**December 18, 2012**

[**BYD to Build Electric Bus Plant in California**](http://www.thechinaperspective.com/articles/chinacorporaten-9884/)

The China Perspective

BYD Co, the Chinese electric car and battery maker backed by Warren Buffett, will build an electric bus plant in California in 2013, which will be its first wholly-owned plant overseas, senior vice president Li Ke said. The California plant is expected to kick off construction in March or April 2013 and to produce 50 to 100 electric buses in 2014 and 500 buses by the end of 2015. The buses to be priced $550,000 to $600,000 will be used in Apple Inc's headquarters, Los Angeles Airport and Stanford University, according to Li. BYD last week signed a deal with Bulmineral, a Bulgarian energy company, to build a 50:50 joint venture electric bus plant in the Eastern European country.

[**75% Of Business Leaders Want Japan In TPP Talks: Poll**](http://e.nikkei.com/e/fr/tnks/Nni20121217D1712A16.htm)

Nikkei

Three-quarters of the nation's top business executives polled in a snap Nikkei Inc. survey say the next government should enlist Japan in the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade talks. When asked whether Japan should take part in the TPP negotiations, 75.9% of the 137 respondents urged the country to swiftly join the talks, far surpassing the 14.6% who said the decision should be made after sufficient national-level discussions.

[**Colombia set for record breaking year of foreign investment**](http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/27453-colombia-set-for-record-breaking-year-of-foreign-investment.html)

Colombia Reports

Colombia is set for a record breaking year in foreign investment as the total reaches over $15 billion from January to November of 2012, local media sources reported Monday.

[**Peruvian exports will reach U.S. $ 44.000M at end of 2012**](http://www.americaeconomia.com/economia-mercados/comercio/exportaciones-peruanas-alcanzarian-los-us44000m-al-cierre-de-2012)

America Economia

Peruvian exports will recover next year to levels similar to those of 2011, when they totaled U.S. $ 45,201 million, compared to the expected recovery in Europe and the U.S., said the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism (Mincetur). (spanish)

[**LatAm mobile sales transactions to grow 35% through 2015 – TCS**](http://subscriber.bnamericas.com/Subscriber/?idioma=I&tipoContenido=detalle&pagina=content&idContenido=604128&tipoDocumento=1)

BN Americas

The total number of sales transactions to be completed on mobile devices in Latin America is to grow 35% by 2015, Indian IT services firm Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) said in a release, without providing hard figures.

**December 17, 2012**

[**Brazil turns to Asia for southern gas expansion**](http://www.bnamericas.com/news/privatization/brazil-turns-to-asia-for-southern-gas-expansion)

BN Americas

Brazil''s federal energy major Petrobras and the government of southern state Rio Grande do Sul are in talks with Asian investors to expand the country''s gas supply network.

[**Japanese investments in Mexico steady**](http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nb20121216d2.html)

The Japan Times

Japanese investments in Mexico remains steady, mainly in the auto and auto parts sectors, reflecting the growing vehicle production in the country and popularity of Japanese brand cars, said a researcher from the Japan External Trade Organization.

[**Japan Outbound Takeovers To Hit Record In '12**](http://e.nikkei.com/e/ac/tnks/Nni20121215D15JFF02.htm)

Nikkei

The number of foreign takeovers by Japanese companies in 2012 is expected to rise 10% on the year to an all-time high of nearly 500. The previous record is 463, which came in 1990 amid the asset-inflated bubble economy. Japanese companies have been boosting their presence in the global M&A market on the back of the strong yen and ample cash reserves. Growth in the number of takeovers of Southeast Asian firms has been especially conspicuous, as Japanese companies are strengthening their focus on the region to hedge against the heightened risks associated with doing business in China.

[**Gulf states to build Latin America links**](http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/b6197a02-4841-11e2-8aae-00144feab49a.html#axzz2FJeE3x3p)

Financial Times

Gulf States have built modest but growing ties with Latin American countries, in an emerging economy powerplay that supporters hope will exploit shared commercial goals and complement both blocs’ existing links to Asia.

[**Ecopetrol to invest $9.5 billion**](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-14/more-ecopetrol-to-invest-9-5-billion-in-2013.html)

Bloomberg

Production target for 2015 set at 1 million barrels. Ecopetrol SA, the world’s eighth- largest publicly-traded oil company this year, announced a 2013 production target of 798,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day, lower than its original target for 2012.

