



Global FDIs Remain Flat in 2019: UNCTAD Report



According to the latest issue of UNCTAD's Global Investment Trends Monitor, global foreign direct investment (FDI) remained flat in 2019, at \$1.39 trillion, a 1% decline from a revised \$1.41 trillion in 2018. This is against the backdrop of weaker macroeconomic performance and policy uncertainty for investors, including trade tensions.

FDI flows to developed countries remained at a historically low level, decreasing by a further 6% to an estimated \$643 billion. Flows to developing economies were unchanged at \$695 billion. Flows to transition economies rose by two thirds to \$57 billion.

Trends in selected economies:

FDI in the United Kingdom down 6% as Brexit unfolds.

Hong Kong, China divestments cause a 48% FDI decline in turbulent times.

Singapore up 42% in a buoyant ASEAN region.

Zero-growth of flows to both the United States and China.

Brazil up 26% at the start of a privatization programme.

German inflows triple as MNEs extend loans to foreign affiliates in a year of slow growth.

Looking ahead, UNCTAD expects FDI flows to rise marginally in 2020 on the back of further modest growth of the world economy.

CACCI Attends the WCF General Council Meeting in Paris



Immediate Past CACCI President Mr. Jemal Inaishvili represented the Confederation at the meeting of the World Chambers Federation (WCF) General Council Meeting held on February 12-13, 2020 in Paris.

As a transnational business organization, CACCI is a Permanent Member of the General Council, the governing body of the WCF. Mr. Inaishvili joined other officers of CACCI Primary Members who are also members of the WCF General Council.

One of the highlights of the two-day event was the bid presentation made by each of the chambers of commerce bidding to host the 13th World Chambers Congress scheduled to take place on 21-23 June 2023. The bidders included the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation (CCIRF), a Primary Member of CACCI. The other two were the Geneva Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services from Switzerland and the Stavanger Region of Chamber of Commerce from Norway.

Established by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) in 1951 to be the advocate of its chamber of

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commerce members worldwide, WCF is a non-political, non-governmental body representing the interests of all local, national, regional, bilateral and transnational chambers of commerce and industry. WCF aims to strengthen links between chambers, enabling them to improve performance as well as discover



new products and services to offer their members.

One of the major activities of the WCF is the World Chambers Congress, which is held every two years with the participation of chambers of commerce and other business organizations from around the world (including CACCI members).

How to Limit the Impact of Coronavirus on Your Business

By Amesh Adalja,
Senior Scholar at the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security

Dr. Amesh Adalja is a senior scholar at the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security and is an expert in the outbreak of pandemics and epidemics around the world. He wrote previously for BRINK on last year's measles outbreak. BRINK spoke to him about how businesses should prepare for the novel coronavirus.

BRINK: Based on your study of prior pandemics, could you give us some sense of how this coronavirus is likely to spread around the world over the next three to six months?

Amesh Adalja: We will see more and more countries reporting cases, with a wide spectrum of illness; many people may only have a mild illness, and a small proportion may have severe illness. However, the fact that this is a new virus that the general population doesn't have much immunity to means that many people will get ill.

Even mild illnesses can pose problems for many health care systems, which often operate at capacity. Some countries, such as in Africa, may be hit disproportionately hard because they won't be able to absorb the cases. This is similar to what we saw with the H1N1 pandemic in 2009 when Africa was disproportionately impacted, even though it was a mild pandemic.

BRINK: Are there likely to be hot spots where the virus will cluster? Can you give any sort of prediction of how it will spread globally?

Mr. Adalja: What we're learning is that this virus had been present in China for several weeks before it was discovered, and at that point, there was free movement of people. So what I hypothesize is that many countries already have cases that are not diagnosed.

This virus has emerged in the middle of a pretty severe flu season and likely was circulating alongside the flu and other respiratory viruses and not diagnosed because we don't diagnose most flu-like illnesses down to a specific viral level. I think the 2009 H1N1 pandemic is a good example, where it will basically be everywhere.



BRINK: There was a lot of talk at the time about SARS and then MERS, but you don't hear very much about those anymore. Is that because they have just been absorbed into the system, or have they disappeared?

Mr. Adalja: SARS has disappeared. SARS was something that didn't have very good transmissibility characteristics in humans, so it basically disappeared once we understood how to contain it.

This was something that was really relying on poor infection control procedures and health care facilities. Once we were able to augment infection-control procedures, this virus died out because it didn't have the ability to sustain itself in human populations.

MERS or Middle East Respiratory Syndrome emerged as something different. This is something that comes from animals. It spreads directly from camels to humans, and it has a hard time spreading from human to human outside of health care facilities.

We are still seeing cases. There have been cases reported within the last week on the Arabian Peninsula. It's very hard to eliminate because of people's contact with camels, but it didn't rise to the level of a pandemic because it didn't have the capacity to spread efficiently between humans. But it is still there and is still killing people in the Arabian Peninsula.

BRINK: You have said that the novel coronavirus is here to stay. Does that mean that it's just going to become part of the general flu season every year?

Mr. Adalja: Yes, I do think that there's a very high likelihood that it will become a seasonal coronavirus, and this may end up becoming what we would call the fifth community-acquired coronavirus.

BRINK: So if I'm an international company, with supply chains around the world, can you give any guidance about how one could prepare for this, not only for one's employees, but also for the business?

Mr. Adalja: The overriding principle is that people's reaction to this virus, including policymakers and governments, is going to have an outsize impact, much bigger than the actual virus itself.

When you have basically an entire province of China shut down, it really is leading to an unnecessary supply shock that will cause reverberations. So it's important for businesses to think about their supply chain, think about how much reliance they have on an outbreak zone and on countries that are prone to taking these kinds of drastic measures, irrespective of the actual risks.

Think about whether there are alternative suppliers. How can we transition away from having supply chains that are vulnerable in this manner? And how do we continue business operations while we transition away from those types of locations where there may be a disruption in the supply chain?

It's unclear how long it's going to last, but right now, it's vital for companies whose supply chains are linked to China to revisit that and look at alternatives.

