SOUTH KOREA







GROWING FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

outh Korea has seen impressive economic growth in the last 65 years. Widely regarded as one of Asia's powerhouses, the country boasts of a technologically advanced industrial sector. This transition, however, did not happen overnight. South Korea realized early that economic growth would flourish further through trade. By building strong ties abroad, the country achieved the stability and prosperity that it still enjoys today.

"Korea lacks natural resources. In the 1950s, we were also recovering from a war. But we achieved economic success because of trade. We processed raw materials and technology from other countries, manufactured them. and then exported to overseas markets. That was how we survived," said Korea International Trade Association (KITA) CEO and former Minister of Trade, Industry, and Energy Kim Young-

When growth picked up, Korea did not become complacent.

Busan-Jinhae Free Economic Zone (BJFEZ) Commissioner Jin Yanghyun recalled: "In the 1990s, Korea focused on attracting foreign investment. The country's goal was to acquire technologies from foreign experts, which would later help in building on expertise across several advanced industries."

BJFEZ attracts investment into the southeast part of Korea, including the country's so-called Industrial Belt, and is



Korea International Trade Association (KITA) CEO and former Minister of Trade, Industry, and Energy Kim Young-ju

regarded as one of the best free economic zones (FEZs) in Asia. South Korea has developed seven other FEZs to spur growth, among them Saemangeum-Gunsan FEZ, overseen by the Saemangeum Development and Investment Agency.

"There are currently five multinationals that have invested here and we have ongoing infrastructure projects to attract more investors. Access to China and highly-skilled, world-class Korean workers are some key advantages of

Saemangeum," Administrator and Vice Minister Lee Cheol-woo said.

So, investors continue to look to South Korea, including American companies.

AMCHAM Korea CEO James Kim said: "U.S. companies are here because they know it's a good market. There's a lot of innovation here, so it's a great testing ground for companies. No one is stopping investments here."

Meanwhile, homegrown SMEs have become more aggressive abroad following the global success of giants such as Samsung, Hyundai, and LG.

"South Korea is a gateway for international business, having established free trade agreements with several countries," said Federation of Korean Industries Vice Chairman Kwon Tae-shin. The country currently has 15 FTAs with 52 countries.

"Korea is a big believer in free trade. Our FTAs encompass the United States, EU, ASEAN and China. The

land area and the GDP covered by our FTA network comprises 75 percent of the world. We value these relationships and will continue to build on them," Kwon said.

Apart from a supportive government, Korean conglomerates and SMEs also have access to several trade promotion associations, which provide domestic and overseas assistance for its members.

KITA, which has 70,000 members and 15 overseas branches, as well as AMCHAM Korea help companies by providing information on attractive foreign markets and connecting them with potential partners worldwide.

For its part, AM-CHAM Korea is proud of its contribution to South Korea's economic growth.

"Our main priority is to help U.S. companies here in Korea. But of course, helping Korean companies invest in the U.S. also creates jobs for Americans. So, we are a big proponent of that," Kim said.

CMS Edu Transforming attitudes and methods

As South Korea embarks on the "Fourth Industrial Revolution," businesses have had to keep pace with rapid advancements around them in order for them to thrive and stay relevant. As countries identify which industries to support amid this huge shift, a South Korean educator is calling on parents and society to change its approach to nurturing a new generation of leaders.

Inspired to enhance creative thinking in children, CEO Lee Chung Koog opened his first learning center in Seoul in 1997. Twenty-one years and more than 30,000 South Korean students later, CMS Edu now has 65 centers spread across South Korea. It has also launched its franchising business in China, Thailand, Vietnam and the United States.

That vision to grow has not waned. CMS Edu successfully launched its IPO in 2016 and seeks new partnerships with education institutions around the world.

"One of my main goals for our global business is to create a network wherein countries can fully grasp our unique methodology. More importantly though, we are looking for partners who won't think of a partnership only in terms of sales and business, but who want to enforce a way of learning that will truly benefit the future's leaders and decision makers," said Lee.

Industry 4.0: Just another change

For Lee, this shift in thinking caused by so-called Industry 4.0 is similar to past challenges posed by drastic changes in business and production. Today, leaders of governments and industry again face the daunting task of reconditioning their economies and companies to ensure their longterm sustainability.



