**Invest Korea News**

**GLOBAL M&A SUPPORT OFFICE, GMAP OPEN M&A DEAL SOURCING PLAZA**

On April 21, Invest Korea, the investment promotion arm of the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA), held the Global M&A Forum in cooperation with the Global M&A Partners (GMAP) at the Seoul Grand Intercontinental Hotel. GMAP, one of the world’s leading partnerships of independent M&A firms, were invited to discuss M&A strategies covering various regions and industries. Out of 37 international GMAP branches, 20 visited Korea for this event in addition with the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy (MOTIE) and 150 Korean companies interested in M&A.

**2016 CHINA WEEK FURTHER BOOSTS KOREA-CHINA TIES**

From April 25 to 27, Invest Korea held the highly-anticipated 2016 China Week, an event that provided opportunities for Korea’s SMEs to network with Chinese investors in the industries of food and distribution, cultural content, luxury goods, resort complex, energy and healthcare.

In addition, the agency held seminars on Korea’s current investment climate and arranged business roundtables that further enhanced Korea-China cooperation.

The event received overwhelming support from over 130 Korean companies seeking to attract foreign investment and 60 Chinese investors seeking to expand their business in Korea.

**Korea News**

**FDI PLEDGES JUMP 19.3 PCT ON-YEAR IN Q1**

New foreign direct investment (FDI) pledged to South Korea jumped 19.3 percent in the first three months of the year due to a sharp rise in investment from the European Union and China.

Fresh FDI committed to the country in the January-March period came to USD 4.24 billion, up from USD 3.55 billion a year earlier, according to the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy.

Meanwhile, new FDI pledges from the EU surged more than five-fold to USD 1.76 billion during the January to March period from a year earlier, while FDI commitments from China also skyrocketed seven-fold to USD 380 million.

**DRUGMAKERS’ TECH EXPORTS TOP 10 TLN WON IN 2015**

South Korea pharmaceutical and bio companies saw exports of their drug-manufacturing technologies exceed KRW 10 trillion (USD 8.64 billion) in 2015 thanks to their efforts to tap into overseas markets.

According to the data by the Korea Drug Research Association, industry leader Hanmi Pharmaceutical Co. and other pharmaceutical companies clinched a combined 26 deals on technology exports and out-licensing last year.

The value of 20 agreements, whose financial terms were disclosed, came to KRW 9.29 trillion (USD 8.09 billion), the association said, adding the figure probably surpassed KRW 10 trillion (USD 8.71 billion) if the remaining six deals were included.

**KOREAN WAVE INDUCES PRODUCTION EFFECT WORTH 15.6 TLN WON**

Korean pop culture and its growing popularity on the global stage had an induced production effect worth KRW 15.6 trillion won (USD 13.5 billion) last year.

The estimated production effect from the Korean wave was up 9.2 percent from a year earlier, according to the report compiled by KOTRA and the Korea Foundation for International Culture Exchange.

The figures were based on its analysis of the impact of Korean pop culture in games, tourism, movies and many other areas.

**Government & Policy**

**S. KOREA, NORWAY TO BOLSTER COOPERATION IN SHIPBUILDING**

On April 15, South Korean President Park Geun-hye and Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg agreed to strengthen cooperation in building eco-friendly ships and offshore plants.

The two sides signed a memorandum of understanding in 2012 that calls for, among other things, cooperation in building eco-friendly ships, according to South Korea’s presidential office.

Ships account for more than 90 percent of South Korea’s exports to Norway and bilateral trade between the two reached a record high of USD 7.4 billion last year, compared with USD 1.7 billion in 2006.

**S. KOREA TO Deregulate Biotech Sector, Bolster ‘Science Diplomacy’**

At the 33rd Presidential Advisory Council on Science & Technology, the South Korean government announced that the country will ease regulations in its biotech industry and develop ways to use carbon elements as an alternative energy source.

It also plans to bolster “science diplomacy” to meet the country’s stature as a science and technology power.

In particular, the government will seek to remove some regulations on “biosbanks” that share human tissue or blood samples for stem cell research purposes.

It will also push for the abolition of the limit to the scope of gene treatment research and promote the digital health industry, while lowering the barrier for commercializing new medical devices.

In the energy field, the government will redouble efforts to deal with a drastic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

On science diplomacy, the government will try to take the initiative in various international research projects on global affairs and strengthen partnerships with other countries in the field.

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