<u>Class : Difference dimension of doing business in Vietnam</u>

The narrator for this class os from Super Gas in Vietnam which is the subordinary of Siam Gas Group. He mainly talked about the culture differences between North and South Vietnam, and why or why not we should invest in Vietnam.

The cultures between North Vietnam and South Vietnam have many differences. But before talking about the difference, narrator said that we should understand how Vietnam separate their region. Vietnam classified their regions differently from Thailand. Vietnam has North central or South central while Thailand do not have/called like Vietnam. In each regions, they will have their own culture, for example, the pronunciation of the same word are different in each region. Food and Belief also different ae well. We will focus only North of Vietnam from number 27 down to the eat of the South Vietnam, (which did not be colonized as the South). For instead, Culture about dinner, North people prefer to cook by yourself and also prefer animal that still alive while South Vietnamese love to have dinner outside the country. So, most of food investments flew to South of Vietnam such as to Ho Chi Minh city.

There are many reasons for investing in Vietnam such as low minimum wage, high proportion of working age, high population or big domestic market, high GDP growth and stable inflation rate. In the other hand, Vietnam also has many weakness such as law in Vietnam is not clear so it can confuse those investors. Standard of living of Vietnamese still low so company cannot give credit to Vietnamese customers. Education system also be a big problem in Vietnam especially college level. Many students with bachelor degree still do not have enough knowledge, for example, some marketing students still don't know 4Ps. There is a lot of speculation and price war happen in Vietnam and also there are some hiding tax and fee that could be very high and hard to prepare. These are problems that investors may face if they invest in Vietnam.

This lecture is quite interesting since the information that narrator told us are like inside information that rarely find from news or textbook such as the culture difference especially the different culture between North of Vietnam and South of Vietnam which is my most favorite part of the lecture. However, there is a point that is different from previous lecture. One of the lecturer of this course said that the law of Vietnam is clear while this lecturer said it is not but it could because the thing that clear and stable is the Vietnam developing plan not the law. This lecture also made me feel that Vietnam is very open to foreign direct investment. I think that it might be because Vietnam still need some of knowledge and technologies from other countries.

Essay : Bangkok Fintech Fair 2019 and Visiting ADB

In the morning we went to Bangkok Fintech 2019 at Bank of Thailand. The topic for morning section is ASEAN Payment Connectivity. There are many institutions that cooperate together which are Banking sector and non-banking sector such as Technology companies, Telecommunication company and Regulators.

First narrator was from Krungsri bank. He talk about cross-border money transfering project that Krungsri had started in Laos and this cross-border payment will use QR code which is quite popular nowadays. Second speaker was from Singtel Group which is a telecommunication company from Singapore. Singtel tries to provide a convenient payment between customers and merchants by allowing customers to use mobile wallets in both domestic and abroad. This payment will be done via VIA application which can be used in Asia, Australia and Africa. Next speaker was a technological expert talking about the key drivers of change in nowadays payment. There are four main keys which are ultra low-cost payment, Global Interoperability, regional and domestic network integration and ,Security and Cyber-resilience (low risk).

Next is a speaker from EVEREX, talking about the stablecoin settlement platform. These cryptocurrencies are issued in blockchain. EVEREX tries to solve the problem of illegal cross-border money transfer. The last speaker is an ragulator from Cambodia, talking about improving the cross-border payment. Many Cambodian come to Thailand for tourism and medical services. Moreover, from the lecture that narrator is a Cambodian, she said that there are more number of Cambodian visiting Thailand than Thai visiting Cambodia. The option of QR-code payment model that they used is Sponsoring Bank Model. There are 3 challenges which are standardized QR-code issue, financial literacy in Cambodia and lacking of robust AML/CFT.

I quite agree with the regulator from Cambodia that the financial literacy is a big problem that happen not only in Cambodia but also in Thailand as well. After listening, I had a chance to walk around the fair and I found that smartphone is the main tool the financial technology. This means that I people do not have smart phone, they will not be able to access these technology and this could be a problem. However, in my perspective, I think that there are many brand that launch a cheap smartphone for those lower income such as Honor from Huawei or Xiaomi. This can help poor people or lack of financial literacy to access banking technology.

In the afternoon, we went to Asian Development Bank (ADB). ADB shareholders are from 68 countries. Thailand is also one of the ADB's sharehloders. There are three main products provided by ADB: Debt (bond and loan), Equity (investing directly to private firm and IPO for a company) and Guarantee (partial guarantee and political risk guarantee). The main customer are shareholders and private enterprises of developing countries. Sources of fund are members' contributions, retained earning from lending operations, loan repayments, special funds bond issuance. The two main sector that ADB lending are Power (energy) and Transportation. One thing that interesting is that ADB also provide a free data that is useful for as since sometime many data/information of some countries is hard to find. With the ADB website, it can facilitate my research.