BRINK: *And for guidance in terms of employees, are there any precautionary measures that you could recommend?*

Mr. Adalja: Right now, we have a travel advisory to China, and I think that it's something that should be followed in general. Not necessarily because I believe that this virus poses a cataclysmic risk, but because if you go to China and you come back, you will be quarantined because of the U.S. policy that's in place right now.

Right now, the United States is looking at China specifically, but other countries like the United Kingdom have extended that kind of travel advisory and are treating people, for example, that come from Singapore and other parts of the world with similar types of precautions.

Eventually, as people understand that this is going to be a mild pandemic and not containable, you will start to see those travel restrictions lift, because they don't work. And people will have to cope with this coronavirus as a risk that's going to have to be incorporated into daily life for ordinary people, for employees

for everyone.

Eventually, employees are going to have to start traveling again, but I would consider waiting it out until some of these travel restrictions lift, because they may end up getting trapped with these quarantine and travel restrictions that may be really disruptive.

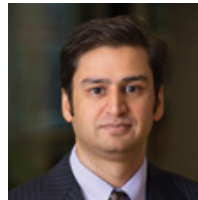
BRINK: *When companies look at their risk portfolio, they consider geopolitical risks and so forth. Should a company be incorporating these sorts of public health issues as part of their risk assessments?*

Mr. Adalja: Definitely. This novel coronavirus isn't the first time this has happened, and it's not the last time. Many people in the private sector are not well-attuned to the risks of infectious diseases and how disruptive they can be.

They are disruptive not only to people's personal lives or to the health care sector, but to any sector because obviously you're employing people, you have supply chains, you have travel. All kinds of different ramifications can occur from an infectious disease outbreak.

So when a company is looking at its systemic risks, whatever their industry may be, it is really important to incorporate the risk of infectious disease threats and think about how you will mitigate them, how you will prepare your workforce for them and how you will think about continuity of operations if you are in a situation where an outbreak is becoming as disruptive as this coronavirus is.

About Author Amesh Adalja



Dr. Amesh A. Adalja is a senior scholar at the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security

Member Personality



Mr. Anjum Nisar Elected New President of FPCCI

The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) in December 2019 elected Mr. Anjum Nisar its new President whose term will

be for the year 2020 till December 31, 2020.

Mr. Anjum Nisar, who is former President of The Lahore

Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), is a seasoned businessman and has a vast knowledge about the issues being faced by the trade, industry and economy. Under his leadership, the FPCCI is expected to continue playing a vital role in the development of the local business community as well as a bridge between the private and public sectors in Pakistan.

The FPCCI also voted in the election of eleven Vice Presidents in charge of different areas of developments and functions.

Product & Service Councils

Asian Tourism Council

FIH Urges Government to Shift Focus Toward Tourism

Formosa International Hotels (FIH) Group of Taiwan on January 16 called on the government to assign more importance to the tourism industry, saying it could develop into a growth driver like the technology sector.

Leisure and hospitality operators are like exporters in that they make money from serving foreigners and can play a significant role in supporting GDP growth if the industry grows big enough, FIH chairman Steve Pan told a news conference.

Pan, who is also a standing board member of the Chinese National Association of Industry and Commerce, said a turning point is taking shape as Taiwan benefits from the US-China trade dispute.

Pan said that top-ranking business travelers — senior executive officers and university principals — had been dwindling for the past three decades as local firms moved operations to China and other emerging markets to save costs.

However, that trend has somewhat reversed in the past two years, as local firms shifted partial production home, while global technology titans expanded research and development facilities in Taiwan, Pan said.

In addition, top-tier universities are asked to take sides and Taiwan appears a favored partner as the trade dispute evolves into a technology competition, he said.

The changes are favorable for Taiwan if policymakers can ensure healthy infrastructure, including sufficient labor supply, Pan said, adding that FIH has had difficulty finding housekeeping and cleaning staff.

Taiwan should learn from Japan, where authorities have allowed the service sector leeway in hiring foreign laborers to meet a rapid increase in foreign tourists that reached 30 million in 2019, he said.

“Opening markets and deregulation do not require funding in the pursuit of growth,” Pan said, adding that the government is on the right track in shifting

its focus to pro-growth measures rather than equitable redistribution of sources.

FIH’s core businesses, including its flagship property Regent Taipei, would continue to grow this year, thanks to its leadership position and successful business model, he said. Regent Taipei managing director Simon Wu said the facility aims for an occupancy rate of 85 percent this year, up from 81 percent last year.

Taipei Times

Asian ICT Council

Huawei inks accord with Ministry for 5G Technology



Huawei Technologies (Cambodia) Co Ltd signed an agreement with the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications to provide the Kingdom with the latest ICT equipment and a 5G technology training programme.

The agreement was signed by the ministry’s secretary of state Sok Puthyvuth and Huawei Cambodia CEO Yao Yuya. Presiding over the signing ceremony were Minister Tram Iv Tek and Chinese Ambassador to Cambodia Wang Wentian.

Iv Tek noted that Cambodia has experienced strong and stable growth over the last two decades.

However, with the emergence of the digital economy and the onset of the fourth industrial revolution, the Kingdom must maintain a long-term vision and accelerate its economic transformation to sustain its growth, he said.

“The Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications has played an important role in supporting the government in achieving its strategic policy vision for a digital economy, as well as preparing for the fourth industrial revolution as outlined in the Rectangular Strategy Phase IV of the sixth mandate of the Royal Government of Cambodia.

“The products and services offered to the ministry today will be used to achieve maximum efficiency. I hope that cooperation between the ministry and Huawei will grow even stronger,” he said.

Yao said Huawei strives to be the world’s leading ICT supplier and fulfil its social responsibilities to Cambodia.

“Based on the previous agreement between [Prime Minister] Hun Sen and the Huawei leadership, the firm is pleased to support the ministry by providing it with a data centre facility, video conference system, a piece of fibre-to-the-office equipment and Huawei laptops for central and provincial government offices.

“This year is an important year for Cambodia’s 5G and Huawei is delighted to be a part of its development,” said Yao.

