



The 2020 CACCI Conference to be Held in Taipei in October



The 34th CACCI Conference will be held on October 29-30, 2020 in Taipei, Taiwan. This year's gathering will be jointly hosted by the Chinese International Economic Cooperation Association, Taiwan (CIECA) and the Chinese National Association of Industry and Commerce, Taiwan (CNAIC).

Relevant information – e.g., Tentative Program, hotel accommodation, registration procedure, etc. – will be sent to members as soon as these are available. In the meantime, members are requested to already block the dates in their calendar of events this year.

CACCI Invited to the Joint Business Council Meetings of ASEAN BAC in Danang, Vietnam



ASEAN-BAC

The Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CACCI) has been invited to attend the first meeting for 2020 of the Joint Business Councils (JBC) of the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC) to be held on April 7 in Danang, Vietnam. CACCI will participate in the meeting as an Associate Member of JBC.

The ASEAN-BAC was established by the ASEAN Heads of State and Government at the 7th ASEAN Summit in November 2001 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam. Launched in April 2003, ASEAN-BAC was set up with the mandate to provide private sector feedback and guidance to boost ASEAN's efforts towards economic integration. Aside from providing private sector feedback on the implementation of ASEAN economic cooperation, the Council also identifies priority areas for consideration of the ASEAN Leaders.

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Accordingly, ASEAN-BAC's activities are primarily focused on reviewing and identifying issues to facilitate and promote economic cooperation and integration. To help them in this regard, the ASEAN-BAC invites a number of joint business councils with interest in ASEAN (e.g., ASEAN-US Business Council, ASEAN-India Business Council, Australia-ASEAN Business Council, etc.) to attend regular meetings for dialogues and exchange of ideas on how to improve regional cooperation.

As Associate Member of the Joint Business Council, CACCI is invited to join these regular dialogues, and will



have the opportunity to provide inputs to the recommendations that the ASEAN-BAC will present to the ASEAN Leaders. In his Letter of Intent to the ASEAN-BAC Chairman Mr. Arin Jira from Thailand, CACCI President Mr. Samir Modi pointed out that, as a regional organization composed mostly of apex chambers of commerce and industry and

business associations in Asia, CACCI is in a position to make significant contribution to the work of the Joint Business Council and the ASEAN-BAC in identifying issues to facilitate and promote economic cooperation and integration.

For 2020, the JBC is scheduled to hold two meetings in preparation for the ASEAN Summit Meeting in November 2020 in Hanoi. The first JBC meeting is the upcoming April 7 meeting in Danang, and the second one in August, in Hanoi. CACCI was formally accepted as Associate Member of the JBC during the May 3, 2019 meeting of the ASEAN BAC held in Manila, Philippines.

CACCI Council Approves Governance Framework for All Product and Service Councils



As part of efforts to further strengthen the CACCI Product and Service Councils (PSCs) and make them more effective and efficient platforms for regional cooperation in various industry and service sectors, the CACCI Council has approved a Resolution to adopt a Governance Framework and Terms of Reference that would apply to all CACCI PSCs.

The adoption of the Governance Framework and Terms of Reference applicable to all PSCs aims to establish and perpetuate the efficiency in the PSCs' ability to meet its goals, and even their public relations and perceptions, as well as help define the role of those in leadership positions, delineate duties, and help prevent duplicated efforts and the overlooking of critical issues. It is also important in preserving and strengthening stakeholder confidence, providing the foundation for a high-performing organization, and ensuring the organization is well placed to respond to a changing external environment.

The PSCs have been established with the primary aim of promoting greater business interaction among CACCI members who are in the same product or service line. Membership in the PSCs will provide businessmen regular forum for:

- networking
- identifying and addressing issues affecting their respective sectors

- finding solutions to common problems
- working out specific programs to accelerate regional cooperation, particularly in the area of trade, investment, technology transfer, capital flow, and the exchange of information; and
- exploring opportunities for business cooperation and joint venture, and initiating and completing business deals.

There are currently eleven PSCs that are operating within the CACCI umbrella. These include the following:

- Asian Textiles and Garments Council (ATGC)
- Asian Council on Tourism (ACT)
- Asian Chemical Industry Council (ACIC)
- Asian Council on Food and Agriculture (ACFA)
- Asian ICT Council (AICTC)
- SME Development Council (SMEDC)
- Asian Council on Health and Education (ACHE)
- Asian Council on Contracting and Construction (ACCC)
- Asian Council on Water, Energy and Environment (ACWEE)
- CACCI Women Entrepreneurs Council (CWEC)
- Young Entrepreneurs Group Asia Pacific (YEGAP)

Two others – the Asian Bankers Association (ABA) and the Council of Asia-Pacific Furniture Associations (CAPFA) – have grown big enough and are now operating independently of CACCI.

ICC Launches Centre for Entrepreneurship

ICC CENTRE FOR
ENTREPRENEURSHIP



The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) has recently announced the launching of the ICC Centre for Entrepreneurship (ICC-CE), “a groundbreaking ICC initiative that will prepare and mobilise the next generation of entrepreneurs and business leaders across the world.” The ICC-CE, says ICC, will expand ICC’s membership across the globe, connect ICC with young entrepreneurs, start-ups and drive innovative and purpose-led businesses under the umbrella of our Lead for the Long Term campaign.

Through the ICC-CE, the ICC aims to leverage its global influence and network to: (i) develop skills for young people who face uncertain employment prospects and (ii) help catalyse local entrepreneurship through deeper collaborations with companies, chambers of commerce and technology partners.

The ICC-CE will serve as a flagship initiative to prepare and mobilize the next generation of entrepreneurs, from developing skills of young people who face uncertain employment prospects, to helping catalyse local entrepreneurship and the jobs of the future through deeper collaborations with companies, chambers of commerce and technology partners.

Building on a wealth of existing initiatives undertaken by chambers of commerce and other organizations to support entrepreneurs, the Centre will support projects on a global scale and connect local markets with small, medium and large-sized businesses from around the world. Under the umbrella of ICC’s campaign to Lead for the Long Term, the Centre will champion the role of entrepreneurs in delivering the UN 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and harness their innovation and creativity for the development of disruptive and purpose-led business models.

The Centre will welcome and actively pursue partnerships with innovative organisations to ensure the most dynamic, regionally relevant approaches are incorporated while minimising the need for ICC to “reinvent the wheel”.

To achieve these aims, the Centre will initially focus on the following areas:

- Championing the corporate-startup relationship through key initiatives to promote open innovation and linking corporate buyers/investors with local entrepreneurs
- Pairing young entrepreneurs with subject-matter experts from across ICC’s geographical and industry base, who will provide support, guidance and feedback through virtual mentoring and coaching
- Running a series of ICC Talks with entrepreneurs, chambers of commerce, companies, banks, governments and international organisations to collectively address challenges to the realisation of economic opportunities in emerging and developing markets
- Leveraging digital connectivity and solutions to create a highly scalable model with regional focal points that will allow for tailored programmes to address priority

challenges.

The Centre will enlist specific support from the following stakeholders:

- Corporate leaders from the ICC membership
- Chambers of commerce in over 100 countries
- International organisations and multilateral development banks
- Academic institutions and business schools > Technology partners, notably in the field of education and community engagement > Entrepreneur support networks

For more information, interested parties may contact any of the following: John W.H. Denton AO, Secretary General, john.denton@iccwbo.org; Quinlan Carthane, Chief of Staff, quinlan.carthane@iccwbo.org; or Julian Kassum, Global Membership and Services Director, julian.kassum@iccwbo.org

CACCI Invited to Attend the CoNGORCAP Meeting in Bangkok on May 22-23



The Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CACCI) has once again been invited to attend the upcoming meeting of the Regional Committee in Asia-Pacific (RCAP) of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CoNGO) to be held on May 22-23, 2020 in Bangkok, Thailand.

To be chaired by CoNGO President Mr. Liberato Bautista and co-chaired by CoNGO First Vice President Mr. Cyril Ritchie, the two-day meeting will examine case studies by NGOs/CSOs on implementation (regional, national, local) of the six Sustainable Goals (SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13, 16, 17) that are to be reviewed at the UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF) at the United Nations Headquarters in New York in July 2020.

Founded in 1948, CoNGO is an independent, international, non-profit membership association of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It facilitates the participation of NGOs in United Nations debates and decision-making. CoNGO is most active at the major UN centres of New York, Geneva and Vienna but its work stretches out to all regions of the world. CACCI, which was granted Consultative Status with the ECOSOC under the United Nations in 1970, joined CoNGO in 1979.

CoNGO and RCAP are committed to Agenda 2030 and to mobilization and action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Since the adoption of the 17 SDGs by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015, NGOs and CSOs throughout the world – including those in the Asia-Pacific region

– have set to work to make the Goals meaningful to the populations they serve, working in concert with governments, communities, academia and other stakeholders. NGOs/CSOs advocate with governments at national and local level to achieve meaningful commitment to implementation of the Goals.

