

Message from the Secretary Treasurer

Dear Colleagues,

We have successfully held the first webinar of the AML/CFT Webinar Series 2019 jointly organized by ABA and the Fintelekt Advisory Services.

We extend our gratitude to the experts who generously shared their time and knowledge with all participants. We hope you have greatly benefitted from the webinar and we strongly encourage you to register in the next webinar in May.

Our member bank from the Philippines, Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation (RCBC) is hosting a Microfinance Appreciation Course with its microfinance arm, RIZAL Microbank. Details of the program can be found on the inside pages of the newsletter.

Regular features like updates and activities from among our member banks are also included in this issue. We hope you find it informative and insightful.

If you wish to contribute to the newsletter, please write to us at aba@aba.org.tw

Thank you and best regards

Ernest Lin

Secretary-Treasurer



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Trainings & Programs

ABA and Fintelekt Successfully Hold the First Webinar of the AML/CFT Webinar Series 2019

Fintelekt



The first of the four webinars scheduled to take place this year as part of the AML/CFT Webinar Series 2019 jointly organized by the ABA and the Fintelekt Advisory Services, was successfully held on February 21, drawing the participation of more than 100 representatives from banks – both ABA members and non-members - around the Asia-Pacific region.

Focusing on the topic “The Role of AML Compliance in Correspondent Banking”, the initial seminar featured Mr. Charan Rawat, Head of Compliance at Rabobank India, as the guest speaker, and was moderated by Mr. Shirish Pathak, Managing Director at Fintelekt Advisory Services.

During the course of the one-hour webinar, Mr. Rawat answered some of the questions surrounding the topic. These included the following:

Why is Correspondent Banking Considered Risky? - Mr. Rawat noted that correspondent banking is risky due to the following reasons: (a) Correspondent bank has no visibility on the end clients or their business; (b) It relies on communication and confirmations provided by the respondent banks; (c) Reliance on certifications provided by respondent bank; (d) Lack of familiarity with business model, client base, client CDD standards, monitoring activities at the end of respondent bank; (e) Principle to Principal Transactions between banks tend to create a false sense of security; and Presence of Nested Accounts.

What are some of the inherent AML risks that banks should factor in while managing their correspondent banking relationships? - Mr. Rawat identified the inherent AML risks to include the following: (a) Inadequate appreciation and understanding of the business of Respondent Bank; (b) Risks associated with products, services, client profile, geographic locations and attendant risks are not factored in periodically; (c) Lack of visibility on underlying transactions; (d) AML programme is not tailored to address correspondent banking matters; and (e) Transaction monitoring is inadequate – far too high false positives or too few alerts.

What are some Key Learnings for Banks from Past Cases? - Mr. Rawat outlined some key learnings that Banks can draw from actual past cases, including the following: (a) A sharp focus on policies, procedures, training, monitoring and auditing will help avoid expensive regulatory action; (b) Learn from mistakes of others, continuously update your processes and challenge your own processes/monitoring practices to identify possible loopholes; (c) An end-to-end visibility into transactions and customer details will help avoid “siloed approach” to banking in general; and (d) There is no substitute for eternal vigilance.

The next three webinars – lasting one hour one each - will address other key AML/CFT challenges within Asia. They will feature practitioners as well as subject matter experts and provide a convenient virtual learning opportunity for AML compliance officers from the banking industry in Asia.

Webinars 2, 3 and 4 are scheduled as follows:

Webinar 2 - May 8

Why Continuous Monitoring is Critical for Trade-Based Money Laundering

Webinar 3 - July 10

Customer Due Diligence Challenges and Best Practices

Webinar 4 - December 4

New Payment Systems and Inherent AML Risks

For more information on the webinar’s content and for registration, please visit <http://fintelekt.com/webinars>. Participation is free of charge.

ABOUT FINTELEKT

Fintelekt (www.fintelekt.com) specializes in research, consulting and education in banking, financial services and



insurance, across India, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh and other countries in South East Asia. It produces industry research, fosters dialogue and creates opportunities for

knowledge sharing between senior executives from banking, financial services and insurance.

Microfinance Appreciation Course to be jointly hosted by Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. and RIZAL MicroBank on June 10-11



Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation (RCBC) and its microfinance arm RIZAL Microbank are jointly hosting a Microfinance Appreciation Course on June 10-11, 2019 in Makati City, Philippines.

The Microfinance Appreciation Course is being conducted as part of the ABA's Short-term Visiting Program. The primary aim of the Short-Term Visiting Program is to provide participating banks the opportunity to study and undergo training on specific aspects of the operations and facilities of the more advanced host banks. The idea is to enable the visitors to enhance their technical skills and knowledge in specific areas of banking operations in the distinct and peculiar social, economic and business environment of the host country. It also allows participants to gain first-hand knowledge of the operations, systems and work procedures of the host bank's various line departments covered by the program.

The Microfinance Appreciation Course hopes to provide participating banks, particularly those who are interested to engage in microfinance as a business initiative, the opportunity to learn from the experience, best practices, and expertise of RCBC and RIZAL MicroBank. The participants and the RCBC experts can exchange views and share knowledge on microfinance as one business activity that ABA members can engage in, in order to sustain and grow their banking operations. A course syllabus will be available soon.

NO PARTICIPATION FEE

There is no participation fee for ABA member banks attending the program. However, non-member banks will be charged a minimal fee of US\$200 per participant.

All participants shall cover their airfare and hotel accommodation.

PROPOSED VENUE and ACCOMMODATION

The workshop will be held at the RCBC headquarters. A list of recommended hotels will be sent to participants separately.

REGISTRATION

Interested members may request a confirmation form from the ABA Secretariat via email at aba@aba.org.tw. Registration is until April 30, 2019.

News Updates

March is Going to be a Huge Month for the World Economy

March is shaping up as pivotal for the world economy.

The coming weeks are set to offer clarity on a US-China trade deal, Britain's fate within the EU and any signs that China's economy is turning around. At the same time, US President Donald Trump is mulling a report that may lead him to place tariffs on European and Japanese cars, while the Federal Reserve, ECB and Bank of Japan will decide policy. And the list goes on.

The US is eyeing a summit as soon as mid-March between Trump and his Chinese counterpart, President Xi Jinping, with White House economic adviser Larry Kudlow hailing a potentially "historic deal." If an agreement is reached, the relief may be short-lived if Britain crashes out of the EU on March 29 without a divorce deal, compounding a broader slowdown across the region.

March is also the month for China's annual National



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People's Congress, when the rubber-stamp parliament will sign off on the government's economic plan for the year.

The centerpiece announcement will be the annual growth target. Some economists expect China to set a lower growth target of either about 6%, or 6-6.5% — down from around 6.5% for the past two years.

Key Chinese data will also be released over coming weeks, indicating whether or not the world's second-largest economy is responding to policy easing after months of stimulus.

March data will need to start showing China's economy is recovering," said Alicia Garcia Herrero, chief Asia Pacific economist at Natixis in Hong Kong. "If not, we should start worrying."



IMF in January cut its forecast for the world economy, predicting it will grow at the weakest pace in three years in 2019.

ROCKY START

How events play out will dictate investor sentiment after a rocky start to the year. The International Monetary Fund in January cut its forecast for the world economy, predicting it will grow at the weakest pace in three years in 2019.

Risks were evident in fourth-quarter data showing the US economy was steadier than thought, growing by 2.9% annualized, though a buildup of inventories means the outlook is far from certain, according to Bloomberg Economics.