Asia News Network

Asian Health & Education Council

New Diapers help Elderly Walk Easier



Unicharm Corp. has developed the world’s first adult diapers designed to help elderly people with walking difficulties move more easily.

The product, to go on sale in Japan on Feb. 4, addresses a market need spurred on by the nation’s rapidly graying population, according to Unicharm officials.

In the Japanese market, adult diapers have outsold baby diapers since 2011. The domestic adult diaper market has been growing at an annual rate of 5 percent and is expected to expand.

Aging causes abdominal muscles to weaken, shifting the body’s natural center of gravity forward, thus making it more difficult to walk. But Unicharm’s diaper stabilizes the pelvis through a special sheet that increases pressure around the stomach

Product & Service Councils

and improves the ability to stretch armpit muscles, the company says.

The diaper's effectiveness was confirmed based on the improved ease with which users raised their legs and the lengthening of their steps, according to Unicharm, which has developed the product in collaboration with the Hyogo University of Health Sciences.

"It appears that the diaper helps the wearer stand straighter," said Kotaro Kawaguchi, a professor of orthopedic and sports physical therapy at the university's School of Rehabilitation.

"Being able to move on their own improves their quality of life," Kawaguchi said.

Unicharm's newest product is priced at ¥1,600 for a pack of 18 medium-sized diapers or 16 large ones.

Japan Times



to its "Housaku Keikaku"(2) agricultural IT management tool and will launch the revised service on April 1. Verification began last October with trials at three sites including SuGWat Farmers, an agricultural corporation based in Aichi Prefecture.

Since 2014, with agriculture facing many issues, Toyota developed and introduced Housaku Keikaku, an agricultural IT management tool, by adapting the Toyota Production System to agriculture in an attempt to increase productivity. This Housaku Keikaku is a cloud service developed to centrally manage paddy fields and enable efficient farming. Currently, it has been introduced to 94 agricultural management bodies nationwide, in the process of growing seedlings through the management of abnormalities in work processes and costs. We have achieved great results in improving the management of Japanese

agricultural business, such as reducing waste due to overproduction.

With the update to Housaku Keikaku, supported products have been expanded to include fruits, vegetables, livestock and more, based on the request from the agricultural management body, so that it can be widely applied not only to rice cultivation but also to outdoor vegetables and greenhouse cultivation. In addition, by adding a new function(2) that centrally manages a series of information on orders, personnel, production, shipping, and inventory, it is possible to reduce waste loss and shipping delays, for example, by improving the accuracy of production planning for custom-made vegetables. It has also made possible the creation of production and personnel plans, which has been a burden on management and to streamline management operations.

The system lineup comprises three types--Type A, Type B, and Type C(3). New business management, agricultural machinery management, environmental management, and ledger output functions and other are available as options, enabling customers to select functions based on individual needs.

AsiaOne

Food & Agriculture Council

Toyota Updates Its "Housaku Keikaku" Agricultural IT Management Tool in Japan

Toyota Motor Corporation announces that it has made improvements

Investment & Joint Ventures in the Region

Chinese Investors Pursue Deeper Textile Ties with Pakistan



Pakistan's clothing and textile sector hopes that 2020 will be a big year for Chinese investment as companies look to move production to outsourcing centres with lower labour costs, a skilled workforce and government incentives

through reduced taxes and duties.

"The interest of Chinese investors in the textile/garments segment has increased many-fold in Pakistan's Punjab province (a major clothing and textile manufacturing hub)," says Sharqui Tipu, additional director for exhibitions and events at the Punjab Board of Investment & Trade, a government agency attracting foreign investment.

"One of the potential projects with around US\$500m is the setting up of a comprehensive textile park near Lahore, where initial work on the project is already completed and construction is the finalization stage," Sharqui told just-style.

A key Chinese investor developing

the Lahore Apparel Park is Faisalabad-based Challenge Apparels, a subsidiary of Shanghai Challenge Textile Co Ltd.

The project should start production for the export market by 2021, Pakistan textile industry officials told just-style, adding that it reflects China's desire to relocate labour intensive industries to neighbouring counties such as Pakistan that already have a solid textile and garment manufacturing base.

Government officials say they hope its manufacturing units might earn as much as US\$300m to US\$500m per year in export earnings.

just-style.com

CIP Sells Stake in Wind Farms to Insurers



Danish wind energy developer Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP) has sold more than 12 percent of its Taiwanese wind farm holdings to Taiwan Life Insurance Co and Transglobe Life Insurance Co through a joint venture, it said on January 15.

CIP formed Taiwan Wind Investment Co Ltd with the insurance companies to sell them a combined 12.5 percent of its stake in the Chang Fang and Xidao wind farms to comply with Financial Supervisory Commission (FSC) regulations.

The FSC approved the investments of NT\$2.5 billion (US\$83.47 million) and NT\$1.7 billion from Taiwan Life and Transglobe respectively, making them the first insurers to invest in wind energy.

Taiwan Life Insurance said it has invested up to NT\$7 billion to date in the nation's green energy sector.

CIP remains the largest shareholder, with an 87.5 percent stake, in the two wind farms, which have a combined capacity of 600 megawatts and are scheduled to integrate with the nation's power grid by 2024.

Taiwan Institute for Sustainable Energy chairman Eugene Chien said the sale makes sense as input and support from the finance industry is necessary.

The government plans to reach a combined capacity of 7.5 gigawatts in offshore wind energy by 2025, which would require investments of an estimated NT\$850 billion, which might be difficult for wind developers to shoulder alone, he said.

CIP Taiwan project office chief executive Jesper Krarup Holst said the company is the first among wind energy developers to receive investments from local life insurance companies and aims to strengthen cooperation between the offshore wind power industry and the finance industry.

Holst is confident that CIP would meet all requirements set by the Taiwanese government, he added.

CIP signed power purchase agreements with Taiwan Power Co in February 2019 and has also obtained approval from the Ministry of Economic Affairs' Industrial Development Bureau.

The firm is currently developing, with China Steel Corp and Diamond Generating Asia Ltd (DGA), the Site 29 project, which would have a capacity of 300 megawatts and is scheduled to be completed by 2024.

