



CACCI President invites members to 30th Conference and celebrate 50th CACCI Anniversary

CACCI President Mr. Jemal Inaishvili is inviting all members to Taipei for the 30th annual CACCI Conference and to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Confederation.

"It is my great honor to invite you to the 30th CACCI Conference scheduled to take place on November 23-25, 2016 in Taipei, Taiwan.

Our gathering this year is doubly significant as it coincides with the 50th Anniversary of our Confederation. As many of you know, CACCI was established in 1966 as a platform for businessmen in the region to "work toward forging economic ties and cooperation among Asian countries, with the view to accelerating their economic development and raising the living standards of their people." Over the 50 years that have passed since its founding, CACCI has emerged as one of the biggest and most influential regional business organizations in Asia-Pacific. And over that same period, Asia has increasingly become a dominant force in the global economy and is today considered the world's most dynamic region.

I therefore hope you would join us in Taipei for our Conference in November this year, not only to help us celebrate 50 years of partnership among our members, but also to exchange views on how Asia can play a much bigger role in the world economy, and what we – as a regional organization – can do to help the region achieve this objective.



30th CACCI Conference

The Rise of Asia: Taking a Bigger Role in the Global Economy
November 23-25, 2016
Taipei Marriott Hotel, Taiwan

www.2016caccl.biz

I would like to count on your continued strong support in our efforts to further build up the foundation that CACCI has set in place over the past 50 years to achieve greater economic interaction and the strengthening of ties between business communities in our member countries.

I look forward to seeing you in Taipei for a fruitful, meaningful, and productive 30th CACCI Conference and 50th Anniversary."

CACCI Conference Update:

Presentation of Illustrious Service Award to Past CACCI Presidents

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Confederation, CACCI will be presenting the "Illustrious Service Award" to past CACCI Presidents. This will be given in recognition of the past presidents' contribution to CACCI during their incumbency, for their unwavering commitment to its objective of bringing Asian businessmen together, and their achievements in promoting regional cooperation and economic development.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- CIECA, CNAIC gear up to host upcoming CACCI Conference
- Get to know the nominees for this year's CACCI Awards
- FICCI invites CACCI members to the First BRICS Trade Fair in New Delhi
- TOBB's declaration on coup attempt in Turkey
- VCCI and Emirates Vietnam discuss cooperation opportunities
- PCCI seeks greater Asian market access for local firms
- Micro scale businessmen in Sri Lanka receive loans under the Citi - CCC Rural Economic Empowerment Program
- Regular Features

CIECA, CNAIC gear up to host upcoming CACCI Conference

The Chinese International Economic Cooperation Association (CIECA) and Chinese National Association of Industry and Commerce (CNAIC), with major sponsor CTBC Financial Holding Co., are gearing up to host the upcoming CACCI Conference in Taipei in November.

CIECA Chairman Mr. CY Wang and CNAIC Chairman Mr. Lin Por-Fong are cordially inviting members to join them in this milestone event.

“We are delighted to invite you to join us in celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CACCI) during the 30th CACCI Conference to be held on November 23-25 this year in Taipei, Taiwan, the Republic of China.

“Both the Chinese International Economic Cooperation Association (CIECA) and the Chinese National Association of Industry and Commerce (CNAIC) share a common vision and mission with all the primary member chambers of CACCI: For the private sector to exert our influence in increasing trade, investment and tourism around the world and provide timely advice to national governments about proper measures that can promote economic growth.

“We had the distinct pleasure of hosting CACCI’s 40th Anniversary and 21st Conference in Taipei in 2006 and we are grateful for your continued confidence in us by once again choosing our two organizations as your



CY Wang

hosts in celebrating another important and significant milestone of CACCI. We will cooperate closely with the CACCI Secretariat in ensuring that our conference this year will be productive and meaningful and that your stay in Taipei will be both comfortable and memorable.

“Not all private sector organizations reach the half century mark. The reason that CACCI has claimed such honor is due to the foresight of its leaders in anticipating future trends; forestalling, evading or mitigating new risks and seizing fresh opportunities. At this year’s Conference, a meeting of the leaders of all CACCI Primary Members will be convened, primarily to review the accomplishments of the Confederation over the 50 years since its founding; re-visit its vision and mission as well



中華民國工商協進會
CHINESE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
INDUSTRY & COMMERCE, TAIWAN (CNAIC)



Lin Por-Fong

as its goals and objectives in light of the current conditions and recent developments in the regional and global market environment; and prepare a road-map of its future direction. Your participation in this event will help guarantee that CACCI remains at the forefront of the economic development of the Asia-Pacific region in the next half century.

“The American poet Ralph Waldo Emerson remarked: “An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man.” As a time-honored institution, CACCI is the lengthened shadow of all CACCI members who have dedicated their time and talents to ensure that regional economic prosperity continues and that our posterity will stand on our shoulders, further build up on our achievements, and carry forward our mission.

“Five decades ago, CACCI was officially inaugurated in Taipei, which eventually became home to its permanent secretariat. The forthcoming 50th Anniversary will be an auspicious occasion for family reunion of all CACCI members. We thank you for your commitment to CACCI over the years and look forward to welcoming you again this November in our home country.” ■



Get to know the nominees for this year's CACCI Awards

CACCI will be presenting 3 awards in this year's conference, namely: Women Entrepreneur Award, Local Chamber Award (Big and Small Categories), and Asia Pacific Young Entrepreneur Award. Below are the nominees for each award.

Women Entrepreneur Award

Bangladesh - **Ms. Selima Ahmad**, Vice Chairperson, Nitol Niloy Group of Industries

Malaysia - **Ms. Christina Tee Kim Chin**, CEO, Cape Group of Companies

Pakistan - **Ms. Naheed Masud**, Proprietor, Raza International; **Ms. Shabnam Zafar**, Executive Director, Elegance International; **Ms. Shireen Khan**, Designer and CEO, S S Designer's World; **Ms. Noshaba Shehzad Masud**, Shehzad Asia International; **Ms. Syeda Shabina Gillani**, CEO, M/S. GBI Traders; **Ms. Shabnam Asif**, Chief Executive/Owner, M/S. Raja Industries (PVT) Ltd.; **Mrs. Fitrat Ilyas Bilour**, Director, Bilour Industries (PVT) Ltd.