The HLPF reviews each July the progress and the gaps on achieving the SDGs. This is done on a rotation basis, and in 2020 the HLPF will review the following Goals:

- a. Quality Education
- b. Decent Work and Economic growth
- c. Reduced Inequalities
- d. Climate Action
- e. Peace, Justice and strong institutions
- f. Partnerships for the Goals

NGOs/CSOs throughout the Asia-Pacific are working in many different ways and at many different levels on the six SDGs up for review at this year's HLPF. Thus for the Bangkok Meeting of RCAP on May 22-23, CoNGO has invited a wide range of Asia-Pacific NGOs/CSOs to present and discuss their substantive on-the-ground experience in advocating for and implementing one



or more of the above six SDGs. The participating NGOs/CSOs were requested to focus their discuss good practices, such as what initiatives have worked, what cooperation mechanisms with other stakeholders have proven valuable; as well as core challenges, such as what impediments have arisen in cooperation and outreach; and lessons learned, including what new mobilization actions and channels are needed and/or foreseen to make progress on SDG implementation.

The presentations on each of the six SDGs to be made at the Bangkok meeting of the RCAP would serve as the focus of analysis, lessons learned, and new cooperation – whether at country or regional level. Following the RCAP session in Bangkok, CoNGO is expected to produce a synthesis which will be fed into the 2020 HLPF. On an ongoing basis, all of these processes would serve also to enhance NGO/CSO relationships with and input to the UN Economic and Social Council for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP), the prime regional intergovernmental body promoting the SDGs. taking account of existing interactions and structures linking NGOs/CSOs with ESCAP, CoNGO hopes that the May 2020 meeting of RCAP in Bangkok would further foster long-term and enhanced cooperation.

What are Key Changes in Incoterms® 2020

Which Incoterms rule should I use?

The latest edition of the Incoterms® rules features an in-depth introduction to help users select the appropriate Incoterms® rule for their sale transaction. The introduction explains the purpose and use of the Incoterms® rules, identifies differences between Incoterms® 2010 and Incoterms® 2020, outlines best practice for incorporating the Incoterms® rules into contracts and explores the relation of contracts ancillary to the sale contract, the concepts of risk and delivery, the role of the carrier, and the care to be taken when using variants of the Incoterms® 2020 rules.

Incoterms® 2020 also incorporates expanded explanatory notes for users at the start of each Incoterms® rule. These explanatory notes assist users with accurately interpreting the latest edition of the Incoterms rules to avoid costly misinterpretations or misapplications.

Why has the FCA Incoterms rule been revised?

Free Carrier (FCA) has been revised for Incoterms® 2020 to cater to a situation where goods are sold FCA for carriage by sea and buyer or seller (or either party's bank) requests a bill of lading with an on-board notation. FCA in article A6/B6 now provides for the parties to agree that the buyer will instruct the carrier to issue an on-board bill of lading to the seller once the goods have been loaded on board, and for the seller then to tender the document to the buyer (often through the banks).



Where are the costs listed in Incoterms® 2020?

Within Incoterms® 2020, all costs associated with a given Incoterms rule now appear at article A9/B9 of that rule, allowing users to see the full list of expected costs at a glance. In addition to the aggregated presentation, the costs associated with each item – for example, carriage (article A4/B4) or export clearance (article A7/B7) – still appear in the respective articles to accommodate a user who wants to focus on a specific aspect of the sale transaction.

What are the different levels of insurance coverage in CIF and CIP?

The Incoterms 2020 rules provide for different levels of insurance coverage in the Cost Insurance and Freight (CIF) rule and Carriage and Insurance Paid To (CIP) rule.

Under the CIF Incoterms® rule, which is reserved for use in maritime trade and is often used in commodity trading, the Institute Cargo Clauses (C) remains the default level of coverage, giving parties the option to agree to a higher level of insurance cover. Taking into account feedback from global users, the CIP Incoterms® rule now requires a higher level of cover, compliant with the Institute Cargo Clauses (A) or similar clauses.

How does Incoterms® 2020 account for arranging carriage?

Incoterms® 2020 recognises that not all commercial trade transactions from the seller to the buyer are conducted

by a third-party carrier. In some cases, transactions are conducted without a third-party carrier at all, such as a seller using its own means of transportation, or a buyer using its own vehicle to collect goods.

Where is information on security-related requirements?

Building on the extensive security-related requirements established by Incoterms® 2010, the latest edition of the Incoterms® rules includes clearer and

more detailed security-related obligations in articles A4 on carriage and A7 on export/import clearance of each Incoterms® rule. Costs relating to these requirements also appear in the consolidated costs article, A9/B9.

Is the Incoterms rule DPU new?

No, simply renamed and moved to more accurately reflect the content of the rule. The former Delivered at Terminal (DAT) has been changed to Delivered at

Place Unloaded (DPU) to emphasise that the place of destination can be any place and not just a “terminal,” and to underscore the sole difference from Delivered at Place Unloaded (DPU) – under DAP the seller does not unload the goods, under DPU, seller does unload the goods.

And since delivery under DAP happens before unloading, Incoterms® 2020 presents the newly named DPU after DA.

International Chamber of Commerce

TOBB Meets with German and Austrian Investors in Turkey

The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) & German-Turkish Chamber of Industry and Commerce (AHK) & Advantage Austria Reception, which brought together representatives of German and Austrian companies investing in Turkey, was recently held at the TOBB Twin Towers.

Speaking at the reception, TOBB Board Treasurer Faik Yavuz stated that as TOBB, they put great importance on improving relations with Germany and Austria. Underlining that the investment process is a difficult and long process, Yavuz thanked the companies which invest in Turkey. Faik Yavuz emphasized that new investments should now pave the way for employment and growth.

TOBB Board Treasurer Faik Yavuz said, “We see every



company which invests in our country as one of our own. Be sure to relay to us any of the problems which you encounter.”

AHK Turkey President Dr. Marcus Slevogt said that they want to create a network here, especially in the field of education. Slevogt said that they visited Ankara 1st OIZ and were very pleased, “As the chamber, we want to address two issues. The first is vocational training, the second is the subject of the Customs Union. We know that where there is trade, communication and peace exist.”

Advantage Austria Ankara Director Dr. Christian Maier also noted that there is significant trade cooperation between Turkey and Austria, noting that their country has about 300 subsidiaries in Turkey.

The Ceylon Chamber's Outlook 2020 Report Explores the Year Ahead



The Outlook 2020 report, published by the Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU) of the Ceylon Chamber, explores the macroeconomic and sector outlook for the year ahead. The sectors covered include apparel, consumer durables, FMCG, tourism, construction, agriculture, plantations and dairy, following interviews conducted with experts in each sector. The

report provides a review of the economy's performance, and of each sector's perspectives on the year ahead.

Delivering the welcome address during the launching of the Report at Economy + Sector Review and Outlook 2020 event held on February 10, 2020, Chamber Secretary General and CEO Mr. Manjula de Silva pointed out the need to have a growth rate of close to 7% over the next five years, in order to make a difference.

Presenting the Outlook 2020, Chamber Chief Economist Mr. Shiran Fernando reiterated that growth was a constant theme which emerged when compiling the Outlook 2020 report. Sri Lanka's economic growth, he said, would surpass 3.5% in 2020, with a substantial part of that being driven by consumption. The key takeaways of the report are as follows:

- Global outlook improves, but is fragile
- Economic growth VS stability – acceleration in growth could come at the cost of stability
- Key structural reforms need to be implemented in order to sustain growth momentum

- Better performance in key sectors is expected in 2020

The presentation and launch was followed by a panel discussion comprising Deshamanya Professor W.D. Lakshman,

Governor of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka; Mr. Dumith Fernando, Chairman of Asia Securities; Ms. Subhashini Abeysinghe, Research Director at Verite Research; and Mr. Maninda Wickramasinghe, Chief

Executive and Country Head of Fitch Ratings Lanka.

To obtain a copy of the report, interested parties may email saumya@chamber.lk.

MNCCI Successfully Conducts CACCI Foundation-Funded Training Program for Women in Cosmetic Industry



The Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MNCCI) has successfully completed the CACCI Foundation-funded training program designed for women in cosmetic industry. Conducted in-house at MNCCI and at the Corporate Hotel in Ulaanbaatar, the training program was held from January

10 to January 24 and was attended by 30 trainees, of whom 28 were women and two were men. The MNCCI project is the beneficiary of a US\$5,000 grant from the CACCI Foundation. Named “Empowering Women Entrepreneurs in Cosmetic Industry,” it is primarily aimed at strengthening the capacity of female-owned cosmetic companies by conducting training to some 200 employees (both women and men) of the 30 Mongolian companies engaged in the manufacture of end-use cosmetics.