Taipei Times

Farcent Hoping to Hike Sales in Southeast Asia



Farcent Enterprise Co, which

manufactures and sells air fresheners and disposable dehumidifiers, is seeking to boost sales in Southeast Asia by 20 to 30 percent this year, while expanding its agency business by 10 to 20 percent.

Pedro Her, a vice president in charge of the company's agency business and overseas markets, said there is still ample room for sales growth in Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia, where competition is increasing.

"We aim to build a deeper and broader presence in those markets," whose fast-growing economies suggest more business potential, Her said on the sidelines of a public function on Friday last week.

Domestically, the company has set a growth target of up to 20 percent for its agency business, aided by the recent addition of the Royal Doulton tableware brand to its product portfolio, which used to center around Corelle Ware, Her said.

Consumers and restaurants are increasingly placing food on nice-looking serveware to enhance the gastronomic experience, he said.

"Food set on designed tableware looks more delicious and gains value," he said.

The trend suggested a business opportunity, as people eat three meals a day, so the Taipei-based company in November last year joined forces with Finnish home product maker Fiskars Living to offer Royal Doulton tableware, which costs NT\$500 to NT\$1,000 for a single piece, Her said.

In line with the strategy, Farcent has reduced its focus on the Royal Doulton Pacific and Gordon Ramsay by Royal Doulton collections, he said.

Taipei Times

Economic Cooperation News

Taiwan's CPTPP bid worth backing: Ex-Japan Official

A former Japanese representative to Taiwan has urged his country to support Taiwan's admission to a free-trade agreement between Canada and 10 other countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

Judging by Taiwan's economic scale and geopolitical importance in the Taiwan Strait, it is fully eligible to

become a member of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), said Tadashi Ikeda, former chief representative of the Interchange Association's, Taipei office.

The association, now called the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association, represents Japan's interests in Taiwan in the absence of diplomatic ties, which ended in 1972.

The CPTPP came into being after

US President Donald Trump pulled the US out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), soon after he took office in January 2017.

Taiwan had hoped to join the TPP, which was signed in February 2016, but was not ratified.

Taiwan is an important partner for Japan, with shared values and close economic ties, Ikeda said, adding that the two nations should further bolster their substantive unofficial ties.

Economic Cooperation News

Japan should throw its support behind Taiwan's bid to join the Japan-led CPTPP, while the two nations should engage in closer security exchanges and dialogue, and promote exchanges between government officials, he said.

Taiwan and Japan should discuss protecting each other's harbors and bays in the event of an emergency, and talks should be held to come up with measures to respond to cyberattacks, he said.

Senior Taiwanese officials could make transit stops in Osaka, Japan, when visiting allies in the Pacific, Ikeda added.

Taipei Times

India Mulls Plan to Woo Apple and Samsung Suppliers

India is considering a plan to offer subsidized loans to mobile handset manufacturers in a bid to attract Apple Inc and Samsung Electronics Co's suppliers to open factories in the nation, a government official said.

The proposals by the Indian Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, which include offering interest subsidy on local borrowing by manufacturers, might form part of the federal budget to be unveiled on Feb. 1, the official said, asking not to be identified.

They also include setting up industrial zones equipped with taxation and customs clearance, along with infrastructure, such as roads, power and water supply, the official said.

India plans to make US\$190 billion of mobile phones by 2025 from US\$24 billion now.

The calls made to the spokesman of the ministry remained unanswered.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, which is under pressure to bring down a jobless rate that is the highest in 45 years, wants to attract overseas component makers and help boost the share of manufacturing in Asia's third-

largest economy to a quarter of the nation's GDP.

Modi's flagship "Make in India" program has been foundering, as poor road and port facilities deter investors.

There has been some success. Hon Hai Precision Industry Co, known internationally as Foxconn Technology Group, the largest assembler of Apple handsets, is ramping up manufacturing of iPhones in India.

It already has two factories in the southern Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, where it makes devices for Xiaomi Corp and Nokia Oyj.

Bloomberg

S. Korea vows to bolster economic cooperation with Russia, Mongolia



Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Hong Nam-ki speaks at a meeting with economy-related ministers held at the Government Complex Sejong

South Korea plans to bolster economic ties with Russia, Mongolia and other Central Asian nations and use the momentum to buttress recovery of the export-driven economy, the top fiscal policy chief said.

"We will strengthen economic cooperation with our neighboring nations in line with the New Northern Policy," said Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Hong Nam-ki in a meeting with economy-related ministers.

A cooperative scheme with Russia in nine key sectors including railways, electricity, shipbuilding, ports,

gas and fisheries -- called "the nine bridges cooperation system" -- will be expanded and reformed, he said.

Long-term economic cooperation plans coupled with bilateral free trade deals with Mongolia and other Central Asian nations will also be established, the minister added.

By injecting 240.5 trillion won (\$208 billion) of export financing and other supportive measures, the government will put a brake on a 13-month losing exports streak, Hong added.

Experts interpreted his remarks as the government's willingness to make headways in relations with North Korea through renewed railway network talks with Moscow. The initial talks of connecting the Korean Peninsula with China and Russia via railways and roads are apparently stalled due to lackluster progress in the inter-Korean railway reconnection project blocked by United Nations sanctions.

"China and Russia last month proposed to the UN council to lift a raft of sanctions on North Korea and ease restrictions on its infrastructure projects," Koh Yu-hwan, a professor of North Korean Studies at Dongguk University told The Korea Herald.

Koh, who attended the annual Eastern Economic Forum held in Vladivostok, Russia, in September 2019, said that Moscow has lost interest in the railway project due to the sanctions that maintain a tight grip on Pyongyang.

On the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, an Asia-Pacific trade deal involving ASEAN nations and its dialogue partners including South Korea, China, Japan, Australia and India, Hong said the government will ramp up efforts to conclude it by the end of the year. A majority of the participating parties reached an agreement on the deal in November 2019.

