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- ✧ Mukesh Ambani of Reliance Industries expressed a [bullish outlook on India](#) and predicted that the U.S. would be [energy independent](#) in five to seven years in an interview with CNN's Fareed Zakaria.
- ✧ Kris Gopalakrishnan of Infosys Ltd. spoke to [NDTV](#) about India's new government budget. He was also interviewed in the [Wall Street Journal](#) about pay-per-use billing models and their effects on company revenues.
- ✧ [CIMB's Nazir Razak](#) spoke to Reuters about his bank's bold regional expansion.
- ✧ Yasuhiro Sato of Mizuho Financial spoke to the *Wall Street Journal* about the [restructuring of his company](#) as well as the [Japanese government's stimulus plans](#). Mr. Sato was appointed to the Industrial Competitiveness Council, a newly-created government advisory board.
- ✧ [Ayala Corp.'s Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala](#) was interviewed by *Bloomberg TV* and discussed growth opportunities for the company and the Philippines.

To send us member news, or for member news questions, please click [here](#).

**Park Geun-hye Vows Tough Response to Domestic Economic Challenges**

Newly-inaugurated South Korean president Park Geun-hye has vowed to make structural reforms to South Korea's economy. In her [inaugural address](#), Ms. Park emphasized the need to foster innovation, support small businesses, and lay the groundwork for a "creative" economy. Under implicit attack were Korea's giant chaebols, which have been accused of monopolizing the gains of the country's development. The middle class, which is straining under the weight of falling wages, fewer high-quality jobs, and the high-cost of borrowing, must be the focus of Ms. Park's reforms, argue [Wonsik Choi and Richard Dobbs of McKinsey](#).

**Talk of Currency War Clouds Global Outlook**

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's proposals for aggressive government stimulus and monetary easing have inspired fears of a sudden devaluation of the yen. The currency has already fallen 10 per cent against the U.S. dollar since Mr. Abe's electoral victory in December, sparking talk of an imminent currency war between the world's largest economies. An editorial in [The Nation](#) argues that a devaluation race-to-the-bottom would prove highly damaging to the global economy, pitting developing economies against developed ones. Within Asia, Japan's neighbors like South Korea and Taiwan could feel the most pressure; however, China is unlikely to join the devaluation race because of risks to sensitive trade relationships, according to an editorial in the [Global Times](#).

**Debate Over Indonesian Growth**

How real is Indonesia's growth? A 2012 [McKinsey Study "The Archipelago Economy: Unlocking Indonesia's Potential"](#) takes an upbeat view. But as the country starts to prepare for next year presidential election, others are less sanguine. [Michael Buehler, Associate Fellow with the Asia Society](#), argues that the two main drivers of Indonesia's growth – credit-fueled domestic consumption and a commodity boom – are neither sustainable nor inclusive, a problem that is only exacerbated by the country's ineffective political institutions.

**China's "Issues to Watch" in 2013**

[Michael Pettis of the Carnegie Endowment](#) predicts several important developments in China in 2013, among them being slowing growth, worsening debts, rising inflation, and falling commodity prices. In terms of non-China developments, Pettis highlights the Spanish bond market, bank deposit levels in struggling Eurozone countries, and domestic savings in Japan as potential flashpoints for future economic trouble.

**Lee Kuan Yew on China's Long-Term Trajectory**

In a new book entitled *Lee Kuan Yew: The Grand Master's Insights on China, the United States, and the World*, former Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew foresees a "contest for supremacy in the Pacific" between the US and China. He is hopeful that the two nations can ultimately formulate a viable power-sharing arrangement, so long as U.S. foreign and trade policy does not stymie Chinese development. Lee states: "Peace and security in the Asia-Pacific will turn on whether China emerges as a xenophobic, chauvinistic force, bitter and hostile to the West," or "educated and involved in the ways of the world, more cosmopolitan, more internationalized and outward-looking." The book was profiled in a [summary for Project Syndicate](#).

**Upcoming Forum Dates**

- 2013 Spring Forum: Langkawi, March 21-23
- 2013 Autumn Forum: Kyoto, September 12-14
- 2014 Spring Forum: Mumbai, February 20-22
- 2014 Autumn Forum: Ulan Bator, September 18-20

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