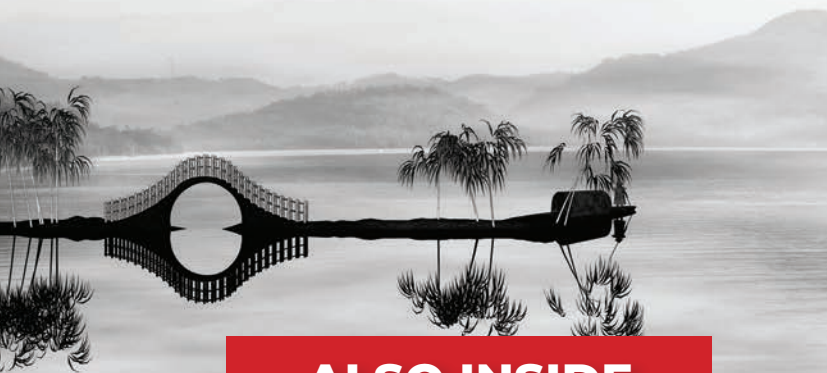
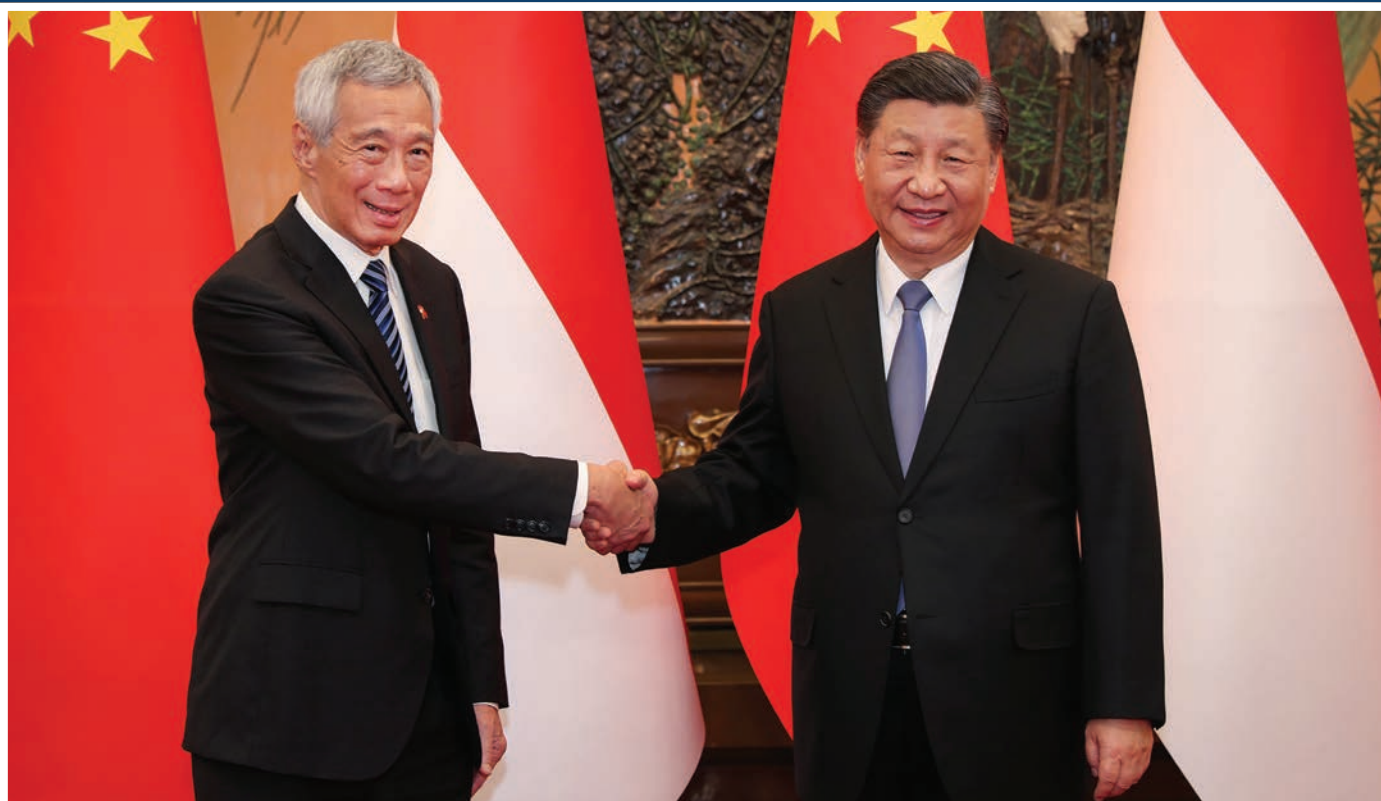