Students of CMS Edu are encouraged to have hands-on exercises as part of its learning experience.

"Most people have a nonchalant attitude or simplistic concept of what the Fourth Industrial Revolution really is. That shouldn't be the case when dealing with it," Lee

Having visited many countries for his business, Lee has seen that the education sector worldwide has not adapted accordingly. Schools have not formulated a suitable method of teaching that prepares their students for Industry 4.0.

"Some universities and economies have focused on certain fields, like ICT and biotechnology, and other highly advanced fields. In Korea, it's

all about those fields now," Lee explained.

"But, the problem with that is educators only supply students with information and knowledge on those fields without recognizing that those fields may not address what we will need in facing future problems," he added.

If that attitude continues, Lee fears that a new crisis may happen when another industrial revolution arises. So, CMS Education prepares its students for whatever changes may come in the future.

"We need to teach students how to think, how to use knowledge, and how to go

beyond the information being fed to them. We want our next leaders to be able to think better, or else nations around the world will find it impossible to catch up with constant changes everywhere," he said.

Convergence education explained

To help its students gain a competitive edge over their peers, CMS Edu adopts what it calls "fusion education," which involves merging various fields of knowledge and allowing those students to come up with solutions to problems from multiple resources.

"Here in CMS Edu, we are

continuously developing new contents for our students, so that come the next paradigm shift, instead of scrambling to enhance their skill set, they can come up with their own jobs. They can rise above the current system and come up with the new one," Lee said.

The way the world works right now, education is just a subsection among different fields that run a country. But that's not how it's supposed to work," added Lee who believes that education must be an overarching field that allows all people to discuss the economy, technology, or any other fields substantially.

According to CMS Edu, if students understand the bigger picture and comprehend how the world works with convergent and fusion knowledge of diverse areas, it will be easier for them to identify which information is ultimately relevant. Then, they may use this to their advantage.

"In Korea, CMS Edu is the pioneer in convergence education. It will be our transformative tool in thriving and becoming more innovative in this world," he said.

The age-old foundation of instruction

To train its students, CMS Edu does not follow trends in teaching style or method. Instead, it developed an enduring methodology that allows students to learn and adapt to whatever comes their way.

Lee explained that the institute's name adheres to its philosophy. CMS or Creative Maieutic School reflects its adherence to the Socratic method of teaching, which teaches students how to think independently, communicate effectively and reach a consensus.

Upon proposing a topic to discuss, teachers first let students make observations freely and start to develop curiosity about the topic. This helps them retain details better. Later on, to improve their grasp of concepts, students are put into groups so that they can deliberate the given



CMS Edu CEO Lee Chung Koog

issue. Teachers will also pose convergent questions and allow students to examine and exchange their views, which improves communication skills and builds confidence in their own thinking. At the end, students must reach a consensus that will be conveyed to the teacher.

"While students initially think alone, their arguments become stronger and more grounded with input from the rest of the group. They learn the value of independent thinking, as well as team work and harmony," Lee said.

"At the same time, through divergent questioning, the students find their own direction and start to consistently think for themselves," he added.

Working together globally

Having established a firm foothold in Korea, CMS Edu has become more aggressive in its global activities. In April, it opened a new center in Vietnam. To continue with its rapid growth, CMS Edu is looking for new partners.

"Because education is a global need, we do not have a checklist or particular order of countries that we will target. To us, what is more important is to meet partners who are ready to accept this new method of teaching," Lee said.

"There are so many teaching trends right now that are part of larger schemes, but institutions nowadays mostly take out one program and use only that for the students. As

Global companies can attack Korea in various ways by coming up with new industries, technologies, and strategies.

But Korea will continue to excel if it knows how to prepare for anything by learning how to think, how to use knowledge and look for new ways to thrive.

"

the whole process or method was not employed, the whole procedure becomes ineffective, and in the long run it won't bring forth the fruits aimed for in the beginning," he also said.

CMS Edu wants partners who share the same vision of creative and innovative education and raise a new generation of innovative and creative leaders.