The subjects covered by the training program included the following: (a) Hygiene and general requirements for the cosmetic industry; (b) Selection of raw materials for cosmetics and methods of suppressing the smell of raw material of animal origin; (c) Physical and chemical structure of vegetable and animal fats and properties; (d) Animal fat and vegetable oil processing methodology; (e) Antioxidant raw materials in Mongolia and their usage in the cosmetic industry; (f) Chemicals used in cosmetics; (g) EU market entry using requirement export system



The trainees included industry experts such as L. Khishigsuren, Chief Technologist, Monos Cosmetics LLC; N. Javzmaa, Scientist, Institute of Chemistry and Chemical technology; Dr. Otgonpurev, Chemistry Department, Mongolian University of Life Science; and Ts. Khula, Officer, Customer Relationship department, MNCCI.

Most of the trainees said it was their first time to undergo product development training in Mongolia. They expressed their appreciation to MNCCI for organizing the in-house training, which they said provided them the opportunity not only to gain knowledge required for the cosmetics industry, but also

to establish close networking with cosmetic manufacturers, academic institutions and scientific institutions. The trainees and the trainers agreed on the need to establish database of commonly used imported ingredients and locally available ingredients. They also stressed the importance of more practical training in the workplace.



For its future plans, the MNCCI said that Mongolia has a great variety of natural resources that can be used to produce natural ingredients for cosmetic products. “But still, we have challenges of limited access to new processing technologies, and most of the companies engaged in the cosmetic industry are start-ups. For cosmetic manufacturers and raw material suppliers, they need more practical training in the workplace. This time, we just organized in-house training. In the future, we would like to establish a common factory equipped with testing and laboratory equipment in order to advance R&D and processing technology for cluster members.

“In March or April, after the Coronavirus quarantine period is over, we are planning to organize the biggest cosmetic factory visit program including cosmetic manufacturers and raw material suppliers in order to share good manufacturing practice locally...Moreover, if we could solve the financial issue, we would like to organize on-site factory visits abroad in order to study the experience of the complex raw material process at the overseas leading cosmetic manufacturing companies in Korea, EU member countries and elsewhere to receive training on the technical sheet, the tool that allows a precise start-to-end monitoring of every details of the cosmetic manufacturing.”



Ceylon Chamber Identifies Afghanistan as a Potential Market to Further Expand Business with Sri Lanka

“I am very grateful to H.E. the President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and the Hon. Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa for their deep interest in elevating Afghanistan - Sri Lankan bilateral ties and further enhancing our two countries’ cooperation within the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and other intergovernmental organizations where we have advanced our common interests in regional stability, environmental security, as well as connectivity for trade and stronger people-to-people ties across South Asia,” said His Excellency M. Ashraf Haidari, Ambassador of Afghanistan to Sri Lanka, at a recent discussion held at the Embassy of Afghanistan in Colombo.

During the discussion, the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce Senior Assistant Secretary General, Ms. Lilakshini de Mel, briefed H.E. Ambassador Haidari on the role of the 19 business councils coming under the purview of the Chamber and indicated that the “Sri Lanka – Afghanistan Trade Desk” will be initially established in February 2020 to further promote trade, investment and tourism between Sri Lanka and Afghanistan. Accordingly, the Ceylon Chamber will be signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) shortly afterwards. The Ambassador assured us of his fullest co-operation to take forward the initiatives of the Trade Desk.

It was further mentioned that the Ceylon Chamber has already established Trade Desks with Africa, Middle East, Iran, Poland and Turkey. Next in line would be Afghanistan, Bangladesh and UAE. Through the Trade Desks, bilateral trade, tourism and investment will be promoted with the assistance of a counterpart Chamber of Commerce. The formation of this business desk provides a single window solution for Sri Lankan



companies and investors looking to invest in Afghanistan’s virgin markets—including construction; telecommunications; logistics and transportation; health and medicine; agriculture and agribusiness covering fruits and dried nuts; natural and mineral resources covering gems and precious stones; hand crafted rugs and carpets—among other things—whilst Afghanistan can benefit from Sri Lanka’s abundance of Tea, Rubber, Coconut, Machinery, Medical and Technical Expertise.

It was further stated by H.E. Ambassador Haidari that owing to a vast cornucopia of resources in both Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, potential economic gains from trade between the two nations is immense and both countries look forward to signing an MOU on trade and investment promotion and protection in due course. It was also noted that Afghanistan and Sri Lanka have initialled an air services agreement, which they will sign sometime soon, as this agreement will help facilitate the establishment of a direct passenger and cargo flight between Kabul and Colombo.

The Acting Minister of Finance of Afghanistan and Chief Advisor to the President, H.E. Dr. Mohammad H. Qayoumi, visited Colombo on February 8-9, 2020. He along with H.E. Ambassador Haidari held bilateral discussions with H.E. President Rajapaksa, who warmly welcomed and strongly supported the proposal by the visiting Afghan Minister to establish air connectivity between Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. They agreed that direct connectivity would immediately boost bilateral trade and people-to-people ties.

Indeed, when air connectivity between our two countries is finally established, Afghans and Sri Lankans should be able to reconnect with our shared heritage through tourism, trade and investment, education, and cultural exchange.

Productivity Growth an Urgent Priority: Australian CCI



The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) is urging federal and state governments to make productivity growth an urgent policy priority in order to protect the living standards of Australians, following the release of the Productivity Commission’s report today.

“The release of the Productivity

Commission’s analysis is a major wakeup call to our federal and state governments,” ACCI Chief Economist Ross Lambie said.

“The message is clear, unless national action to lift Australia’s dismal productivity growth becomes a policy priority, we put at risk the living standards we are all accustomed to.”

“The Productivity Commission’s analysis reinforces the need for governments to identify and act upon opportunities to increase productivity. What we need is policies which enhance the ability of businesses to invest, grow and

employ – they will be critical to achieving this outcome.

“Prime areas for reform include ensuring our regulatory environment is fit for purpose and supporting the private sector in taking risks and investing in an increasingly uncertain and dynamic world.”

Dr Lambie said much-needed initiatives were being pursued, such as getting rid of burdensome regulations, supporting infrastructure and providing incentives for business to invest and employ staff, but further improvements had

to be made.

“ACCI has made a number of proposals to turbo-charge business investment, particularly in the SME quarter, such as an increase to the instant

asset write off scheme.”

“Longer term, we need to encourage political appetite for a review of the tax and transfer system to ensure Australia has a competitive tax system that

encourages aspiration and entrepreneurship while at the same time providing adequate funding for social needs.”

TOBB and Djibouti Chambers Meet in Ankara



The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) Board Treasurer Faik Yavuz met with Youssouf Moussa Dawaleh, Chairman of Djibouti Chamber of Commerce and Pan Africa Chamber of Commerce. During the meeting held at TOBB Twin Towers, ideas were exchanged for the development of economic relations between the Djibouti Chamber of Commerce and TOBB.

UNCTAD Reports on Impact of the Corona Virus Outbreak on Global FDI



The outbreak and spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19) will negatively affect global foreign direct investment (FDI) flows, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) stated in its latest issue of “Global Investment Trends Monitor”.

According to UNCTAD, depending on the scenario for the spread of the epidemic – ranging from short-term stabilization to continuation throughout the year- the downward pressure on FDI caused by Covid-19 is expected to be -5% to -15% (compared to previous forecasts projecting marginal growth in the underlying FDI trend for 2020-2021).

Among the other highlights of the UNCTAD report are the following:

- The impact on FDI will be concentrated in those countries that are most severely hit by the epidemic, although negative demand shocks and the economic impact of supply chain disruptions will affect investment prospects in other countries.
- More than two thirds of the multinational enterprises (MNEs) in UNCTAD’s Top 100, a bellwether of overall investment trends, have issued statements on the impact of Covid-19 on their business. Many are slowing down capital expenditures in affected areas. In addition, lower profits – to date, 41 have issued profit alerts – will translate into lower reinvested earnings (a major component of FDI).
- On average, the top 5000 MNEs, which account for a significant share of global FDI, have seen downward revisions of 2020 earnings estimates of 9% due to Covid-19. Hardest hit are the automotive industry (-44%), airlines (-42%) and energy and basic materials industries

(-13%). Profits of MNEs based in emerging economies are more at risk than those of developed country MNEs: developing country MNE profit guidance has been revised downwards by 16%.

IMF Urges Governments to Roll Out Aggressive Support Measures for Virus-Affected Global Economy



The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on March 9 called on governments worldwide to join forces and roll out aggressive financial supports for the virus-affected global economy, including direct payments to workers and businesses.

However, while several nations have taken steps to cushion the blow to their economies and boost confidence, including the US, there has been little visible coordination among policymakers like there was at the height of the 2008 global financial crisis.

The rising concern about the global economy has been reflected in the continued collapse of global stock markets, with trillions in value wiped out in the past few weeks, a rout that continue

Given the “acute shocks” caused to economies, consumers and businesses, IMF chief economist Gita Gopinath said that “policymakers will need to implement substantial targeted fiscal, monetary and financial market measures to help affected households and businesses.”