**December 14, 2012**

[**Geely to set up auto plant in Brazil**](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/business/2012-11/28/content_15968712.htm)

China Daily

Zhejiang Geely Holding Group will set up a vehicle assembly plant in Brazil with an investment of $311 million, Brazilian magazine Veja. The plant is expected to create 1,500 jobs and to have an annual production capacity of 100,000 vehicles, the report said. Geely plans to manufacture two to three models in the plant starting in 2015, with prices between $10,000 and $11,000.

[**Overseas construction orders top $50 bil. for 3rd year**](http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/biz/2012/11/602_125003.html)

Korea Times

Overseas orders won by Korean builders surpassed US$50 billion for the third straight year in 2012, due to increased demand from the Middle East, Latin America and Africa, data showed Monday. Orders from Latin American countries soared 253 percent on-year to 5.5 billion while those from Africa stood at $1.2 billion, up 28 percent from a year earlier, according to the association. Meanwhile, orders from Asia, the second-largest market for Korean construction companies, dipped 5 percent on-year to $13.5 billion, according to the association.

[**Coca-Cola Femsa to Buy 51% of Coke Bottler in Philippines**](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-14/coca-cola-femsa-to-pay-689-million-for-51-in-philippines-firm.html)

Bloomberg

Coca-Cola Femsa SAB, the largest publicly traded Coke bottler by volume, agreed to buy a 51 percent stake in Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. for $689 million in its first acquisition outside of Latin America.

[**Argentina's Bridas in Talks to Invest $500 Million With YPF**](http://online.wsj.com/article/BT-CO-20121213-710508.html?mod=WSJ_Energy_middleHeadlines&_requestid=51393)

The Wall Street Journal

Bridas Energy Holdings Ltd., the oil and gas company owned by Argentina's Bulgheroni family, is in talks with state-run energy company YPF SA to invest $500 million next year in unconventional energy production, according to a person familiar with the situation.

[**Macquarie Mexico IPO Offers REIT Where Murder Reigned**](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-14/macquarie-mexico-ipo-offers-reit-where-murder-reigned.html)

Bloomberg

The biggest real-estate investment trust to go public in Mexico is staking its success on the city most ravaged by the nation’s drug war.

[**Colombia is Fast Becoming a Rising Oil Giant in Latin America**](http://www.energytribune.com/el/67832/colombia-becoming-oil-giant-in-latin-america?utm_source=BenchmarkEmail&utm_campaign=Dec_13_2012_Email&utm_medium=email)

Energy Tribune

Colombia today is one of the most promising exploration and production (E&P) investment markets in the world. As the fourth-largest crude oil producer in Latin America after Venezuela, Brazil and Mexico. Colombia accounted for two billion barrels of proven crude oil reserves in 2012, equivalent to almost seven years of output. Colombia’s oil production has increased since 2008 due to increasing exploration and development. In 2011, 34 different operators were conducting oil exploration in Colombia. The exploration area within the country rose to more than 100 million hectares in 2011, compared with just 12.5 million hectares in 2003.

**December 13, 2012**

[**Japan-Colombia free-trade talks set**](http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nb20121211a4.html)

Japan Times

Japan and Colombia are scheduled to start free-trade talks on Dec. 17 to discuss a possible bilateral free trade agreement, the Foreign Ministry said Monday. The two sides are expected to discuss areas to be covered by the possible pact and terms of reference, it said. The Japanese side will be represented by Jun Yokota, ambassador in charge of economic diplomacy.

[**With Eye On TPP, More Nations Approach Japan On Trade Talks**](http://e.nikkei.com/e/ac/tnks/Nni20121212D1212A13.htm)

Nikkei

Japan will soon be negotiating 7 separate trade agreements at the same time, a result of countries fearing that they would be at a disadvantage should it participate in the U.S.-led Trans-Pacific Partnership. Once the New Year rolls around, Japan will begin discussing a trilateral free trade agreement with China and South Korea, an economic partnership agreement with the European Union, and a Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership for East Asia. It entered talks with Mongolia, Canada and Colombia this year, and it has been in talks with Australia since 2007. Japan declared in November 2011 that it would enter preliminary talks toward participation in the TPP. Should Japan join the TPP, corporations of countries that have not signed trade pacts with Japan could be forced to compete under unfavorable terms compared with American firms. This prompted Europe, China and others to come to the table with Japan.