"The economy appears to have dodged a bullet at year-end -but the coast is not clear," Bloomberg US economists led by Carl Riccadonna wrote in a note.

Economic Times

Philippine Peso Surprises to Become Asia's Best Currency

By David Finnerty, Bloomberg



The Philippine peso has defied a yawning current-account deficit to emerge as Asia's best-performing currency in February. And it may continue to surpass its peers.

Peso bulls say record remittances, rising investment and a buoyant domestic economy will propel further gains in the currency. Easing inflation could also lend a hand, as higher real yields burnish the appeal of Philippine bonds.

The peso is among Asia's biggest turnaround stories, as the currency bounced back from a 13-year low after a slew of economic reforms and a \$170 billion infrastructure spending

plan revived sentiment. Proactive central bank policy has also helped win over skeptics.

"The peso has been stronger recently and could continue to outperform in the region, amid sustained net foreign portfolio investments on a widely expected further declining trend of local inflation," said Mike Ricafort, economist at Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. in Manila.

The Philippine currency strengthened 0.8 percent in February to 51.70 per dollar, the best performance among Asian currencies. It has climbed since the start of the year, as a pause in Federal Reserve tightening and easing global trade tensions fueled demand for developing-nation assets.

The peso was among the hardest hit in the emerging-market sell-off last year, tumbling to a 13-year low of 54.41 in October as investors punished economies running current-account deficits.

Technicals back the case for further peso gains. The dollar-peso currency pair remains in a bear trend, hovering above initial support at 51.90, its Feb. 13 low. The pair's slow

News Updates

Bear Trend Intact

Dollar-peso slow stochastics continue to signal bear trend



Source: Bloomberg

stochastics, a momentum indicator, signals it may drop further in the near term, with the %D line reading 43 and falling.

Sentiment toward the peso has recovered even after the central bank forecast the nation's current-account deficit will widen to 2.3 percent of gross domestic product in 2019, the biggest shortfall since 2001. The recent rebound in crude prices threatens to worsen the gap, as the Philippines imports almost all its oil requirements.

Investors are betting on the peso after foreign investment into Philippine stocks and bonds recorded a net inflow of \$763 million in January, more than four times the level a year ago. Remittances from Filipinos working abroad climbed to an all-time high of \$2.85 billion in December.

Inflation data due March 5 could provide more fodder

for peso bulls. Consumer-price gains may have eased to a one-year low of 4.0 percent in February, according to a Bloomberg survey of economists on March 1 afternoon, and within the central bank's target band of 2 to 4 percent. Price pressures have waned since touching a nine-year high in September, thanks to government measures to boost food supplies.

Global Outperformer

Philippines was among top 10 best-performing global sovereign bond markets in February.

This augurs well for peso government bonds, which gained 0.4 percent in February, the seventh-best performer among 34 sovereign markets tracked by Bloomberg. Waning price pressures will boost real yields on Philippine debt, particularly as the central bank remains in hawkish mode for now.

Ten-year peso bonds offer a real yield of 2 percent, compared with about 5 percent for Indonesian securities and Indian debt.

But for peso bears, the outlook is less certain.

"Peso outperformance is unlikely to persist," said Divya Devesh, head of Asean and South-Asia FX research at Standard Chartered Bank in Singapore. "Monthly trade deficits are likely to persist, leading to strong dollar demand onshore. In addition, monetary policy is likely to remain unchanged in 2019, with risks skewed towards rate cuts."

Helping Financial Sector to be More Sustainable with New Initiative

By Sue-Ann Tan, *The Straits Times*

Financial institutions, non-governmental organizations and academics will work together under a new initiative to help businesses be more sustainable.

The Asia Sustainable Finance Initiative (ASFI), which was launched on January 21 at the Parkroyal on Pickering hotel, aims to help shift the region's financial flows towards sustainable outcomes.

It will bring together the finance industry, academia and science-based organizations to help Singapore-based financial institutions operating in the region to deepen their expertise in sustainable finance.

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is the secretariat and knowledge partner. Other knowledge partners include the Asia Investor Group on Climate Change, United

Nations Environment Programme - Finance Initiative and the National University of Singapore.

The Association of Banks in Singapore, Life Insurance Association, Institute of Banking and Finance Singapore and the Singapore Exchange Regulation are among the finance sector partners.

An ASFI spokesman said: "The financial sector is crucial in creating resilient and sustainable economic growth through its ability to influence companies to adopt best practices and to direct financial flows towards sustainable development.

"As a key global financial hub, Singapore is an important conduit for capital flows into the Asia region, and as such its financial institutions have significant potential to shape resilient regional economies."



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From left: Ms Lydia Wee, deputy chief executive of the Institute of Banking and Finance Singapore; Mr Nicholas Hadow, chairman of the Investment Management Association of Singapore; Mr Pierre-Emmanuel Brard, chief investment officer of AXA Insurance Singapore and ASFI representative for the Life Insurance Association; and Mrs Ong-Ang Ai Boon, director of the Association of Banks in Singapore at the Asia Sustainable Finance Initiative (ASFI) launch. ST PHOTO: JONATHAN CHOO

Sustainable finance is also key to addressing the region's increasing vulnerability to climate change, the degradation of land and ocean ecosystems, labor and human rights, and water risk, she added.

The initiative will focus on helping financial institutions better understand and incorporate environmental, social and governance (ESG) risks and opportunities into decision-making processes.

It will assist partners in devising standards and certification schemes and help institutions understand material, environmental and social issues so they can price risk and value companies.

The ASFI will also bring research and innovative tools so finance institutions can develop viable green solutions to create an actual impact on the environment and society.

Ms Indranee Rajah, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister for Finance and Education, said at the launch: "Financial institutions play an important role in influencing how capital is allocated to economic activities with sustainable development outcomes. This will facilitate decision-making... that delivers financial performance as well as positive impacts on society."

She added that institutions here have significant potential to catalyze sustainable finance in the region.

"While we are still at the early stages... we have seen some success in encouraging the use of debt capital market financing towards sustainable projects."

In 2017, developer City Developments Limited issued the first green bond in Singapore, and DBS Bank partnered Impact Investment Exchange on the world's first listed social bond, an US\$8 million (S\$10.9 million) Women's Livelihood Bond.

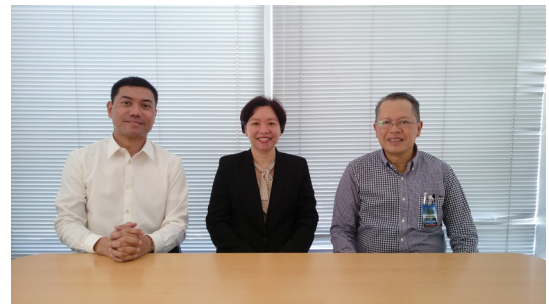
Ms Indranee said Singapore can advance deeper ESG integration within financial institutions and implement credible standards. There should also be deepened research and development in ESG products by building capabilities.

The Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources and Monetary Authority of Singapore welcomed the initiative: "Partnerships and collective action are essential to achieving sustainable development."

Ms Jeanne Stampe, head of WWF's Asia Sustainable Finance team and founder of ASFI, said: "Today's pressing environmental and social challenges threaten the... stability of Asian economies.

"By working... alongside other science-based knowledge partners, we can facilitate an orderly transition to economies that deliver well-being to all people while protecting the natural capital on which all businesses and societies depend."