"Education will always be relevant. It has always been important. It continues to play a key role in the development of humankind. As we transform to become a more advanced society, education will become even more essential," he said.

Firm commitment to Koreans

While all sectors find common ground for collaboration, CMS Edu remains committed

to transforming Korea and its next generation of leaders.

"We are currently going through the 4th Industrial Revolution, and no matter how much we prepare for it concretely, it will be hard to predict what will happen beyond that – and the things we will need to survive will change," Lee points out.

"Korea is thriving currently but we don't know what the future holds. Global companies can attack Korea in various ways by coming up with new industries, technologies, and strategies. But Korea will continue to excel if it knows how to prepare for anything by learning how to think, how to use knowledge and look for new ways to thrive," Lee said.

"Educators have to always look forward and be one step ahead. And that's what we are here for," he added.

http://cmsedu.co.kr



Young Korean children learn early on about teamwork and consensus.

Hanchang: early adapter, big winner

as a leading global power has rested primarily on its *chaebols*, or large industrial conglomerates, and its hightech giants. However, its SMEs are emerging from the shadows and contributing more to Asia's fourth-largest economy.

Hanchang, based in Busan, has been able to adjust quickly to changes in the market, both at home and abroad. Today, the holding company is staking its future on finding new growth opportunities in the market.

While growing on the back of its gaseous fire extinguisher system manufacturing, in the last three years Hanchang has restructured and created three new segments: construction in 2015, seafood in 2016, and just last year, entertainment. The

outh Korea's reputation move involves some risk but also promises huge returns.

"We import live seafood from our company in Vladivostok, Russia. In Korea, there is a frenzy over the entertainment business. These businesses are risky but have great potential. If we successfully carry out our investment plan, Hanchang will grow even faster," said CEO Choi Seung-hwan.

Hanchang is now formulating a future business strategy for North Korea. Last August, it launched a cruise ferry line business with routes plying the East Sea, stopping at Russian and Japanese ports. The first such company with cruise level ships, Hanchang looks forward to dropping anchor at a North Korean port in the near future.

"The current positive atmo-



Expanding beyond its original activity, Hanchang has ventured into three new businesses: property development, hotel management and aquatic products.

sphere between North and South Korea is still building and economic relations are expected to be restored. If we could finally open a port in North Korea with our cruise ferry line, we won't just send passengers but also drop cargo. We are opening a new chapter with economic cooperation between the two Koreas. It will also help North Korea return to the international trade market. We are highly anticipating taking a crucial role in the process," he

Amid Hanchang's rapid expansion, Choi is also seeking partners: "Being listed on the Korea Stock Exchange for over 40 years, we are continually looking for investors. As sales grow fast, we need capital to finance our expansion."

Through expanding its territory into new business fields, Hanchang has been doubling their revenue. It may not take that long before the company joins the billion-dollar club.

www.hanchang.co.kr/en

Development enters the next phase

ith its transition from traditional to more advanced industries, South Korea wants to maintain its status as a leader in several industries namely fintech, biotechnology and electronics. Industry associations, together with the government, are increasing support to SMEs in these sectors by providing them with assistance on research, funding and partnerships.

With 65 years of experience, the Korea Financial Investment Association can attest to the growth of finance and increasing role of IT in the industry. KOFIA Chairman Kwon Yong-won is optimistic about the further integration of the two.

"The Korean financial investment industry is techfriendly because of our strong IT infrastructure. The introduction of non-face-



KOFIA Chairman Kwon Yong-won

to-face identity verification, robo-advisor services and blockchain-based authentication system (Chain ID) are major examples of advanced technologies that have allowed us to effectively respond to the Fourth Industrial Revolution," Kwon said.

Meanwhile, Korea BIO, which was launched in 2008

through the integration of the bio, venture capital, and genetic engineering associations, is helping in the development of 300 Korean bio companies. In particular, it is working with the Ministry of Industry to run a long-term program for the creation of bio-industry ecosystems. In 2016, together they raised a \$34.1 million fund to support Korea's initial bio-ventures. In addition, they regularly hold training and investment seminars for early venture companies.

The Korea Electronics Association is another organization at the forefront of innovation. KEA seeks investments for new technologies in electronics and works closely with universities to drive research in areas, such as AI and IOT.