[**Nissin Plans 3 New Warehouses In Mexico**](http://e.nikkei.com/e/ac/TNKS/Nni20121212D12JSN02.htm?NS-query=nissin)

Nikkei

Nissin Corp. will add 3 warehouses in central Mexico as it expands its distribution network there in response to growing demand related to autoparts. As the first phase, the company in February will lease a 6,300 sq. meter warehouse on the outskirts of Celaya. The site is slated to be used to store parts and factory equipment for auto-related manufacturers entering Mexico. In October, Nissin will open a 6,200 sq. meter warehouse near Silao, where many Japanese carmakers are concentrated. Accompanying the expansion, Nissin will increase the workforce at its Celaya branch from six at present to 50 in 2013 and 100 in 2014, when the warehouse is set to open.

[**Top Chinese political advisor arrives in Argentina for official goodwill visit**](http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/748608.shtml)

Xinhua

Top Chinese political advisor Jia Qinglin arrived here Wednesday to kick off his official goodwill visit to the South American nation. In a written statement issued upon his arrival, Jia, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), said China and Argentina shared a deep and traditional friendship, while their bilateral ties have seen comprehensive development. China is ready to work with Argentina to promote mutually beneficial cooperation so as to benefit the two countries and their peoples, he added. Before arriving in Argentina, Jia paid a visit to Costa Rica, where he met with Costa Rican President Laura Chinchilla, Legislative Assembly President Victor Emilio Granados and other leaders. During his meeting with the staff members at the Chinese embassy in Costa Rica and representatives of overseas Chinese, he stressed the need to study and implement the spirit of a recent speech delivered by Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, while visiting "the Road Toward Renewal," an exhibition that illustrates China's ups and downs since 1840, with the other six members of the Standing Committee of the CPC Central Committee Political Bureau.

[**Grupo Nutrsa agrees to acquire a 44% stake in Malayisian Company Dan Kaffe**](http://www.gruponutresa.com/en/informacion_relevante?page=3)

Grupo Nutresa Press Room

Grupo Nutresa S. A., through its affiliate Colcafé S. A. S., reached an agreement to acquire a 44% stake in the Malaysian company Dan Kaffe (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd (“DKM”). Founded in 1994, DKM is one of the largest Malaysian soluble spray-dried coffee and coffee extracts manufacturer. The other shareholders of the company are Mitsubishi Corporation, with 30%, and Takasago International Corporation, one of the worldwide leaders in flavors and fragrances, with 26%.

**December 12, 2012**

[**State-owned enterprises urged to expand overseas**](http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90778/8042875.html)

People Daily

China’s overseas investment has risen sharply in recent years. And as the country pushes ahead with its “Go-Out” strategy, State Owned Enterprises are being urged to expand outward investment further. “China’s state owned enterprises should continue to seek business opportunities in various sectors worldwide”, Chen Yuan, the newly appointed chairman of Chinese Enterprise Investment Association made the remark at its high-level council meeting in the Great Hall of People, adding that domestic companies need to further expand investment overseas. Chen Yuan said,“As well as attracting inward foreign investment, domestic enterprises should focus more on expanding outward foreign investment, and speed up transformation of outward investment models.”

[**Peru, South Korea agree to foster industrial development**](http://www.andina.com.pe/Ingles/noticia-peru-south-korea-agree-to-foster-industrial-development-438472.aspx)

Andina

Peru and South Korea have signed a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at boosting industrial and technological cooperation between companies and government bodies of both countries, Peru’s Ministry of Production reported. The agreement was signed by Peru’s Minister of Production, Gladys Triveño, and South Korea’s Deputy Minister of Knowledge Economy, Jaedo Moon.

[**Mitsubishi entering Colombian ethanol market**](http://www.portafolio.co/negocios/mitsubishi-al-mercado-etanol-colombia)

Portafolio

Mitsubishi Corporation formalized its entry into the ethanol production market in Colombia through the purchase of a majority stake in BioEnergry BioOriente, company that is building the largest fuel ethanol distillery of the country.

[**Beijing set to welcome visa-free visitors**](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-12/06/content_15990215.htm)

China Daily

The decision to waive visas for foreign visitors for 72 hours is a major step toward Beijing's goal of becoming an open international city, tourism experts said.The capital announced on Wednesday that, from Jan 1, visitors from 45 countries will be allowed a three-day stay without a visa. The program, of particular benefit to transit passengers and businesspeople, will make the city more accessible and allow tourism to be a strategic pillar of the economy, the Beijing Tourism Development Committee said.