ABA Secretariat Officer Meets with RCBC Executives



Ms. Christina Alvarez, Senior Vice President, Head, Corporate Planning Group, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. (RCBC) (center) and Mr. Raymundo C. Roxas, President of Rizal Microbank, the microfinance arm of RCBC (left), met with ABA Deputy Secretary Mr. Amador Honrado Jr. (right) on February 4 to discuss initial preparations for the Microfinance Workshop to be conducted by Rizal Microbank for ABA



News Updates

member banks on June 10-11 at the RCBC headquarters in Makati City, Philippines.

The workshop aims to provide member banks, particularly those who are interested to engage in microfinance as a business initiative, the opportunity to learn

from the experience, best practices, and expertise of RCBC and Rizal Microbank, which are already successfully engaged in microfinance operations. Through the workshop, the ABA hopes to provide another valuable opportunity for members

to exchange views and share experiences on microfinance as one business activity that they can engage in, in order to sustain and grow their banking operations.

ABA Releases Chairman's Reflection 2014-2018



ABA recently released the Chairman's Reflection 2014-2018 which summarizes the activities undertaken by Immediate Past Chairman Mr. Daniel Wu during his four-year term from 2014 to 2018.

Mr. Daniel Wu, President of CTBC Financial Holding Co., was first elected as Chairman of the ABA during the 31st ABA General Meeting and Conference held on November 19-20, 2014 in Muscat, Oman, taking over from Mr. Lorenzo V. Tan, then President and CEO of Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation (RCBC) from the Philippines. Prior to that, Mr. Wu served as ABA Vice Chairman from 2012-2014.

Two years later, during the 33rd ABA General Meeting and Conference held on November 10-11, 2016 in Ha Long Bay, Vietnam, Mr. Wu was re-elected as ABA Chairman, making him the first to be voted to the position for a second term- and marking a milestone in the history of the Association.

His two terms at the helm of the ABA saw him

building on the achievements of his predecessors while making his own important contributions to the progress and development of the Association. In his Valedictory Address at the 35th ABA General Meeting and Conference on November 15-16, 2018 in Maldives, he expressed his deep gratitude to the general membership for their cooperation and support of the projects and programs that his administration during his four-year incumbency. "All your cooperative endeavors- which have been the hallmark of ABA- have certainly made my task as Chairman more worthwhile, rewarding, and enjoyable in so many levels, thereby providing me with a memorable four-year tenure. Without your collaboration, the various programs that we set out to do at the start of my term would have not been achieved," Mr. Wu told members.

The Chairman's Reflection can be downloaded from the ABA website <https://www.aba.org.tw/>



Special Feature

Digitising Investment Suitability

BY CHRISTIAN GILMOUR, Asian Banking and Finance

For private banks and wealth managers, investment suitability is a hot regulatory topic and should be at the heart of front-office digitization efforts. Increasingly, supervisors are expecting private banks and wealth managers to strive for good customer outcomes and demonstrate that their decision-making processes are centered on an understanding of customer needs.

Recent regional developments include the introduction of regulation on the offline distribution of complex products by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority in October 2018, and the Financial Service Agency of Japan's Principles for Customer-Oriented Business Conduct, which were finalized in March 2017.

Although regulatory specifics differ between jurisdictions, the underlying fundamental principle remains consistent: an investment product ought to be aligned to a customer's risk profile and appetite. In instances where the product is considered to be unsuitable, such as where there is a high probability of unacceptable losses, the obligation is on the banks to control the selling process and protect the customer.

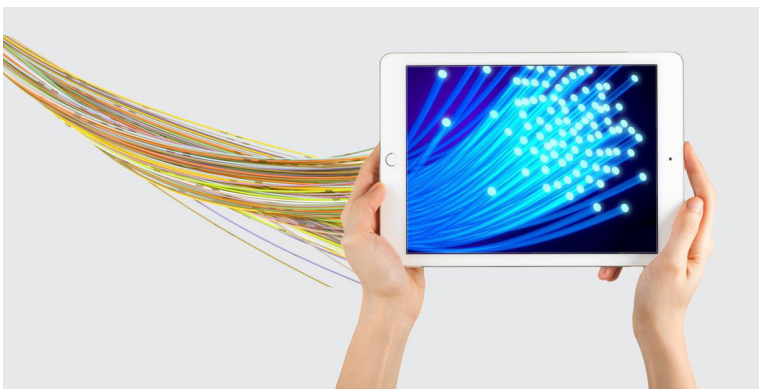
Matching a product to a customer's needs is the core requirement.

For private banks and wealth managers, the regulatory pressures are pushing players to adopt a more proactive stance where a deep and ongoing understanding of the customer drives the selection of investment products.

To do this, private banks and wealth managers have to address five key themes, each posing their own unique set of opportunities and challenges:

1. Enabling effective client suitability assessment

In order to enable effective client suitability assessment, the development and rollout of an Investment Profile Questionnaire (IPQ) during the client profiling phase



(see: "Five stages of the investment suitability process") will need to take into consideration the volume of information that is required for an operating model to apply across different jurisdictions, where requirements on data capture may diverge. An effective IPQ is one which supports a single operating model where client information can

be compared across various client segments and jurisdictions to build a deeper understanding of client risk appetites and corresponding product suitability.

The five stages of the investment suitability process include the following:

Client profiling

The first stage entails understanding the client's risk profile and appetite. This is typically assessed through the use of an IPQ that covers details such as the client type, investment objectives, risk appetite, investment time horizon, and other key client metrics.

Product profiling

The second stage entails understanding the product's risk profile. This includes assessing the associated risks of each product type, including its time horizon, liquidity characteristics, counterparty risks, investment objectives, as well as other special features.

Matching

The third stage focuses on assessing the suitability of a product for a specific client to ensure that the client's risk profile matches the product's risk profile. If these do not match, the focus then shifts towards mitigating the risk through appropriate disclosure or acknowledgment from the client of a mismatch.

Disclosure

At this stage, the client is informed about the risk of the product. If a risk mismatch has been identified in the previous stage, there may also be a requirement for the client to acknowledge that they accept the mismatch.

Maintenance

As market conditions and circumstances evolve, there is a need to put in place the necessary controls and ensure ongoing and regular assessments of the suitability of products to clients.

2. *Building a comprehensive product data suite*

Building a comprehensive product data suite is critical to ensure that product attributes are consistently captured across locations and asset classes, whilst facilitating better comparability between different product types, and enabling private banks and wealth managers to offer a better range of products to their clients. Although more complex asset classes may present challenges in terms of data sourcing, effective data laddering can also help to overcome some of these issues.

3. *Customizing product offerings*

Technology is a key enabler for private banks and wealth managers to offer their clients customized product offerings. By matching data from the client profiling and product profiling stages of the process, private banks and wealth managers can obtain greater client insight across multiple parallels and offer enhanced product offerings that are customized to their client's requirements.

4. *Standardization of disclosure requirements*

Disclosure requirements differ significantly across jurisdictions, with certain jurisdictions allowing the distribution of products with high risk profiles to clients with low risk profiles so long as a disclosure of the associated risk has been acknowledged by the client. The standardization of disclosure requirements is therefore critical to ensure consistency across risk disclosures to clients. In addition, by setting up standardized platforms to automate disclosures, private banks and wealth managers can also ensure minimal disruptions to their overall sales process, while retaining a clearly documented audit trail for their future reference.