That includes “cash transfers, wage subsidies and tax relief,” as well as interest rate cuts and financial market support by central banks.

Given the ties between global economies, “the argument for a coordinated, international response is clear,” she said in a blogpost.

The IMF already warned that the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak would slow growth in the world economy to less than the 2.9 percent posted last year.

The virus has shuttered factories, disrupted travel, delayed conferences and sporting events and infected more than 110,000 people worldwide.

The impact effects are seen in production cuts hitting companies across the globe that depend on parts from China, where the outbreak originated, but would also hit consumption, as people are reluctant to go out and spend money.

Some nations have already taken steps, Gopinath said.

Italy, the country hardest hit in Europe, has extended tax deadlines and is preparing a 7.5 billion euro (US\$8.53 billion) package aimed at helping out the devastated tourism industry and other sectors, while South Korea has introduced wage subsidies.

The US Federal Reserve in early March announced an emergency interest rate cut and on March 9 significantly increased its cash injections into money markets with US\$150 billion per day in short-term loans to ensure ample liquidity amid the virus uncertainty.

That was just what Gopinath called for, saying that such moves “can lift confidence and support financial markets.” She added that “actions by large central banks [are] also generating favorable spillovers for vulnerable countries.”



However, government spending measures to support economic activity have been slow in coming and economists are warning that rapid action is crucial to have the biggest effect.

Germany announced a 3 billion euro per year investment package, but it does not go into effect until next year and is spread over three years.

US President Donald Trump has signed a bill with US\$8 billion in emergency funding, but that largely goes to medical equipment, medication and testing supplies for state and local governments.

White House advisers were reportedly preparing a menu of options for Trump that include paid sick leave and emergency help for small businesses.

French President Emmanuel Macron called for EU leaders to hold a videoconference yesterday aimed at coordinating their response to the coronavirus outbreak on the continent.

Gopinath said that governments can help workers who are laid off by business closures by extending and increasing unemployment insurance, as well as helping those that do not have paid sick leave.

The economic concerns can ripple into financial markets, causing borrowing costs to rise, which would in turn “expose financial vulnerabilities that have accumulated during years of low interest rates, leading to a heightened risk that debt cannot be rolled over,” she said.

AFP Washington, Taipei Times

COVID-19 Outbreak to Have Significant Economic Impact on Developing Asia: ADB

The ongoing novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak will have a significant impact on developing Asian economies through numerous channels, including sharp declines in domestic demand, lower tourism and business travel, trade and production linkages, supply disruptions, and health effects, according to a new analysis by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The magnitude of the economic losses will depend on how the outbreak evolves, which remains highly uncertain. The range of scenarios explored in the analysis suggests a global impact in the range of \$77 billion to \$347 billion, or 0.1% to 0.4% of global gross domestic product (GDP).

In a moderate scenario, where precautionary behaviors and restrictions such as travel bans start easing 3 months after the outbreak intensified and restrictions were imposed in late January, global losses could reach \$156 billion, or 0.2% of global GDP. The People’s Republic of China (PRC) would account for \$103 billion of those losses—or 0.8% of its GDP. The rest of developing Asia would lose \$22 billion, or 0.2% of its GDP.

“There are many uncertainties about COVID-19, including its economic impact,” said ADB Chief Economist Yasuyuki Sawada. “This requires the use of multiple scenarios to provide a clearer picture of potential losses. We hope this analysis

can support governments as they prepare clear and decisive responses to mitigate the human and economic impacts of this outbreak.”

Estimated Global and Regional Impact of COVID-19, under Different Scenarios

	Best case		Moderate case		Worse case	
	As % of GDP	Losses in \$ billions	As % of GDP	Losses in \$ billions	As % of GDP	Losses in \$ billions
World	-0.1	\$77	-0.2	\$156	-0.4	\$347
People's Republic of China	-0.3	\$44	-0.8	\$103	-1.7	\$237
Developing Asia excluding the People's Republic of China	-0.2	\$16	-0.2	\$22	-0.5	\$42
Rest of the World	0.0	\$17	0.0	\$31	0.0	\$68
Source: ADB staff estimates.						

The analysis, The Economic Impact of the COVID-19 Outbreak on Developing Asia, presents full details on the scenarios considered. It also presents estimated impact on individual developing Asian economies—and on sectors within these economies—including under a hypothetical “worst case” scenario for a given economy in the event of a significant outbreak. These should not be interpreted as predictions that an outbreak will occur but are meant to provide guidance for governments as they consider appropriate responses.

ADB’s response to COVID-19 to date includes \$2 million announced on 7 February to enhance detection, prevention,

and response in the PRC and the Greater Mekong Subregion; another \$2 million announced on 26 February to support response in all its developing members; and a CNY130 million (\$18.6 million) private sector loan, signed on 25 February, to Wuhan, PRC-based pharmaceutical distributor Jointown Pharmaceutical Group Co. Ltd. to support the continued supply of essential medicines and personal protective

equipment.

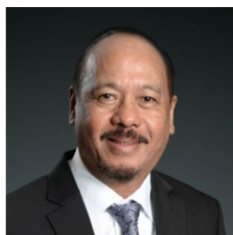
ADB stands ready to provide further support to its developing members in their efforts to respond to the adverse impact of COVID-19. ADB will use appropriate means to address the identified needs including through existing and new financial assistance, emergency assistance lending, policy-based lending, private sector investment, and knowledge and

technical assistance.

ADB is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty. Established in 1966, it is owned by 68 members—49 from the region.

Asian Development Bank

Member Personalities



Philippine CCI Names New Secretary-General

Mr. Ruben Jimenez Pascual has recently been appointed Secretary-General of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI). He replaces Mr. Crisanto Frianeza, who retired early this year.

Mr. Pascual has an extensive professional experience honed by more than three decades as a journalist, diplomat, legislative chief of staff, business executive and consultant to international development agencies, government departments and agencies, politicians and legislators, local and foreign corporations, and socio-civic organizations.

Upon completion of an economics degree in the University of the Philippines in Diliman, he joined Business Day, then the country's leading business newspaper, and was once adjudged as the best agriculture reporter of the country. It was in that stint that the Department of Agriculture recruited

him to be an Agricultural Attache, being posted to the European Union based in Brussels, Belgium and to the United States based in Washington D.C., from 1985 to 1993. Upon his return, he organized and led the merger of two major export associations into the Philippine Exporters Confederation (Philexport) as the Chief Operating Officer, growing its membership from 400 to over 3,000 over 2 years, raising incomes 8-fold, and generating enormous funding for exporters from international development agencies.

After his stint with Philexport, he was recruited to be Chief of Staff of then Senator Gloria Macapagal Arroyo who became President of the country after 5 years. Following his work at the Philippine Senate, he founded RJP Consulting which exists up to this date. He has provided services and consultancies to international funding agencies such as USAID, CIDA, AusAid, the World Bank and many other agencies. He has been consultant to many major corporations involved in agribusiness, power, telecommunications, shipping, steel, information technology and many other fields.



Manjula de Silva Appointed as the Secretary General & CEO of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Manjula de Silva assumed duties as the Secretary General and CEO of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, from February 1st, 2020.

Mr. de Silva took over from Mrs. Dhara Wijayatilake who retired from that position after serving in that capacity since March 2016.

Mr. de Silva has held several senior positions in the Private Sector as well as in the Public Sector, including as a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Sri Lanka, as the Chairperson of the National Insurance Trust Fund, as the Managing Director and CEO of HNB Assurance PLC, and the Director General of the Public Enterprises Reform Commission, among others.

Mr. de Silva served as the Chairman of the CIMA (Chartered Institute of Management Accountants) Sri Lanka Board in 2016, and was subsequently appointed to its Regional Board for MESANA (Middle East, South Asia, and North Africa) Region. He is a Past President of both Insurance Association of Sri Lanka (IASL) and Unit Trust Association of Sri Lanka (UTASL).

Currently Mr. Silva serves as a Board Member of BPPL Holdings Ltd. since 2016, and a Board Member of the Tea Smallholder Factories PLC since 2017.

Mr. de Silva has been engaged with the work of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce since 1996, having served on the Chamber Committee and being actively involved in several other initiatives. He has also served as the Chairman of its Steering Committee on Insurance. He currently serves as a member of the Chamber Economic Policy Steering Committee as well as the National Agenda Committee on Public Sector Reforms.

Product & Service Councils

Asian Textile & Garment Council

Weaving Renewable Energy into India's Textile Industry



India's textile and garment industry are one of the world's largest, contributing to 3.7 per cent of the global market. The use of decentralized renewable energy can modernize and accelerate this growth while improving livelihoods for millions.

Nasir, a hand loom weaver from Belgaum, Karnataka shifted from his manual machine to a solar powered loom. As a result, he was able to double his production output and save many labour-intensive hours that impacted his income and health. Nasir now has a steady supply-chain and local client base contributing to an increased income for him and his family.