Iran - **Ms. Seyedeh Fatemeh Moghimi**, Managing Director, SADIDBAR Int. Trans. Co.; **Ms. Haide Shirzady Gilani**, Managing Director, Recycling and Composting Kermanshah Co.; **Mrs. Yalda Rahdar**, Member of the Directorate, IRAFA

Management and Industrial Group

Mongolia - **Mrs. Oyunchimeg Magvan**, CEO, Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry; **Ms. Gerelmaa Ulzii-Orshikh**; Founder and President, Landex Limited Liability Company; **Ms. Undarmaa Batbayar**, Founder, Bishrelt Group

Local Chamber Award

Big Chamber Category

1. The Chittagong Chamber of Commerce & Industry (Bangladesh)
2. Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry (Bangladesh)
3. Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Pakistan)
4. Davao City Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Philippines)
5. Corlu Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Turkey)

Small Chamber Category

1. Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Sukhbaatar Province (Mongolia)
2. UVS Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Mongolia)
3. Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Bahawalpur (Pakistan)
4. Jhang Chamber of Commerce & Industry (Pakistan)
5. Metro Naga Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Philippines)
6. Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry-Muntinlupa City

(Philippines)

7. Negros Oriental Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Philippines)

Asia Pacific Young Entrepreneur Award

Bangladesh

1. Mr. Tabarakul Tosaddek Hossain Khan, Proprietor, Tito Saw Mill and Munnu Filling Station; Chairman, Manikganj City Center, Munnu
2. Mr. Md Muntakim Asraf, Managing Director, Chandina Farmland & Cold Storage Ltd.

Mongolia

3. Ms. Khulan Davaadorj, Founder/CEO, Natural Essentials LLC

Iran

4. Mr. Masoud Jamali, Managing Director, Tanab Naghshe Jahan Sepahan
5. Mr. MohammadAmin Hajkazemian, Managing Director, Sahra Ruby Co-AHT, TPW Fine Foods Co.

Taiwan

6. Ms. Tina Y. Lo, Vice Chairman, Industrial Bank of Taiwan

Sri Lanka

7. Dr. Amila Ishan Kankanamge, CEO, E3X Global (Private) Limited
8. Ms. Rohanthi Wijewickrama, Founder/CEO Quebec Den (Pvt) Ltd.

Philippines

9. Mr. Jhondie "JD" Abenaza, Founder/CEO, Software Engineer, Zeenoh, Inc.
10. Mr. Frederick D. Chua, CEO, Magellan E-Support Services Inc.; President, MY3D Concepts Corp. ■



The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Academy is to hold its first Regulation and Compliance in Trade Finance Conference on October 26, 2016 in Singapore.

This high-level event will gather some of the trade finance industry's leading professionals to discuss regulatory trends - both in the regulatory capital and financial crime fields - which have had a major impact on the financing of trade in recent years.

ICC Academy to tackle crucial industry issues at upcoming conference

Leveraging the ICC Academy's position as the leading education provider for trade professionals, the conference will include practical sessions on how banks and corporates can best manage increasing regulatory compliance risks.

Daniel Kok, ICC Academy General Manager said: "Compliance in the finance sector is now more important than ever. The increasing burden of regulatory compliance means more challenging times for banks and corporates. That's why we are focused

on providing high-quality training for trade professionals on how to manage risks and ensure the maximum operational efficiency."

ICC Secretary General John Danilovich will open the first-of-its-kind event which will feature speakers drawn from industry, government and regulatory bodies. Participants will also be able to choose from two separate streams - capital adequacy or compliance - depending on their particular interests. *ICC News Release* ■

FICCI invites CACCI members to the First BRICS Trade Fair in New Delhi



The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) is inviting CACCI members to attend the First BRICS Trade Fair to be held on October 12-14, 2016 in Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

Being organized in the run up to the BRICS Political Summit, the BRICS Trade Fair is designed to be the largest platform for Indian companies to meet

and network with counterpart businesses from Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa. The BRICS Trade Fair was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a special initiative from India to foster business connects amongst companies from the five countries.

CEOs of companies and leaders of business associations from BIMSTEC countries - which include Bangladesh,

Bhutan, Myanmar, Thailand, Nepal and Sri Lanka - have also been invited to join the event.

Interested parties may contact Mr. Praveen Mittal, Additional Director, Trade Fairs Division at praveen.mittal@ficci.com. ■



On the night of July 15, Turkey repelled an attack aimed at the heart of its democracy and constitutional order.

One thing is now clear: Turkey will not accept government by anyone who does not derive its strength from the ballot box, and its legitimacy from the people. Turkey's 79 million citizens see no alternative to democracy in shaping their country's future.

Turkey's democratic institutions have proven themselves mature enough to resist a takeover by brute force. Those who targeted the political and economic gains of the last 93 years in our country have failed.

From this day on, our responsibility is to make sure life goes back to normal, and that Turkey once again becomes a country envied for its bright future. We in the business community will do what is required of us to this end.

We are resolved to leave behind any interruptions to progress and to go back to our country's economic agenda as soon as possible. In this regard, TOBB, YASED, TURK-IS, HAK-IS, TISK and TZOB, as well as international companies who have

TOBB's declaration on coup attempt in Turkey

From the The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB)

invested in Turkey's future, have come together to make an assessment of the present situation.

We reiterate our support for reform initiatives that will take Turkey on a new path of growth. Turkey's economy – under the leadership of the President who disrupted the heinous attack on the night of July 15 – now needs to take a leap forward.

In the wake of the coup attempt, a consensus emerged among Turkey's political parties on the matters of democracy and rule of law. This will solidify Turkey's global position in the near future.

Now it is important that this consensus is harnessed to bring about a consensus on a new Constitution, which will reinforce democracy and rule of law, as well as safeguard the independence of Turkey's judiciary. We believe that the EU process will facilitate this institutional transformation and secure Turkey's position in the global agenda.

We are aware that the state of emergency is a necessary, but temporary and limited constitutional measure introduced for rapid normalization. In this context, we expect that a reform agenda aimed at improving the investment climate will be introduced swiftly. Work on this is ongoing, and is absolutely critical for the economic leap Turkey needs to make.

We think that the Law on

Improving the Investment Climate, the draft Law on Industrial Property, the Production Reform Package and Reform Package for Investment-Export Incentives, all of which have been underway for some time, will be of the utmost importance for Turkey in continuing to pursue its global aspirations.

If these reform packages are improved in a way to include new incentives for international investors, and include a tax reform providing positive discrimination to high technology investments, our country will be able to attract more investment.

An efficient public-private sector dialogue mechanism is critical in these endeavors. Such a mechanism can ensure that companies do not have any setbacks in their daily work with the public sector in these turbulent days, and that the reform process is executed in a transparent manner. We regard today's high level dialogue meeting as a significant step of this close cooperation.

As businesspeople investing in Turkey, we continue to produce, export, invest and create jobs. We do this because we know that those who invest in Turkey's future have always prospered, and will continue to do so.