"Conversations are getting important in terms of Al and IOT. With that, we are work-

ing closely with Korea's top players, such as Samsung and LG, as well as with SMEs and even vehicle and telecommunication companies to develop technologies for our industry," KEA Vice-Chairman Nam In-seok says.

For its part, the Korea Display Industry Association is working with MOTIE on a large R&D project to develop the display industry's future technology, particularly for the benefit of SMEs developing and testing needs.

"Tech development and advancement is crucial for the economy's survival and growth," KDIA Vice-Chairman Seo Kwang-hyun

"While home-grown giants such as Samsung and LG will continue to lead the global industry, we are here to make sure that a thriving Korea includes its smaller players," Seo adds.

A growing legal field

raditionally, the "Big Five" Korean law firms dominated the legal landscape. In 2012, after the government signed free trade agreements with the United States and the European Union, smaller, and even foreign, law firms found a place in the market, with the number of lawyers significantly increasing and international firms setting up shop.

But to survive, firms had to identify their strengths.

KL Partners chose to specialize in cross-border litigation and international arbitration. Coming from one of Korea's "Big Five", Managing Partner Kim Beom-su recalled: "We saw the need for experts in specific practice areas and thus focused only on international dispute resolution and corporate M&A."

Seoul's push to be the next hub for international dispute resolution among Northeast Asian countries puts the firm in a strong position.

For Kim, recent events in Korea proved its capabilities to be such: "Transparency is one of Korea's main strengths. How Koreans react to wrongdoings only shows how Koreans value justice and how the country is capable of indicting and litigating even those who are in power."

Coming from another "Big Five" firm, Tek & Law founder Ted Koo went on with opening his own law firm in 2012 and now sits at the forefront of Korean innovation.



Kim & Chang is Korea's largest and most specialized law firm with a premier global practice. Based in Seoul, it is a full service law firm with over 1,500 dedicated professionals, advising the world's leading companies and financial institutions.

We are highly experienced protection, data biomed, and fintech," Koo explained.

What sets Tek & Law apart is its focus on and expertise in blockchain and cryptocurrencies.

"Many are very interested in the new wave, but they aren't quite sure what to expect in terms of government policies and regulations. We have found a niche area here in providing consulting services on this exciting but complex technology," Koo said.

"We are the best in this area, and we have a strong potential to help foreign clients navigate their way through Korea," he added.

Meanwhile, traditionally strong firms aren't letting their quard down.

One of Korea's original "Big Five," Bae, Kim & Lee (BKL) has the largest geographical footprint among "Tek is for technology. all Korean law firms, with

seven locations abroad. Its international bases cover Shanghai, Beijing, Hong Kong, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh, Yangon and Dubai.

In its effort to assist companies through the Fourth Industrial Revolution, it also recently opened an office in Pangyo, Seongnam City, Korea's so-called Silicon Valley.

strong foundalts tion domestically helped

power its success in international business.

Managing Partner Sungjin Kim said: "Our offices abroad are all clientled. We moved with our clients and thus expected more outward work from Korea "

At the same time, BKL has seen more inbound work coming in, which now accounts for 70 percent of its business. The

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



firm experienced 40 percent growth between 2014 and 2017.

Korea's largest law firm, Kim & Chang, also sees the value in having offices abroad. Having set up its first overseas office in Hong Kong, the firm has recently opened its new office in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

"We find that an international office can be a great source of servicing existing clients more effectively while also enabling us to reach new and interesting work and clients," Senior Partner Kye Sung Chung said.

As Korean companies look to find new growth opportunities through overseas M&As and investments, it will also expand into emerging markets, Asia and Russia.



Bae, Kim & Lee (BKL) Managing Partner Sungjin Kim

Korea's attractiveness as an investment destination, it expects an increase in inbound work too.

"Korea is the only country that has signed FTAs with the world's three largest economies - the U.S., the EU, and China, as well as the ASEAN countries. particularly in Southeast For many multinational companies, Korea is a stra-At the same time, given tegic market to enter into

other key markets, such as China," Chung said.

Korean firms' dedication to client satisfaction and commitment to enhanced quality have allowed them to thrive and drive the economy along with them.

