



CACCI Profile

Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry

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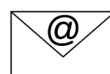
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David Hsu, Director General; Amador R. Honrado, Jr., Editor

Abby Moreno, Assistant Editor; Wendy Yang & Teresa Liu, Contributing Editors;

7F-2, No. 760, Sec. 4 Bade Road, Taipei 10567, Taiwan Tel: (886 2) 2760-1139; Fax: (886 2) 2760-7569

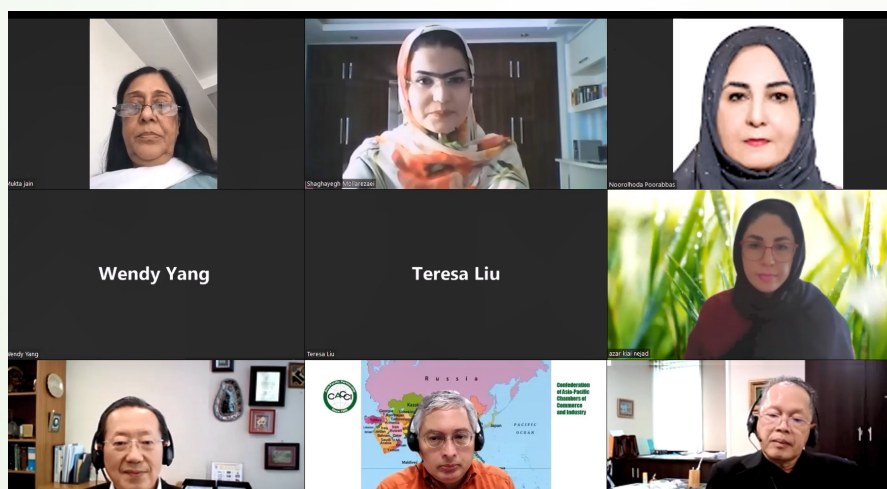


CACCI President Meets with ICT Council Chairman on Proposed Smart Solutions Forum



CACCI President Mr. Samir Modi (rightmost, top row) met virtually with Mr. James Chiao, Chairman of the CACCI ICT Council (leftmost, middle row), and CACCI Secretariat executives on July 27 to exchange views on the proposed webinar series on International Smart Solutions this year. The series aims to establish a communication platform between smart solution providers and international enterprises, provide consulting services, understand the problems faced by enterprises, and solve their problems through the Taiwanese and other member countries' smart solution platforms.

CWEC Chairperson Meets with Businesswomen Group from Iran



Mrs. Mukta Nandini Jain, Chairperson of the CACCI Women Entrepreneurs Council (CWEC), met virtually with key officers of the Khorasan Razavi Businesswomen Association (KHBWA) led by Chairwoman Mrs. Azar Kianinejad on August 26 to discuss possible areas of cooperation. Also in attendance were officers of the CACCI Secretariat

headed by Director-General Mr. David Hsu.

KHBWA is interested to know more about CWEC and learn from the experiences of women entrepreneurs from CACCI member countries in running their businesses and how to address the challenges currently faced by business women in Iran. Mrs. Jain proposed, as an initial activity, the

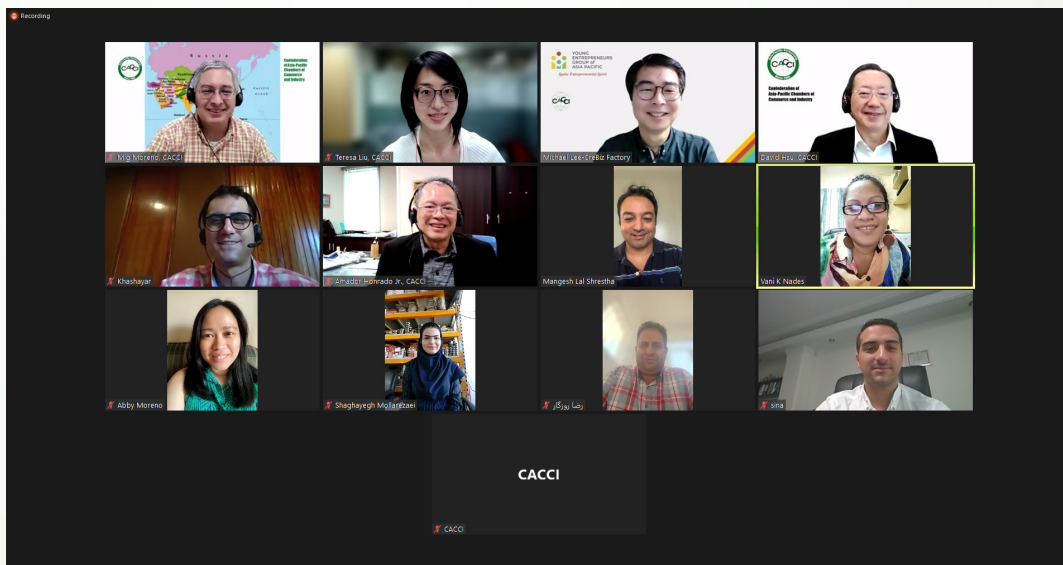
holding of an online webinar between the two organizations and have the opportunity to meet with each other and exchange views on areas of mutual concern. Mrs. Kianinejad also extended an invitation to Mrs. Mukta and members of the CWEC to visit Khorasan Razavi to allow face-to-face meetings and know each other better.

Founded in 2013, KHBWA works under the umbrella of the Khorasan Razavi Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, which is a provincial member of Iran Chamber of Commerce Industries Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), a CACCI Primary Member. KHBWA deals with empowering businesswomen and women entre-

preneurs in Khorasan Razavi province, which is located in the North East part of Iran. It has more than 30 active members who are either a CEO of SMEs, a board member of them, or potent enough to manage their own business.

The CWEC was organized in October 2005 during the 70th CACCI Council Meeting held in Tbilisi, Georgia. Its primary objective is to promote the growth and development of women entrepreneurs in the Asia-Pacific region. CWEC is currently under the chairmanship of Mrs. Mukta Nandini Jain, former national president of the FICCI Ladies Organization (FLO).

YEGAP Holds Orientation for New Members



The restructured and revitalized Yung Entrepreneurs Group of Asia-Pacific (YEGAP) held a virtual orientation meeting with new YEGAP members on August 24. Moderated by Mr. Michael Lee, Chairman of the YEGAP Committee on Membership and Partnership Alliances (2nd from right, top row), the meeting provided the new members the opportunity to introduce themselves and their respective businesses and activities, their motivation for joining YEGAP, and what they expect from their membership

in the Group. YEGAP Chairman Mr. Mangesh Lal Shrestha (2nd from right middle row) was also on hand to welcome the new members and to elaborate on YEGAP's vision and aspirations. YEGAP is one of the Product and Service Councils established under the CACCI umbrella and aims to provide a venue for young entrepreneurs in CACCI member countries to get actively involved in entrepreneurial development and help promote regional economic cooperation in Asia-Pacific.

NEWS UPDATES

ACCI renews Memorandum of Understanding with Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry on August 1 hosted Mr. Arshad Rasjid, chair of the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KADIN), Indonesian Ambassador to Australia, Dr. Siswo Pramono, and a delegation of Indonesian business leaders.

During the delegation's visit, the Chamber oversaw the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with KADIN dedicated to further enhancing trade and investment linkages through the Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (IA-CEPA). The signing renews an MOU first signed in 2016.

The MOU was signed by KADIN chairman Arshad Rasjid and ACCI chief executive Andrew McKellar and reaffirms their commitment to further promote growth and prosperity between Australia and Indonesia, one of the world's fastest growing economies.

The agreement is expected to help elevate the two organisations' already strong levels of cooperation and comes amid the Chambers' work in facilitating further commercial opportunities in both Australian and Indonesian markets.