**December 11, 2012**

[**Peru expects to diversify exports to China**](http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/epaper/2012-12/11/content_16006056.htm)

China Daily USA

Peru expects to significantly expand its non-traditional exports to China over the next five years as it strives to reduce the nation's reliance on mineral trade with the world's second-largest economy, a senior trade official said.

[**Japan firms tackling food crisis**](http://e.nikkei.com/e/ac/tnw/Nni20121203TC0FOODC.htm)

Nikkei

The planet's environmental challenges are being seen by some Japanese companies as chances to create new business opportunities that tackle growing concerns about climate change and the availability of food. Toyota Tsusho Corp. is working with Kinki University to develop a commercially viable system to breed and farm bluefin tuna. T. Hasegawa Co., the world's eighth-largest maker of flavors and fragrances is focusing on a food additive used to create a milk flavor. A tiny amount of this substance makes the liquid almost indistinguishable from real milk in taste and flavor. Ajinomoto Co. is developing a technology to turn algae into a material that can produce glutamic acide. Sakata Seed Corp., meanwhile, has started growing a new kind of tomato that is less vulnerable to high temperatures.

[**More Japan Firms' Overseas Units Reinvesting Earnings Abroad**](http://e.nikkei.com/e/ac/tnks/Nni20121210D1012A16.htm)

Nikkei

Overseas subsidiaries of Japanese companies are holding onto earnings to procure parts and materials locally, instead of repatriating funds to Japan. Reinvested earnings, a reflection of internal reserves at foreign units, averaged a monthly 166.5 billion yen between January and October, up 60% on the year and the highest in four years. The figure is close to the 176.2 billion yen record in 2008. With domestic growth hitting a ceiling, more Japanese businesses are looking to strengthen profitability at overseas subsidiaries. To avoid a current account deficit, Japan will need to strengthen its earnings capabilities overseas even further.

[**Consortium To Develop Low-Cost Solar Cells**](http://e.nikkei.com/e/ac/tnks/Nni20121210D1012N03.htm)

Nikkei

The National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology, or AIST, is forming a consortium Tuesday with 19 corporations and universities to develop solar cells that can be made at about half the cost of existing models. The group will include solar cell manufacturers Sharp Corp. and Panasonic Corp. as well as materials and component producers such as Asahi Glass Co. and Dainippon Screen Mfg. Co. (7735). Fukushima University will also be involved. In all, about 100 researchers are expected to participate. The researchers aim to create prototypes of high-efficiency monocrystalline silicon solar cells with a thickness of less than 100 microns -- about half that of current cells -- within five years. They hope to lower the production costs to less than 50 yen per watt.

[**Korean economy expected to keep low growth trend in 2013**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/business/2012-12/03/c_132015914.htm)

Xinhua News

South Korean economy was expected to keep its 2-percent level of low growth trend next year due to persistent uncertainties at home and abroad, heads of local think tanks said Monday. "Our economy is forecast to grow 2.8 percent in 2013. The economy will maintain its low growth trend next year like this year," Yun Chang-hyun, president of the Korea Institute of Finance (KIF) said at a seminar hosted by the Federation of Korean Industries (FKI), the local business lobby.

**December 10, 2012**

[**Yara to Buy Bunge Brazil Fertilizer Assets for $750 Million**](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-07/yara-to-buy-bunge-s-brazil-fertilizer-business-for-750-million.html)

*Bloomberg*

The Swedish Yara International ASA (YAR), the largest publicly traded nitrogen-fertilizer maker, agreed to purchase Bunge (BG) Ltd. operations in Brazil for $750 million as it pursues a 33 percent production increase in four years from 2010 levels.

[**Dutch SME opens milling factory for sustainable coffee in Colombia**](http://colombia.nlambassade.org/nieuws/2012/12/dutch-sme-opens-milling-factory-for-sustainable-coffee-in-colombia-copy.html)

*Nederlandse Ambassade in Bogotá, Colombia*

After two years of preparation the Dutch-Colombian joint venture Mild Coffee Company Huila (MCCH) opened a milling factory for sustainable coffee in the city of Neiva (South Colombia).

[**GDF Suez closing in on Repsol LNG assets in Peru and Trinidad**](http://www.upstreamonline.com/live/article1299999.ece)

*Upstream Magazine*

Repsol put its non-core LNG assets in Canada, Peru and Trinidad earlier this year to boost its finances and credit ratings following the seizure of its Argentinean unit YPF by the country’s government.