In the past, we profited by investing in Turkey's future. In the future, those who invest in Turkey today will also profit. *TOBB* ■

VCCI and Emirates Vietnam discuss cooperation opportunities

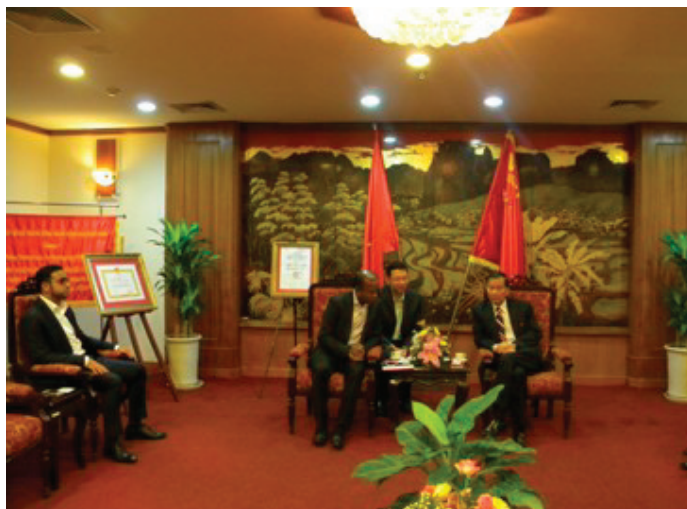
The opening of the first Hanoi - Dubai air route by Dubai-based airline Emirates has opened up many travel and trade opportunities for the two sides. This was the main topic of the meeting between Mr Hoang Quang Phong, Vice President of Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) and Emirates Vietnam CEO Haitham Al Battawy at the VCCI Head Office in Hanoi.

Speaking at the meeting, VCCI Vice President Hoang Quang Phong stressed that Dubai has long been known as one of the largest commercial centers in the Middle East and as a gateway to penetrate African markets. The two sides have cooperated closely in various fields and trade turnover has kept rising although result achieved are incommensurate with existing potential due to limited market approaches for both sides, particularly language barriers and geographical distances.

The opening of Hanoi - Dubai route will help shorten the geographical distance and increase opportunities of cooperation between Vietnam and Dubai in particular and between Vietnam and Middle Eastern and African countries in general, he added.

Mr Haitham Al Battawy said Vietnam is an active developing country in Southeast Asia. People's living standards have improved and more people wish to travel and do business abroad.

Four years ago, on June 4, 2012, Emirates opened the first flight to Vietnam with daily flights between Ho Chi Minh City and Dubai. This event marked Vietnam's connection with Emirates' global network headquartered in Dubai. From Dubai, Emirates brings customers from Vietnam to its global networks in the Middle East, Europe, Africa, America and South Asia. He hopes that with the opening of Hanoi - Dubai route, Emirates will contribute to strengthening connectivity for Hanoi and its surrounding areas, and further contribute to tourism and trade development of Hanoi in particular and Vietnam at large.



Mr Mohammed Ali Al Kamali, a representative of Dubai Exports, noted that the current trade turnover between Vietnam and Dubai is growing. This demonstrates high interests and great cooperation potential of both sides. Vietnam's major exports to Dubai include agricultural products, seafood, electronics, machinery and electronic components. However, Vietnam's current exports to Dubai outweighed Dubai's exports to Vietnam. He hoped that the new air route will increase opportunities and narrow the trade gap between the two sides. *VCCI News Release* ■

PCCI seeks greater Asian market access for local firms

The Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) plans to forge-cross border deals with its counterparts in the region to secure local firms' greater access to key Asian markets.

According to PCCI president George Barcelon, the group is now strengthening its business councils to develop greater trade and investments relations with other Asian business groups.

The target is for these councils to supplement the efforts of their

respective member-companies to capture the lucrative growth opportunities across a number of industries including agriculture, business process outsourcing (BPO), telecommunications, manufacturing, mining, consumer products, logistics and transportation and global supply chains.

Barcelon said the councils are expected to jointly organize forums, inbound and outbound trade missions, roundtable discussions, as well as business matching and networking

sessions.

The councils were also invited to join PCCI business delegations in official foreign travels of President Rodrigo Duterte and the trade missions of the Department of Trade and Industry.

The PCCI chief added that market information could be shared with small and medium enterprises, particularly those that could be potential suppliers or participants to the global value and supply chains, but are currently lacking in experience and staff for export marketing. *PCCI News Release* ■

CACCI Highlights



CACCI President Inaishvili meets with Bulgarian CCI Vice President and Bulgarian Ministers - (left photo) CACCI President Mr. Jemal Inaishvili called on the President of the Bulgarian CCI Vice President Mr. Georgi Stoev on July 21 at the Chamber's premises in Sofia, Bulgaria. Mr. Inaishvili and Mr. Stoev discussed and exchanged views on several issues, including CACCI-related matters, activities of the Silk Road Chamber for International Commerce (SRCIC), activities of the Bulgarian CCI, and possible areas of cooperation between CACCI and the Chamber. Mr. Inaishvili also took the opportunity to invite Mr. Stoev and his Chamber colleagues to attend the upcoming 30th CACCI Conference in Taipei. Also attending the meeting was Mr. Litien Chen, Director, Taiwan Trade Center, Sofia. Mr. Inaishvili also called on two Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria during his visit to Sofia on July 21. He met with Mrs. Lilyana Pavlova, Minister of Regional Development and Public Works (middle photo), and with Mr. Ivaylo Moskovski, Minister of Transport, Information Technology and Communications (right photo).



CACCI Director-General meets with PCCI - CACCI Director General Amb. Victor C. Y. Tseng met with Mr. George Barcelon, President of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) during the former's recent visit to Manila on August 11. Amb. Tseng updated Mr. Barcelon on the ongoing and upcoming activities of CACCI, and invited the PCCI head to organize a delegation to the upcoming 30th CACCI Conference in Taipei. Joining Mr. Barcelon in receiving Amb. Tseng were PCCI Secretary-General Mr. Crisanto Frianeza and Deputy Secretary General Ms. Edith Mendoza. Amb. Tseng was accompanied by CTBC Bank officers Mr. Ernest Lin and Ms. Ivy Cheng.



ICC Asia Executive Director visits CACCI Secretariat - Mrs. Lee Ju Song, Executive Director of International Chamber of Commerce Asia (ICC Asia), visited the CACCI Secretariat during her recent visit to Taipei. Mrs. Lee was received by CACCI Secretariat executives led by Deputy Director-General Mr. Amador Honrado Jr. on the afternoon of August 17 at the Secretariat's headquarters. Mrs. Lee and Mr. Honrado discussed possible areas for joint activities between the two organizations, particularly in the holding of training programs for CACCI members on topics of ICC Asia's expertise such as the ATA Carnet. They also talked about the collaboration of CACCI and the ICC World Chambers Federation in the 31st CACCI Conference and the 10th World Chambers Congress scheduled to take place in September 2017 in Sydney, Australia.