5. *Ensuring consistent data capture*

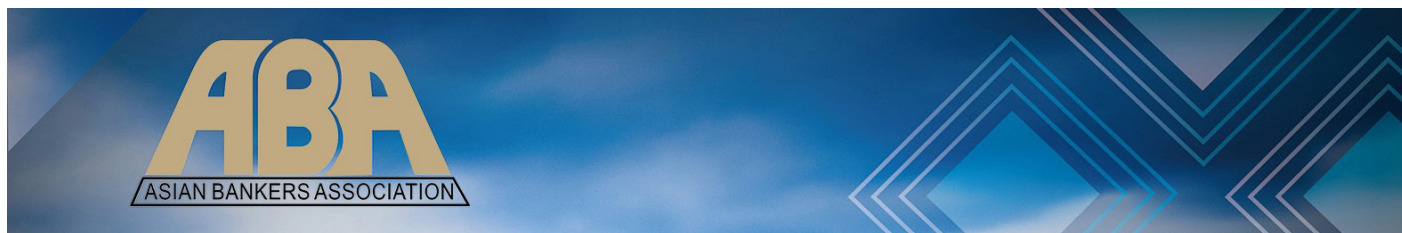
Consistent data capture protocols across the entire suitability process is crucial to facilitate ongoing monitoring and assessment to ensure that there remains a suitable match between a client's risk profile and a product's risk profile, even as both continually evolve. This requires the use of analytic platforms that are capable of efficiently consuming and assessing data. In contrast to legacy platforms where single position assessments were the focus, new technological platforms now enable first and second line controls to move beyond sample-based analysis, enabling private banks and wealth managers to leverage entire sets of data for greater accuracy and more comprehensive oversight.

Ultimately, regulators will not only be watching investment suitability but also the delivery of good customer outcomes. Ensuring that firms are not serving the wrong types of customers is a continuing regulatory priority. Robust procedures for understanding customer identity and associations, ongoing monitoring and analysis of transactions, and timely identification, and escalation and action on suspicious matters continues to be top of mind for regulators.

About Author Christian Gilmour



Christian is an Executive Director, Consulting at Deloitte Southeast Asia. He is a seasoned banking executive with a global track record of motivating and leading teams to deliver complex, time pressured transformations. He has hands on expertise in Investment Banking and Private Banking/Wealth Management spanning business, product, change and client management developed over a decade in Barclays Capital and Wealth. He also has a deep end to end understanding of the full product set for the institutional/private client segments.



Among Member Banks

BEA Helps Raise HK\$1.8 Million for the TWGHs Teen Cafe Youth Mental Health Promotion Project

The Bank of East Asia, Limited (BEA) has reaffirmed its commitment to the community by supporting the Teen Cafe Youth Mental Health Promotion Project (“Teen Cafe” or the “Project”) managed by Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (“TWGHs”). To maximize the impact of its support, BEA invited customers, business partners, and others to join the Bank in making a donation to the Project instead of sending flowers or other gifts to the Bank on the occasion of its 100th Anniversary. As at the end of January 2019, approximately HK\$1.8 million had been raised, which will enable TWGHs to help around 600 adolescents and young adults annually for at least the next two years. The Bank of East Asia Charitable Foundation (BEA Foundation, which is celebrating its 10th Anniversary in 2019, will monitor the Project on behalf the Bank.



Dr. David K.P. Li, Chairman & Chief Executive of BEA and Chairman of the BEA Foundation, said, “Since its establishment, the BEA Foundation has supported vulnerable and under-resourced members of our community, including the children and the elderly through initiatives like the BEA Parent-Child Reading Programme, the BEA

“High Five” Club, and the Palliative Care in Residential Care Homes for the Elderly Programme. As we celebrate our centenary, we are pleased to take the opportunity to extend our support to the youth of our community. I would like to offer my most heartfelt thanks to everyone who has joined us in supporting the Teen Cafe. Together, we can ensure a bright future for the next generation, and for Hong Kong.”

BEA News Release

SBI Reports Frauds of Rs 7,951 Crore in 9 months of FY’19 - State Bank of India (SBI) on March 1 said frauds amounting to Rs 7,951.29 crore were reported during the first nine months of 2018-19. All these accounts became NPAs much earlier and most of the portfolio is already provided for with 100 percent provision, SBI said in a regulatory filing.



“Moreover, we provide additional provision on new frauds in each quarter to cover the gap, if any,” it said.

In, this connection, while all fraud related laid down guidelines are being followed, resolution process for recovery through Debt Recovery Tribunal and other mechanism is also underway, it added.

The nation’s largest lender said the first quarter reported 669 cases of fraudulent activities amounting to Rs 723.06 crore, the second quarter saw 660 cases involving a Rs 4,832.42 crore and the third quarter reported 556 cases amounting to Rs 2,395.81 crore.

Business Today India

Japan’s MUFG Agrees to Buy German Lender DZ Bank’s Aviation Finance Arm for 710 Billion Yen - Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group Inc. agreed to buy DZ Bank’s aviation finance division in one of its biggest acquisitions since it was created in 2005.



The assets MUFG bought from Germany’s second-largest bank, held by its subsidiary DVB Bank, include a loan portfolio of 5.6 billion euro (710 billion yen) as well as the unit’s employees and “parts of the operating infrastructure,” according to news releases from both banks on March 1.

The deal is the latest for Japan’s biggest bank in a spate of acquisitions abroad as it seeks to make up for diminishing returns in a country that’s beset by rock-bottom interest rates and slow economic growth.

MUFG’s recent transactions include its purchase of an additional stake in PT Bank Danamon Indonesia and an agreement to buy Commonwealth Bank of Australia’s asset management unit. At the same time, MUFG has been selling holdings in companies such as Standard Life Aberdeen PLC and Brazil’s Banco Bradesco SA to improve the efficiency of its investments and free up capital.

“It’s a move in the right direction,” said Toyoki Sameshima, a senior bank analyst at SBI Securities in Tokyo. “MUFG has been shifting assets to more profitable areas. My overall impression is positive.”

Japan Times



Among Member Banks

SMBC Taps Industry 4.0 for Expansion - Japanese multinational banking and financial services company Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC) is keen to expand in Thailand to cash in on the Industry 4.0 initiative set to attract more foreign investment.



Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak said Koichi Miyata, president of SMBC told him on February 6 that Thailand 4.0 would be a significant driver of industrial development attracting foreign investors.

The Thailand 4.0 policy will enhance the country's role and attract existing manufacturers to expand their investment, while Sumitomo is ready to support Japanese investment, Mr. Miyata said.

Mr. Somkid said SMBC is also willing to provide information to the government, which is scheduled to hold its next roadshow in Sendai and Hokkaido before the general election.

He reaffirmed to the Japanese economy that the Thai economy is expected to grow 4% this year, down from an estimated 4.2% in 2018.

Bangkok Post

Malaysia's Maybank Posts Best Quarterly Profit in 2 years, but Flags Risks - Malaysia's Malayan Banking Bhd (Maybank) beat expectations with a 9.1 percent rise in quarterly net profit, its highest profit in two years, as Islamic banking income soared and net interest income grew.



But the Southeast Asian nation's largest lender by assets flagged its profitability would be under some strain this year due to higher costs, and also said uncertainty in long-term domestic economic policy was impacting its clients.

Net interest margin - a key measure of bank profitability - fell 3 basis points in 2018 to 2.33 percent and the bank expects a further compression of 3-5 basis points this year, pressured by potential deposit competition.

While the bank expects stable economic growth in Malaysia, its biggest market, it noted uncertain longer term economic policy was still a concern for the market.

"Many of our clients (who are) institutional investors...would like to know a bit of clarity on the medium to long term economic policies - where do we want to go, which sectors are we focused on, what are we going to do about creating new employment, what are we going to do about creating a better environment for new investments," Group president and CEO Abdul Farid Alias said at the bank's results briefing.