PM LEE IN CHINA: GREATER EXCHANGES AS CHINA - SINGAPORE BORDERS RE-OPEN



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- **Bangladesh National Day Reception: Many Reasons to Celebrate**





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Presentation of **Credentials**

President Halimah Yacob received the credentials of the High Commissioner of Australia, and Ambassador of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay and High Commissioner of the Gabonese Republic on 25th April 2023 at the Istana.

H.E. Allaster Edward Cox High Commissioner of Australia



PRIOR to his posting here, H.E. Allaster Edward Cox was most recently First Assistant Secretary for Strategy and Development in the Office of Southeast Asia at the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). He has also served as Australia's Ambassador to Vietnam (2208 - 2012) and High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam (2001-2004), as well as Deputy Head of Mission to Indonesia (2017 - 2021) and Malaysia (1998 - 2000). The High Commissioner has been focused mainly on Southeast Asia and has served in various important roles in the Australian DFAT.

He graduated from Sydney University in Economics and Law in 1985 and was a graduate trainee at Shell Australia before embarking on a long diplomatic career. With his extensive diplomatic experience, the High Commissioner is well-equipped to strengthen Australia's relationship with Singapore and the wider Southeast Asian region.

He is married to Susila Selvarajah and has two adult daughters.

H.E. Raúl Juan Pollak Giampietro Ambassador of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay

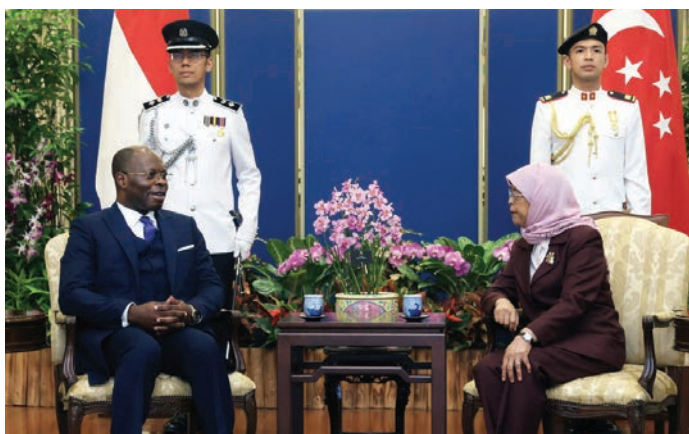
PRIOR to Ambassador Pollak Giampietro's posting here he assumed the post as the resident Ambassador of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on 30th September 2021 with concurrent accreditation to Singapore. Before Vietnam he had also served as Ambassador of Uruguay to Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras and Dominican Republic and as Director-General of Political Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Ambassador received his PhD from the University of the Republic of Uruguay's School of Law and Social Sciences in 1988.

Aside from his diplomatic duties, Ambassador Pollak Giampietro is also a respected professor at the Universidad ORT in Montevideo. He is married to Mrs. Raquel Pietrzik Nieves and they have five children.