ACCI's leadership in further advancing a forward-leaning Indonesia policy will be further on display when the Chamber represents Australian business at the forthcoming B20 Summit in Indonesia.

Australia and Indonesia are the only members of the B20 in South East Asia.

ACCI chief executive Andrew McKellar said:

"The world needs less protectionism and more collaboration. We need meaningful cooperation and real teamwork to address the new global challenges of today.

"The renewed Memorandum of Understanding

between the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry reaffirms our commitment to enhance the collaborative partnership between our countries.

"ACCI and KADIN are pleased to take this step forward today alongside partners and friends to advance our common purpose of promoting Australia-Indonesia commercial relations," Mr. McKellar added.

ACCI News

ICCIMA stresses need for establishing railway regulatory body

During a meeting of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA)'s Transport and Logistics Committee, the members of the committee stressed the need for establishing a regulatory body in the country's railway industry, the ICCIMA portal reported.

The attendees of the mentioned meeting

emphasized that necessary provisions should be made in the Seventh Five-Year National Development Plan for the operation of a regulatory body in the railway industry and the private sector should also be able to have a stronger role in the industry.

Speaking at the meeting, Ali Hosseini, the head of the ICCIMA Transport and Logistics Committee enumerated some of the challenges and problems of the country's transportation industry and said: "The transportation industry is one of the industries that operate in direct connection with all economic sectors and the conditions governing it have significant effects on the market. Therefore, paying attention to the needs of this industry should be the priority in defining the country's economic and legislative programs."

He further pointed to some of the issues of the railway industry, saying: "There is not enough productivity in this industry. We have problems in railway management and our approach in this field is uneconomical. Due to the low speed of rail transportation and the lack of efficiency, a regulatory body should be established. If we want to reach the transit goals of 30 to 50 million tons per year, the rail industry must be developed."

Tehran Times

ILO, FBCCI ink deal on workplace safety in ten sectors

The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) will jointly work to boost health and workplace safety in ten priority sectors across the country.

The sectors are electronic and electrical, chemical, plastic, light engineering, leather, food processing, furniture, printing and packaging, domestic readymade garment (RMG) and steel



re-rolling.

To this effect, ILO and FBCCI signed an agreement to undertake a

number of capacity-building and promotional activities to strengthen workplace and health safety at institutional as well as enterprise levels, according to a statement.

These activities will be supported by ILO's RMG programme funded by Canada and the Netherlands. Through the initiative, 15 safety units will be established to build safety culture in these ten sectors, it added.

Simultaneously, 2,400 safety representatives and 100 safety committees will be developed to improve awareness and capacity on workplace safety and health among employers and workers.

ILO Bangladesh country director Tuomo Poutiainen, FBCCI president Md Jashim Uddin, its senior vice president Mostofa Azad Chowdhury Babu, representatives from various industrial sectors and business leaders were present at the signing ceremony held at the FBCCI auditorium in the city.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Poutiainen said, "ILO is pleased to join forces with FBCCI to promote safety culture and practices in priority industries. We hope that our collective efforts will help prevent many occupational accidents, injuries and diseases and save countless lives."

All Bangladeshi enterprises with 50 or more employees have a legal binding to set up 'safety committees' consisting of an equal number of worker and employer representatives.

The ILO-FBCCI initiative will develop the capacity of 900 safety committee members on fire and occupational safety and health (OSH) so that they can better monitor, address and communicate on safety issues at their respective workplaces, the statement said.

Earlier in May, the ILO RMG programme organised the first Industrial Safety Forum (ISF) in Dhaka to discuss, engage and collaborate on improving workplace safety and health in all economic sectors across Bangladesh.

The Financial Express

KCCI Chief Targets Industrialization of Korean Food



SK Group Chairman Chey Tae-won, who serves as chairman of the Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), is stepping up to spearhead the industrialization of Korean food in the private sector.

The business body announced that it has chosen Korean food's industrialization as the primary theme for this year's National Development

Project Season 2.

The National Development Project, hosted by the KCCI, aims to discover a variety of solutions from the private sector to address structural problems faced by Korean society in the post-pandemic era.

Last year, the program was held in the form of a public contest gathering ideas for startups. The selected ideas have turned into actual products under the auspices of Chey and other mentoring entrepreneurs.

This year, the program will commence under the overarching theme of industrializing Korean food.

The Korean food industry carries a high potential for growth and synergy in the private sector, which can easily be linked to other industries like content production, the KCCI explained.

The Korea Bizwire

PCCI, DoTr discuss better transport system and logistics fees



Leaders of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) led by President George Barcelona recently paid a courtesy visit to Transportation Secretary Jaime Bautista to present PCCI's strategic agenda on infrastructure, transport and logistics.

PCCI expressed its support for the Department of Transportation's programs and expressed appreciation

for the commitment of Secretary Bautista that, under his term, the Department of Transportation (DoTr) will be more prudent on proposals to raise transport logistics-related fees.

Bautista committed to continue and finish the transport-related infrastructures that are already in the pipeline of Build Build Build program for railway, road, seaport and airport such as the Metro Manila Subway, LRT-1 extension, maintenance of MRT-3, MRT -7, North-South Commuter Railway of PNR, EDSA Busway, and completion of airports in Sangley and Bulacan.

The Manila Times

Startup Boot camp for Youth concludes in Colombo

Intending to strengthen Sri Lankan startups and empower young entrepreneurs, SCCI (Network of South Asian Private Sector) and Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka (FCCISL) in partnership with Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF South Asia) co-organized the Startup Boot camp for Sri Lanka Youth at Kingsbury Hotel, Colombo.

The two-day training program themed, “Strengthening Startup Ecosystems in South Asia: A Cross-border Startup Boot camp for Sri Lankan Young Entrepreneurs” was aimed to equip Sri Lankan young entrepreneurs with the necessary knowledge and skills for developing their startups to the next stages.

It was also an effective platform for the young participants to network with international startups, angel investors, and startup mentors in South Asia and beyond and was free of charge and over 100 participated from different parts of Sri Lanka, like Colombo Jaffna, Trincomalee, Matara, Monaragala, Kandy, Badulla, etc.

Moreover, their startups represented various sectors such as IT, eco-friendly products, fashion, handicrafts, tourism, education, agriculture, renewable energy, etc. The young participants’ deep enthusiasm was reflective of their great inclination to rebuild Sri Lanka’s economy through their innovative startups.

Industries Ministry Additional Secretary (Industry & Industrial Estates Development Division) Chaminda Patiraja, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom Country Director (Sri Lanka & Bangladesh) Wolfgang Heinze; National Enterprise Development Authority (NEDA) Chairman Sunil Jayarathne; Sri Lanka Standards Institution Chairman Asanga Ranasinghe; FCCISL Senior Vice President Keerthi Gunawardane; FCCISL Director Dr. Rohitha Silva and; and FCCISL Director Ruwan De Silva participated as special invitees and delivered speeches.



Participants received certificates on completion of the Boot camp from Ruwan De Silva.



Participants in the discussion.



Special Guests and Organizers.

The inaugural session was moderated by SCCI Associate Director Tilan M. Wijesooriya.

The interactive training sessions focused on theoretical and practical perspectives of the development of startups, i.e. Mindset Mastery for Entrepreneurs, Leadership and Management Skills, manage in VUCA Times, Applied Concepts of Entrepreneurship and Startup Models, Systems View of Entrepreneurial Creativity, Angel

Investments, Customer Service Excellence, Self-Development, Industry 4.0 and IOT, Growth Hacking, Invention Engine, Creative Intelligence, etc.

National and international startup role models and subject matter experts from Sri Lanka, India, Nigeria and the United States conducted the interactive training sessions of the two-day program.

