting food service industry including restaurants and chain outlets.

Eng also hopes to venture downstream into the ready-to-eat market. This will include operating its own kiosks and food trucks to directly serve consumers. Notably, this will be a different ballgame for Fusipim. Not only will it involve a new brand building exercise, there is also a whole new set of competitors including established outlets like Family Mart and 7-Eleven.

“We need to keep growing the local business and we still need to build a stronger platform for our brand. We are targeting the young (demographic for this new business) as most of them want convenient food. And we are slowly diversifying to more product range. If the model works, we can showcase it overseas,” he says.

Currently, Fusipim exports to 16 countries, including China and the US. It recently started exploring opportunities in the Indochina region and he expects this to take off in the future. He hopes to grow exports to make up 50% of revenue in three to five years’ time.



Eng is also looking to grow his local sales team by placing them with their partners in foreign markets to expose them to international trade practices. This will help groom them for its future plans. Eng’s vision for Fusipim is for it to become a world-class brand in the food industry. This means deploying the right strategy through the right talent to capture the market. It requires a strong distribution network to have its products in every corner and in every freezer.

“When your business is small, you need to focus on what you are doing. When you focus, your company will grow fast. Once you grow, you need to make sure you grow in the right direction. When you get the right direction, your company will grow big. And when you are big, you need to stabilise it and grow deeper. I think that’s the position that Fusipim is in,” he says. He emphasises that continuous learning and innovation will be key to its success.

(Source: The Star, 30 September 2019)

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