[**Endesa, Chile fund agree to $5.963 bln Enersis cap hike**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/07/chile-endesa-pensionfunds-idUSL1E8N78PY20121207)

*Reuters*

Spanish energy firm Endesa SA and Chilean pension funds reached an agreement that puts regional energy group Enersis SA's planned capital increase at $5.963 billion, Endesa said on Friday.

[**YPF in shale partnership talks with Statoil**](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/c4ee6216-41fe-11e2-979e-00144feabdc0.html#ixzz2EexbDb2G)

*Financial Times*

YPF, the Argentine state-controlled energy company, is in talks with Norway’s Statoil about a potential partnership as part of its $37bn push to develop the Latin American country’s massive energy reserves.

**December 7, 2012**

[**China Gives Costa Rica Cash for the World's Newest Chinatown**](http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/lifestyle/2012/12/06/costa-rica-gets-world-newest-chinatown/)

Fox News Latino

Costa Rica is one of Latin America’s top tourist destinations thanks to its lush rainforests, beautiful beaches and comparatively low levels of crime. Now San José, the country’s generally overlooked capital city, hopes to draw in even more tourists with the construction of the world’s newest Chinatown. With the help of over $1 million from the Chinese government, Costa Rica completed an almost 2,000-foot long pedestrian street lined with a Tang Dynasty-style archway, Chinese style shops, restaurants and other stores that San José’s mayor hopes will become a travel destination on its own, a boost to the local economy and a symbol of friendship between the countries.

[**China, Costa Rica vow to enhance win-win cooperation**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-12/05/c_132021584.htm)

Xinhua News

China and Costa Rica have pledged to enhance win-win cooperation in a wide range of areas in a bid to promote their friendly cooperative ties. Top political adviser Jia Qinglin made the pledge Tuesday during a meeting with Costa Rican Legislative Assembly President Victor Emilio Granados. Jia, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), said Costa Rica was an important partner to China in Latin America. China and Costa Rica had consolidated political relations with ever deepening mutual understanding and political trust since they forged diplomatic ties five years ago, Jia said. The two nations had maintained coordination in international and regional affairs and together protected the interests of developing countries, Jia said. China attached importance to developing friendly cooperative relations with Costa Rica and was willing to work with Costa Rica to enhance cooperation in all spheres, Jia said. The CPPCC was willing to strengthen exchanges with Costa Rica's Legislative Assembly to promote bilateral ties, Jia said.

[**Mitsubishi acquires 18.1% ownership of Quellaveco**](http://www.asahi.com/english/TKY201202170355.html)

The Asahi Shimbun

Mitsubishi Corp. announced the completion of its acquisition of International Finance Corp.'s 18.1 percent stake in Anglo American Quellaveco S.A., which is developing the Quellaveco copper project in Moquegua, Peru.

[**Drugmaker Eisai to conduct joint research with Brazil's Fiocruz**](http://www.asahi.com/english/TKY201210250250.html)

The Asahi Shimbun

Eisai Co. has signed a global cooperation agreement with Brazil's Fundacao Oswaldo Cruz, also known as Fiocruz, to develop new medicines and vaccines for malaria and neglected tropical diseases, Eisai said Oct. 25.

[**MHI gets order to build coal-fired power plant in Chile**](http://www.asahi.com/english/TKY201211270480.html)

The Asahi Shimbun

Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. said it has received a full-turnkey order from Empresa Electrica Guacolda SA, an electricity provider in Chile, for a 154-megawatt coal-fired power generation plant.

**December 6, 2012**

[**GS Yuasa, Mitsubishi Win Industrial Battery Order From Chile**](http://e.nikkei.com/e/ac/TNKS/Nni20121205D0512N02.htm?NS-query=chile)

Nikkei

GS Yuasa Corp. announced that it will team up with Mitsubishi Corp. to supply an energy storage system for a power plant in Chile. The companies will deliver lithium ion batteries capable of storing 6,300kwh, which is enough to power 700 typical Japanese households for one day. The value of the contract has not been disclosed, but it is said to be one of the largest foreign orders ever received for Japanese-made lithium ion batteries. Mitsubishi affiliate Lithium Energy Japan will produce the batteries, and GS Yuasa will manufacture the system equipment. Mitsubishi will ship the system to Chile's second-largest power provider, AES Gener SA, for use at a coal-fired power plant scheduled to be built on the outskirts of the northern city of Mejillones. The 530,000kw plant will use the batteries to provide up to 20,000kw of backup power in case of outages or accidents.