From Sri Lanka, Dr. (Eng.) Ranil Sugathadasa; Deepal Sooriyaarachchi, Dr. Ravi Bamunusinghe, Prajeeth Balasubramaniam, Dhammika Kalapuge, Vijitha Abeywardena, and Mudith Madumarachchi conducted their relevant sessions.

From India, Karmjitsinh Bihola conducted a session. Muiyiwa Fasakin from Nigeria conducted another session.

From the United States, Prof. Dr. John F Cabra and Prof. Dr. Jim Friedman conducted the sessions.

All sessions were live streamed on YouTube Channel REAL Life TV whilst Sri Lanka Telecom was the communications partner that provided high-speed internet connectivity for the activities of training sessions.

All the young entrepreneurs were extremely happy about the program, mentioning, “We gained theoretical and practical knowledge along with skills necessary for the growth of our startups. Now we are futuristic and have pragmatic hopes of rebuilding our nation through innovative startups.”

Daily News

Ceylon Chamber's National SME Forum 2022 highlights Resilience Measures for SMEs

Digital transformation and innovation that sees opportunity in turbulence in order to attain resilience and growth, were among key themes that were explored at the National SME Forum 2022 organised recently by the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce.

Conducted under the theme of 'Way Forward for SMEs to Navigate Through the Crisis', the second edition of the annual Forum engaged high-level public sector officials, industry experts, organisations engaged in SME development, and other players in the SME ecosystem, to map out a course of recovery for the SME sector which is among the hardest hit by the current economic crisis. Deputy Governor of the Central Bank Mrs. T.M.J.Y.P. Fernando, CEO – Lanka Clear, Channa De Silva, economist Dr. Anura Ekanayake and veteran entrepreneur Dr. Nirmal de Silva were among the eminent panelists who participated at the Forum.

The Forum highlighted the need to prioritise digitisation of the SME sector in order to transform the supply chain, overcome logistics challenges and ensure broader access to both local and global markets. Featuring eminent panelists from a wide selection of sectors and industries, a key feature of the Forum was the dialogue it facilitated amongst participants and presenters, giving participants the opportunity to address pressing questions and obtain insightful advice from the panelists.

Topics raised through participant questions included the potential risks of digitisation, addressing import and export related challenges, and retaining customers and stabilising the business amidst the currently challenging economic environment.

Panelists offered insightful advice and guidance on navigating these issues, explaining how partnership and collaboration, with SMEs working together at an industry level, can contribute to overcoming challenges. A key theme presented by panellists was the importance of being proactive and identifying opportunities that

could arise from challenges, such as leveraging digital innovations spurred by the pandemic and other economic factors to integrate more efficient processes into business operations.

Emerging trends in supply chain logistics and management, exploring regional collaboration, and benefiting from capacity building initiatives spurred by government, NGO and private sector entities within Sri Lanka were other areas that were explored. Mitigating payment risks, evaluating businesses for export-readiness, diversifying product portfolios and dealing with compliance related challenges were discussed.

With several pertinent issues being discussed and innovative solutions discussed, the outcomes derived from the National SME Forum offer a strong basis to further explore and develop strategies to address the survival and revival of Sri Lanka's SME sector.

Ada Derana Business



FPCCI extends support to Prime Minister's Youth Programme

President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) Irfan Iqbal Sheikh has extended his full support from the platform of FPCCI to collaborate on joint programmes with the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) – be it business & agricultural loans; skill development programmes and employment generation.

He added that youth is Pakistan's greatest asset and they account for 65% of the total population of the country. Additionally, we should also not forget to educate, empower, employ and emancipate the young women as women are 52%

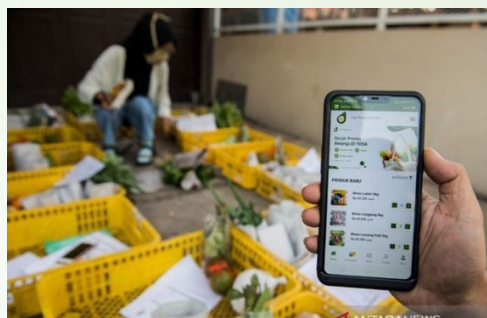
of Pakistan, he added.

Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Youth Affairs, said that the youth Programmes the soul of the Prime Minister's vision to empower youth and is the most precious asset of Pakistan. The journey started with the establishment of the Youth Affairs Wing to empower young people with the skill set, resources, and self-reliance opportunities by initiating a grand youth development programmes catering to multiple domains.

Senior Vice President FPCCI, Suleman Chawla, said that FPCCI is the right platform on many counts to support PMYP: (i) it can facilitate the load disbursements to youth diligently and in diverse sectors (ii) FPCCI can provide guidance to the youth to make their businesses viable and successful (iii) FPCCI can jointly organize job fairs, skill development programmes and seminars (iv) the apex body has the presence and linkages across Pakistan and across sectors to create an enabling environment in the length & breadth of the country (v) FPCCI can help bridge industry-academia disconnect.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh has also proposed to the government that FPCCI & PMYP can bring international skills, social and business development institutions like GIZ, TVET, JICA, DFID, UNIDO, USAID, etc. on board to provide maximum support and assistance to the very motivated, talented and hard-working youth of the country.

Bol News



innovate in order to increase the added value of goods and services, which would further boost the

operational cost efficiency in the longer term, he affirmed.

In addition to digitalization, he said, companies should adopt the values of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) in improving its values.

According to Rasjid, companies that implemented ESG initiatives were able to reap the benefits, including 15-30 percent higher price of goods and services in all sectors of business to consumers (B2C) and business to business (B2B), 50-percent faster sustainable growth of products, and an increase in return on capital.

Indonesia continues to face uncertainty in 2022 as the COVID-19 pandemic lingers on. Transmission of the virus has declined gradually during the year and various restrictions have been relaxed, thereby raising hopes of economic recovery, he elaborated.

The country's robust economic growth in the second quarter of 2022 is an indication that it has gradually recovered, with household consumption as the main contributor to the economic growth and gross domestic product (GDP).

However, increased geopolitical tensions due to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine have impacted the domestic economy.

Risjad said that concurrently, Indonesia and several other countries are facing multidimensional challenges in reviving the health sector during the post-pandemic era, strengthening national food resilience and energy security, as well as preserving the nation's financial stability.

Indonesia's business world should be able to adapt to the situation and optimize its businesses.

"Of course, inclusive collaboration between the government and private sector is needed because businesses cannot solve the problems alone," he emphasized.

Antara News

Digitalization to boost competitiveness amid global uncertainty: KADIN

Digitalization will improve business competitiveness to face global economic uncertainty, as the world transitions to recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, Head of the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KADIN) Arsjad Rasjid stated.

Companies will also need to continue to

MEMBER PERSONALITY

CNAIC elects Thomas Wu as new Chairman



The Chinese National Association of Industry and Commerce (CNAIC) held a general meeting on June 21, 2022, during which they elected Thomas T.L. Wu as their 26th-term Chairman. Wu's term was effective immediately following the election. He takes over the role from former Chairman Por-Fong Lin.

According to Wu, he plans on leading CNAIC to become a more influential platform that speaks for the industry, to assist the industry and commerce communities in communicating with the government and connect them to the world, and to ultimately promote Taiwan's economic growth and development. To achieve this, he will use four core principles: optimizing the investment and operation environment; deepening global economic cooperation; promoting the innovative use of energy in industry and commerce; and planning for a sustainable future.

Apart from his new role as Chairman of CNAIC, Wu is also concurrently Chairman of Taishin Financial Holdings, Taishin Bank, and Taishin Charity Foundation.