Reuters

RCBC Leads Financing for Infrastructure Projects - Yuchengco-led Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. (RCBC) continues to take the lead in financing key infrastructure projects nationwide as the national government ramps up massive infrastructure spending under the Build Build Build program.



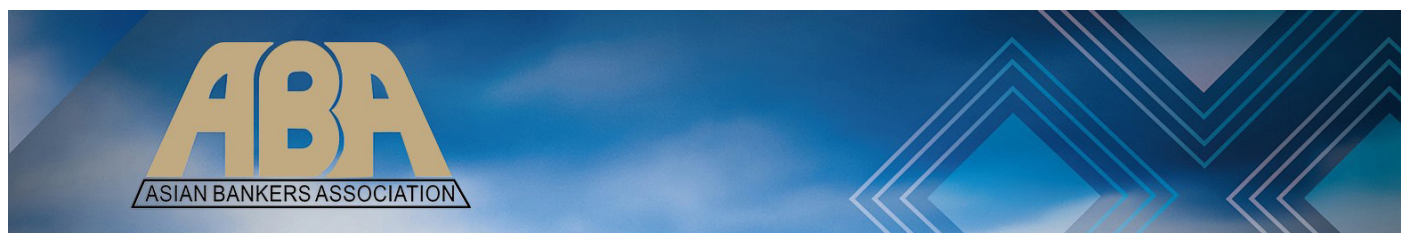
The country's 10th largest bank in terms of assets is the biggest lender to the P19 billion project finance facility of a unit of infrastructure giant Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPIC).

RCBC deputy chief executive officer Eugene Acevedo said the proceeds of the 15-year term loan facility extended to Cebu Cordova Link Expressway Corp. (CCLEC), an indirect subsidiary of MPIC, would partially finance the first public-private partnership (PPP) outside Metro Manila.

This is the first bridge venture of MPIC that controls Metro Pacific Tollways Corp. (MPTC). The loan facility was signed late last year.

"We are excited about this opportunity to be involved in a financially viable project that will bring significant impact in the economy of Cebu," Acevedo said.

Philippine Star



Among Member Banks

PNB Raises P8.2 billion from LTNCD issuance - Philippine National Bank (PNB) raised P8.22 billion via the issuance of long-term negotiable certificates of time deposits (LTNCDs) due 2024 as part of a series of fund raising activities lined up by the bank.



The debt instrument with a tenor of five years and six months fetched a coupon rate of 5.75 percent per annum.

PNB president and chief executive officer Jose Arnulfo Veloso said the fund raising activity would help extend the bank's maturity debt profile and raise long-term funds to support its loan growth.

"This is a strategic exercise for us as we continue to grow our loan portfolio. Raising long term funding at attractive levels offers our investors an opportunity to support our goals, while allowing us to also provide cost-competitive loans to our clients who would like to grow alongside our strong Philippine economy," Veloso said.

It was the largest LTNCD issuance by PNB. It was 2.7 times oversubscribed as the initial plan was to raise only P3 billion.

"This is due to strong investor demand from both retail and institutional investors," he said.

Philippine National Bank

DBS Bank Launches "Robo-Investor" to Appeal to Investors Looking for Low Maintenance Investments - Singapore's largest bank DBS unveiled a "robo-investor" service on February 28 to allow customers to manage their investment portfolio through a "robot" which automates investment processes such as rebalancing, executing trades and monitors investment performances.



Called digiPortfolio, the service was made live to the bank's Wealth customers earlier this week and is scheduled to be rolled out to all of DBS' customers by the end of this year. The bank has 5.2 million retail customers, of which three million make their banking transactions online.

The service automates investment processes and creates an investment portfolio based on the client's risk appetite, varying the proportion of equity, fixed income, and cash invested into unit trusts chosen by the bank's investment team.

According to Mr Lim Soon Chong, regional head of investment products and advisory at DBS consumer banking group and wealth management, only one in 10 Singaporeans have made investment transactions in the past 12 months.

Mr Lim attributed the low investment activity among Singaporeans to the lack of time, high upfront fees, and the inertia faced when filling up forms which can be tedious. The many choices to make on deciding on an investment product also puts off Singaporeans.

DBS Bank News Release

UOB and OctoRocket to Help SMEs in Asean Apply for Financing - UNITED Overseas Bank (UOB) and OctoRocket.asia (OctoRocket), a business to business e-commerce platform, announced that they have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to enable small businesses in Asean on OctoRocket to apply for financing quickly and easily.



OctoRocket, a joint venture launched in January by Singapore Press Holdings (SPH) and Y3 Technologies, enables cross-border trade between suppliers and buyers from Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. For a start, OctoRocket is helping 30 suppliers in the region's packaged food industry to sell more than 600 types of food products such as snacks, instant noodles, canned food, sauces, condiments and beverages.

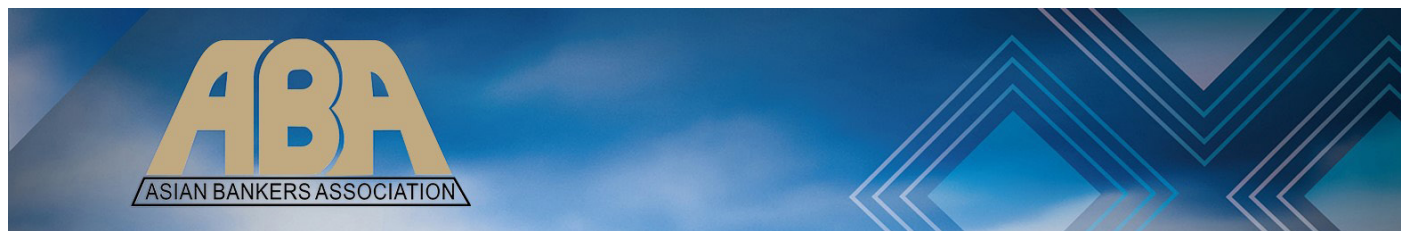
Under the MOU, UOB will enable small businesses that use OctoRocket for at least six months to apply for financing directly via the online platform.

Instead of relying on the company's financial statements, the Bank will assess the applicant's creditworthiness based on its transactional data on OctoRocket, using a credit assessment engine developed by Avatec.ai.

The engine harnesses the power of artificial intelligence and machine learning to gain insights into the applicant's cashflow and day-to-day operations, determining the applicant's credit quality quickly and with more certainty.

This will enable the Bank to cut the time taken for loan approvals from an average of 2.5 days to just 15 minutes.

Digital News Asia



Among Member Banks

Bank of Taiwan Opens Representative Office in Manila - The Bank of Taiwan (BOT) officially opened a representative office in Manila, capital of the Philippines on January 31 as part of its efforts to help Taiwanese businesses enter the Southeast Asian market.



During a speech at the opening ceremony that day, BOT Chairman Joseph Jye-cherng Lyu said the office demonstrates the brotherhood between Taiwan and the Philippines indicating the two sides will work together to create economic value.

The representative office was set up to assist Taiwanese businesses take advantages of opportunities offered by economic growth in the Philippines, Lyu pointed out.

Explaining the strategic location of the office, he said “the Philippines stands as a critical entry point to the ASEAN market with ample opportunities for Taiwan businesses.”

“I believe from the bottom of my heart, that this is the country (the Philippines) we BOT must be present to (make) dialogue directly with clients in the region,” Lyu said.

The bank will strengthen cooperation with local financial institutions and multinational banks to create win-win situations, he added.