[**Japan Firms Need 'China Plus One' Strategy**](http://e.nikkei.com/e/ac/TNKS/Nni20121206D06HH832.htm?NS-query=china%20plus%20one)

Nikkei

Japanese companies are cutting their earnings forecasts for the current business year one after another. Companies combined pretax profits at listed firms are expected to rise 5% on the year in fiscal 2012 ending next March, down from an earlier estimated increase of more than 20%. Companies are under pressure to turn things around. "We will tear down all our antiquated plants," declared Kunio Noji, president of Komatsu Ltd. that will replace all domestic plants over 40 years old within the next three years. Komatsu took the step in hopes of raising productivity at its domestic operations and reducing fixed costs 20-30%. Besides cost-cutting, another response is the "China plus one" strategy. This commonly refers to building plants in a third country, in addition to China.

[**JX Unit Looks To Net More Of Seafood-Coloring Market**](http://e.nikkei.com/e/ac/TNKS/Nni20120918D18JSN01.htm?NS-query=chile)

Nikkei

JX Nippon Oil & Energy Corp. has begun marketing a seafood-coloring agent in the U.S. in an effort to lift its global market share for the product to 25% in 2020, up from roughly 7% currently. Although also used as a pigment for cosmetics, astaxanthin is mainly used as an animal feed additive and in particular to add color to farm-raised salmon and other fish. Some 90% of astaxanthin is chemically synthesized, but JX Nippon Oil & Energy is one of a small group of companies that manufacture a natural form of the substance. The JX Holdings Inc. subsidiary uses a process of bacterial fermentation of vitamin B12 and has modified the production method to become price competitive with the synthetic version. For years JX Nippon outsourced production to another company in Japan and sold around 1 ton a year, but two years ago it also farmed out production to a firm in Europe and sold twice as much astaxanthin there as in Japan. In 2011 sales ballooned to 7.2 tons and the business turned its first profit. Now the company has gained approval to market astaxanthin as an additive in the U.S. and will use that opportunity to enter this huge market, promoting use of the substance to color fish imported from places like Chile.

[**Mercedes Near Decision on Sharing Mexican Plant with Nissan**](http://www.thedetroitbureau.com/2012/09/mercedes-near-decision-on-sharing-mexican-plant-with-nissan/)

The Detroit Bureau

Daimler AG will “probably” announce by year-end a decision on where it will build a new North American assembly plant, and there is a strong possibility that the new factory will be part of a planned mega-complex alliance partner Nissan has already committed to in Mexico. Daimler needs more capacity to supply North America and other markets , having reached the limits of what it thinks can be done out of its existing Mercedes-Benz assembly plant near Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Discussions between Daimler and Nissan as part of a three-way alliance that also includes French-based Renault. The partners have steadily expanded a 30-month-old alliance that will now see them develop compact engines and share transmissions. Nissan previously agreed to produce small powertrains at a plant in Tennessee that will be used on the Mercedes line in Alabama.

[**JR Tokai lifts curtain on 1st-generation maglev train**](http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T121122004256.htm)

Jiji Press

Central Japan Railway Co. unveiled the front car of its Series L0 first-generation high-speed magnetic levitation train for commercial service to the press at its test facility. By the end of 2013, the railway operator, known as JR Tokai, plans to extend the test line at the facility to 42.8 kilometers from the current 18.4 kilometers and begin five-car test runs of the maglev train. JR Tokai plans to launch its maglev train services between Shinagawa Station in Tokyo and Nagoya Station in Aichi Prefecture in 2027. The test line will be used as part of the commercial service maglev line. With a maximum speed of about 500 kph per hour, the maglev train will link the two stations in about 40 minutes, far shorter than the about 1-1/2 hours it takes to travel between Tokyo and Nagoya Stations on the Nozomi Shinkansen bullet train. A 16-car maglev train can carry up to 1,000 passengers. JR Tokai plans to extend the line to Osaka, with the whole of the maglev line slated to go into full-fledged service in 2045.