PRODUCT & SERVICE COUNCILS

Asian Garment & Textiles Council

Cotton prices rise globally on supply dearth

Cotton prices rose 24.19 percent to 77 cents per pound in the international markets due to a fall in supplies by China and India, two major cotton producers and consumers, according to industry insiders.



Cotton was traded at 77 cents on August 6 in the international markets, up from 62 cents three months ago. Six months ago the price was below 60 cents.

“It is a short-term hike. I hope the price will start declining from November when new crops will be available in markets,” said Hissam Khandker, director of Delcot Enterprise Ltd, a leading cotton importer of Bangladesh.

The demand for cotton in China also increased due to higher consumption by mills; the country also stopped selling the fibre from its stock, he said. On the other hand, the largest cotton supplier, India, has been importing cotton from other countries, he added. *The Daily Star*

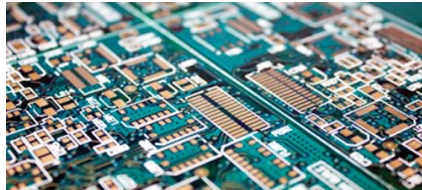
Asian ICT Council

Taiwan IT service sales grow nearly 5% in second quarter

Thanks to rising demand for system integration and cloud technology setup, the IT service industry grew 4.8 percent in sales from a year ago to NT\$63.5 billion in the second quarter, the Economics Ministry reported on August 10.

Revenue in the data processing and information supply sector dipped 1.4 percent to NT\$11.6 billion,

however, as demand for web marketing decreased.



The professional service sector, (excluding IT services,) fell 2.5 percent to NT\$60.4 billion.

In particular, the management consulting business dipped 0.8 percent to NT\$17 billion, the advertising and market research industry fell 5.7 percent to NT\$31.2 billion, the design industry rose 8.9 percent to NT\$10.3 billion and the photography industry tumbled 17.2 percent to NT\$1.9 billion.

The China Post

Asian Tourism Council

Alcohol bill detrimental to Indonesia's tourism, hoteliers warn



The Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association warns that the proposed anti-alcohol bill may jeopardize the country's tourism industry.

A hotel association has warned the government and the legislative body that Indonesian tourism will “collapse” should the House of Representatives pass a bill prohibiting alcohol in the country.

The bill, introduced by the United Development Party (PPP) and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), both Islamist parties, does not take into account voices from players in the tourist sector.

Despite the uproar from businesspeople in the tourist sector, like

the Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association (PHRI), the House has continued with the bill's deliberation.

“If the bill is passed, our business will be done. The tourists, who mostly come from Europe, drink alcohol all the time. It will be very inconvenient for them if they can't find alcohol,” PHRI head Hariyadi Sukamdani said on August 10. *The Star*

Women Entrepreneurs Group

Facebook launches program to cultivate more women entrepreneurs in Taiwan



SheMeansBusiness is a series of workshops, resource centers and networking events to help female entrepreneurs.

Social media giant Facebook on July 21 announced to launch “SheMeansBusiness” in Taiwan — a series of workshops, resource centers and networking events to help female entrepreneurs in Taiwan enhance their skills, knowledge and connections.

Facebook held a forum at Taipei's Syntrend Creative Park, inviting successful woman entrepreneurs to share their business experiences, talks centered on the mission of the social-networking website's new project, “When women succeed, we all win.”

Facebook's Head of Small Business in Greater China Amanda Chen highlighted the difficulties woman face in starting a business.

“Only 36-percent of all entrepreneurs are women, and 19-percent of founders of start-up companies are women, said Chen. “Though the numbers have been gradually increasing, there is still room for improvement.” *The China Post*

ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWS

Japan firms to invest NT\$ 6 billion in Taiwan: MOEA

In a statement released on August 2, the Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOEA) said its delegation to Japan at the end of July had successfully attracted NT\$6 billion worth of foreign investment.

The purpose of the delegation, led by Deputy Minister of Economics Affairs Shen Jong-chin between July 25-29, was to gather feedback from Japanese companies about their investment needs.

The delegation also hoped to promote the five flagship innovation industries advocated by the new government, including green energy, biotechnology and smart machinery.

The delegation visited nine big companies in Japan, two of which — Fujifilm Electronic Materials Co., Ltd. and Mitsubishi Gas Chemical Company — have already inked a letter of intent with the MOEA. *The China Post*

South Korean investors seek opportunities in Brunei

The Brunei government has put its policy emphasis on industrial diversification from an oil-dependent economy.

A delegation of investors from South Korea were in Brunei in July to explore opportunities in the sultanate.

A press statement from the Asean-Korea Centre (AKC) said that the Brunei government hosted a two-day program for the visiting investors with the objective to “facilitate investment and trade between the two countries in biotechnology, cosmetics, ICT and e-commerce”.

Through the program, the South Korean delegates gained insight on Brunei’s technology, cosmetics and ICT sectors by visiting the relevant organizations such as the Rimba Digital Junction and the Bio Innovation Corridor.

The delegates also took part in a product development workshop that aims to explore investment opportunities in the e-commerce sector and capacity-building for local SMEs. *The Brunei Times*

Vietnam, Philippines mull rice deal

Minister of Industry and Trade Trần Tuấn Anh said Vietnam and the Philippines should consider extending their rice trade deal, which will expire at the end of this year, for a new period of 2017-2020.

He made the proposal during a meeting with his Philippine counterpart, Ramon Lopez, in Vientiane, Laos, on August 5, on the sidelines of the 48th ASEAN Economic Ministers’ Meeting and related meetings.

Minister Anh suggested that the Philippines organize the second meeting of the Vietnam-Philippines Joint Sub-Committee on Trade at a convenient time to foster co-operation and tackle emerging problems in bilateral trade ties, as well as to discuss specific measures to boost two-way trade in the future.

Lopez lauded Vietnam’s proposal to extend the bilateral rice trade deal, affirming that he will discuss the matter with relevant ministries and agencies in his country. *Vietnam News*

Taiwan seeks to boost medical ties with Southeast Asia

Taiwan plans to boost medical exports and expand cooperation on health care education and technology with members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations as part of the government’s New Southbound Policy, Minister of Science and Technology Yang Hung-duen said in a recent interview with local newspaper Liberty Times.

“The nation boasts advanced medical technology in areas ranging from in-home care services to complex

clinical surgery,” he said. “We intend to work with the Ministry of Health and Welfare to collect information on the effectiveness of Taiwan-made equipment in local hospitals so as to provide a solid basis for promoting medical exports to ASEAN countries.”