Focus Taiwan

Taipei Fubon Bank and Fubon Insurance become Most Expansive Taiwanese Companies in Vietnam - Taipei Fubon Bank and Fubon Insurance have become the most expansive Taiwanese companies in Vietnam after a decade of operating in the country, Richard M Tsai, Chairman of Fubon Financial Holdings, said.



Speaking at an event titled “A Decade in Vietnam” organized by Taipei Fubon Bank and Fubon Insurance in HCM City on March 2 to celebrate a decade in the country, he said the bank and the insurer, subsidiaries of Fubon Financial Holdings, opened a branch and set up a wholly-owned subsidiary in Vietnam in 2008.

A decade later they have become the most expansive Taiwanese bank and insurance company in Vietnam, he said.

“Over the course of a decade, their scale and business locations have flourished; Taipei Fubon Bank now has three branches in HCM City, Ha Noi and Binh Duong while Fubon Insurance Vietnam has offices in HCM City, Ha Noi, Binh Duong, and Dong Nai.”

Vietnam offers a demographic dividend and its domestic market has immense potential, being one of the fastest growing emerging economies in the world, he said. Thus, the country has a key role in Fubon Financial Holdings’ bid to enter the Southeast Asian market, he said.

Vietnam News

Mega Bank to Hire Hundreds - Unfazed by a global economic slowdown, state-owned Mega Financial Holding Co on February 11 announced plans to hire more workers this year to bolster their retail banking operations.



Mega Financial Holding Co chairman Michael Chang said that the conglomerate plans to add 600 employees this year to support its consumer banking business.

The banking-focused company presented its plan last year and there still is ample room for improvement, Chang said.

Mega Financial has focused on hiring legal compliance professionals after being fined by US financial regulators for compliance failures at its US banking branches in 2016 and last year, he said.

The situation has stabilized, as evidenced by Mega’s improved earnings ability, Chang added.

Net income reached NT\$28.2 billion (US\$915.32 million) last year, a 9.5 percent increase from 2017 and the best performance in three years, with earnings of NT\$2.07 per share, Mega Financial data showed.

Mega International Commercial Bank, which generated 85.87 percent of the holding company’s overall profit, aims to hire more consumer banking employees to make its retail banking business as big a contributor as corporate banking — its key profit driver, Chang said.

Taipei Times



Among Member Banks

NEC delivers facial recognition system for Taiwan's E. SUN Commercial Bank - NEC, a firm expertise in the integration of IT and network technologies, has provided its facial recognition system to Taiwanese bank, E. SUN Commercial Bank (E. SUN Bank).

NEC system is said to help create safe, secure and convenient automated teller machines (ATMs) using facial recognition.

NEC said that E. SUN Bank's systems are the world's first facial recognition automation ATMs with one-time password technology.

E. SUN Bank has already installed and commenced operation of the ATMs at five locations in the country.

The system supplied by NEC uses facial recognition artificial intelligence (AI) engine called NeoFace, which is claimed to feature the world's highest recognition precision and part of the firm's advanced biometric authentication technologies Bio-Idiom.

Users need to insert their cash cards and have a photo of their face taken with a camera installed within the ATM, when using these facial recognition-equipped ATMs for the first time.



Compelo

Bangkok Bank Launches Western Union Speedy Cash Service - Bangkok Bank, in its move to become a digital banking specialist, has launched a quick, secure service for international payments.

Customers can now receive Western Union cash via Bualuang mBanking and Bualuang iBanking. Customers can apply for the service at Bualuang mBanking, Bualuang iBanking or Bangkok Bank branches. For more information, call Bualuang on 1333.



Banking and Finance Newsbriefs

Hong Kong

Hong Kong Central Bank Chief Norman Chan to Retire in October

Hong Kong's central bank Chief Executive Norman Chan will retire on Oct. 1 this year, after completing exactly 10 years in the role, a government statement said on February 21.

Chan, a long serving member of Hong Kong's civil service, joined the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA), the country's banking regulator and de facto central bank, at its establishment in 1993, and was appointed chief executive in 2009.

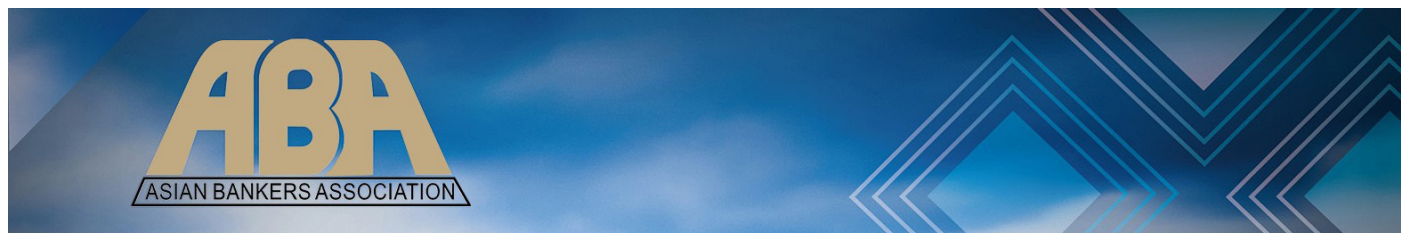
He also worked at Standard Chartered between 2005 and 2007.

"In the aftermath of the global financial crisis... Norman has played a pivotal role in the international financial system reform agenda," Hong Kong Financial Secretary Paul Chan said in the statement.

Chan said he felt now is the right time to retire and spend more time with his family.

Paul Chan is chairing a selection panel which will identify Norman Chan's successor, the statement added.

Reuters



Banking and Finance Newsbriefs

India

India's GDP to Grow at Slowest Pace in 5 years in FY19

The government has slashed FY19 GDP estimate to 7 percent from 7.2 percent earlier, which will put India's growth rate at a five-year low for the current fiscal year.

October-December GDP growth came in at 6.6 percent, which was slowest in five quarters. Analysts in an ET NOW poll had projected a growth of 6.8 percent.

Core sector growth in January also slowed down to 1.8 percent against 2.7 percent on a sequential basis and 6.2 percent on a yearly basis.

The size of the Indian economy is now seen at Rs 190.5 lakh crore, which makes India's GDP at \$2.7 trillion. India's nominal GDP growth is seen at 11.5 percent in FY19 against 11.3 percent last year.

Farm growth is seen at a slower pace at 2.7 percent vs estimate of 3.8 percent earlier. Industry growth is seen slightly slower at 7.7 percent vs 7.8 percent estimate earlier and services growth estimate is marginally revised upwards to 7.4 percent.

Economic Times India

Indonesia

Bank Indonesia Mulls Accumulating Global Sukuk as Shariah Buffer

Bank Indonesia is weighing the use of sukuk issued by other countries in its monetary operations as demand for Shariah-compliant securities surge among lenders in the world's largest Muslim-majority country.

The central bank is discussing whether to add more foreign sovereign sukuk to its reserves to be used as an underlying asset for Sukbi, a monetary instrument for liquidity operations, according to Deputy Governor Dody Budi Waluyo. Bank Indonesia's efforts to deepen the financial market and ensure stability are hampered by inadequate Shariah securities at its disposal, he said.

Bank Indonesia is increasingly relying on its money market operations to ensure liquidity for banks after raising rates by a total of 175 points since May to counter a selloff in its currency triggered by rising U.S. interest rates. With the risks of a prolonged U.S.-China trade war lingering, the central bank has been intervening in the currency and bonds market to quell volatility.

