

SME WEEKLY NEWS

(7 January 2019 – 11 January 2019)

Countries	Highlights
<p>MALAYSIA</p>	<p>SME Corp plans to expand TUBE programme content</p> <p>SME Corp Malaysia plans to expand the Tunas Usahawan Belia Bumiputera Programme (TUBE)'s programme content, which is entering its sixth edition this year. Chief executive officer Noor Azmi Mat Said said the plan included introducing content related to Islamic commercial transactions (muamalat) and spiritual development to help youth entrepreneurs in facing challenges. Noor Azmi said SME Corp received 55,000 applications to participate in the upcoming sixth edition of the TUBE programme. SME Corp had awarded grants totalling RM96 million to 4,422 youth entrepreneurs under the TUBE programme. On another note, Noor Azmi said SME Corp was committed in ensuring that small and medium enterprises (SMEs) contribute 41% to the country's gross domestic product by 2020, up from the current 37.1%. He added that SMEs would be encouraged to explore new technologies in order to discover new or non-traditional methods to create products, markets and new ways to conduct business, thus boosting innovation, competitiveness and productivity.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: Bernama, 10 January 2019)</i></p>
<p>THAILAND</p>	<p>SME D Bank offering low-interest loans to storm-hit businesses</p> <p>The Small and Medium Enterprise Development Bank of Thailand (SME D Bank) is introducing a loan scheme to rehabilitate businesses battered by Tropical Storm Pabuk. According to SME D Bank, businesses affected by the storm will be granted a 6-month non-loan repayment period as well as an additional loan of up to 2 million baht depending on their credit. The additional loan scheme comes with a repayment period of five years and 0.42% interest per month. The bank is also rolling out other loan schemes in the storm-hit south such as a community loan program, an agricultural support program, a tourism loan program, an innovative business loan scheme, and a loan program for family-run stores.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: Pattaya Mail, 8 January 2019)</i></p>
<p>SINGAPORE</p>	<p>'Hunt in packs' so SMEs can benefit from FTAs: Panel</p> <p>While Singapore has signed several free trade agreements (FTAs) over the years, one group of businesses seems to be having difficulties reaping their benefits - small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). To help them, companies could "hunt in a pack", with larger businesses such as multinationals given incentives to work with smaller firms from non-competing sectors, leading the way to enter new markets, industry leaders said at a roundtable discussion yesterday, ahead of Singapore's Budget on Feb 18. Besides suggesting ways to support SMEs, industry leaders shared concerns about the fallout from trade tensions, discussed the need for companies to go global and spoke on the challenges in understanding Industry Transformation Maps (ITMs). Industry leaders also mooted ways to help smaller enterprises thrive.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Source: The Straits Times, 10 January 2019)</i></p>

RISING THROUGH REAL ESTATE RANKS



CONSULTANCY firm Rahim & Co International Sdn Bhd is no stranger to the property scene in Malaysia. Helming the namesake company is Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Abdul Rahman, a genteel leader with vast knowledge and experience in the business.

Abdul Rahim went on to serve the government for five years before joining Bank Bumiputra Malaysia Bhd. His turning point was when he decided to establish his own company in December 1976, in Jalan Ampang, Kuala Lumpur. The experience at Bank

Bumiputra was one that he is grateful for and which made him more professional. For Abdul Rahim, it is quality that has kept the company going for over 40 years.

Rooted in its business belief, Rahim & Co strives to be transparent about the market dynamics.

Based on its commendable ethics, Rahim & Co was extended the offer from Leading Estate Companies of the World (LeadingRE) and Luxury Portfolio to join its by-invitation-only network of real estate firms in 2016. With a presence in more than 50 countries such as the United Kingdom, France and Singapore, the company has a policy of having only one representative in each country.

In the 1980s, Rahim & Co became the first local firm to start selling property in London. A champion in his own right, Abdul Rahim was also among the chiefs who fought for the liberalisation policy of the profession in the senate.

The policy change resulted in a partnership with Permodalan Nasional Bhd (PNB) in 2015 when it invested a 49% stake in the company. Since then, Rahim & Co went on to amass a string of successes with accomplishments like the biggest property transaction in 2016 worth RM1bil and winning awards such as Best Property Consultancy (Malaysia) and Best Estate Agency (Malaysia) at the Asia Pacific Property Awards. Most recently, Rahim & Co won the Silver Award at Star Outstanding Business Award (SOBA) 2017.

Moving forward, Rahim plans to expand the company's operations overseas as well as open new branches in Sandakan, Sabah and Miri, Sarawak.

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(Source: 8 January 2019, The Star)