The Korea Herald

Fairs & Exhibits in Asia-Pacific

DATES 2020	NAME OF FAIR (Further Information)	COUNTRY	DATES 2020	NAME OF FAIR (Further Information)	COUNTRY
3-5 March 	Middle East Energy Dubai (Informa Markets, Tel: 971-4-407-2583, Email: info@middleeast-energy.com, URL: https://www.middleeast-energy.com/en/home.html)	Dubai U. A. E.	12-15 March 	IFEX 2020 (Dyandra Promosindo, Tel: 62-21-5367-311, Email: info@ifexindonesia.com, URL: https://ifexindonesia.com/)	Jakarta Indonesia
3-5 March 	Asia Pacific Wind Energy Expo (Intercon Convention Management Co. Ltd., Tel: 886-921-135-128, Email: maggy.su@intercon.com.tw, URL: http://www.intercon.com.tw)	Kaohsiung Taiwan	16-18 March 	Care/Welfare Robot & Device Expo 2020 (UBM Japan Co., Ltd. Tel: 91-3-5296-1034, Email: helpdeskjapan@medtec-japan.com, URL: http://www.medtecjapan.com/en)	Tokyo Japan
3-6 March 	Architecture + Construction Materials 2020 (Nikkei Inc./Space Media Japan, Tel: 81-3-6256-7355, Email: tradefairs2020@smj.co.jp, URL: http://www.tradefairs2020.com)	Tokyo Japan	17-20 March 	Inlegmash 2020 (Expocentre, Tel: 7-499-795-2766, Email: inlegmash@expocentr.ru, URL: https://www.inlegmash-expo.ru/en/)	Moscow Russia
3-7 March 	India Smart Utility Week 2020 (India Smart Grid Forum, Tel: 91-9868-3354-85, Email: b.rai@indiasmartgrid.org, URL: http://www.indiasmartgrid.org)	New Delhi India	18-20 March 	ILDEX Vietnam 2020 (VEAS Co., Ltd., Tel: 84-28-3848-8561, Email: info@veas.com.vn, URL: https://ildex.com.vn/en/home/)	HoChiMinh City/Vietnam
4-6 March 	Smart Factory + Automation World 2020 (Smart Factory + Automation World Secretariat, Tel: 82-2-6000-8129, Email: automationworld.biz@coex.co.kr, URL: http://automationworldkorea.com/)	Seoul Korea	18-20 March 	Ecology of Big City (Expoforum, Tel: 7-812-240-4040, Email: o.pavlovskaya@expoforum.ru, URL: https://ecology.expoforum.ru/en/)	St. Petersburg/ Russia
5-7 March 	Medical Fair India 2020 (Messe Duesseldorf India Pvt. Ltd., Tel: 91-11-4855-0000, Email: info@md-india.com, URL: http://www.md-india.com)	Mumbai India	19-21 March 	Expomed Eurasia (Reed Tuyap Exhibitions Inc., Tel: 90-212-867-1100, Email: gokhanevcil@reedtuyap.com/tr, URL: http://www.reedtuyap.com/tr)	Istanbul Turkey
10-12 March 	Automotive Testing Expo Korea Expo 2020 (UKIP Media & Events Ltd., Tel: 44-1306-743744, Email: dominic.cundy@ukimediaevents.com, URL: http://www.ukimediaevents.com)	Goyang Korea	19-21 March 	5th Dhaka Auto Parts Show 2020 (CEMS-Global USA in Association with CEMS Bangladesh, Tel: 880-2-4881-0267#81, Email: contact@cems-autopartsshow.com, URL: http://www.cems-autopartsshow.com)	Dhaka Bangladesh
10-13 March 	Climate World 2020 (EUROEXPO GmbH, Tel: 43-1-230-85-3533, Email: y.marouf@euroexpo-vienna.com, URL: https://climatexpo.ru/eng/)	Moscow Russia	20-21 March 	The Franchising & Business Opportunities Expo (Specialised Events, Tel: 61-4-1332-4717, Email: rachel@specialisedevents.com.au, URL: http://www.specialisedevents.com.au)	Sydney Australia
11-13 March 	AgroWorld Uzbekistan (Iteca Exhibitions, Tel: 998-71-205-1818, Email: agroworld@iteca.uz, URL: https://iteca.uz/agroworld/eng/index.php)	Tashkent Uzbekistan	21-23 March 	Power & Alternative Energy Asia 2020 (Ecommerce Gateway Pakistan (Pvt) Ltd., Tel: 92-21-3870-9970, Email: info@powerasia.com.pk, URL: http://www.powerasia.com.pk)	Karachi Pakistan
11-13 March 	Australian Oil & Gas Exhibition & Conference (Diversified Communications Australia, Tel: 61-3-9261-4500, Email: aog@divcom.net.au, URL: http://www.divcom.net.au)	Perth Australia	24-26 March 	Propak Vietnam 2020 (informa makets, Tel: 65-6233-6652, Email: Jeffrey.au@ubm.com, URL: http://propakvietnam.com/)	HoChiMinh City/Vietnam
12-15 March 	Meltalworking EURASIA (Hannover Fairs Turkey Fuarcilik A.S., Tel: 90-212-334-6900, Email: info@hf-turkey.com, URL: http://www.hf-turkey.com)	Istanbul Turkey	25-27 March 	Japan Drone 2020 (Japan UAS Industrial Development Association, Tel: 81-3-5244-5285, Email: kumamoto@uas-japan.org, URL: http://www.uas-japan.org)	Chiba Japan
13-14 March 	GTF 2020 (ExpoGeorgia, Tel: 995-32-234-1100, Email: expo@expogeorgia.ge, URL: http://www.tourismexpo.ge/?lang=en)	Tbilisi Georgia	26-29 March 	IBAKTECH (Messe Stuttgart Ares Fuarcilik Ltd. Sti., Tel: 90-212-284-1110, Email: info@messe-stuttgart.com.tr, URL: http://ibaktech.com/en/startseite/)	Istanbul Turkey

Online System Planned to Link Food Banks with Donors



A staff member at the nonprofit organization FoodBank Yamanashi packs food in Minami Alps, Yamanashi Prefecture, in September 2019.

The farm ministry will launch an online system in fiscal 2020 to link food banks with food donors to support needy people and families while cutting food waste, officials said January 18.