H.E. Baudelaire Ndong Ella High Commissioner of the Gabonese Republic



CURRENTLY the High Commissioner is the Ambassador of the Gabonese Republic to the People's Republic of China, and concurrently as the High Commissioner to Singapore. A career diplomat, he has served Gabon in various capacities, including as the Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York and Geneva. Other career highlights include serving as the coordinator in-charge of human rights issues of the African Group in Geneva, President of the Human Rights Council during its Eighth Cycle, and Chair of the Permanent Representative Committee of the African Union in 2009.

He holds a Postgraduate degree in international law and human rights from the University of Nantes in France and a Master of Arts and Bachelor of Arts in public law from the University of Omar Bongo in Gabon.

He is married with five children.



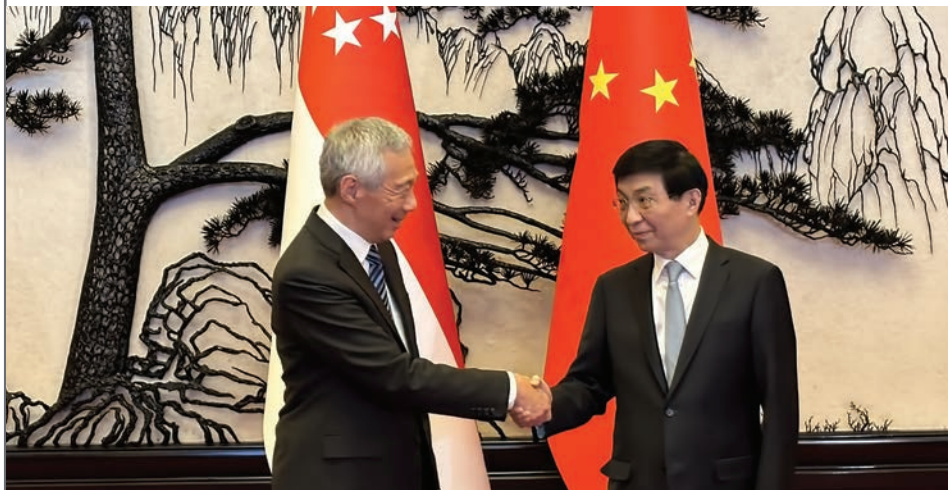
Singapore's national flower is a hybrid orchid - the Vanda Miss Joaquim

Why Diplomacy **Matters**

SINGAPORE has more than 73 resident foreign High Commissions and Embassies, 44 Consular Posts and 14 International Organisations (as of May 2023). They act as a conduit between Singapore and their respective countries. Diplomatic missions are headed by influential newsmakers who open doors for business, trade, investment, education, the arts and culture. **IN Diplomacy's** mission is to communicate and be a bridge between the diplomatic community and Singaporeans.

PM Lee: Opening Up New Avenues of Dialogue and Cooperation

The whistle-stop tour of Guangzhou, Hainan, and Beijing in China by Prime Minister Lee was packed with meetings, rewarding engagements and explorations of new opportunities to strengthen the bonds between the two nations



Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Chairman Wang Huning (Photo: PMO Photo/Koh Yong Sheng)

PRIME Minister Lee Hsien Loong, was on an official visit to the People's Republic of China from 27th March to 1st April 2023 at the invitation of Premier Li Qiang. A series of meetings and engagements were lined up in Beijing as well as in Guangdong and Hainan provinces. He was accompanied by Mrs Lee and Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Trade and Industry Gan Kim Yong, Minister for Health Ong Ye Kung, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of National Development, Sim Ann, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Law, Rahayu Mahzam, as well as officials from the Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Trade and Industry.

In Guangdong, Prime Minister Lee was hosted to lunch by the Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Guangdong Provincial Committee, Huang Kunming. PM Lee shared that Singapore would like to take bilateral relations to the next level, while looking forward to substantial outcomes from discussions. The duo was in agreement that there was good potential for deepening engagement between Singapore and the Chinese province including in the **Guangdong - Hong Kong - Macao Greater Bay Area**, as reported by CNA. PM Lee also had the opportunity

to meet Singaporeans residing in Guangdong at a reception at the InterContinental Guangzhou Exhibition Center.