The central bank began offering a sovereign sukuk-backed securities, known as Sukbi, to conventional and Shariah banks from last year and the instrument has found favor with the banks. The bank sold 4 trillion rupiah of 7- and 14-day tenors in its latest auction on Feb. 13.

Bloomberg

Iran

Iran Merging Military-Linked Banks to Stabilize Sector

Iran is merging four military-linked banks and another financial institution with the country's oldest bank to boost efficiency and help stabilize the sector, the central bank said on March 2, as the economy reels under U.S. sanctions.

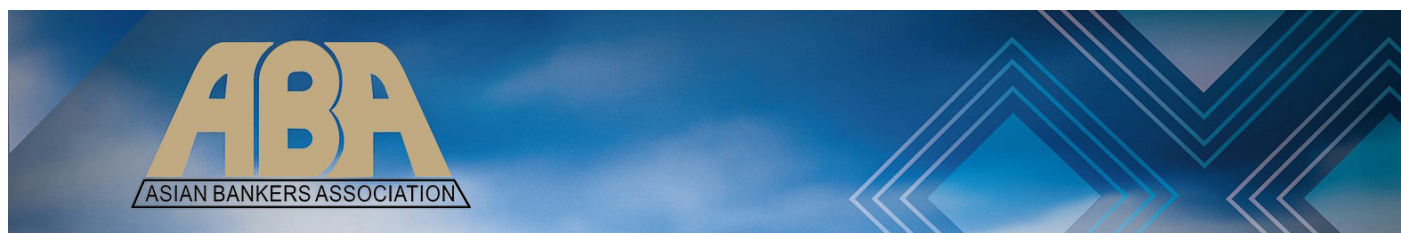
Many Iranian banks are under pressure because of years of poor management and economic difficulties, caused by decades of international sanctions and the reimposition of U.S. sanctions last year.

The merger would create "a stable and more efficient single bank to provide better services to the families of the armed forces and the general public", the central bank said in a statement quoted by state news agency IRNA.

Ansar, Mehr Eqtasad, Qavamin, and Hekmat banks and the Kosar credit institution will be merged with state-run Bank Sepah, set up in 1925 by an army pension fund as Iran's first bank, the central bank statement said. It gave no further details of the merger or the institutions involved.

President Donald Trump reimposed U.S. sanctions last May after pulling out of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal. The sanctions have shaken the economy and pushed the currency to record lows, disrupting foreign trade and helping boost annual inflation fourfold to nearly 40 percent in November.

Reuters



Banking and Finance Newsbriefs

Japan

Japan's Economy Improving but Faces Risks from Abroad: Gov't

Japan's economy continues to improve, but faces heightened risks from overseas including the knock-on effects of a slowdown in China, the government said on February 21.

In the February edition of its monthly economic report, the Cabinet Office maintained its headline assessment that the world's third-largest economy is "recovering at a moderate pace," supporting the view that the economy remains in its longest expansion phase since the end of World War II.

But it downgraded its views on industrial production and corporate profits, and warned that "attention should be given" to the outlook for the Chinese economy, which grew at the slowest pace in 28 years in 2018, the ongoing tariff war between Washington and Beijing, and uncertainty over Britain's planned exit from the European Union.

Industrial production is "increasing moderately, while weakness can be seen in some areas," the office said. In particular, it noted that production of high-tech products such as memory chips used in smartphones and data centers had slowed.

Growth in corporate profits, which had soared to record-highs on the tailwinds of a weaker yen, "appears to be pausing, although they remain at a high level," the office said.

The Mainichi

Malaysia

Malaysia's Economy Gathers Pace in Q4 on Improved Exports

Malaysia's economy expanded at a faster pace in the final quarter of last year, ending a year of weakening momentum as resilient exports helped to shore up growth amid a slowdown in global demand from the US-China trade war.

Solid growth in gross domestic product provides a welcome reprieve for Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's administration, which has faced simmering discontent over rising living costs less than a year after romping to a shock general election victory in May.

The central bank said it expects the economy to remain on a steady growth path, supported by steady domestic demand and improving external appetite for Malaysia's exports.

"Malaysia will continue to experience quality growth in external demand and that will provide support to growth in 2019," Bank Negara governor Nur Shamsiah Mohd Yunus told a news conference.

Southeast Asia's third-largest economy expanded 4.7 per cent in the fourth quarter from a year earlier, up from 4.4 per cent in the third quarter.

Straits Times

Philippines

Budget Chief Benjamin Diokno Named BSP Governor

Over a week after the death of Nestor Espenilla Jr., the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) has a new governor: Benjamin Diokno, who will be moving from his post as secretary of budget and management.

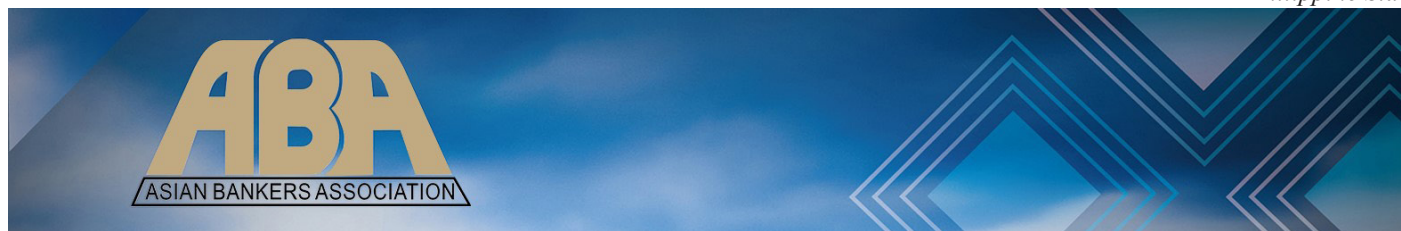
Diokno disclosed his appointment on March 4 to reporters. He will be serving the remainder of Espenilla's six-year term. The appointment was confirmed by Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea at Malacañang.

The chief of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) bested BSP deputy governors Maria Almasara Cyd Tuaño-Amador, Diwa Guinigundo and Chuchi Fonacier as well as Monetary Board member Peter Favila and bankers Nestor Tan of BDO Unibank, Antonio Moncupa of EastWest Bank, and Cezar Consing of Ayala-led Bank of the Philippine Islands.

The BSP community and bankers were surprised by the announcement as they were expecting that another central bank insider would be appointed.

Both Espenilla and his predecessor Amando Tetangco Jr. served the central bank for more than three decades. Tetangco served an unprecedented two six-year terms, while Espenilla served for only 19 months. Espenilla died on Feb. 23 after battling tongue cancer for more than a year.

Philippine Star



Banking and Finance Newsbriefs

Singapore

MAS named central bank of the year

The Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) has been named central bank of the year, it was announced on February 6. The award from London-based journal Central Banking recognises best practices in policy, governance, economics and management.

Editor-in-chief and award committee chairman Christopher Jeffery said in a press statement: "Singapore's central bank stands out for its pioneering fintech efforts combined with its consistency of performance in monetary policy, financial stability and supervision.

"The MAS has proven itself to be a well-structured and agile institution capable of introducing joined-up rule-making while embracing technological change, all the while seeking to maintain a focus on prudent oversight of financial institutions - for which it has a strong track record."

The journal noted that MAS has displayed an enviable track record for monetary and financial stability, implements coherent financial system oversight as a "super-regulator", and has emerged as a pioneer in creating a framework to facilitate next-generation technological and financial innovation.

The Straits Times

Taiwan

Taiwan Intent on Improving Anti-Money Laundering Score

Taiwan is hoping to earn an improved score when an evaluation team from the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG) returns for a four-day follow-up onsite review in March, according to a Ministry of Justice official.