India is looking to find durable and viable ways to meet its growing energy needs. While Saubhagya has made strides in expanding grid-connectivity, decentralized renewable energy (DRE) is positioning itself as a strong alternative, especially in areas where grid-supply is erratic and unreliable. For the textile industry in particular, efficient, clean and reliable energy can go a long way in accelerating growth in the industry, increasing its contribution to India's GDP and supporting the livelihoods of millions.

"It doesn't work to just add solar to an existing machine. It has to be designed with solar in mind. Only then will it be efficient and cost-effective," says Kunal Vaid, Director of Resham Sutra, a social energy enterprise delivering sustainable energy solutions for rural livelihoods using innovative technology and renewable resources for silk production.

Resham Sutra's range of affordable electric reeling machines – many of which are powered by solar energy and

use 10 per cent of the power of a standard motorized machine – vastly improve working conditions for women reeling silk from cocoons. This proved to be a huge time and energy saver as traditionally, a process called thigh-reeling was employed – one which was physically demanding and considered undignified labour resulting in younger people opting out of the industry.

This is where DRE can play a pivotal role - in driving modern and efficient systems for the industry while accelerating scale. Advancements in renewables, its access and flexibility to serve the most remote parts of India and the use of information technology to manage and monitor energy use and storage can drastically enhance the output and quality of textiles and garments in the country.

ETEnergyworld.com

Asian SME Council

GDCKL 2020: Building a Flight Path for Malaysian Drone Companies



More than 30 local and international industry experts gathered in Kuala Lumpur for the Global Drone Conference & Hackathon 2020 (GDCKL 2020), as Malaysia continues to establish itself as a global test bed for emerging technologies and innovation. "The goal," emphasised Syed Hussien Habshee, SME Corporation Malaysia Chairman, who officiated the opening, "is to turn Malaysia into a drone hub in Southeast Asia."

Noting that the world is in the "midst of a global drone revolution", Syed Hussein said that the global drone services market is expected to be worth US\$63.6 billion (RM267 billion) by 2025, with Asia-Pacific set to grow the fastest. No surprise then that he encouraged local entrepreneurs and SMEs to explore opportunities in

five industrial verticals: agriculture, construction, energy, Infrastructure and public safety.

Syed Hussein highlighted that there were 15 local players involved in the drone industry while singling out FourFang and Aeroflye as companies that SME Corp hopes to further develop and grow, hopefully emulating the success found by global drone service provider Aerodyne, who recently announced a Series B funding of US\$ 30 million.

Tsuyoshi Habuchi, Terra Drone Head of South East Asia & Oceania, presented a more nuanced view of market growth, by dividing it into several areas: Hobby (potential global market size: US\$20 billion), Industry, (US\$30 billion) and Military (US\$60 billion).

Tsuyoshi explained to the audience that the drone market originally was about hardware sales, but now drones are transitioning to being part of a more complete solution, as part of an overall service, replacing work currently done by humans.

SME Corp certainly hopes that this potential can be fulfilled by local players. Noor Azmi Mat Said, SME Corp Malaysia CEO, said that the number of companies will grow from the current 15, "We don't have specific targets, but if possible, at least ten more," he said.

He also hopes that these companies can take advantage of the High Impact Programmes 2 (HIP2) to bring solutions to the market. Under the 2020 National budget, RM1.2 billion has been allocated for digitalization initiatives with SME Corp hoping to earmark between RM500,000 and RM1 million for drone-related initiatives.

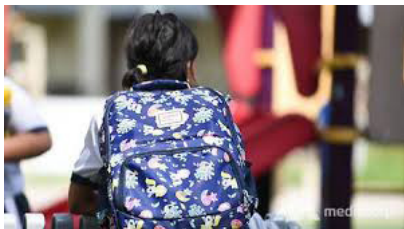
Digital News Asia

Asian Health & Education Council

Schools to offer mental health lessons from 2021; more trips to Asian countries

Mental wellness and peer support will be given more focus in schools soon, as the Ministry of Education refreshes

Product & Service Councils



the Character and Citizenship Education (CCE) curriculum for 2021.

“One key challenge our youths face today is mental well-being,” said Second Minister for Education Indranee Rajah in Parliament on Wednesday, March 4.

As such, mental health will be part of the new CCE curriculum in secondary schools, “to help students to understand common mental health issues and their symptoms, know when and how to seek help for themselves and others, and develop empathy and care towards persons with mental health issues”, said Ms Indranee, during her ministry’s Committee of Supply debate.

Similarly, polytechnics and the Institute for Technical Education (ITE) have also worked with the Health Promotion Board to develop mental health resources for students.

Other than educating students, teachers will also create “a positive school learning environment”.

Teachers are taught to create a “positive classroom culture” as part of their training, and “positive teacher-students relationships are strongly emphasised”, said Ms Indranee. The ministry will develop teachers’ capabilities through SkillsFuture for Educators.

Building on that, schools will have to teach students how to overcome setbacks. Teachers in schools and Institute of Higher Learnings’ class advisors will be trained to pick up signs of distress, reach out to these students and refer them to mental health professionals if needed.

To allow students to engage Southeast Asia better, the humanities curriculum will place more emphasis on studying Asia, said Mr. Ong.

“It must provide students with a deeper appreciation of the geographies, histories, cultures, languages and economies of our regional countries,” he said. More

overseas trips will also be organised to Asian countries. Singaporean students should experience Asia, as it is “our own backyard” and where Singaporeans “have a natural competitive advantage”, added Mr Ong.

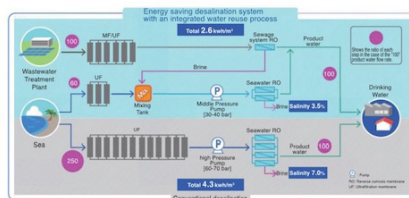
Institutes of Higher Learning will aim for 70 per cent of their students to have overseas exposure, with a further 70 per cent of these students to have exposure to ASEAN, China or India.

Channel News Asia

Asian Council on Water, Energy & Environment

Hitachi: Energy-Saving, Low Environmental Impact Seawater Desalination System Starts its Demonstration Operation in Republic of South Africa

Implementation structure



[Details of the demonstration operation]

New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO) and Hitachi, Ltd. (TSE:6501) are engaged in a demonstration project for a seawater desalination and water reuse integrated system in the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality, known as City of Durban, Republic of South Africa, and have recently started demonstration operation of the system at the demonstration site of a waste water treatment plant in the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality.

This demonstration project uses a system developed during a demonstration project by NEDO in Japan, and construct demonstration facilities aiming for desalinating 6,250 tons of drinking water from seawater and treated and discharged waste water every day, while saving 30% more energy compared to conventional seawater desalination systems and reducing the impact on the nearby marine

environment. In the future, we plan to introduce this technology in Republic of South Africa and to other regions with serious water shortages, thus contributing to the development of water infrastructure and industry.

NEDO engaged in a seawater desalination and water reuse integrated system demonstration project to solve South Africa’s water shortage issue and to promote the introduction of energy-saving water production technology. To demonstrate the energy-saving seawater desalination and water reuse integrated system developed during NEDO’s demonstration project in Japan, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was concluded with eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality, South Africa on November 17, 2016. Furthermore, the implementing agent Hitachi concluded an Implementation Document (ID) with eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality, the owner of the waste water treatment plant where the demonstration plant located.

AsiaOne

Investment & Joint Ventures in the Region

Kachin State Inks Border Business Park Deal with China-Myanmar Joint Venture



The MOU signing ceremony to establish the Kanpiketi Business Park in the border town of Kanpiketi, Kachin state. / Ministry of Information

The Kachin State government has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with a Chinese-backed company to develop a business park project in Kanpiketi, a border town in northern Myanmar, as part of Beijing’s ambitious grand infrastructure plan, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Investment & Joint Ventures in the Region

On Wednesday March 4, the MOU was signed by the state government and Myanmar Heng Ya Investment Development Company Ltd, a joint venture between Myanmar's Kampaiti Development Company Ltd and China's Yunnan Tengying Trading Company Ltd. The Chinese company holds a 70-percent stake while the Myanmar company holds 30 percent.

The signing ceremony was held at the Kachin State government office in Myitkyina, the state capital, witnessed by State Minister of Finance, Revenue, Planning and Economy U Wai Lin, State Minister for Electricity and Industry U Win Nyunt and other officials from both sides, according to a press release from the Myanmar Ministry of Information.

At an estimated cost of US\$22.4 million (31.85 billion kyats), the Kanpiketi Business Park will cover nearly 70 acres (28 hectares) in the border town in northern Kachin State's Special Region 1. The area is controlled by the New Democratic Army-Kachin (NDAK) militia, which is allied with the Myanmar military.

At the signing ceremony, U Wai Lin promised that the government would implement the project with transparency. Myanmar and China will work together to promote cross-border trade, control illicit border trade and offer job opportunities to local people, he said.