Under the envisaged system, food manufacturers and retailers input information such as type, quantity and the delivery time of leftover foods they can provide, while food bank operators and welfare facilities enter the details of foods they need, the officials said.

The system will make it easier for donors and recipients to connect based on the information gathered.

“Many companies hesitate to donate food out of concern that they might be diverted into other channels,” said a Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries official.

The new system “can help such companies get information such as recipients and the amount of food they need, making them feel secure about donating food,” the official said.

Initially, the ministry is considering running the system in each of the country’s 47 prefectures.

The number of groups operating food banks around the country jumped to 105 in 2019 from just 12 in fiscal 2008. This compares with more than 200 in the United States, where the food bank system began in 1967.

Major companies such as convenience store operator Lawson Inc. and fast-food chain Kentucky Fried Chicken Japan Ltd. have started providing

leftover food to those in need through such food banks.

But the effect on reducing food waste across the country has been marginal.

Japan Times

Smartwatch can monitor stroke risk



Researchers from National Central University's College of Health Sciences and Technology who helped develop a wearable monitor that can test a wearer's heart function and analyze it via cloud-based artificial intelligence pose for photographers at a news conference in Taipei.

National Central University researchers have developed a wearable smartwatch device that can check heart function through an electrocardiogram (ECG) test and determine whether the user has an irregular heartbeat or could be at risk of a stroke.

A team from the College of Health Sciences and Technology developed the device as part of the “AI-realized fenceless hospital” program.

The wearer needs to press on the device’s surface with their index finger for one to two minutes to perform an ECG test, team member Lin Chen, an assistant professor in biomedical science and engineering, told in a news conference.

Using real-time analysis provided by an artificial intelligence-based cloud ECG reading system, the device can determine whether the user has atrial fibrillation (AF) or an irregular heartbeat (arrhythmia), which could lead to blood clots, stroke, heart failure and other complications, Lin said.

The data collected by the smartwatch, which can detect AF with 97 percent accuracy, can be used to monitor chronic disease or identify high-risk

patients, he added.

While AF is a common form of arrhythmia clinically, only about one in 100 people has the condition, placing them at high risk of a stroke, Lin said.

The US Food and Drug Administration in 2018 certified the device for medical treatment, the team said.

Taiwan Landseed Hospital physician Lin Ying-kuang said that people’s heart rates change continuously, so arrhythmia cannot always be detected at hospitals, so it is vital for people to be able to monitor their health at home.

With the smartwatch, people can have their heartbeat measured whenever they feel unwell and physicians can monitor the measurement using the data uploaded by the watch to the cloud system, Lin Ying-kuang said.

Taipei Times

Indonesian Unicorn to Launch Bumper Fundraising



South-East Asia shows signs of remaining hot for “unicorn” funding rounds. Tokopedia, the Indonesian ecommerce start-up, is in the final stages of preparing a fundraising of up to \$1.5bn from investors including Singapore’s Temasek, China’s Alibaba and Japan’s SoftBank, according to Henny Sender.

If the large funding round goes ahead, it would suggest that South-East Asia may remain somewhat sequestered from the chill that has shrunk valuations since the WeWork debacle. SoftBank-backed WeWork, once valued at \$47bn, is now thought to be worth less than \$5bn.

The fundraising, which could come as soon as next quarter, would value Tokopedia at between \$8bn and \$9bn, making the company Indonesia’s second-largest unicorn after Gojek, which is valued at about \$10bn.

The additional capital would give Tokopedia more ammunition in its fight to

dominate the ecommerce market in south-east Asia's biggest economy. Wealth fund Temasek is expected to lead the round with a \$500m investment, with existing Tokopedia investors SoftBank and Alibaba joining in to avoid any dilution to their

existing stakes.

The WeWork debacle has raised scepticism in Asia over several fast-growing unicorns, including Oyo, the Indian hotel start-up, and Paytm, the Indian payments start-up. But the Tokopedia example shows

that for a unicorn in prime position in the region's biggest potential market, the thirst to invest remains strong.

Financial Times

Policy Updates

Australia

Australian Economic Forecast hit by Bushfires, Low Wage Rises and High Household Debt

Economic growth will be lower than government forecasts for the rest of the decade as consumers battling persistently low wage rises and high household debt keep their wallets shut, ANZ's chief economist says.

David Plank estimates growth in gross domestic product over the 2020s will be between 2% and 2.5% a year, well short of the 3% a year Treasury predicted the economy would hit within the next two years in an update issued in December.

Plank said the prospect of lower growth for longer meant the government should consider stimulus options including infrastructure spending and tax cuts for business.

Australia's economy has also been battered by last month's unprecedented bushfires, which have devastated tourism areas and are estimated to have wiped between 0.1 and 0.2 points from GDP growth figures.

Plank said the underlying cause of the broader economic slowdown was not clear.

But he said it seemed growth was being crimped by a lack of demand from Australian consumers, who are burdened by debts that on average are more than 200% of household disposable income.

The Guardian

Bangladesh

'Made in Bangladesh' Expo Showcases Products of Over 60 Companies

The event kicked off with the ribbon-cutting ceremony led by the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry Sultan al-Khater, Qatar Businessmen Association (QBA) chairman Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim al-Thani, and the Advisor to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh Salman F Rahman.

The trade and investment exhibition was jointly organised by the Bangladesh embassy in Qatar and the Bangladesh Forum Qatar (BFQ), and patronised by the Export Promotion Bureau of Bangladesh, sponsored by Qatar Financial Centre (QFC), and supported by the Qatar Chamber and the QBA.

Rahman is leading the delegation from Bangladesh, bringing with him different government agencies like the Bangladesh Industrial Development Authority, Export Promotion Bureau, Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority, Bangladesh High Tech Parks Authority and industry leaders from different sectors, as well as more than 60 participating Bangladeshi companies.

The products and services on display at the exhibition are being exported by Bangladesh to more than 100 countries around the world, the BFQ said in a statement.