The New Southbound Policy seeks to elevate the scope and diversity of Taiwan’s export economy and minimize overreliance on any single market. In addition to Southeast Asia, it extends to six South Asian countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, and encompasses inbound investment and tourism, as well as educational and cultural exchanges.

According to Yang, Taiwan’s efforts to enhance medical cooperation with Southeast Asia extend to training and research. *Taiwan Today*

Vietnam, Singapore hold business forum

A business forum held in HCM City on July 20 has helped connect companies in Vietnam and Singapore, enabling them to explore co-operation opportunities.

Nearly 200 business leaders, industry experts, policymakers and government officials participated in the 2016 Vietnam – Singapore Business Forum held on July 20 in HCM City.

The forum was aimed at strengthening trade connectivity to leverage co-operation opportunities for Vietnamese and Singaporean businesses since the two countries have joined the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Asean Economic Community (AEC).

Hosted by the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI), this business platform connected companies in Vietnam and Singapore, enabling them to explore co-operation opportunities.

The forum also focused on Vietnam’s consistent efforts to improve the investment environment. *Vietnam News*

Micro scale businessmen in Sri Lanka receive loans under the Citi - CCC Rural Economic Empowerment Program

A group of micro scale businessmen in the Udappuwa area of the Puttalam district was given loans by the Hatton National Bank (HNB), recently to expand their businesses under the Citi – Ceylon Chamber of Commerce (CCC) Rural Economic Empowerment Program.

Accordingly, 31 entrepreneurs, who were earlier trained by the Citi - CCC Rural Economic Empowerment Program on how to plan, initiate and expand the business and access loans from the formal financial sector, were awarded the loans. Among them, there were 23 female entrepreneurs, who are engaged in tailoring and small scale garments, dry fish processing and selling and running grocery and kerosene oil shops in their locality. Male entrepreneurs are mainly engaged in fishing and fishing related businesses like fishing net repairing.

The Head of Corporate Affairs of Citi Sri Lanka Ms. Shanaka Waduge, Senior Assistant Secretary General of CCC Mr. Chandra D. Vithanage and Senior Manager, Development Banking of HNB Mr. M. V. P. Gunawardena took part in the event, representing their respective entities.

Udappuwa is a rural fishing village in the Puttalam District and situated 23 km North of Chilaw. The village populace mainly comprises of fishermen and they are predominantly in to seasonal fishing. During the off season, some of them move to the Eastern Coast for fishing while others are engaged in daily wage earning activities. Almost all men are in to fishing during the fishing season. The income of the Udappuwa community members were revealed as season based and highly volatile during the off season.

It is because of this reason, the Citi - CCC Rural Economic Empowerment Program had chosen Udappuwa village in order to strengthen their feasible livelihood options through



various business development services and facilitating the access to finance through formal banking system and to support them with viable business ideas to generate sizable extra income during off seasons.

Mr. Chandra D. Vithanage, Senior Assistant Secretary General of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, in his opening remarks thanked Citi for choosing the Chamber to implement this novel project concept. He further highlighted that unlike in many business development related projects, this Citi-CCC Rural Economic Empowerment Program focused on offering necessary business development services like business management related capacity building, business plan preparation, linkages & capacity building in technical know-how & technology transfer and market information & market linkages, to graduate them as successful entrepreneurs to access financial services from formal banking system.

Ms. Shanaka Waduge, Head of Corporate Affairs, Citi Sri Lanka expressed her great pleasure and satisfaction to see that the majority of the customers who received the HNB loans were female entrepreneurs. She further highlighted that Citi encouraged

gender diversity and believed that economically empowering rural women not only ensured the well-being of their immediate family but was also a contributing factor to the overall economic and social development of our country. On her closing notes she advised the Citi CCC Rural Economic Empowerment Project participants to invest the loan capital received in the best effective way and added that Citi remained committed to Sri Lanka and would continue to remain conscious and responsive to strategic and economic initiatives of the country.

HNB Udappuwa Branch has a client base of 600 customers and Rs. 230 Mn as outstanding loan portfolio, yet with zero Non-Performing loans. This Branch was the best HNB Branch in the region in 2015.

Speaking at the event, the Senior Manager, Development Banking of HNB Mr. M. V. P. Gunawardena said that with the direct facilitation and coordination of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, HNB was happy to partner with Citi Bank, yet another global bank being existence in 160 countries, for the betterment of the rural men and women to inspire their entrepreneurial activities, initially in their locality.
CCC News Release

INVESTMENT & JOINT VENTURES IN THE REGION

▲ Advantech, Sigfox team up on internet of things

- Industrial computer manufacturer Advantech has partnered up with French internet of things (iot) network infrastructure provider Sigfox to go after the market for iot. Sigfox is said to be a rising star in the French startup community, building a global communications network for iot devices in 24 countries, with seven million devices registered to its network. Sigfox founder and CEO Ludovic Le Moan delivered a keynote speech about iot in Taipei on August 2, following his firm's announcement to build iot networks in Taiwan — its base stations worldwide are set to be provided by Advantech. "Sigfox's network technology is inexpensive, consumes little power and works over long distances. It uses unlicensed radio spectrum for its service, so it doesn't require permission from government to operate around the world," said Chaney Ho, President of Advantech and vocal advocate for the expansion of iot. *The China Post*



▲ Honda, SoftBank begin joint AI research for 'emotion' cars

- Honda Motor Co. and SoftBank Group Corporation announced on July 21 that they will begin joint research in artificial intelligence. Cutting-edge artificial intelligence (AI) technology is essential for self-driving vehicles.



Major automakers have been accelerating tie-ups with companies in other sectors to implement greater use of AI in vehicles that could one day offer advice on what to wear and

even cheer up someone with a broken heart. Honda aims to equip its cars with an "emotion engine," a piece of AI technology developed by a company under the SoftBank umbrella. The engine will be a practical application of AI that can "read" a person's emotions and hold a conversation with them and express its own feelings. "We can make a product that people can feel affection for," Honda R&D Co. President Yoshiyuki Matsumoto said at an event held by SoftBank in Tokyo on July 21. Honda R&D is a development subsidiary of the Japanese automaker. *Japan News*

▲ SCG to expand in other PH locations

- SCG Philippines, a unit of Thailand's largest cement company, is eyeing other locations in the country for expansion, while also strengthening its corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Phaskorn Buranawit, country director of SCG Philippines and Mariwasa Siam Ceramics, said that as the company grows its operations, its CSR program,



which involves granting scholarships to Filipino students, will also grow. He said SCG Philippines is now exploring

opportunities for expansion. "The Philippine economy is growing and I think there's a lot of room for the business from construction materials, infrastructure, and others. There are a lot of opportunities for the business," Buranawit said in an interview with reporters on July 23. SCG, one of the leading conglomerates in the ASEAN region, has three core businesses including SCG Cement-Building Materials, SCG Chemicals, and SCG Packaging. *Manila Bulletin*