Myanmar became an official member country of the BRI after signing a 15-point MOU on the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC) in 2018.

The Irrawaddy

Rakuten and Vodafone Invest in AST & Science's Space Venture to Reach More People, Devices and Places with Mobile Coverage

Rakuten and Vodafone have become the lead investors in a venture to extend mobile coverage to more people and devices across the planet, using the first mobile broadband network that will be broadcast from space.

Branded SpaceMobile, the low-Earth-orbit (LEO), low-latency satellite network from AST & Science will be the first in the world to connect directly to



standard smartphones. The company holds an extensive patent and IP portfolio for its ground and space technologies.

"SpaceMobile will be particularly transformative to the growing US\$1 trillion annual global mobile market because it will eliminate the coverage gaps faced by today's five billion mobile subscribers moving in and out of connectivity every day. It will also help the world's most under-served communities to access the latest mobile services much sooner than predicted, helping more people to access the digital economy," said Abel Avellan, AST & Science chairman and CEO.

AST & Science will initially offer 4G services to partner networks globally, with 5G delivered in the future. The SpaceMobile network will enable seamless roaming to and from terrestrial cellular networks at comparable data rates without any need for specialized satellite hardware.

In addition to its investment in AST & Science, Vodafone has agreed to a strategic partnership and will contribute technical, operational and regulatory expertise in support of the global deployment of SpaceMobile.

Nick Read, CEO, Vodafone Group, said, "At Vodafone we want to ensure everyone benefits from a digital society – that no-one is left behind. We believe SpaceMobile is uniquely placed to provide universal mobile coverage, further enhancing our leading network across Europe and Africa - especially in rural areas and during a natural or humanitarian disaster - for customers on their existing smartphones."

"AST & Science's SpaceMobile venture is a perfect fit for us," said Mickey Mikitani, chairman and CEO of Rakuten, Inc. "Our investment is part of our broader strategy to become a leading mobile network operator in Japan and a global solution provider to markets around the world. Rakuten's strategic investment with

AST & Science has the potential to support our efforts to connect users across Japan through mobile innovation, expanding national coverage from metropolitan to remote areas and bolstering the network in times of natural disaster."

AST & Science successfully tested its SpaceMobile technology aboard the BlueWalker 1 satellite, launched in April 2019, and has been further validating the technology following that initial flight.

Yahoo Finance

Exxon, BHP Pledge New Gas by 'Early 2021' as Supply Crisis Looms



Global energy giant ExxonMobil and miner BHP say they will bring urgently needed new gas to the east-coast market by early 2021, as their joint venture prepares to begin work on one of the largest remaining undeveloped gas reservoirs in Victoria's Bass Strait.

The announcement on the \$550 million project known as West Barracouta comes at a critical time as the push to lift the supply of gas into the southern states takes on greater urgency. Manufacturers have begun openly blaming a three-fold hike in the gas price as they close their doors, while authorities are warning of a looming supply shortage. The Morrison government, meanwhile, has made increasing gas production a condition for states to receive energy funding deals, pressuring Victoria to lift its onshore gas drilling ban to help offset the rapidly declining output from the Bass Strait offshore fields.

ExxonMobil, which is seeking a buyer for its 50 percent stake in the Bass Strait operation, has been investing heavily to moderate the decline from the ageing fields. Operated in a joint venture with BHP, the offshore fields have traditionally supplied up to half of Australia's east-coast gas demand.

In December the joint venture

gave the green light to the \$550 million West Barracouta project. However, the project is only expected to help offset the decline in production from the East Barracouta reservoir, rather than increase overall supply.

ExxonMobil said its subsidiary Esso Australia had drilled to a depth of 1.3 kilometres on its first well in the new West Barracouta field, and would have gas flowing into the market by 2021.

“Esso Australia continues to focus

on delivering gas that Australians need to the domestic market,” ExxonMobil Australia chairman Nathan Fay said.

The Sydney Morning Herald

Economic Cooperation News

Asia-Pacific Economies face \$211 bn Hit from Coronavirus: S&P

The coronavirus could wipe more than \$200 billion off Asia Pacific economies this year, S&P Global ratings warned Friday, sending growth to its lowest level in more than a decade, as governments struggle to combat the disease.

In a worst-case scenario, China could see growth of less than three percent, while Japan, Australia and Hong Kong could “flirt with recession”, it said in a report.

Fears about the impact of the outbreak, which has spread to at least 85 countries since it began in China in late December, have hammered world markets as investors fret over its economic impact.

S&P said it expected the region to grow 4.0 percent this year as supply and demand shocks blow a \$211 billion hole in the economy. That compares with a 4.8 percent estimate given in December and would be the worst performance since a contraction in 2008 caused by the global financial crisis.

“Asia-Pacific’s outlook has darkened due to the global spread of the coronavirus,” it said. “This will exert domestic supply-and-demand shocks in Japan and Korea. It will mean weaker external demand from the US and Europe”

The report said economies were suffering from the double-whammy of weak demand as consumers stay home for fear of catching the disease, and falling supplies as industries are rocked by shutdowns.

The Economic Times

Tremendous Scope Exists for Expanding Pakistan’s Economic Ties with Belgium: Belgian Envoy

Ambassador of Belgium Philippe Bronchain has stressed the need to enhance

trade and investment cooperation between the two countries as there are lots of things that can be done in different sectors of the economy which would prove beneficial for Belgium and Pakistan.

Speaking at a recent meeting of Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI), he said that the business & industrial community of Karachi must look into the possibility of exploring trade and investment opportunities in Belgium which, though, was not a huge country but very open and had the second largest port in Europe along with excellent pharmaceutical and other major industries.

“We would like to contribute towards further promoting mutual understanding between our two countries, and we also need to promote the image and perception about Pakistan,” he added.

President of KCCI Agha Shahab Ahmed Khan, while welcoming the Ambassador, pointed out that during FY18, Pakistan exported goods worth \$666.4 million while the imports from Belgium amounted to \$518.6 million.

He noted that in Dec 2014, KCCI organized Belgian Companies’ Catalogues Exhibition in collaboration with the Embassy of Belgium in its efforts to promote bilateral trade which was followed by another Belgian Companies’ Catalogue Exhibition held in March 2017 at KCCI.

Agha Shahab said that Belgium was one of Pakistan’s largest trading partners within the EU. Belgium had extended consistent support that helped Pakistan acquire GSP Plus status in 2013. It had also provided humanitarian assistance during the floods in Pakistan in 2010.

Pakistan could help Belgium expand its trade to the Central Asian Countries, China, India and the Middle East while Belgium in turn could help Pakistan expand its trade with the European countries, he added.

Business Recorder

Azerbaijan’s Economic Reforms Discussed in Washington



Azerbaijani Finance Minister Samir Sharifov met with Kristalina Georgieva, the Managing Director of International Monetary Fund

Azerbaijani Finance Minister Samir Sharifov recently met heads of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in Washington, US to discuss economic reforms carried out in the country.

During the meeting with Kristalina Georgieva, the Managing Director of International Monetary Fund (IMF), Samir Sharifov gave comprehensive information about large-scale reforms implemented under President Ilham Aliyev leadership in Azerbaijan.

“IMF is ready to render all necessary support to Azerbaijan in this direction,” IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said during the meeting, adding that she met President Aliyev at Davos Economic Forum in January of 2019.

During the meeting, it was also emphasized that Azerbaijan plays a significant role in a global and regional scale. The sides discussed Azerbaijan’s partnership with international financial organizations, and the ways of upgrading them to a qualitatively new level.

The minister also held a meeting with Jihad Azur, Head of the IMF department on the Middle East and Central Asia, and Natalia Tamirisa, Head of the IMF mission on Azerbaijan. Implementation of

Economic Cooperation News

MediumTerm Expenditure Framework in Azerbaijan, as well as in the framework of the 4th article of IMF, preparations for the organization's representatives' visit to the country in July were also high on the agenda.

Samir Sharifov had another meeting with Cyril Muller, the Vice-President of World Bank (WB). During the meeting, discussions were held on further

cooperation plans between Azerbaijan and World Bank, as well as execution of issues arising after the meeting between President Ilham Aliyev and Axel Van Trontsenburg, the Managing Director of WB, in the framework of Munich Security Conference held in February.

As part of his visit to Washington, the Azerbaijan Finance Minister met with Peter Haas, Co-chair of the US-Azerbaijan

Economic Partnership Commission and First Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs of the US. They discussed the next meeting of Intergovernmental Commission to be organized in Washington in July, 2020 and mutual economic cooperation relations between Azerbaijan and the United States.

Azernews

Technology

Google's Self-Driving Unit Waymo Raises \$2.25B in Its First External Investment



Waymo, the self-driving unit of Alphabet, said it had raised \$2.25 billion in its first external investment round and expects to add more outside investors. The company also disclosed its self-driving trucking business will be called Waymo Via.