The event is expected to give companies from both countries the opportunity to interact through business-to-business meetings at the venue.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony was followed by a tour of the exhibition hall and highlighted by the seminar "Bangladesh-Qatar Relations: Untapped Potentials", which was opened by BFQ founding president Iftexhar Ahmad, followed by a speech from Ashud Ahmed, the ambassador of Bangladesh to Qatar.

QFC CEO Yousuf al-Jaida spoke on the "Role of Qatar Financial Centre", while Doha Bank CEO Dr R Seetharaman spoke about "Growing Opportunities

for Bangladesh and Qatar." Rahman focused on updates about the Bangladesh economy, while BFQ president Yousuf Saeed concluded the seminar with a vote of thanks.

"Qatar is one of the most opulent countries in the world in terms of per capita income that provides easy access to the world's major centres of commerce. I am sure, the country can be an excellent market, as well as a distribution hub for our export products.

"In addition, we have a large workforce stationed in the country, which could be a niche market for our products, too. Therefore, I am confident that the export promotion exhibition and investment hunting event will help propel the growth target in a new booming market," Rahman said.

Gulf Times

Cambodia

Japan's foreign direct investment in Cambodia peaks \$2.5 billion in Last 15 years



Miyao Masahiro chief representative Japan External Trade Organisation.

Between 1994 and 2019, Cambodia welcomed 137 Japanese investment projects worth US\$2.5 billion under the framework of Japan's direct investment.

The update was provided by Bun Chanthy, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Commerce in a seminar on

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“Benefiting from Valuable Chain through MSME Links” here in Phnom Penh recently.

The investment projects, Bun Chanthy continued, focused on electronic parts, electricity, vehicle auto parts, technical equipment, agro-industry, processing food, hotels, tourism, hospitals, shopping malls and beyond.

There are also Japan’s 1,799 small and medium enterprises (SME) investing in areas such as banking, aviation, and catering, he added.

“Japanese businesses and investment in Cambodia are renowned for their quality. They add value to local goods, generate jobs and help improve the living standards of Cambodian workers, which is in line with the vision and mission of the Royal Government of Cambodia.

“The number of Japanese firms doing business in the Kingdom increases every year. Their decision to invest and expand their operations in the Kingdom signals strong confidence on the Cambodian government and in its investment environment,” Bun Chanthy was quoted as saying.

Khmer Times

Hong Kong

9,000 Hong Kong hospital workers are threatening to strike amid coronavirus outbreak if the government doesn’t close its border with mainland China

More than 3,000 hospital workers in Hong Kong have voted in favor of a strike that could begin as early as Feb. 3 in a move to pressure the Hong Kong government to close its borders with mainland China amid the ongoing Wuhan coronavirus outbreak.

The workers are members of the Hospital Authority Employees Alliance, formed in December and consisting of 18,000 doctors, nurses, and other hospital employees, per the South China Morning Post (SCMP). Members representing the organization told the SCMP that the low turnout was due to members who were working or not in the city to vote.

More than 9,000 medical workers have signed a petition, pledging to join the potential strike, the SCMP reported. Non-essential hospital workers were expected to strike on Feb. 3, with the rest of the workers beginning to strike throughout the week of Feb. 10, the Hong Kong news outlet said.

The Hong Kong Hospital Authority said it was closely monitoring the strike. There are around 77,000 total workers at the public hospitals, including 6,500 doctors and 27,000 nurses, the SCMP said.

As Reuters reported, Carrie Lam, Hong Kong’s chief executive, has resisted calls to close Hong Kong’s borders with China, citing guidance from the World Health Organization.

“I am afraid (closing the border) contradicts the WHO suggestion ... which asks governments not to take any measures that may fuel discrimination,” Lam said at a news conference.

The threatened strike comes as nations around the world move to impose new travel restrictions with China in order to limit the spread of the coronavirus, which has killed at least 259 and infected around 12,000 others. While the virus has gone global, the majority of its effects have been felt in mainland China.

As Business Insider reported, the coronavirus has spread to every part of China, with at least 10 cases in Hong Kong.

Business Insider

India

More Opening Up Mulled

The government is considering further opening up its insurance and aviation sectors to foreign investors to help spur the economy, people familiar with the matter said. The Ministry of Finance has suggested increasing the limit on foreign direct investment in insurance and pension companies to 74 percent from 49 percent, and allowing foreign airlines to own Indian carriers, the people said.

It also wants to allow 100 percent foreign investment in railway operations, education and rental housing management companies, the people said.

The government wants to increase the amount of foreign direct investment to as much as 6 percent of GDP, the people said, compared with less than 2 percent.

Taipei Times

Japan

First year of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement shows growth in EU exports



1 February 2020 marks the first anniversary of the entry into force of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). In the first ten months following the implementation of the agreement, EU exports to Japan went up by 6.6% compared to the same period the year before. This outperforms the growth in the past three years, which averaged 4.7% (Eurostat data). Japanese exports to Europe grew by 6.3% in the same period.

Commissioner for Trade Phil Hogan commented: “The EU-Japan trade agreement is benefitting citizens, workers, farmers and companies in Europe and in Japan. Openness, trust and a commitment to established rules help deliver sustainable growth in trade. The EU is and will continue to be the largest and most active trading block in the world. The EU is a trusted bilateral partner to more than 70 countries, with whom we have the biggest trading network in the world.”

The EPA creates new opportunities for European farmers and food producers, while fully protecting the EU’s interests. Thanks to the agreement, 211 high-quality food and drink products from the EU (so-called “geographical indications”) can now be sold under their own name in Japan and are protected from imitation.

In addition, the EU has gained better access to public contracts in Japan, one of the largest public procurement markets in the world. The agreement

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also offers better conditions for services suppliers, greater mobility for company employees, and a framework to enable the mutual recognition of professional qualifications.

The EU and Japan have also agreed to set ambitious standards on sustainable development, including for the first time a specific commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement.

Modern Diplomacy

Pakistan

Pakistan, Malaysia to Build Strong Economic Relationship



(Left) Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad and (Right) Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan

Pakistan and Malaysia have agreed to build a strong economic partnership and work together on issues affecting the Muslim Ummah.

The understanding came at talks between Prime Minister Imran Khan and Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad at Putrajaya.