▲ Malaysian companies, Pt Hanson sign MoU for US\$863m housing project

- The housing project will be built on a 500-hectare land in Maja, Tangerang, about 80km from Jakarta. Three Malaysian companies, namely Sime Darby Bhd, I and P Group Sdn Bhd and SP Setia (Indonesia) Sdn Bhd, have teamed up with Indonesia's PT Hanson International Tbk to jointly develop an affordable housing project here. The project, with a gross development value of 3.5 billion ringgit (US\$863.13 million) on a 500-hectare land, is situated in Maja, Tangerang, about 80km from Jakarta. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed on August 1 between the companies on



the sidelines of the 12th World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF) here. The signing was witnessed by Malaysia Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and WIEF chairman Musa Hitam. PT Hanson is one of Indonesia's largest property developers by landbank, owning more than 3,500 hectares in greater Jakarta. Under the MoU, the companies have proposed to enter into a joint venture, whereby the Malaysian entities will have an equity interest of 20 percent each, while PT Hanson holds the rest. The parties will continue negotiations to finalize the details and work on an agreement within three months, said the statement. *The Star Malaysia*

FAIRS & EXHIBITS IN ASIA-PACIFIC

DATES 2016	NAME OF FAIR (Further Information)	VENUE		
4-7 Oct.	Tokyo Int'l Packaging Exbn 2016 (JPI, Tokyo Tel: 81-3-3543-1189, Fax: 81-3-3543-8970, Email: t-pack@jpi.or.jp, URL: www.tokyo-pack.jp/)	Tokyo Japan		
5-7 Oct.	Metallurgy India (Messe Duesseldorf India Pvt. Ltd., Tel: 91-11-4855-0054, Email: DughL@md-india.com, URL: www.metallurgy-india.com/)	Mumbai India		
5-7 Oct.	E-Commerce Expo Asia (TAITRA, Tel: 886-2-2725-5200, Fax: 886-2-2720-2027, Email: ecexpo@taitra.org.tw, URL: www.ecexpo.com.tw/)	Taipei Taiwan		
5-8 Oct.	AllPack Indonesia (Kristamedia Pratama, Tel: 62-21-634-5861, Fax: 62-21-634-0140, Email: info@kristamedia.com, URL: allpack-indonesia.com/)	Jakarta Indonesia		
5-8 Oct.	Int'l Greentech & Eco Products Expo (Malaysian Exbn Services Sdn Bhd, Tel: 603-4041-0311, Email: enquiry@mesallworld.com, URL: www.igem.my)	K.L. Malaysia		
6-8 Oct.	METALEX Vietnam 2016 (Reed Tradex Co., Tel: 66-2686-7299, Email: metalexvietnam@reedtradex.co.th, URL: www.metalexvietnam.com/)	HCMC Vietnam		
6-9 Oct.	Int'l Electronics Show and Int'l Green Industry Show (TAITRA, Tel: 886-2-2725-5200, Fax: 886-2-2757-6245, Email: taitronics@taitra.org.tw / green@taitra.org.tw, URL: www.taitronics.tw/ www.greentaiwan.tw/)	Taipei Taiwan		
12-15 Oct.	Robot World 2016 (Korea Assn. of Robot Industry, Tel: 82-2-7777-2550, Email: smkang@korearobot.or.kr, URL: www.robotworld.or.kr/)	Goyang Korea		
12-15 Oct.	Vietnam Print Pack Foodtech (Chan Chao Int'l Co., Ltd., Tel: 886-2-2659-6000, Email: exfdp@chanchao.com.tw, URL: www.vietnamprintpack.com/)	HCMC Vietnam		
13-16 Oct.	electronicAsia 2016 (HKTDC, Tel: 852-1830-668, Email: exhibitions@hktdc.org, URL: www.hktdc.com/fair/electronicasia-en/electronicAsia.html)	Hong Kong		
15-17 Oct.	Int'l Silk Fair (Indian Silk Export Promotion Council, Tel: 91-11-4057-1366, Email: buyers@indiainternationalsilkfair.com, URL: www.indiainternationalsilkfair.com/)	New Delhi India		
17-19 Oct.	Innovative Textile Application Show (Taiwan Textile Federation, Tel: 886-2-2341-7251, Email: titas@textiles.org.tw, URL: www.titas.tw/2016/index.asp)	Taipei Taiwan		
18-20 Oct.	Asian Food Show (Osaka Int'l Business Promotion Center, Tel: 81-6-6612-8203, Email: info@asianfoodshow.com, URL: www.asianfoodshow.com/en/)	Osaka Japan		
18-20 Oct.	WASMA (ITE Moscow, Tel: 7-499-750-0828, Fax: 7-499-750-0830, Email: wasma@ite-expo.ru, URL: www.wasma.ru/en-GB)	Moscow Russia		
18-20 Oct.	BuildTech Asia 2016 (Sphere Exhibits Pte Ltd., Tel: 65-6319-4021, Fax: 65-6319-6140, Email: buildtechasia@sph.com.sg, URL: www.buildtechasia.com/)	Singapore		
18-22 Oct.	Health Sumex (HHB Expo, Tel: 90-312-438-3811, Fax: 90-312-438-3682, Email: tugce@hhbexpo.com.tr, URL: www.healthsumex.com/en/index.html)	Ankara Turkey		
19-22 Oct.	BAKUBUILD 2016 (Iteca Caspian LLC, Tel: 994-12-404-1019, Fax: 994-12-404-1001, Email: build@iteca.az, URL: www.bakubuild.az/2016/)	Baku Azerbaijan		
19-22 Oct.	Hospital Expo 2016 (PT. Okta Sejahtera Insani, Tel: 62-21-5890-7366, Email: hospital.expo@gmail.com, URL: www.hospital-expo.com/)	Jakarta Indonesia		
20-22 Oct.	World Tea & Coffee Expo (Sentinel Exbns. Asia P Ltd., Tel: 91-9819845133, Email: info@sentinelexhibitionsasia.com, URL: www.worldteacoffeeexpo.com/)	Mumbai India		
20-22 Oct.	Taiwan Int'l Water Show 2016 (TAITRA, Tel: 886-2-2725-5200 Ext.2679, Email: aqua@taitra.org.tw, URL: www.aquataiwan.net)	Taipei Taiwan		
24-28 Oct.	S'pore Int'l Energy Week (Energy Market Authority, Tel: 65-6835-8000, Fax: 65-6835-8020, Email: ema_siew@ema.gov.sg, URL: www.siew.sg/)	Singapore		
25-27 Oct.	Indometal 2016 (Messe Duesseldorf Asia Pte. Ltd., Tel: 65-63329642, Email: beattrice@mda.com.sg, URL: www.indometal.net/)	Jakarta Indonesia		
26-28 Oct.	Japan IT Week (Reed Exbns. Japan Ltd., Tel: 81-3-3349-8519, Email: itweek-autumn@reedexpo.co.jp, URL: www.japan-it.jp/en/aki/)	Chiba Japan		
26-29 Oct.	AsiaWorld-Expo (HKTDC, Tel: 852-1830-668, Fax: 852-3543-8717, Email: exhibitions@hktdc.org, URL: www.hktdc.com/)	Hong Kong		
27-29 Oct.	Busan Int'l Seafood & Fisheries Expo (BEXCO, Tel: 82-51-740-7518, Fax: 82-51-740-7640, Email: bisfe@bexco.co.jp, URL: www.bisfe.com/)	Busan Korea		
27-30 Oct.	2016 Kaohsiung Int'l Food Show (TAITRA, Tel: 886-2-2725-5200, Fax: 886-2-2722-7324, Email: foodkh@taitra.org.tw, URL: www.foodkh.com.tw)	Kaohsiung Taiwan		
31 Oct. - 2 Nov.	Tokyo Int'l Industry Exbn. (Secretariat Office, Tel: 81-3-3263-8885, Email: ofc@sangyo-koryuten.tokyo, URL: www.sangyo-koryuten.tokyo/)	Tokyo Japan		