Named Managing Partner of the Year in 2017 by Asian Legal Business, Kim Jae-hoon heads Lee & Ko. another of Korea's "Bia Five".

"When I entered the firm, we had four practice groups," Kim recalled. Rising through the ranks, he saw the firm evolve and adapt.

With over 35 practice groups, Lee & Ko has become a one-stop shop for its clients.

It is recognized by international legal publications as top for all of its major practice areas.

"Because we have several practice areas, we get



Lee & Ko Managing Partner Kim Jae-hoon

to form teams with a vast range of expertise, who can service our clients and guide them through different matters," he said.

Lee & Ko's story of growth mirrors that of Korea. "Our country went through a lot, and this allowed us as a nation to be equipped with the skills to face any challenge head on," he added.



KOREA'S PREMIER LAW FIRM KIM & CHANG

Kim & Chang is leading the way in Asia and around the world, with Korea's largest and most diverse team of legal professionals and industry experts.

Tek & Law: the proactive advisers

s data traverse multiple borders each day, the need to protect important personal information from potential breaches and cybercrimes has become a fundamental need. With the emergence of blockchain technology, the world is negotiating a new field of business opportunities, while facing unfamiliar vulnerabilities.

Against this backdrop, a Seoul-based law firm, Tek & Law, has positioned itself as leading experts in this challenging landscape. Its main clients include blockchain, biomedical, and financial technology companies that have built businesses successfully thanks to the firm's specialized expertise in those fields.

"We also provide services to Chinese investors who want to invest in Korea and to Korean companies that are making inroads into the broader Asian market. As regulations that apply to

TEK&

these areas have yet to be concretely put into place and thus, are interpreted differently many times, a lot of risks are being generated. Tek & Law's significant competitive edge lies in our ability to cater to the specific needs of our clients," Managing Partner Ted Koo said.

With the surge of cryptocurrencies and initial coin offerings (ICOs) around the world, Tek & Law is again able to showcase its expertise in diagnosing government regulations and policies and provide invaluable advice to its clients.

http://teknlaw.com

Korean law firms geared for "5G" economy

mid fast-shifting economic and political winds in Korea, leading law firms like Bae, Kim & Lee LLC are taking dynamic strides to adapt. And these successful strategies are exemplified by BKL's 500 lawyers.

Outward bound: As Korean industry pivots to Southeast Asia and other regions for manufacturing and new markets, BKL opened offices in Dubai, Hong Kong and Vietnam in 2015 and in Myanmar in 2016, on top of long-established offices in Beijing and Shanghai.

Rapid specialization: BKL has been quick to master and gear up for newer, expanding areas of regulation in Korea, such as fintech, data privacy, anti-corruption, environmental and biotechnology.

When Kakao Bank launched

as Korea's first internet-only bank in 2017, BKL led the way with its experts in areas like data security and financial regulation. With business-specific teams ranging from ecommerce to renewable energy, BKL has seen its work swell by 30 percent since 2014.

Targeting innovation: Alert to looming changes, BKL had already formed a blockchain regulation team long before the recent cryptocurrency surge.

In 2018, the firm branched into the Pangyo "techno-valley" outside Seoul to serve the burgeoning cluster of hightech leaders and startups. With each passing month, legal advisors in Korea face a "brave new world." Firms like BKL are rising to the challenge.

www.bkl.co.kr



As a client, you need answers, but above all you need next steps. In this era of rapid evolution, hundreds of multinationals turn to Bae, Kim & Lee LLC.

BKL offers cutting-edge legal services in Korea. Top-tier practice groups - in M&A, finance, tax, competition, technology, government policy, and many more areas-deliver incisive, forward-looking advice and advocacy.

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Leading the way in legal services

ultinational corporations rely on legal advisors who offer precise advice framed both by global perspectives and deep local market knowledge. Since its founding in 1977, Lee & Ko has become the go-to law firm in Korea for clients seeking innovative and business-focused legal solutions to navigate the complex, crossborder issues.

Starting with four practice groups, Lee & Ko has since expanded its specialization to more than 35 practice areas. And over its 40-year history, the full-service law firm has orchestrated some of the groundbreaking resolutions to many transactions, disputes, and advisory engagements involving businesses in Korea and elsewhere in the world.