His experience in both the industrial and financial sectors is vast. He was the Chairman and President of Shinkong Synthetic Fibers Corporation; the Vice Chairman of TECO Electric and Machinery; and the Director, Managing Director and Supervisor of First Bank, Taipei Business Bank, and Hua Nan Bank respectively. In 1992, he co-founded Taishin Bank with societal leaders and established Taishin Financial Holdings in 2002. Since then, the business scope of Taishin Financial Holdings has expanded to include banking, life insurance, securities, investment trust, investment advisory, leasing, and asset management.

Wu is also deeply aware of his social responsibilities. He has served as the Chairman of Friends of the Police Association and is the current convener for their Board of Supervisors. At the same time, he is Managing Director of both the Taiwan After-Care Association and the Association for Victims Support.

SPECIAL FEATURE



Reshore or Diversify? How to reorganize the world's fragile supply chains

By Jong Woo Kang, Asian Development Bank

Trade conflicts, the pandemic and geopolitical tensions have all had an impact on global supply chains. It's time to rethink how these crucial production links are set up and how they can be made more resilient.

One key lesson of the pandemic and subsequent supply and demand mismatches is that global supply chains are fragile. They have been struggling amidst uneven economic recovery and trade conflict between global heavyweights, and are suffering geopolitical risks that are critically weighing on food and energy supplies.

Businesses, particularly in manufacturing, are finding it difficult to source inputs and engage seamless, multistep logistics and delivery management systems across borders. At national levels, this has resulted in shortages in key medical products and equipment during the health crisis, shipping and transportation costs going through the roof, and security concerns about the heavy reliance of critical goods and commodities from countries that could turn less supportive or even antagonistic in a volatile geopolitical environment.

The Time Is Right to Rejigger Global Supply Chains

One school of thought is to diversify those further away from places prone to disruptions due to economic, health, climate change and geopolitical issues. The other is bringing the production capacity back to the home country (onshoring) or to countries nearby (nearshoring). The benefits of diversification transcend sheer cost minimization. They also involve gains from risk mitigation and

securing back-up sourcing plans in case of a threat to existing supply chain security.

Nearshoring utilizes geographical or even cultural and political proximity of neighboring countries for upstream or downstream segments of supply chains. Onshoring builds production capacity of goods at home, often intending to cover the end-to-end business streams of designing, sourcing, manufacturing, marketing, distribution, sales and post-sales services.

Regional trade blocs or agreements such as the European Union, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement (USMCA) support nearshoring. The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) is another example, although it can fall under the category of “friendshoring” as touted by some people, where the scope of “friend” goes beyond the geographical boundary.

Pursuing Multiple Strategies at Once

Although concerns are growing about potential fragmentation of global supply chains based on a few trading blocs among allies, the future of global supply chains may not follow one common path, and will unfold differently depending upon countries' priorities and sectoral characteristics.

It is also worth noting that a government's industrial policy can do only so much, and the ultimate reconfiguration of supply chains is hugely dependent upon how businesses take supply chain risks on board and how they respond to incentives provided by governments.

While supply chain risk management seems

to have become part of operational decisions in many C-suites, cost efficiency and gains from specialization and trade are something that business cannot entirely forgo. In this sense, reshoring or onshoring versus further diversification of supply chains may not be viewed as an either/or choice, but as strategies to be pursued in parallel.

Some sectors will rely more on reshoring while others will focus on further diversification, subject to supply chain vulnerabilities and the expected gains from repositioning of management strategies.

Reshoring Comes With a Cost

In rejiggering supply chains, governments should consider:

First, reshoring needs to be pursued in a selective and efficient way. No matter how ambitious a country might be, reshoring across broad industries is neither possible nor desirable given additional cost implications and inefficiencies involved in bringing back home part of supply chains.

Although we hear a lot about the need to rebuild production capacity of semiconductors in the U.S. and EU, with their heavy reliance upon East Asia for manufacturing (foundry), this doesn't mean they have forgone the sector entirely over time. They have rather become specialized in high value-added, upstream segment of the chips supply chain such as Electric Design Automation (EDA) and Discrete, Analogue, and Optoelectronics and sensors (DAO), relegating simpler manufacturing processes largely to Asian economies.

By encompassing the manufacturing segment, reshoring will certainly enhance supply chain security for this critical "new oil" of the economy, yet with additional cost implications at least for the short term. This is where technological advances can play a role and the level of technological sophistication vis-à-vis traditional foreign peers will characterize the efficiency of such reshoring strategies.

Second, reshoring strategy may not solely target outsourced production capacities of domestic companies. Attracting foreign investment could also be a part of strategy to cope with short-term domestic constraints in human and physical capital mobilization. Domestically incorporated foreign invested enterprises will make no less contribution to expanding production capacity and job creation than local companies, let alone the

expected technology spillovers.

Risk Implications

Third, diversification motives may not be based solely on cost efficiency, but should consider risk management perspectives. For this, the offshoring of production to multiple sites with lower correlation of various supply chain disruption risks will help. This also corroborates the rationale that free trade agreements should be explored not only with geographical neighbors but with trade partners further afield to expand the scope for such opportunities.

Lastly, while government incentives to rejigger supply chains could be effective in jumpstarting businesses' motivation to reshore or diversify, this may not ensure the long-term sustainability of such approaches, given that subsidies tend to ameliorate fixed costs for investment or tax payment, not operational costs.

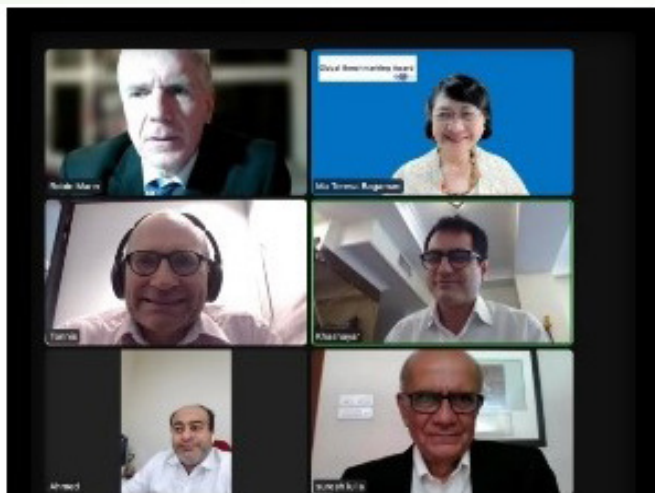
Incentives for export competitiveness could also have some implications on WTO compliance and stoke retaliatory reactions from trading partners. So, the success of such strategies will hinge on how a good eco-system could be nurtured to facilitate a virtuous cycle of outputs from newly expanded production or sourcing capacity being linked to robust demand base domestically and abroad.

Legitimate economic rationale and political motives for rejiggering supply chains may not always ensure its success unless pursued with strategic thinking and practical implementation plans, which also need to be well aligned with business incentives. Rhetoric is one thing, but implementation is another. Only those which can wisely strategize its implementation will be able to reap the benefits.

Brink News

PRODUCT & SERVICE COUNCILS

Young Entrepreneurs Group of Asia-Pacific



Iran YEGAP Member enlisted as Judge Panelist at Global Benchmarking Award Final 2022

The 8th Global Benchmarking Award was held virtually on August 4 with the purpose of encouraging organizations to demonstrate how benchmarking is a drive for their success and an integral part of their advancement.

The award is designed by the Global Benchmarking Network (GBN), a network of organizations with interest in the practice of benchmarking. The award is organized by Partnerships (Australia), BestPrax Club (India) and COER (New Zealand). This year, Dubai Police was selected as the winner by the judges. The members of the board of GBN attended the award in their capacity as judges. Mr Khashayar Ataie from Iran was one of the



judges. Mr. Ataie is also a member of CACCI's Young Entrepreneurs Group of Asia-Pacific. Other judges were from the Netherlands, the US, the Philippines, India, and New Zealand.