Founded 11 years ago as a small project inside Google, Waymo is now widely considered the leader in developing self-driving technology. But Waymo and its principal rivals are still years away from building large-scale businesses around that technology, analysts believe.

The outside investors will help Waymo be more disciplined, Alphabet Chief Financial Officer Ruth Porat told the Morgan Stanley investor conference on Monday March 2.

Waymo Chief Executive Officer John Krafcik, in a media briefing late on Monday, declined to confirm whether Alphabet plans to sell or spin off Waymo, saying it was "certainly a possibility for the future."

Krafcik described the outside

investment as part of "an evolutionary path that we had always imagined" that could lead to "more independence" for Waymo.

In addition to Alphabet, initial investors include auto parts supplier Magna International, with which Waymo has an assembly deal; U.S. dealership chain AutoNation, which services and maintains Waymo's vehicles; the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board, and three large investment firms: Silver Lake, Andreessen Horowitz and Mubadala Investment.

Alphabet CFO Porat said a more "intense focus" on "metrics and milestones" had already played out at Alphabet's Verily health care business, which raised \$1 billion from Silver Lake and others in January 2019.

Last September, investment bank Morgan Stanley slashed its projected valuation of Waymo to \$105 billion from its earlier estimate of \$175 billion, saying the commercialization of self-driving vehicles and technology was taking longer than expected.

Krafcik said Waymo, which has partnered with Lyft Inc, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles and Jaguar Land Rover, is considering partnerships with other automakers and transportation service providers in various markets outside North America, but did not provide details.

ETech

Foxconn Expects iPhone Production to Return to Normal in March

Foxconn, the main assembler of

Apple products such as the iPhone and iPad, expects to resume normal production by the end of March after the coronavirus outbreak forced it to close factories in China in late January.

But company chairman Liu Young-Way said during an earnings call with investors that there are still "plenty" of uncertainties and the company could not yet quantify the impact of the lengthy shutdown on full year earnings.

For now, Liu said there will be "significant, negative year-on-year impact for all our core business segments" for the three months ending in March. Asked if the first quarter would be profitable, Liu said: "I cannot tell you at the moment."

Foxconn, also known as Hon Hai Precision Industry, employs hundreds of thousands of people. About 75% of its production capacity in mainland China, according to brokerage firm KGI Asia.

The manufacturer said that as of Tuesday March 3, it is producing at about 50% of capacity.

Foxconn's reduced production capacity will also likely delay the launch of Apple's lower priced iPhone SE2, which was expected this month or next, according to KGI Asia analyst Laura Chen.

Apple did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The company warned last month that its revenue for the March quarter will take a hit because the outbreak is limiting how many devices it can make and sell in China.

CNN

Australia

Australian Government Stimulus Package Promises Financial Support 'as Fast as Possible'



Josh Frydenberg, Treasurer of Australia

Josh Frydenberg, Treasurer of Australia says the Morrison government will use the tax and transfer system to get financial support to Australian households as quickly as possible as part of a looming stimulus package to counter the negative economic impact of the coronavirus.

Ahead of a cabinet deliberation about the stimulus package expected on Tuesday, the treasurer was asked by reporters on Monday March 9, how the government intended to administer assistance to households, given the Coalition has criticised the Rudd government's stimulus package deployed during the global financial crisis.

Frydenberg told reporters on Monday March 9, when it came to households: "We have our existing systems, the tax and transfer systems. In terms of the specific details, I will leave that to our announcement, but what we will be focused is ensuring the support gets out there as fast as possible."

The treasurer said the multibillion-dollar package, which the government has been working up over the past couple of weeks in anticipation of a sustained economic hit from both the bushfires and the coronavirus, would be "very comprehensive and very substantial".

Frydenberg hinted the government would roll out the first phase of assistance to households and business imminently, then likely revisit again at the May budget. He said the measures would be "scalable".

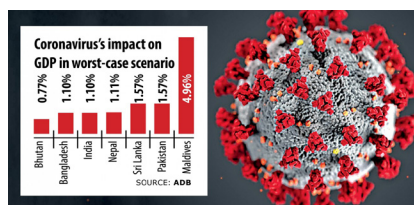
The government has signalled a new business investment allowance, a financial boost for pensioners through

changes to deeming rates, and immediate support for small and medium-sized businesses will form part of the looming package.

The Guardian

Bangladesh

Coronavirus Stands to Wipe \$3b off Bangladesh Economy



Bangladesh's gross domestic product may contract by as much as 1.1 per cent in the hypothetical worst-case scenario of a significant outbreak of coronavirus in the country, said the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in an analysis.

That means, the novel virus, which is yet to arrive in Bangladesh, could wipe \$3.02 billion off the \$300 billion-plus economy.

In such a scenario, 894,930 jobs will be lost, according to the ADB.

The magnitude of the economic impact will depend on how the outbreak evolves, which remains highly uncertain, the Manila-based lender said.

China is the biggest trading partner of Bangladesh and the biggest source of raw materials. The world's second largest economy accounted for more than a fifth of the country's imports of \$56 billion in fiscal 2018-19, Bangladesh Bank data showed.

The world's second largest economy is also emerging as an export destination for Bangladesh.

Bangladesh receives 5-6 lakh tourists every year and of them a major portion comes from China.

"There are many uncertainties about the COVID-19, including its economic impact," said ADB Chief Economist Yasuyuki Sawada in a statement. "We hope this analysis can support governments as they prepare clear and decisive responses to mitigate the human and economic impacts of this outbreak," he

added.

In the hypothetical worst-case scenario, the duration of travel bans and sharp decline in domestic demand will be six months in China and the outbreak in other developing economies lasting three months.

The Daily Star

Cambodia

COVID-19: Gov't to Set Up New Economic Measures

Despite no new cases of COVID-19 reported in Cambodia since January, the government is planning new measures to tackle the financial effect the virus continues to have on the country.

Meas Soksean, general secretariat of the Ministry of Economy and Finance, said that while they can't fully gauge the final fiscal damage the outbreak will have, the government will focus on the garment and tourism industries.

"The garment sector is affected more than other sectors, so we will facilitate the import of raw materials and mid-finished components for production and assembly in the country, ready for export," said Meas.

"The government has maintained close monitoring on the affected enterprises and companies and introduced emergency intervention to control the impacts on the sector in some areas for the purpose of ensuring economic and social stability," he said.

Khmer Times

Hong Kong

Hong Kong Cuts Interest Rate After US Fed's Surprise Move to Bolster Sagging Economy as Coronavirus Outbreak Spreads Worldwide

Hong Kong's monetary authority reduced its base lending rate by half a percentage point after the US Federal Reserve conducted an emergency cut for the first time since the global financial crisis to counter risks stoked by the global

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coronavirus outbreak.

The Fed trimmed its key rate by 50 basis overnight, two weeks before its scheduled meeting on March 17 and 18, as Chairman Jerome Powell said he “saw a risk to the economy, and chose to act.”

Hong Kong’s de facto central bank, which runs its monetary policy in lockstep with US policies to maintain the local currency’s peg to the US dollar, followed with a 50 basis point cut to 1.5 per cent, effective immediately, the HKMA said in a statement posted on its website.

A cut in the base lending helps reduce the cost of money, aiding Hong Kong’s borrowers in weathering a retail and consumption slump that last year drove the local economy into its first technical recession in a decade. The HKMA cut the official lending rate three times in 2019 by a combined 75 basis points, following nine consecutive increases totalling 225 basis points between 2015 and 2018.

The actions indicate that “the Fed would proactively use its monetary policy to mitigate possible economic risks posed by the coronavirus,” HKMA’s chief executive Eddie Yue Wai-man said in a statement on its website. “However, further developments of the coronavirus are still very uncertain and financial markets will continue to see considerable volatility. Investors should manage their risks prudently.”

The HKMA will continue to closely monitor market situation, and maintain orderly operations of Hong Kong’s money and foreign exchange markets, Yue said. It will also ensure stability of the Hong Kong dollar peg, he added.

South China Morning Post

India

India undergoing major economic, policy changes: PM Modi at ET Global Biz Summit

The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, addressed the Economic Times Global Business Summit on March 7. The broad theme of the Global Business Summit 2020 is ‘Collaborate to Create:



Prime Minister, Narendra Modi

Sustainable Growth in a Fractured World’. Addressing the delegates from around the world, the Prime Minister said that the vision of ‘Collaborate to Create for Sustainable Growth’, is the need of the day and also the basis for the future. “The idea of Collaborate To Create is as old as it is relevant,” he added.

Modi stressed that new challenges emerge in every era which further strengthens our spirit of ‘Collaborate to Create’.

The Prime Minister said that the Government is in constant contact with all stakeholders, taking feedback continuously, taking major decisions at every level. By liberating the country from the status quo, we are moving towards creation by cooperation not only at the national level but also internationally, he added. The Prime Minister also listed out the role of India in building international level institutions like International Solar Alliance and Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.