TECHNOLOGY

Philippines adopts Vietnam technology to improve onion cultivation

The Philippines is banking on Vietnam's latest technology in onion farming to improve productivity and lessen its dependence on imported produce.



Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol said the new onion farming technology developed by Vietnamese farmers in the Mekong Delta where about 7,000 hectares is devoted to the production of onions, would allow farmers to harvest three times a year.

In the Philippines, local onion farmers harvest only once a year because they use seeds that take about six months before they the onion bulbs are ready for harvest.

To help the Philippines achieve self-sufficiency producing onions, Piñol has allowed VietGrow, one of Vietnam's biggest vegetable seeds producer and fertilizer manufacturer, to set up demonstration farms in North Cotabato, Southern Leyte, Nueva Ecija, Isabela, Ilocos Norte and Mindoro.

Instead of seeds, the new technology uses onion tubers as planting materials that could be harvested after two months, allowing farmers to harvest as much as three to four times per year. *Philippine Star*

Indian succeeds in producing petrol from plastic waste



Sreejith V.S. and Perinjanam panchayat president Sachith K.K. near the prototype of the pyrolysis plant that converts plastic to petrol.

A man developed a petrol making plant which can create 9.5 liters of fuel from kg of waste.

The Perinjanam Panchayat, a local government institution in Kerala, has developed the prototype of a pyrolysis plant in which plastic waste could be burnt and distilled to make petrol and other byproducts. This is part of its endeavor to find a low-cost and pollution-free technology for processing non-biodegradable waste. The plant was designed by Mr V.S. Sreejith, who has worked for several years in solid waste management and is director of science center in Kodungallur, which promotes scientific experiments among students.

"Petroleum is converted to plastic products by heating it at a particular temperature. In the pyrolysis plant of the prototype which we have developed, a reversal of polymerization happens," Mr Sreejith said. The plant is at present burnt using LPG for display, but the bio-gas from organic waste will be used for the purpose when the civic body puts the technology to use to processing plastic, he added. "Out of 10 kg of plastic, 9 liters and 600 ml of petroleum can be extracted using

this technology," he claimed. *Deccan Chronicle*

Bosch Packaging Technology to unveil testing equipment for jelly production

Bosch Packaging Technology is set to unveil its new jelly lab equipment at this year's Pack Expo International in Chicago, US, which is being held from November 6-9.

The company will exhibit the testing equipment for jelly production, including medicated and functional gummies such as cough lozenges, omega-3 and mineral-enriched products, as well as other supplemented jellies.



It will showcase the laboratory depositor and drying room, which will allow jelly producers to accurately test new products, helping in accelerating the production of tested recipes to an industrial scale.

Featuring exchangeable pump system and different sizes of servo-controlled pistons, the GML03 lab depositor can process a range of product formulas to produce jellies, hard candies, toffees, and fondant.

It can also process other confectionery masses such as single, one shot, striped and striped with filling. *Packaging Business Review*

Published monthly by the Secretariat, Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry

Victor C. Y. Tseng, Director General; Amador R. Honrado, Jr., Editor

Jacqueline Uy, Associate Editor; Wendy Yang, Contributing Editor; Julia Hsu, Assistant Editor

14/F, No. 11, Songgao Road, Taipei 11073, Taiwan; Tel: (886 2) 2725-5663/4; Fax: (886 2) 2725-5665

Email: cacci@cacci.org.tw / cacci@cacci.biz ; Website: www.cacci.biz

POLICY UPDATES

(A compilation of rules, laws and policies on trade and investments in CACCI member countries)

Brunei

Brunei's exports slip to US\$374m in June

Oil and gas exports account for about 90 percent of the sultanate's total exports.

Brunei's exports for the month of June decreased to BN \$503.8 million dollar from the previous month's figure of BN\$505.1 million dollar, the Department of Economic Planning and Development (JPKE) said on August 12.

In its latest International Merchandise Trade Statistics (IMTS) report, JPKE said June's oil exports rose to BN\$243.8 million from BN\$219 million recorded in the previous month.

Exports of liquefied natural gas declined from BN\$222.9 million in the previous month to BN\$214.1 million in June. *Brunei Times*

Indonesia

Indonesia urges action against slash-and-burn clearing as haze season arrives

Indonesia's disaster agency urged prompt action against slash-and-burn plantation fires on August 19 as the annual smoke "haze" begins to drift across the Malacca Strait to neighboring Malaysia and Singapore.

Fires in Indonesia, set in the dry season by companies clearing land for plantations, cause an annual crisis that at times blankets large parts of the region in choking smog, closing airports and schools and prompting warnings to residents to stay indoors.

Home to the world's third-largest area of tropical forests, Indonesia has been criticized by green activists and by neighboring Southeast Asian nations for failing to stop the annual fires.

"Smoke from forest and land fires in Riau has started to enter the Malacca Strait. Let's prevent and put out the fires," agency spokesman Sutopo Nugroho said on his Twitter account on August 19 referring to a district on the main island of Sumatra. *Business Insider*

Japan

Japan coffee market brews growth as supply hits record high

The domestic coffee market is growing steadily and does not look like it will be grinding to a halt anytime soon.