Introduction to Tehran Youth Association of Entrepreneurs

Tehran Youth Association of Entrepreneurs, which was established with the official permission of the Iran Chamber of Commerce and the full supervision of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce in 2017 is the only official association of Iran Chamber of Commerce for the youth of the country whose members are from Tehran Chamber of Commerce. They are active in providing cooperation, mutual thinking and organized activities among young entrepreneurs in order to create a favorable environment for young entrepreneurship, business networking and doing joint work, training and skill building in the field of management and entrepreneurship.

Also, this association, with its official presence in some government organizations and departments of Iran, follows up on potential issues and problems of the country's young producers and businessmen. They also provide numerous



welfare, sports, and consulting services that support the country's youth in the path of progress.

Like youth chambers in other parts of the world, this organization operates on the four pillars of education, social responsibility, networking in entrepreneurship and deputy preparation and has expanded its relationship with the corresponding associations at the national and international levels, which led to the signing of memorandums of understanding like the arbitration center of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, insurance, etc., all of which directed toward serving of the youth.

To get familiar with the association, more info is available on

<https://www.instagram.com/tccimjunior/>

Asian Council Tourism

Cannabis cafes open new front in Thai tourism revival



The RG420 cannabis cafe opened just four days ago in Khao San, an area of Bangkok popular with backpackers - and already it's crammed with customers.

Several such outlets have sprung up across

the capital since Thailand decriminalised the plant in June, a few weeks before it dropped COVID-linked controls on foreign visitors.

Foreign arrivals shrank to 2 million in the first half of 2022 from nearly 40 million in 2019, and RG420's owner Ong-ard Panyachatiraksa and others like him view their cafes as central to efforts to revive a tourism industry that contributed about 12% to GDP before the pandemic struck.

He said hundreds have been visiting the cafe every day, and he plans to open others. "Europeans, Japanese, Americans - they are looking for Thai sativa," Ong-ard told Reuters, referring to a cannabis strain. "Cannabis and tourism are a match."

Not everyone agrees. In 2018, Thailand became the first Southeast Asian country to legalise marijuana for medical use. In June, the entire cannabis plant was decriminalised.

That has led to an explosion in its recreational use, something that government officials - concerned about negative effects on health and productivity often linked to uncontrolled use of the drug - have retrospectively tried to discourage.

"The law does not cover recreational cannabis use... and so tourism promotion is focused on medical (aspects)," the national tourism authority's Deputy Governor, Siripakorn Cheawsamoot, said.

The pushback against the way the new policy is being interpreted has caused some confusion, with authorities resorting to issuing piecemeal regulations such as banning public smoking of cannabis and its sale to under 20s.

A parliamentary committee is now debating a bill to regulate cannabis use that is expected to finalise in September and could impact the cannabis cafes. [read more](#)

Akira Wongwan, a medical cannabis entrepreneur and one of the committee's advisers, said she expected recreational use to be subject to zoning laws.

Meanwhile, in the crowded smoking room at RG420 - a reference to Rag Gan, a Thai expression meaning "love each other" - Briton Malik Khan has just finished rolling a joint.

"This country is beautiful, and there's so much to do here as well," the 26-year-old said. "It (cannabis) adds to the scene really nicely."

Reuters

Business leaders pledge support for new Asia- Pacific Green Deal



Recognizing the role that the private sector can play in scaling up climate action, government and business leaders from across the region have declared their support for an Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business.

The declaration was adopted at the Asia-Pacific Business Forum 2022 today, co-hosted by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network (ESBN).

The Green Deal for Business encourages companies to go greener, to work to decarbonize both their own operations as well as those of their supply chains, change towards a more circular economy to minimize waste, and to build smart, water-efficient and climate-resilient cities.

Highlighting the urgent need to redouble efforts to regain the momentum to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), United Nations Under-Secretary-General and ESCAP Executive Secretary Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana called for coordinated efforts by governments and the private sector.

“The crisis has shown that the region needs to invest in its health infrastructure, address the digital divide and improve trade, transport and energy connectivity,” said Alisjahbana, adding that inflationary pressures and a surge in prices of agricultural commodities and energy are challeng-

ing post-pandemic recovery efforts, particularly in developing countries, where high food and energy prices could push many into poverty.

George Lam, Chair of ESNB and President of the Hong Kong-ASEAN Economic Cooperation Foundation, said: “From the COVID-19 pandemic, we must build back better, together and that means investing in smarter, greener solutions to further develop the Green Economy. I urge businesses to wholeheartedly adopt and implement the new Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business through taking specific actions towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”

Delegates at this year’s Forum also explored how business innovation, new technologies and new industries could be harnessed in pursuit of a new green economy.

“The digital economy will be important for green policies,” said Arkhom Termpittayapaisith, Minister of Finance of Thailand, adding that the digital transformation can significantly reduce internal and external costs, and promote green innovation such as smart city development.

“We need to bring onboard the private sector to deal with climate change in a meaningful way. Without the private sector significantly reducing emissions, we will not meet any of the global climate plans. The private sector is also ultimately the source of most solutions - it’s the private sector that can innovate, create green products and finance green investments,” said John Denton, Secretary-General of the International Chamber of Commerce.

The Asia-Pacific Business Forum has been held annually since 2004 and invites governments, businesses, civil society and academics from all over the region to dialogue and identify innovative solutions and recommendations for the private sector to better contribute to greener and more sustainable development.

This year’s APBF urges businesses across the Asia-Pacific region to sign up to the Green Deal for Business Declaration to demonstrate that businesses must take a leading role in the green transformation towards a low carbon, climate-resilient and sustainable new economy.

Scoop Media

INVESTMENT & JOINT VENTURES



Mitsubishi private equity arm to launch \$124m Southeast Asia fund

Japanese trading house Mitsubishi Corp. will invest more than 17 billion yen (\$124 million) in promising mid-tier companies in Southeast Asia through regional investment arm AIGF Advisors by 2025, using its connections to help them grow.

AIGF, a Mitsubishi subsidiary focused on markets inside the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, recently raised capital to launch a new fund from institutional investors and others in Japan and abroad.

AIGF envisions investing 2 billion to 4 billion yen in each company. It will focus on unlisted businesses in fields like food and logistics, which are expected to enjoy a boost from e-commerce and the shift to digital technologies.

AIGF has already invested several billion yen each in a meat distributor in the Philippines and a Singapore-based logistics company whose specialties include transporting semiconduc-

tor-manufacturing machinery and other precision equipment. The money will be used to expand their logistics networks and make digital upgrades.

Mitsubishi Corp., whose businesses span energy, minerals, cars and food, will also provide access to its retail know-how and client network.

AIGF plans to invest in three to five more companies.

This is AIGF's second fund. The company raised \$176 million for its fund launched in 2015.

The previous fund invested in three companies, including the Thai operator of KFC fried-chicken restaurants. Malaysian upscale supermarket chain Jaya Grocer, which is also on the list, grew its earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization roughly fivefold before AIGF divested.

Nikkei Asia

Apollo and Belstar to Form Private Credit Joint Venture in Korea

Apollo and Belstar Group announced they have agreed to establish a 50/50 joint venture in Korea to provide a wide range of private credit solutions, bringing together the capabilities of Apollo's global credit platform with Belstar's long standing expertise in investing and partnering with corporates and institutions in Korea.

The joint venture intends to provide large corporations, mid-sized enterprises and sponsors in Korea with asset-backed capital solutions, corporate lending and acquisition financing. In providing private lending solutions, in addition to the traditional financing sources in place today, the joint venture will look to address a liquidity gap

borrowers face in the market. The joint venture is a strategic extension of Apollo's credit investment franchise in the Asia Pacific region and will support Apollo's recently established Asia Pacific Credit Strategy. The investment program in Korea will be anchored by Apollo's funds and its internal and affiliated insurance balance sheets, focusing on providing flexible and differentiated capital across the yield and duration spectrums.