In recognition of the firm's

industry-leading capabilities and commitment to excellent service, Lee & Ko has consistently topped the rankings of various renowned law firm research and evaluation groups in all practice areas, such as corporate law, M&A, banking and finance, capital markets, dispute resolution, intellectual property, tax, antitrust and competition, and employment

Market commentators attribute Lee & Ko's continued success in delivering client satisfaction to the comprehensive expertise of the firm's lawyers and the seamless collaboration among its specialized practice groups.

Managing Partner Kim Jae-hoon agrees: "Close coordination among our teams is crucial to delivering the best results for our clients."



With its people focused on different, highly specialized fields, Lee & Ko leverages each of the teams' expertise and creates a task force for each of its cases. This allows the firm to approach matters from multiple angles and find the best solution.

With that, the firm has positioned itself as a one-stop service that can handle any deal, project or case in a manner that is both cost effective and practical.

While South Korea remains a major player in the international stage, Lee & Ko is able to assist any foreign corporation that wants to enter the market, as well as South Korean company seeking to expand outside the country.

Currently, most of its inbound cases come from the United States, Europe and Japan, while Vietnam grabs the most interest for most outbound South Korean companies

"As Korea and the world transitions into more advanced technologies and industries, we are ready to further lead in our industry and help our clients, regardless of their needs," Kim said.

www.leeko.com

The next wave of innovators

hile *chaebols* still play a dominant role in South Korea's economy, they now share the spotlight with small and medium-sized enterprises as important contributors to growth. An established innovator and early adaptor of new technology, South Korea sees these SMEs, along with the government and the academe, moving quickly as the country enters the so-called 4th Industrial Revolution.

A testament to creativity and innovation found widely in South Korea, JENAX, founded in Busan in 1991, recently launched J.Flex, a safety-tested, flexible lithium-powered rechargeable battery that can be bent in any direction.

J.Flex has found its way

into various applications in healthcare, medical, fashion, military and Internet of Things. Its versatility has produced innovative products in the wearables, printed electronics and medical devices sectors.

"This is a revolutionary battery in the industry," says **Strategic Manager EJ Shin**, who unveiled J.Flex in the CES trade show in Las Vegas in 2015 and in other trade shows in the United States and the EU.

"Our goal for the next two to three years is to further expand our presence in the EU and the U.S. We want to contribute to the next phase of technology in those markets," she adds.

Meanwhile, holding company Hanchang has built a stable business in



JENAX Strategic Manager EJ Shin addreses participants of MEDICA, the world's largest healthcare trade show.

manufacturing and hotel management since 1967, growing consistently because of its ability to adapt quickly to changing market conditions.

Over the past decade, the Busan-based company has diversified its activities to include property development, construction, fishing, entertainment and cruise line operation. And having entered the Russian and North Korean markets, the company is also seeking new investors and businesses to secure its long-term future.

Because of its decision to enter businesses with less competition, Hanchang has experienced much success so far. CEO Choi Seunghwang stresses that while the strategy may be "filled with risk, it also is filled with great expectations."

"We want to enter the billion-dollar sales club," Choi says. "It took us many years to reach 100 million dollars in sales. We had to adapt and evolve many times."

While all these twists and turns are normal for business, Choi said: "Now we are making the right moves and taking the right steps towards the right direction to

get to our goal faster."

At the root of South Korea's transformation to being an industrial power-house are academic institutions such as **CMS Edu**, which hopes to help nurture South Korea's future leaders.

Since opening its first center in 1997, CMS Edu has expanded its services to include consultation and management of learning centers, publication of textbooks and teaching materials, organization of school and afterschool programs, as well as online learning programs.

CMS Edu did away with the traditional mindset and encourages its students to think for themselves while adopting a wider perspective that looks further into the future.

"We produce students who are creative and capable of creating their own jobs," CEO Lee Chung Koog explains.

The group's learning centers have been franchised and adopted in China, Thailand and Vietnam. Now, it eyes further global expansion.

"We want partners who care about each student's future and who share the same philosophy," Lee says.