Despite Japan's shrinking population, the volume of coffee consumed at homes and major chain stores has reached a new high for the third straight year through 2015, and imports of green coffee beans have also been growing continuously.

The market was energized by the introduction of players from other industries, such as convenience stores that installed coffee machines on their counters. Established coffee makers, not wanting to be left behind, have also rolled out new products.

According to the All Japan Coffee Association, domestic coffee consumption reached about 462,000 tons in 2015, a record high and the fourth consecutive annual increase. *The Japan News*

Korea

Korea to present road map for new energy business in global conferences

Since the Paris Climate Agreement last year, Korea has been sparing no effort to take preemptive policy action to brace for a low-carbon economy.

The Ministry of Industry, Trade and Energy has been formulating policies to develop new energy businesses and putting them into practice with the aim of not only fighting climate change, but also nurturing the nation's new growth engine.

In September, it will have a chance to present its roadmap for the new energy industry development to the world through four international energy conferences to be held in Korea.

The 2016 Global Green Growth Week, which will be held in Jeju on Sept. 5-9, will draw global leaders from the government and business sectors to

seek and identify fundamental climate change solutions. Hosted by the Seoul-based Global Green Growth Institute, the GGG Week will open the floor to participants to share thoughts on expanding investments in renewables and on implementing creative and ambitious green growth policies. *Korea Herald*

Myanmar

Myanmar to give export-only businesses indefinite tax exemption

In a move aimed at improving Myanmar's export market, the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) declared that factories that export 100 percent of their products will have tax exemptions for life under new investment policies.

According to DICA Director-General Aung Naing Oo, the current policies in place allow any business approved by the Myanmar Investment Commission to enjoy multiple tax exemptions, regardless of their nature.

"The new regulations look to support the current national objectives, which means refining those privileges to better suit exporters," the director-general said.

"It's not going to be three years. If they want 10 years, 20 years or 50 years, they will get full tax exemptions as long as all of their products are for export. For example, other businesses that import raw materials will need to pay customs duties. But exporters that have found a place in the international market will get refunds equivalent to the amount they paid (in taxes) while importing raw materials," said Aung Naing Oo. *Eleven Myanmar*

Nepal

Nepal aviation authority invites proposals to conduct eco study

The Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (Caan) has asked shortlisted firms to submit requests for proposal to carry out an environmental and social

impact assessment of the planned second international airport (SIA) in Nijgadh, Bara.

The modern airport in Nijgadh, which is located 175 kilometers south of Kathmandu, will be the biggest airport in South Asia in terms of area at 80 square kilometers. The four shortlisted firms are CEOCE Consultants; ADMC Engineering and Desired Engineering Consultancy; Nepal Environmental and Scientific Services, BDA Nepal and Environment and Resource Management Consultant; and Silt Consultant, Tech Studio of Engineering with Association of Raft Consultancy. *Kathmandu Post*

Philippines

Finance chief: 'Best time to invest in Philippines'

Now is the "best time" for investors to put their money in the Philippines, especially in Mindanao, as the country heads for a one-of-a-kind political and economic watershed under the Duterte presidency, Department of Finance (DOF) Secretary Carlos Dominguez III said over the weekend in Davao City.

Dominguez told top clients of the country's No. 1 bank that while most countries across the globe plod through economic and political uncertainties, the Philippines has been moving onward in the opposite path of a growth streak expected to be sustained at 6.5 percent to 7.5 percent over the medium term.

Under this rosy scenario, Dominguez said investors would do well to venture in Mindanao, which is poised to finally evolve from the perennial Land of Promise to the country's new "economic promised land," not only because the new President hails from the South, but, more importantly, because it is an island that is teeming with natural resources plus human talent and has the "most headroom for growth in our country." *Sun Star*

Singapore

Singapore Tourism Board to woo business travelers, families from Malaysia

The Singapore Tourism Board (STB) is offering financial support for business travel and promoting the island's child-friendliness to Malaysia in a bid to reverse sliding arrivals and revenue from its northern neighbour.

While overall tourist receipts declined for the first time since 2009 last year, falling by 6.8 percent to \$22 billion, Malaysian spending in the Republic dived by a quarter to just \$637 million. Malaysia has long been Singapore's third-largest source of tourists, but with the ringgit depreciating by 20 percent against the Singapore dollar in the past two years, it could slip behind fourth-placed India.

Indonesian and Chinese tourists remain Singapore's top two visitors by numbers. *Straits Times*

Taiwan

E-commerce firms to pay business tax in Taiwan

In order to exact tax revenues from cross-border e-commerce transactions, the Ministry of Finance (MOF) is considering an amendment to the Business Tax Act, which could go into effect as early as January of next year.

The government said e-commerce giants like Agoda and Uber have been exempted from paying taxes despite their substantial profits in Taiwan's market. The current situation gives these companies an unfair advantage over their domestic counterparts.

The National Taxation Bureau's Taipei branch has invited representatives from Apple, Uber, Agoda, and other e-commerce operators for a meeting on Aug. 18. Agenda items include e-commerce operators' company registration and methods of taxation.

The MOF began inviting e-commerce titans like Apple, Uber and Agoda "for coffee" in July. Four of the

five National Taxation Bureau offices around the island have participated in the dialogue. *The China Post*

Thailand

Thailand doubles fees for visas on arrival

Thailand will double visa-on-arrival fees for tourists from 19 countries and regions including China, its biggest source market, in an effort to bulk up income from tourism -- easily the most buoyant sector in the economy.

From Sept. 27, the charge for a visa allowing visitors a 15-day stay will be 2,000 baht (\$57.8).

China provided 26% of Thailand's 29.8 million foreign arrivals last year. Other countries affected by the hike include India, Saudi Arabia, and Taiwan.

The increase comes after the country's lucrative but vulnerable tourism industry was hit by a string of bomb blasts on Aug. 11 and 12 in the southern provinces, including at popular coastal resorts around Phuket and at Hua Hin. *Nikkei Asian Review*

Vietnam

Vietnam govt approves plan to reduce cash use

The Vietnam government has approved an e-commerce development plan for 2016-20 that targets 50 percent of consumers switching from cash to other forms of payment.

The target has been set after factoring in the rapid increase in online shopping and electronic banking.

However, the plan acknowledges the need to significantly improve network security to convince residents to switch from cash.

The Vietnam government has set targets of 30 percent of the population shopping online and spending US\$350 a year each and business-to-customer (B2C) e-commerce turnover increasing 20 percent to \$10 billion, or 5 percent of the country's total retail and services turnover. *Vietnam News*