The two sides agreed for regular discussions to strengthen the trade and investment relations by removing barriers in key areas. Both the sides also expressed commitment to build stronger ties in the areas of defense, law enforcement, tourism and education.

Later addressing a joint news conference along with the Malaysian counterpart, Prime Minister Imran Khan thanked Mahathir Mohamad for standing by Pakistan on Kashmir dispute and speaking against the injustices being perpetrated by Indian forces in occupied Kashmir.

Imran Khan said unfortunately a very radical and extremist government has taken over India which has put the

Kashmiri people in an open prison.

Prime Minister Imran Khan led the Pakistani delegation while the Malaysian side was led by its Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad.

The two sides discussed the entire spectrum of bilateral relations and ways and means to further expand their relations in different fields including trade, economy and tourism.

Both the sides are expected to sign a number of important agreements and MOUs.

Imran Khan will also address a think-tank event organized by the Institute of Strategic and International Studies of Malaysia.

He will also highlight the dire human rights and humanitarian situation in occupied Kashmir, emphasize the importance of averting risks to regional peace and stability posed by Indian belligerence, and underscore the importance of peaceful resolution of Kashmir dispute.

Earlier, Malaysian Minister for Defence Mohamad Sabu and senior officials of the Malaysian government received Imran Khan at Kuala Lumpur International Airport.

The Nation

Russia

Russia is closing its 2,600-mile border with China amid fears about the Wuhan coronavirus outbreak

Russian officials have ordered closed more than half of the crossing points along its 2,600-mile border with China, citing concerns about the Wuhan coronavirus that has so far sickened nearly 8,000 people around the world and killed 170 within China.

"We have to do everything to protect our people," Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin said at a televised cabinet meeting on January 30, The New York Times reported.

The crossing points will shut down as of midnight on January 31, local time, according to the newspaper.

Officials have not confirmed any coronavirus cases in Russia, but its government has been on edge nevertheless. On January 30, the foreign ministry issued a statement strongly advising its citizens not to travel to China unless "absolutely necessary."

The government also temporarily suspended electronic visas for Chinese citizens, according to the statement.

The World Health Organization also met January 30 and declared an international public health emergency over the virus.

Business Insider

Taiwan

Taiwan's Economy Accelerated in Final Quarter of 2019

Taiwan's economic growth accelerated in the final quarter of 2019, capping a year of better-than-expected performance amid investment returning from China.

Gross domestic product expanded 3.38% in the final three months, faster than in the previous quarter and economists' estimates of 2.78% growth

For the year, the economy grew 2.73%, just behind 2018's pace of 2.75%

Growth was better than forecast due to stronger investment, exports and private consumption, an official of the statistics office said after releasing the data

Investment by chip-maker Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. and other companies bringing money home helped the increase, statistics official Huang Wie-jie said, adding that he expects steady growth this year for the same reasons

Although the trade war between China and the U.S. has damaged demand across Asia, it also benefited Taiwan, as some companies increased production in the island economy, or raised exports as a way of avoiding tariffs

Investment momentum will continue this year and demand from other countries will rise as global demand recovers, according to Winston Chiao, an economist at Taishin Securities Investment

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Advisory Co. There will be a high base this year for comparison, but growth will be about 2.5% for the full year, he said

Imports of capital equipment in 4Q grew more than 49% in Taiwan dollar terms due to purchases made by Taiwanese semiconductor companies, Huang said.

“Taiwan’s real GDP growth in 2020 will likely be underpinned by strong domestic investment as re-shoring continues to take place under the government’s three-year Invest in Taiwan program,” Societe General SA analyst Michelle Lam wrote in a note before the data.

Bloomberg

Thailand

Thais Ban Single-Use bags at Major Stores

Thailand began the year with a ban on single-use plastic bags at major store, continuing a campaign launched by the government and retailers toward a complete ban in 2021 to reduce waste and debris in the sea.

“Thailand was ranked sixth among the world’s top countries that dumps waste into the sea,” Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Varawut Silpa-Archa told reporters after handing out reusable bags to the public. “During the past five months, we were down to 10th.”

The ministry says the country reduced the use of plastic bags by 2 billion, or about 5,765 tons in 2019, in the first phase of campaign to encourage consumers’ voluntarily refusal of plastic

bags from stores.

Varawut said the most challenging aspect would be the last 40 percent of plastic bags, used at fresh markets and in rural areas.

Reuters

Vietnam

Vietnam gives two scenarios for economic growth amid impact of coronavirus



Foreigners wear face masks while visiting Hỏa Lò Prison Museum in Hà Nội. Tourism is one of the sectors being affected by the coronavirus outbreak in China. - VNA/VNS

The Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) has submitted two scenarios for economic growth this year to the government, as the country faces the impact of coronavirus in China, one of Vietnam’s biggest trade partners.

In the first scenario, if the epidemic is controlled promptly in the first quarter of this year, Vietnam’s GDP growth rate is estimated at 6.27 per cent, 0.53 percentage points lower than the target set by the Government in its Resolution No. 1.

In the second scenario, if the epidemic is controlled in the second quarter, the estimated GDP will only increase 6.09 per cent over the previous year, 0.71 percentage points lower than the target.

MPI said that the epidemic might last until the first quarter or even into the second quarter of 2020.

“This makes it difficult to accomplish the objectives and targets of socio-economic development in 2020 assigned by the National Assembly, especially the targets of economic growth, trade, import and export in each quarter and the whole year.”

“To achieve the 2020 GDP growth rate of 6.8 per cent as set out in Resolution No.1, it is a huge challenge,” said Minister of Planning and Investment Nguyễn Chí Dũng.

The ministry said the epidemic would also greatly affect the target of controlling inflation below 4 per cent this year.

If the epidemic continues into the second quarter, in addition to the impact of petrol price adjustments, natural disasters, adverse weather and increasing pork price, the average Consumer Price Index this year could rise 4.86 per cent from last year.

According to the IMF, it is still quite early to assess the impact of the coronavirus outbreak on the global economy this year, but it is certain that growth in the first quarter will be seriously reduced.

The Star