The Prime Minister said that the 21st century is full of many possibilities. “Amidst these possibilities, there is a lack of a common global voice. The question before the whole world is to somehow adjust to the changing circumstances or to develop a new path in a new way,” he added.

The Prime Minister said that in the midst of changing global conditions, India has also made very wide changes. There was a period when India was neutral by creating equal distance between countries. Even today India is neutral, but by equal friendship, he added. “Keeping distance in that period, an attempt was made to escape. Today, we are trying to maintain friendship and walk together. This is the very essence of India’s foreign policy and economic policy,” he added.

Indus Dictum

Japan

Japan’s Cabinet Approves Visa Cancellation Policy for China and South Korea

Japan’s Cabinet approved a policy on March 6, that enables the government to invalidate the visas of people coming from China and South Korea. The measure is among those aimed at preventing the spread of the new coronavirus.

The Japanese government will cancel the visas starting March 9. All foreign nationals coming from the two countries will be denied entry into Japan, if they do not have new visas.

People from South Korea, Hong Kong and Macao are currently exempt from visa requirements for short-term stays of up to 90 days. But they will be required to obtain travel documents starting the week of March 9.

Japanese officials are currently examining new applications carefully, and few visas have been issued to people from the two nations.

The government says visas for foreign visitors who are currently in Japan will become invalid once the individuals leave the country.

This policy will be in effect until the end of this month. But Japan’s foreign ministry says the period may be extended.

The government says it will work with China, South Korea, and other nations to implement anti-virus measures at ports of entry.

NHK

Malaysia

Malaysia Picks Bank CEO as Finance Minister

Malaysia’s prime minister picked the head of one of the country’s main banks as his new finance minister today amid heightened global risks and domestic policy uncertainty.

Tengku Zafrul Aziz, chief executive officer of CIMB Group Holdings

Policy Updates

Bhd, will head the finance ministry in the Cabinet of Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin, who replaced Dr Mahathir Mohamad recently after a power struggle.

Tengku Zafrul will be tasked with implementing a RM20 billion stimulus package to counter the economic damage from the Covid-19 outbreak. Growth in Malaysia was slowing even before the epidemic, weakening to a decade low in 2019.

The appointment comes a week after Bank Negara Malaysia lowered the benchmark interest rate by 25 basis points to counter risks to the economy from the Covid-19 outbreak.

The government recently revised down its economic growth forecast for this year to 3.2%-4.2%, from 4.8% previously, after last year's expansion was the weakest in a decade.

It also has widened the fiscal deficit target to 3.4% of gross domestic product, from 3.2% earlier, to accommodate the stimulus package.

Free Malaysia Today

Mongolia

Mongolia Seeks to Pre-Qualify Bids in Solar-Plus-Storage Tender



The Sersang Khushig Khundii solar power plant in Tuv aimag, Mongolia. Source: ADB

Mongolia has launched an invitation call for project developers willing to take part in the pre-qualification round of a solar-plus-storage tender.

The invitation for bids was published by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which is providing financial support for the initiative as part of its Upscaling Renewable Energy Sector Project. The competition concerns the engineering,

procurement and construction (EPC) of the 5-MW Uliastai solar photovoltaic (PV) park and an accompanying battery storage facility. According to the ADB, the required investment for the project is estimated at around USD 7.95 million (EUR 7.9m).

Interested parties will be able to submit bids by March 27.

Under its green development policy, approved in 2014, Mongolia aims to make renewables account for 20% of its installed power capacity by 2020 and 30% by 2030. Data by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) shows that at end-2018, the country had around 63 MW of installed solar PV capacity.

Renewables Now

Singapore

Singapore Business Confidence Falls to Record Low on Coronavirus Worries: Survey

Business sentiment among Singapore firms plunged to an all-time low in the second quarter of 2020 because of coronavirus health risks and potential economic impact.

This is according to the Singapore Commercial Credit Bureau's (SCCB) latest Business Optimism Index study out on March 10.

Business sentiment tumbled to -7.88 percentage points in Q2 2020 from 5.31 percentage points in Q1 2020 as all six of the study's indicators reported negative numbers.

The Q2 2020 figure is the lowest since SCCB started polling businesses for the study in Q3 2010, the bureau told The Business Times.

The slide in optimism levels was caused by negative spillover effects of heightened global health risks posed by the virus, slowing Chinese demand and disruption of supply chains, said SCCB chief executive officer Audrey Chia.

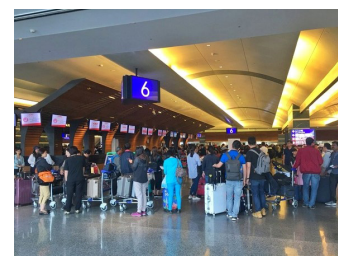
The study polled 200 business owners and senior executives representing major industry sectors across Singapore, with figures calculated by subtracting

the percentage of respondents expecting decreases from the percentage expecting increases, said SCCB.

The Straits Times

Taiwan

Taiwan Travelers Impacted by Entry Restrictions from 23 Countries and Regions



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) said on March 8 that currently 23 countries and regions have issued new border regulations impacting Taiwanese travelers.

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic continues to worsen around the world, many countries have upgraded their screening procedures and broadened entry restrictions to prevent potential carriers from entering their territory. The MOFA Bureau of Consular Affairs on Sunday warned that many countries have denied entry to Taiwanese citizens and that travelers — whether business or leisure — should check on potential restrictions before boarding flights.

According to MOFA, 13 countries and regions have banned individuals with travel histories to areas with COVID-19, including Samoa, the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Solomon Islands, the Kingdom of Tonga, Vanuatu, Tahiti, Tuvalu, Kiribati, El Salvador, Mauritius, Lebanon, and the Malaysian state of Sarawak. Four nations have also imposed travel bans on all Taiwanese travelers: Jamaica, Saudi Arabia, Kazakhstan, and Mongolia.

While Burma and Italy have not denied Taiwanese entry, both countries have suspended international flights. MOFA added that Taiwanese citizens are

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allowed into Russia and Bermuda, but they will be placed in a 14-day quarantine, reported the Liberty Times.

Taiwan News

Thailand

Thailand Aims to Become Electric Vehicle Hub in 5 Years

The Thai government will roll out strategic plans to turn the country into an electric vehicle (EV) hub in five years under several promotional measures, said Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak on March 11.

Somkid announced the policy after chairing a meeting of the National Electric Vehicle Policy Committee.

The committee is currently working out strategies to become hub for electric vehicles including electric motorcycles, said Somkid.

“The national strategies focus on the environment, solutions to air pollution and the transition of the Thai automotive industry to electric vehicles,” said Somkid. “Fairness is guaranteed for existing car makers in Thailand.”

Meanwhile, Somkid has instructed the Board of Investment (BOI) to find more promotional privileges for investment in

the production of electric vehicle parts including batteries and support the import of cheap batteries.

Such measures would add to corporate income tax exemption for eight to 10 years, Somkid said.

The deputy prime minister said that Thailand is also pushing and encouraging state enterprises to use electric vehicles including passenger buses.

Thai energy conglomerate including PTT Plc and the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand will join forces to open charging stations, Somkid said.

Xinhua News Agency

Vietnam

Businesses in Vietnam Seek Support amid Covid-19 Losses

The coronavirus outbreak has affected the country's economy, with production for exports and services suffering the most.

The tourism and service industry in Danang, one of the cities attracting the most foreign tourists, is expected to suffer losses of up to VNĐ700 billion (US\$30.4 million) due to the slump in tourism in the two months since the novel coronavirus



(Covid-19) epidemic began.

Lê Hữu Nghĩa, general director of Lê Thành Construction and Trading Company, said his company's hotel chain saw 95 per cent cancellations, and rooms are now booked only by businesses and almost none by tourists.

The chairman of the city tourism association, Cao Trí Dũng, said the association has submitted a proposal to the city on supportive measures for the industry.

Chu Tiến Dũng, chairman of the HCM City Union of Business Associations (HUBA), said urgent support is needed from the government to help the tourism industry in various key provinces and cities. He suggested measures such as reducing and delaying tax for businesses. Businesses still have to repay their bank loans and taxes, but revenues from tours and service are declining, he said.

Vietnam News/Asia News Network

About CACCI

The Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CACCI) is a regional grouping of apex national chambers of commerce and industry, business associations and business enterprises in Asia and the Western Pacific.

It is a non-governmental organization (NGO) serving as a forum for promoting the vital role of businessmen in the region, increasing regional business interaction, and enhancing regional economic growth. Since its establishment in 1966, CACCI has

grown into a network of national chambers of commerce with a total now of 28 Primary Members from 26 countries in the region. It cuts across national boundaries to link businessmen and promote economic growth throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

As an NGO, CACCI is granted consultative status, Roster category, under the United Nations. It is a member of the Conference on NGOs (CoNGO), an association of NGOs with UN consultative status.

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