Matt Michelini, Partner and Head of Asia Pacific at Apollo, commented, "We have been exploring the market opportunity in Korea with a heightened degree of interest for several years, and are delighted to partner with Belstar to address the market need for alternative forms of liquidity and credit in Korea. We are optimistic this joint venture will serve as a starting point for Apollo's long-term presence in Korea."

"Together with Apollo, we are helping Korea transition from a primarily bank-financed market to a market with alternative sources of credit enabled by the 2021 amendments to the Capital Markets Act," said Daniel Yun, Chairman and Managing Partner of Belstar. "We are pleased to partner with Apollo and deliver their leading credit expertise to further develop the capital markets in Korea."

Globe Newswire

Siam Cement speeds up green transition with recycling, energy deals

Leading Thai materials maker Siam Cement Group has accelerated a push into green businesses such as recycling and renewables amid a global and local drive to reduce plastics and other emissions-heavy products that have been a mainstay for the conglomerate.

In July, group unit SCG Packaging announced that it acquired Peute Recycling in the Netherlands. The investment will allow SCG Packaging to quickly expand and grow in the packaging materials recycling business, CEO Wichan Jitpuk-



dee said in the release.

Peute has the capacity to produce 1 million tonnes of recovered paper a year, and handles plastic as well. The plan is to use Peute's recycled materials in European production, as well as bring Peute's technology to Asia to create materials for use in food and package deliveries.

Another group unit, SCG Chemicals, acquired a 70% stake in Sirplaste-Sociedade Industrial de Recuperados de Plastico in April. Sirplaste is Portugal's largest plastic recycler with an annual capacity of 36,000 tonnes.

In addition to these two deals, worth a combined 362.5 billion baht (\$10.1 billion), SCG is making inroads into renewable energy.

SCG Roofing said in April that it would partner with Huawei Technologies to develop efficient solar roof systems, using Huawei's storage batteries. SCG Ceramics in June launched a carport that doubles as a solar-powered charging station for electric vehicles.

SCG plans to invest 70 billion baht by 2030 into products and services that help reduce carbon emissions -- a push fueled partly by concerns that it cannot keep growing under its current business model.

The group's mainstay products, like cement and petrochemicals, require massive amounts of energy to make and result in large amounts of greenhouse gas emissions. Investors' attitudes toward the group have hardened as they focus more on environmental, social and governance factors.

SCG also operates joint ventures with leading overseas businesses like Toyota Motor, Kubota and Nippon Paper Industries.

Nikkei Asia



ADM and Temasek's Asia Sustainable Foods Platform Inaugurate ScaleUp Bio Joint Venture

ADM, a global leader in nutrition and agricultural origination and processing, and Asia Sustainable Foods Platform, a company focused on accelerating the commercialization of sustainable foods in Asia, announced the official inauguration of their joint venture company, ScaleUp Bio. It is the first company in Singapore to provide contract development and manufacturing organization services for precision fermentation for food applications.

ScaleUp Bio has entered into a multi-year partnership with A*STAR's Singapore Institute of Food and Biotechnology Innovation (SIFBI) to establish a joint lab focused on precision fermentation. Scheduled to be operational in Q1 2023, the joint lab will be situated within the Food Tech Innovation Centre (FTIC) at Biopolis. It will provide start-ups with fermenters that can support up to 100L in capacity, associated downstream processing units and relevant testing, as well as analytical equipment for full optimization.

Upon maturity of their growth cycle, start-ups can seamlessly transition to ScaleUp Bio's new facility, which can further support up to 10,000L fermentation capacity. Located in the Tuas district, the facility will be wholly owned and operated by ScaleUp Bio and is targeted to be operational by mid-2023.

The joint lab and new facility will provide technological development and precision fermentation for companies producing a wide variety of bio-based products, including alternative proteins, to serve growing consumer demand in Singapore and the wider Asia-Pacific region.

In November 2021, the Asia Sustainable Foods Platform and A*STAR's SIFBI commit-

ted to invest over S\$30 million over the next three years in FTIC. Through the FTIC, food-tech companies including start-ups will have access to tailored infrastructure and service offerings, namely a food grade pilot scale facility with extrusion and fermentation equipment, shared labs, test kitchens, co-working spaces, as well as A*STAR's deep R&D know-how.

ADM News

India's Vedanta set to choose site for \$20bn tech hub with Foxconn

Indian metals conglomerate Vedanta is close to selecting a site for a mammoth \$20 billion tech hub to churn out microchips, displays and other products, sources told Nikkei Asia, teaming up with Taiwanese electronics giant Foxconn as New Delhi looks to slash supply disruptions from overseas.

Officials from Vedanta have been visiting a 400-acre (160-hectare) location in Pune in the western state of Maharashtra that is a leading candidate to host the hub, said two people with direct knowledge of the matter. Other possible sites are understood to include in the neighboring state of Gujarat and the southern state of Karnataka.

Broad plans for the development were first announced earlier this year after the COVID-19 pandemic upended global supplies of crucial electronic components used in everything from smartphones to cars. India has vowed to spend \$30 billion to overhaul its tech industry and build local chip supply chains to avoid being "held hostage" to foreign producers.

The sources said Foxconn staff have also been involved in choosing the site, although it remains unclear exactly what role the company will play in the overall project. Foxconn in February agreed to invest nearly \$120 million in a joint venture with Vedanta to develop semiconductors in India, without elaborating.

The hub is likely to include a display plant, a chip facility and a chip packaging and testing

plant, according to a Maharashtra state government document seen by Nikkei Asia.

"First production from the venture will start within two years," Vedanta Chairman Anil Agarwal told India's Business Standard newspaper.

Agarwal said around \$10 billion of the investment will be made immediately, with the rest coming as the project expands. "With this, more than semiconductors, we will be able to make [components] for several items, like cellphones, laptops and televisions."

The Maharashtra government note indicates that Maharashtra government officials hope the hub would attract investment from other multinational companies down the line, mentioning the likes of Corning, Samsung, Silicon Works, LG Chem, Linde and Praxair.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has said it is determined to make the country more self-sufficient in tech and is particularly keen to curb its reliance on its neighbor and sometime rival China. It has previously said it plans to allocate around \$10 billion of federal funds to subsidize two chip and two display facilities in India.

Foxconn is the world's biggest electronics

manufacturer, assembling products ranging from iPhones and MacBooks for Apple to video game consoles for Nintendo and Sony. Its chairman, Young Liu, has been pushing for the company to boost its chip output, especially as the tiny components are key to its emerging ambitions to develop electric vehicles.

The company already has production facilities in southern India that assemble iPhones, along with televisions for China's Xiaomi. India does not yet have any display or semiconductor manufacturing sites, with observers highlighting that these products require more advanced know-how and infrastructure, such as stable supplies of electricity and pure water.

Indeed, one analyst warned that the project could face a bumpy road ahead.

"Manufacturing and packaging of semiconductors requires trained manpower, which is at present not available in India," said Hetal Gandhi, a director at CRISIL Research. "Besides, manufacturing semiconductors requires [an] uninterrupted supply of water and electricity, which are only available in a handful of locations [in the nation]."

Nikkei Asia



ECONOMIC COOPERATION



US, Mongolia Discuss Expanding Economic Cooperation At 1st Strategic Dialogue Meeting

The United States and Mongolia discussed expanding economic cooperation as they held their first strategic dialogue meeting, according to a joint statement.

On August 24, Ulaanbaatar hosted the 15th annual US-Mongolia bilateral consultations and their first strategic dialogue.

"The Governments of the United States and Mongolia reaffirmed their strong desire to build on the Strategic Partnership, expand the relationship in all areas of mutual interest, and explore opportunities for increased economic cooperation and investment through existing and new mechanisms such as the U.S. International De-

velopment Finance Corporation," the statement said.