**December 5, 2012**

[**Nissan, Honda To Sell Mexico-Made Subcompacts In U.S.**](http://e.nikkei.com/e/ac/tnks/Nni20121204D0412F02.htm)

Nikkei

Nissan Motor Co. and Honda Motor Co. seek to boost sales of subcompact vehicles in the U.S. by shipping them from Mexico, a location that provides cost advantages. Demand for subcompacts, which are relatively inexpensive and fuel efficient, is rising in the U.S. as the immigrant population grows. As early as the second half of next year, Nissan will kick off Mexican production of a Note subcompact fitted with a low-cost platform developed specifically for emerging markets. The vehicle will be sold in the U.S. as a new version of the Versa hatchback. Honda will shift production of the Fit subcompact from Japan to a plant being built in Mexico, making all of the new Fits slated to debut in the U.S. in 2014 there. The firm also plans to add sedans and other models to the Fit lineup and improve fuel efficiency by some 30%. It aims to triple U.S. sales from 2011 to 150,000 units in 2015. Producing in Mexico will help the Japanese firms alleviate the negative impact of the strong yen amid intense competition from South Korean rivals, which are taking advantage of the weak won to lower prices. Moreover, the Japanese automakers will enjoy the benefit of a U.S. tariff waiver on shipments from Mexico, whereas shipments from Japan are subject to a 2.5% tariff. Tariffs on South Korean cars shipped to America are expected to be eliminated starting in 2016 through the country's free trade agreement with the U.S. American sales of subcompact vehicles, which weigh as much as 1.5 tons and are about 4 meters long, are expected to reach nearly 1.49 million units in 2018, an increase of about 70% from 2011, according to U.S. research firm IHS Automotive.

[**It’s Vampire Season for GREE, as its Latin American Invasion Continues**](http://www.techinasia.com/gree-vampire-season/)

TechniAsia

Yesterday Japanese mobile gaming giant GREE announced a partnership with Brazilian game developer Vostu, the leading social games company in Latin America. And now just a day later, GREE has announced another tie-up in the region, which will bring Vampire Season – Monster Defense to its GREE platform. The title is developed by Brainz, which is part of Columbia-based ZIO, one of the top 3D animation and media studios on the continent.

[**Latin America, Spain Present Investment Projects to Chinese Firms**](http://www.laht.com/article.asp?ArticleId=653871&CategoryId=12394)

Latin American Herald Tribune

Companies, investment promotion agencies and diplomats from more than 140 countries, among them Spain and several from Latin America, attended the fourth edition of the China Overseas Investment Fair.

[**Hero Moto to start exports to Latin America, Africa this fiscal**](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/Hero-Moto-to-start-exports-to-Latin-America-Africa-this-fiscal/articleshow/17338688.cms)

The Times of India

Nearly two years after its split from Japanese partner Honda, the Munjal family-run two-wheeler major Hero MotoCorp will start exporting its products to Africa and Latin America to expand its global footprint.

**December 4, 2012**

[**Japan leads ranking of foreign investment in Chile**](http://www.df.cl/japon-lidera-ranking-de-paises-con-mayor-inversion-extranjera-materializada-en-chile-este-ano/prontus_df/2012-11-28/215929.html)

DF.cl

The January-September figures show that Japan reached investment levels of U.S$ 1,671 million and doubled the $ 826 million recorded by Canada in the same period, positioning as the leader in foreign investment in 2012, said City. (In Spanish)

[**Government To Aid Renewable Energy In Local Revival Projects**](http://e.nikkei.com/e/ac/tnks/Nni20121203D03EE612.htm)

Nikkei

The Japanese government will help municipalities and nonprofit organizations cover initial research costs for 31 projects that aim at reviving local economies through renewable energy. The scheme by the Agency for Natural Resources and Energy and the Internal Affairs Ministry aims to promote greater use of renewable energy while also revitalizing local economies. The plan would have municipal governments and NPOs use solar, wind and geothermal power to generate electricity. Through the feed-in tariff system, income from the sales of this power would be used to contribute to local economies. In the city of Koshi, Kumamoto Prefecture, local businesses and the city government are looking to set up a 7-megawatt solar power facility. Full research into the project is set to begin by the end of the year. Income from electricity sales would be used to promote the city's local agricultural products.

