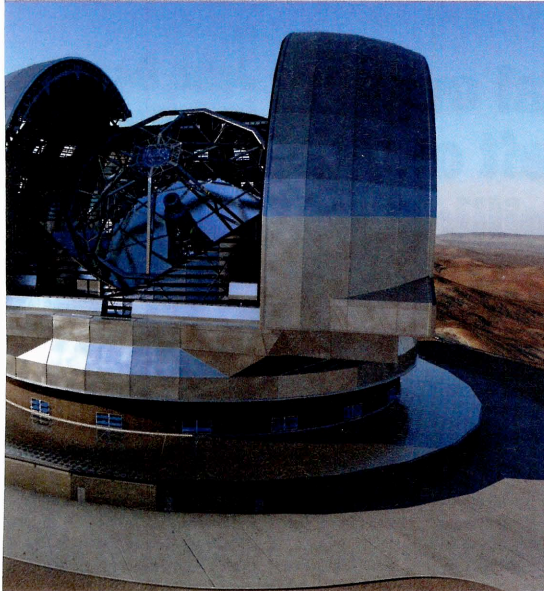


## WORLD NEWS



**CHILE** A consortium led by Italian construction firm Astaldi has been awarded the contract to build the world's largest optical telescope.

The ACE consortium comprises two Italian companies – Astaldi (60% share) and Cimolai (40% share) – winning bidders in the tender process initiated by the ESO (European Southern Observatory).

The contract signed by ACE is valued at around 400 million (US\$ 446 million), with Astaldi's share amounting to 60% and 40% going to Cimolai.

Once completed, the telescope will operate at an elevation of 3,000 metres above sea level, in the central part of the Atacama Desert in Chile.

With mirrors exceeding 39 metres in diameter, the E-ELT will have the capacity to gather more light than all the planet's largest telescopes combined.

### ETHIOPIA

## Salini bags hydro project

Italy-based construction firm Salini Impregilo has won the contract to build a new hydroelectric plant in the Koysha area of Ethiopia.

The US\$ 2.5 billion project, awarded to Salini by Ethiopian Electric Power (EEP), includes the construction of a 170-metre high rolled compacted concrete dam.

Once completed, the dam will be the largest in Ethiopia, with its reservoir volume totalling 6 billion m<sup>3</sup>, while the hydroelectric plant will produce 6,460 GWh of energy per annum.

A statement from Salini Impregilo said that, together with two former projects – GIBE III, which went into operation recently, and GERD (the Grand Renaissance Dam) on the Blue Nile – the Koysha plant will enable Ethiopia to become Africa's leading nation in terms of energy production.

While Ethiopia currently exports energy to near neighbours Kenya, Sudan and Djibouti, the authorities are also currently considering the possibility of reaching markets in the Middle East and Europe, when all of its under construction plants are operational.

### SINGAPORE

## China's \$22bn for projects

The China Construction Bank Corporation (CCB) has signed an MoU with International Enterprise (IE) Singapore to provide US\$ 22 billion for construction projects under China's 'One Belt, One Road' (Obor) initiative.

In a statement, announcing the agreement – the first such MoU CCB has signed with a Southeast Asian country – the company said it is now working on 176 major Obor-related projects, with a combined investment of over US\$ 300 billion.

China is keen for Southeast Asian countries to collaborate with it on the initiative. These projects could include infrastructure, logistics, financial services, urban planning and clean technology.

Lee Ark Boon, IE Singapore's chief executive, said of the MoU, "China's Obor initiative will... catalyse projects in both physical and info-comm infrastructure."

He added: "Singapore's know-how and networks with China and Southeast Asia gives Singapore-based companies a further advantage on OBOR projects."

### SWITZERLAND

## Gotthard tunnel opens

The world's longest and deepest railway tunnel, the Gotthard Base Tunnel in Switzerland, opens officially today, 17 years after the first blast in the main shaft.

The tunnel forms part of the route from Rotterdam in the Netherlands to Genoa, Italy.

The opening ceremony will include events for the general public on 4 and 5 June, when 50,000 to 100,000 visitors are expected at the festival sites on either end of the 57 km tunnel.

The tunnel is being handed over to Swiss Federal Railways (SFR). At the official opening of the Gotthard Base Tunnel, besides the entire Federal Council, the heads of state and government of neighbouring countries are also expected.

The tunnel has virtually no gradients, and is at its highest point 550m above sea level.

It will allow passenger trains to travel more quickly through the Alps and reduce the number of locomotives needed by freight trains. The Gotthard Base Tunnel will also shorten the travelling distance between Altdorf and Bellinzona by 30km.

### EVENTS DIARY

#### 2016

##### Hillhead

June 28 – 30, 2016  
Buxton, UK  
[www.hillhead.com](http://www.hillhead.com)

##### Bauma China

November 22 – 25  
Shanghai, China  
[www.bauma-china.com](http://www.bauma-china.com)

##### Bauma ConExpo India

Dec 12-15, 2016  
Delhi, India  
[www.bcindia.com](http://www.bcindia.com)

#### 2017

##### Samoter

February 22 – 25, 2017  
Verona, Italy  
[www.samoter.it](http://www.samoter.it)

##### ConExpo-Con/Agg

March 7 – 11, 2017  
Las Vegas, US  
[www.conexpoconagg.com](http://www.conexpoconagg.com)

##### SMOPYC

April 4 – 7, 2017  
Zaragoza, Spain  
[www.smopyc.es](http://www.smopyc.es)

##### APEX

##### (International Access Equipment Exhibition)

May 2-4, 2017  
Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
[www.apexshow.com](http://www.apexshow.com)

##### International Rental Exhibition (IRE)

May 2-4, 2017  
Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
[www.IREshow.com](http://www.IREshow.com)

##### Plantworx 2017

June 6-8, 2017  
Bruntingthorpe, UK  
[www.plantworx.co.uk](http://www.plantworx.co.uk)

##### BICES 2017

Sept 2017 (Dates TBC)  
Beijing, China  
[www.e-bices.org](http://www.e-bices.org)