Both sides welcomed the initiation of talks on a bilateral Open Skies Agreement, a step toward establishing scheduled non-stop passenger flights between the two countries, further expanding economic and people-to-people ties.

The sides reiterated their commitment to resolution of all international disputes by peaceful means and with respect for the UN Charter and international law. They also "expressed concern over the suffering of the Ukrainian people."

The two countries also discussed improving Mongolia's business climate, increasing activities of USAID, and developing collaboration on projects to advance the East Asia nation's economic development and diversification, digitalization, and economic independence. They welcomed successful partnership on defense and security, peacekeeping operations and other areas, according to the statement.

Urdu Point



Australia's defence minister said he aims to deepen defence ties with France, Germany and Britain during visits to the European partners this week, saying war in Ukraine has increased the importance of cooperation with like minded nations.

The trip, from Aug. 29 to Sept. 1, will be Richard Marles' first since centre-left Labor won a general election in May.

The government said France stop would help "restore and renew" their bilateral relationship, calling France one of Australia's "oldest and most capable partners".

Australia in June reached a 555 million

euro (\$553 million) settlement with French military shipyard Naval Group over its scrapping of a multi-billion dollar submarine deal last year.

Canberra hoped the settlement would help repair a rift after the previous government ditched the deal in favour of building nuclear-powered submarines with the United States and Britain under a new alliance dubbed AUKUS.

The trip will also see Marles participate in a roundtable with German defence industry representatives, while in Britain he will visit shipyards, the government said.

"Our relationship with the United Kingdom is both historic and mutually beneficial, and is reflected through our continued commitment to AUKUS," Marles said. "My visit to Europe comes at a time when the war in Ukraine has shown the importance of increasing cooperation with like minded partners, both in Europe and the Indo-Pacific."

In June, Marles visited Japan to promote defence cooperation to counterbalance China's growing military influence in Asia.

Reuters



The Airports Authority of India (AAI) and the LfV Air Navigation Services of Sweden have signed a memorandum of understanding to bring together the two countries with demonstrated capabilities in building and operationalising the next generation of sustainable aviation technology.

The agreement will enable the two sides to explore smart aviation solutions and pave the way for bilateral exchanges of aviation knowledge

and technology. It will allow Indian companies to accelerate growth while leveraging Swedish innovation and expertise. Under the aegis of the MoU, companies can collaborate in areas of mutual interest.

Acknowledging the pressing need for rapid development concerning next-generation smart airports and the necessity to build sustainable transport systems, both parties agreed to exchange aviation knowledge and technology transfer programmes; promote close and friendly relations between the two agencies; expand technical cooperation in airports; and support the development of a safe, secure, sustainable, and efficient aviation sector.

A joint working group shall be organised to prioritise interest areas and drive collaboration between the two countries. This MoU will play a crucial role in furthering government-to-government engagements between India and Sweden in the aviation sector; in addition to other existing areas of collaboration like sustainability, healthcare, innovation, energy, and infrastructure.

The Ambassador of Sweden to India talked about the long-standing collaboration between India and Sweden. “We are looking forward to this addition to the already expansive India-Sweden collaboration, which already includes sustainability, health, innovation, energy, and will now extend to civil aviation.” The Ambassador of India to Sweden explained that the MoU covers new ground and will facilitate technology collaborations to improve safety, sustainability, and efficiency in the aviation sector.

Open Gov Asia



President Tsai Ing-wen told a business forum in Taipei that Taiwan would continue collaborating with the United States and other countries in the Indo-Pacific region on trade and economic issues in the “post-pandemic” era.

Through a pre-recorded video, Tsai said at the business forum organized by the Commercial Times that the government remained committed to deepening its cooperation with the U.S. and Indo-Pacific partners to expand Taiwan’s trade and economic links.

She specifically mentioned the U.S.-Taiwan Initiative on 21st-Century Trade -- a joint initiative launched by Taiwan and the U.S. in early June for both sides to map out a pathway to negotiating and signing a trade agreement -- as an example.

Under the joint initiative, Washington and Taipei will focus their negotiations on 11 areas, including trade facilitation, regulatory practices, agriculture, and anti-corruption.

The initiative was unveiled about one week after Taiwan was excluded from participating in the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, a multilateral partnership led by the U.S. and seen by some to serve as a potential bulwark against China’s growing economic and political influence in the region.

Meanwhile, Tsai said the “New Southbound Policy” had increased the country’s trade and investment ties with the 18 countries in Southeast Asia, South Asia as well as Australasia targeted by the policy.

According to Tsai, Taiwan’s trade with New Southbound Policy partners reached a record US\$149 billion in 2021, showing that trade ties had not been greatly impacted by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

At the same time, Taiwan has signed new versions of the bilateral investment agreement (BIA) with the Philippines, Vietnam, and India to provide better protection for Taiwanese investors in these countries, Tsai noted.

Looking forward, the president went on, the government would continue assisting companies with operations in the New Southbound Policy countries in cultivating talent and pushing for industrial upgrades as part of efforts to strengthen and safeguard Taiwanese businesses’ investments in the region.

CNA

TECHNOLOGY

New tech to provide faster internet access on Mumbai's rail network

Suburban rail commuters in Mumbai served by select telcos will be able to enjoy faster internet on their mobile phones courtesy of a new technology.

Cloudextel, which pitches itself as a 'network as a service' company, has tied up for a pilot project with Railtel to provide the shared Radio

Access Network (RAN) solution at nine railway stations between Churchgate and Dadar on the Western Railway.

The company's Founder and Chief Executive, Kunal Bajaj said it has already fixed up the equipment at the Mumbai Central railway station, and claimed that the results have been very satisfactory with higher data speeds.

At present, subscribers of Vi and Airtel will be able to avail the services without any extra cost or a new login like the one required to log on to a public WiFi, Bajaj said.

Typically, the company fixes up a single base station and then multiple small units across a station to help the connectivity, Bajaj said, adding that a site like Mumbai Central will require an investment of ₹1 crore.

Cloudextel will commit to a set of parameters on service delivery and the telco pays it regardless of the number of consumers who get



served or the data they download, Bajaj said.

The company, a subsidiary of Bombay Gas Company, feels in the next 12-18 months, the project can be expanded to all the sub-urban railway stations and it will be putting up similar infrastructure along tracks as well for better connectivity while traveling.

The same shared RAN solution will be pitched to airports, metro stations, and top-grade commercial real estate projects as well, Bajaj said.

At present, it is funded by the parent and has drawn up a plan to invest up to ₹400 crore over the next five years depending on how the business grows, Bajaj said, adding that it will be looking for external funding as it expands.

The Hindu

POLICY UPDATES

Cambodia

Cambodia to introduce special tourist policy to help boost industry



The Cambodian government is set to introduce a “special tourist policy” to boost the ailing travel industry by attracting long-staying tourists, repeat visitors, high spenders, potential investors and others.

With the hope that these visitors will become involved in socio-economic development, Cambodia’s Tourism Ministry has been working on drafting the policy with the feedback gained from public and private institutions in the country.

According to the Phnom Penh Post, Ministry secretary of state Tith Chantha said during a recent workshop that while a typical traveller spends an average of US\$700-800 per trip to Cambodia, the “special tourist” described in the policy spends about US\$2,000-3,000.

The ministry said in a statement that these tourists also visited the country more often and stayed longer, with a majority of them having businesses or jobs in

the country.

Chantha said discussions are ongoing on the rights and conditions for tourists, who are investors or traders, to buy land to build lodgings.

He said the policy aims to turn ecotourism into a more attractive investment option, and the ministry was working on mechanisms to attract more tourists in the future.