[**Tokyo Electron, Sharp End Solar Cell Equipment Tie-Up**](http://e.nikkei.com/e/fr/tnks/Nni20121130D3011N04.htm)

Nikkei

Tokyo Electron Ltd. said Friday that it dissolved its subsidiary that makes solar cell production equipment, a joint venture with Sharp Corp. The firms began joint development through the Yamanashi Prefecture-based unit in 2008, commercializing plasma-enhanced chemical vapor disposition equipment for making thin-film silicon solar cells. The equipment was delivered to Sharp, but demand weakened due to the firm's slumping solar cell business. Tokyo Electron is focusing its resources on a major Swiss producer of solar cell manufacturing equipment that it recently acquired. The company announced Tuesday that it completed its purchase of Oerlikon Solar, the world's No. 3 player in the field, for roughly 22.5 billion yen ($250 million).

[**Investment Funds Finding Success In Emerging Countries**](http://e.nikkei.com/e/ac/VERITAS/Nni20121125D24VS902.htm?NS-query=brazil)

Nikkei

Japan's investment trust market appears to be betting that times are getting better for many emerging economies.The creation of investment trust funds focused on emerging-country assets continues to be brisk. As of the end of October, a total of 98 such funds had been launched this year, according to Deutsche Asset Management. Many analysts, however, expect improvements in economies of India and Brazil. The consensus among private-sector forecasters is that Brazil's gross domestic product data for the July-September quarter, to be announced Nov. 30, will show a quarter-to-quarter increase of 1.3-1.4%, up from an anemic rise of 0.5% in the previous three months.

[**U-shin To Buy Valeo's Car Door Parts Ops**](http://e.nikkei.com/e/ac/TNKS/Nni20121201D3011A16.htm?NS-query=brazil)

Nikkei

U-shin Ltd. has agreed with Valeo SA to purchase the French autoparts maker's access mechanism business for roughly 17.1 billion yen ($180 million) in late March. The Access Mechanism Product Group, which deals with car door handles and key sets, is forecast to generate 580 million euros in sales in 2012, which is about equal to U-shin's projected group sales of 62 billion yen for the year. The midtier Japanese autoparts maker will fund the acquisition with its cash reserves and bank loans. U-shin aims to leverage the deal to boost its overseas sales ratio from slightly below 30% today to more than 70%, as it will enable the company to expand its sales channels to European automakers, one of its weakest links.

[**Comeback Kids Finally Getting Some Love**](http://e.nikkei.com/e/ac/VERITAS/Nni20121127D27VS429.htm?NS-query=brazil)

Nikkei

Small- and midcap stocks rebounding from past earnings setbacks are drawing attention from investment professionals seeing room for ongoing growth. A growing number of investment experts see the potential for hidden gems among so-called comeback stocks -- firms that have staged earnings recoveries after revamping their business models or other improvements. Freund Corp., which commands the No. 3 global share in granulation machinery used by pharmaceutical firms has nearly double to triple on the year, despite going largely unnoticed by the market through much of 2011. Freund suffered two straight years of pretax profit declines through the year ended February 2011 as North America slumped. But the company's fortunes turned around as it offset that weakness by expanding elsewhere. "We launched a division to develop emerging markets such as Brazil and India that are expected to show sharp growth in pharmaceutical demand, and we also actively increased orders from Japanese generic-drug makers," an investor relations official says.

**December 3, 2012**

[**AP IMPACT: China overtaking US as global trader**](http://www.boston.com/business/technology/2012/12/02/impact-china-overtaking-global-trader/gwI1PLvAcDPSo90KjJgTUM/story.html)

AP

This is the first installment in "China's Reach," a project that will analyze China's influence with its trading partners over three decades, and explore how that is changing business, politics and daily life.

[**Chinese carmakers head for Brazil**](http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/159ef37c-3c84-11e2-86a4-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2DzeFS3jo)

FT

A surge in car ownership among the country’s booming middle classes has brought many Brazilian cities to a standstill, but proved particularly lucrative for the Chinese who have stepped in to capitalise on this sudden demand for cheap vehicles.

[**Casas Bahia Slum Store Success Lures Retailers: Corporate Brazil**](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-03/casas-bahia-slum-store-success-lures-retailers-corporate-brazil.html)

Bloomberg

Casas Bahia isn’t the only company seeking out new customers in Brazil’s favelas, a commonly-used term to describe shantytowns that lack basic public services or urbanization. Drawn by improved security, rising incomes and a booming credit market, retailers are opening shop in the once no-go areas.

[**Latin Growth Tune Plays in Two Speeds**](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324020804578151311678565042.html)

Wall Street Journal

Latin America is becoming a tale of two economies, with nations like Peru, Colombia, Mexico and Chile growing faster than the global average and nations like Argentina and Brazil struggling with crippling slowdowns.