Deputy Justice Minister Chen Ming-tang said that when the team returns it will be an opportunity for Taiwan to improve its preliminary results from a mutual evaluation by the APG during a third round of a peer review conducted from Nov. 5 to 16, 2018.

The APG uses a "mutual evaluation," or peer review, to assess the degree to which its members comply with international standards in combating money laundering and terrorist financing.

A bad score can hurt the reputation of a country's financial sector and put it at a major disadvantage in engaging in international finance.

The third round peer review has four possible outcomes -- "regular follow-up," "enhanced follow-up," "transitional follow-up list" and "non-cooperation" -- with "regular follow-up" the best, said Chen, who also heads the Executive Yuan's Anti-Money Laundering Office (AMLO).

Focus Taiwan

Thailand

Thailand to Buy \$318 mln Worth of New Shares in Bank Merger - Finance Minister

Thailand will buy 10 billion baht (\$317.97 million) worth of newly issued shares in the merger between TMB Bank and Thanachart bank, a senior official said on March 7.

The government is investing because the new bank would be more efficient, Finance Minister Apisak Tantiworawong told reporters.

TMB has signed a \$4 billion merger agreement with Thanachart Bank where TMB would offer new shares worth 40 billion to 45 billion baht to its shareholders and 50 billion to 55 billion to Thanachart shareholders, Thanachart Capital and Canada's Bank of Nova Scotia.

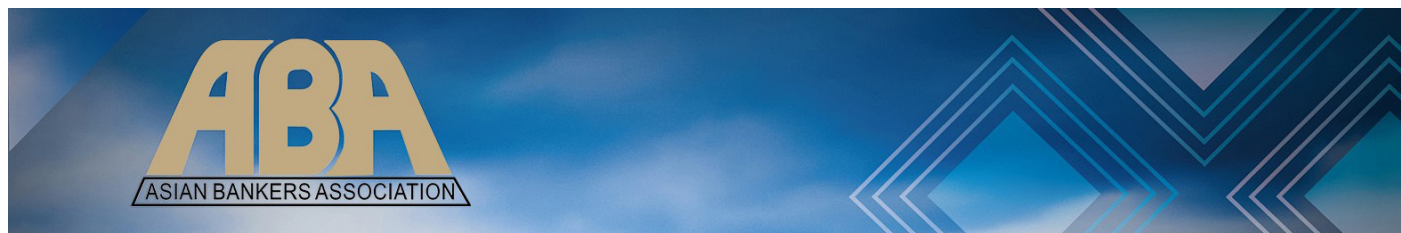
The combined bank would have assets of 1.9 trillion baht and 10 million retail customers.

The Thai government currently owns 25.92 percent in TMB and Dutch banking group ING holds 25 percent.

The Bank of Nova Scotia currently holds 49 percent of Thanachart bank, and Thanachart Capital holds 51 percent.

ING and Thanachart Capital will hold at least a 20 percent stake in the new entity and the Bank of Nova Scotia is expected to hold a significantly smaller stake. (\$1 = 31.4500 baht)

Reuters



Banking and Finance Newsbriefs

Vietnam

Vietnam Banks' Profitability Improves

Vietnamese banks are forecast to gain in profitability this year, but raising capital will be a key focus for banks to meet the State Bank of Vietnam's strict Basel II requirements.

According to a report released on February 25 by ratings agency Moody's Investors Service, Moody's-rated banks in Vietnam have shown higher profitability through wider net interest spreads and lower credit costs, which led in turn to improvements in asset quality because the banks utilised the profit growth to write off remaining legacy problem loans.

The report showed the banks achieved a higher aggregate return on assets for a second year running, registering a rise of 1.1 per cent in 2018 from 0.9 per cent in 2017.

Aggregate net income for the banks also rose 35 per cent to VND 70 trillion (US\$3 billion) last year from the previous year, despite a moderation of credit growth.

"For 2019, Vietnamese banks that Moody's rates will achieve a further improvement in profitability, again because of wider net interest spreads and lower credit costs," said Rebaca Tan, a Moody's analyst.

Vietnam News

Publications

The Future of Work: Regional Perspectives

This study considers how technology is likely to change labor markets in Africa; Developing Asia; Emerging Europe, Central Asia, and the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean; and Latin American and the Caribbean in the coming years.

Recent technological innovation in fields such as robotics, automation, and artificial intelligence have reduced the number of workers required in a range of sectors, while lowering costs and increasing reliability. This trend has led policy makers, academics, chief executive officers, and entrepreneurs to ask what types of jobs will be most affected, what new skillsets will be needed for the jobs of tomorrow, and how governments can ease the transition.

This study identifies concrete policy actions countries in these regions could take to face up to the challenges and seize the opportunities presented by emergent technology. It is a copublication between African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and Inter-American Development Bank.



The Future of Work
Regional Perspectives

Contact for details: ADB Publishing

Website: <https://www.adb.org/publications>

Publications

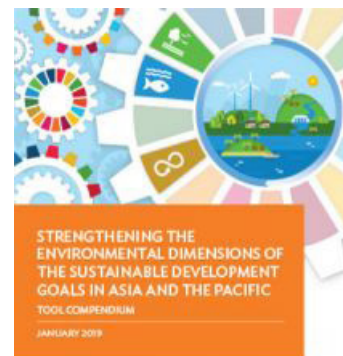
Strengthening the Environmental Dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: Tool Compendium

ADB, in collaboration with UN Environment, prepared this tool compendium to help developing countries implement the environmental dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals.

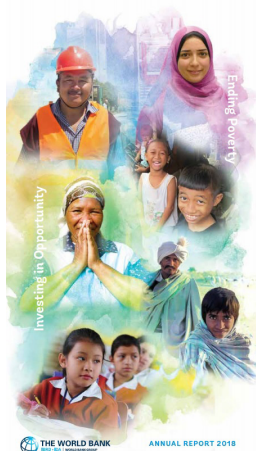
The tools presented here can help policy makers gain a better understanding of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) interlinkages, establish horizontal and vertical policy coherence, and select appropriate guidelines, indicators, and institutional arrangements for effective integration into national policies, plans, and programs. This publication reflects the high-level commitment of ADB and UN Environment to support efforts to accelerate progress in implementing the environmental dimensions of the SDGs.

Contact for details: ADB Publishing

Website: <https://www.adb.org/publications>



World Bank Annual Report



This Annual Report, which covers the period from July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018, has been prepared by the Executive Directors of both the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA)—collectively known as the World Bank—in

accordance with the respective bylaws of the two institutions. Annual Reports for the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) are published separately. Throughout the report, the term World Bank and the abbreviated Bank refer only to IBRD and IDA; the term World Bank Group and the abbreviated Bank Group refer to the collective work of IBRD, IDA, IFC, and MIGA. All dollar amounts used in this Annual Report are current U.S. dollars unless otherwise specified.

Funds allocated to multiregional projects are accounted for at the country level in tables and text. Fiscal year commitments and disbursements data is in accordance with the audited figures reported in the IBRD and IDA Financial Statements and Management's Discussion and Analysis documents for fiscal 2018. As a result of rounding, numbers in tables may not add to totals and percentages in figures may not add to 100.

Contact for details: World Bank Publication

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/about/annual-report>

Published by the Secretariat, Asian Bankers Association

Ernest Lin, Secretary Treasurer; Amador R. Honrado, Jr., Editor, Jacqueline Uy, Associate Editor

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