Phnom Penh Post

Iran

Iran allows €1bn worth of car imports



The Iranian government has finally authorized a law allowing the import of finished cars more than four years after the country imposed a ban on such imports to protect local car manufacturers and to cut back on hard currency spending.

The official IRNA news agency said in a report that the Iranian administrative government had issued a decree earlier in the day setting out conditions and regulations of car imports into the country.

The report said under the new law, which was approved in the Cabinet on August 17, Iranian

importers will be able to bring in finished cars worth below 20,000 euros, with a focus on cars worth below 10,000 euros, for selling to customers in Iran Mercantile Exchange.

Total annual car imports allowed under the new law should not exceed 1 billion euros, it added.

The report said that importing unfinished cars for use in Iran’s commercial fleet will be allowed under Iran’s direct foreign investment rules while car imports into Iran’s free trade zones, where regulations are more lax compared to the mainland, will be exclusively restricted to hybrid or all-electric cars.

Iran imposed a ban on imports of cars in 2018 after the country’s oil exports revenues came under strain because of American sanctions.

The ban was also meant to help local car manufacturers increase their sales and better cope with the impacts of sanctions on their supply chains.

Iran’s industry ministry expects around 100,000 cars will be imported into the country under the law in the next 12 months.

However, the ministry said that it will consider strict standards for imports of cars into Iran, including the need for setting up a sufficient number of dealerships and a smooth supply of parts into the market.

Press TV

Japan

Japan eases COVID rules against travel to Indonesia, Philippines

The Japanese government has eased its travel warning over the coronavirus pandemic for 54 countries and a region, including Indonesia and the Philippines, and is



no longer requesting that residents in Japan refrain from nonessential trips to those nations.

The Foreign Ministry said it had lowered the travel advisory for those areas from the second-lowest Level 2 on its four-point scale to Level 1, which advises Japanese nationals traveling to those regions to “stay fully alert.”

Twenty-three countries and a region from the Middle East and Africa, such as Egypt and South Africa, were newly designated as Level 1. Eleven European nations including Ukraine and Russia, 10 Asian and Pacific countries such as Pakistan and Myanmar as well as 10 in Latin America were also newly designated as Level 1, according to the ministry.

Meanwhile, 35 areas including Taiwan, Australia, New Zealand, Mexico and Turkey remained under the Level 2 warning.

In addition, advisories for 41 other nations were downgraded from Level 3, which warns people to avoid all travel, to Level 2. Among them are 33 in the Middle East and Africa, four in the Caribbean, three in Eastern Europe, and Kyrgyzstan.

Seventy other nations and areas such as China, South Korea, India, the United States, Britain, France and Germany have already been moved to Level 1.

The total number of areas under the Level 1 category now stands at 125, while those at Level 2 have declined to 76. No nations fall into Level 3 and 4.

The ministry said it still recommends those who plan to travel overseas to get fully vaccinated to prevent COVID-19 infection.

Nikkei Asia

Nepal

All provinces to implement ‘70 points system’ in trial exams for driving license

The Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport, under the federal government, passed the guideline that one should obtain at least 70 points in the practical examination (trial) of the driver’s license. Earlier, Bagmati, Madhesh and Karnali Province hesitated to implement the guideline.

In a discussion of transport ministers and secretaries of all seven provinces at Singha Durbar, the ministers of all the seven provinces expressed their readiness to implement the 70 points trial under the leadership of the Minister for Physical Infrastructure and Transport, Mohammad Ishtiaq Rai.

Harihar Pokharel, the spokesperson for the Labor Ministry of Bagmati Province said that the ministers of all the seven provinces have agreed on the implementation of the guideline. He said, “The meeting agreed on 11 points. The new guideline that one should obtain at least 70 points in the trial of the driver’s license will be implemented soon.”

Bagmati, Madhesh and Karnali provinces had not implemented it even after 14 months since the federal government introduced the guideline. Although Gandaki, Lumbini, Sudur Paschim provinces and Province 1 have implemented this guideline, other three provinces were hesitant to implement the driving license examination guidelines 2077.

My Republica

New Zealand

New Zealand temporarily changes immigration rules to hire extra workers



New Zealand will make temporary changes to its immigration rules seeking to hire thousands of extra workers to plug a labor shortage, Immigration Minister Michael Wood said.

Wood said the government was aiming at temporarily doubling numbers under the working holiday visa scheme.

The visa scheme allows people to enter and work from New Zealand for a period of up to 12 months, or sometimes even more, if they’re from select countries like the UK or Canada.

By throwing open more working holiday visa slots, New Zealand is hoping for 12,000 extra workers over the year.

“These measures are about providing immediate relief to those businesses hardest hit by the global worker shortage,” Wood said in a statement.

Michael Wood said there would be relaxation of wage rules for skilled migrants in key sectors like aged care, construction, infrastructure, meat processing, seafood and adventure tourism so these businesses are slowly able to build necessary skills in the country.

Wood announced a temporary extension of working holiday visas by six months and an opportunity for those who previously held the visa but didn’t travel to New

Zealand because of COVID.

"COVID brought the world to a standstill," Wood said, adding that a workers' crunch was being felt most by New Zealand's hospitality and tourism sectors that traditionally rely on international workers.

While COVID had a major impact on international travel around the world, New Zealand's response was unusually draconian by global standards. The isolated and remote islands closed their borders almost entirely during the pandemic, hoping to keep the virus out altogether, but ultimately failed in this goal. It finally reopened on July 31 this year.

DW

Philippines

Philippines enacts law to aid parents provide quality care to their kids

A proposed legislation seeking the establishment of a Parent Effectiveness Service (PES) program in the country has lapsed into law, Senate President Juan Miguel Zubiri said.

The new law mandates local government units (LGUs) to implement a PES program that will help parents and their substitutes strengthen their skills and knowledge on their parental duties and their role in protecting and promoting children's rights.

Also part of the program is the parent's and their substitutes' responsibilities in fostering positive early childhood development as well as advancing their children's educational progress.

"The LGUs shall give priority to parents and/or parent substitutes with vulnerable children, such as but not limited to children at risk, children in conflict with the law, and children who have been exposed to

and/or involved in violence in the homes and communities, solo parents and/or their parent substitutes, and adolescent parents and their parents, and/or parent-substitutes," the law states.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development will be the implementing agency of the law. Likewise, it will be mandated to develop a PES Module Manual in coordination with the Department of Education, the Early Childhood Care and Development Council, the School Governing Councils, the Department of Health, the Department of Justice, and the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

GMA News

Taiwan

Border controls likely to be further relaxed in October: CECC



Taiwan could further relax border controls in October after the country passes the anticipated peak of the most recent COVID-19 outbreak caused by the Omicron sub-variant BA. 5, the Central Epidemic Commander Center (CECC) said on August 26.

Speaking at a news conference in Taipei, CECC head Victor Wang said he expects current border control measures to be loosened once a clear downward trend in COVID-19 infections emerges.

The new rules are likely to come two to three weeks after Taiwan passes the peak of the most recent surge in new cases in mid or

late September, he added.

However, the relaxation does not mean drastic changes to existing protocols, Wang said, explaining that the "3+4" policy for arriving travelers -- three days of mandatory quarantine, followed by a four-day self-monitoring period -- will continue for the time being.

Taiwan could start by raising the weekly cap of 50,000 visitors allowed to enter the nation, or by opening up for tourist groups, he said.

Offering a preview of its future marketing plans, the Tourism Bureau said eased control measures could apply to inbound tourist groups before outbound tourist groups.

The bureau will first attempt to normalize inbound travel from Japan, from which about 2 million tourists visited Taiwan each year before the pandemic, according to deputy director-general Lin Hsin-jen.

Other priority markets include countries in Southeast Asia, North America, Europe, as well as South Korea, he said.

CNA