In Hainan, Mr Lee attended the opening plenary of the **Bo'ao Forum for Asia (BFA) Annual Conference** with the theme: *"An Uncertain World: Solidarity and Cooperation for Development amid Challenges."* Mr Lee had been invited to also deliver a speech there. Chinese Premier Li Qiang hosted lunch for foreign leaders attending the BFA Conference, and Mr Lee also met with the Secretary of the CPC Hainan Provincial Committee, Feng Fei.

In Beijing Prime Minister Lee met President Xi Jinping, on 31st March 2023. PM Lee congratulated President Xi on his re-appointment for the third time as President and for the successful convening of the 14th National People's Congress and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference meetings (Lianghui).

The duo reaffirmed the excellent ties between the two nations while agreeing to upgrade bilateral relations to an **"All-Round High-Quality Future-Oriented Partnership"**. The upgraded partnership mirrors the commitment of both sides

to expand bilateral cooperation, and pursue new collaboration in forward-looking areas such as digital and green economies.

Prime Minister Lee and President Xi also were in agreement of the importance of the **Joint Council for Bilateral Cooperation** as the annual apex bilateral cooperation platform that will continue to be held at the same level and frequency to provide guidance for high-quality and future-oriented cooperation for both sides. As viewed by them, both sides should seek to resume flight connectivity and people-to-people exchanges to pre-pandemic levels.

Both leaders also touched upon matters related to regional and international developments. PM Lee welcomed China's growing engagement of ASEAN.

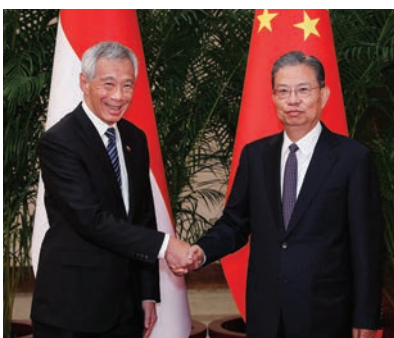
PM Lee also met with the Chairman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee Zhao Leji. The Singaporean leader looked forward to the resumption of more high-level exchanges between Singapore and China, by leveraging institutional bilateral mechanisms such as the **Singapore-China Forum on Leadership** and the **Singapore-China Social Governance Forum**.

In his meeting with Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) Wang Huning, PM Lee noted that both sides enjoyed close bilateral cooperation and mutual trust built over generations at the leadership and people-to-people levels and that this year was the 15th anniversary of the **Tianjin Eco-City (TEC)**, and that both sides were working towards an expanded scope of collaboration.

PM Lee was hosted to lunch by Secretary of the Communist Party of China Beijing Municipal Committee Yin Li. They welcomed closer engagements between Singapore and Beijing for mutual benefit, in areas such as people-to-people exchanges, science and technology, and trade.

On 1st April 2023 Prime Minister Lee met Chinese Premier, Li Qiang. Both leaders reaffirmed Singapore and China's strong cooperation and longstanding ties. They commended the good progress made by the projects between both countries, such as the three Government-to-Government projects in **Suzhou, Tianjin, and Chongqing**. They also discussed how Singapore and China could further expand and deepen collaboration, in areas such as air connectivity, digital economy, green development, financial cooperation, and energy and food security. PM Lee and Premier Li welcomed the substantive conclusion of the **China-Singapore Free Trade Agreement Subsequent Negotiations**, and looked forward to the signing later this year.

PM Lee expressed in-principle support for China's interest in joining the **Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)**. PM Lee also welcomed China's application to the **Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA)**, in accordance with the rules and procedures of the agreement.



(Above from left): PM Lee with National People's Congress Chairman Zhao Leji. PM meets Jerry Wang, student at the Guangzhou SingChin Academy (Photo: MCI Photo/Terence Tan)

Full report online visit:
www.indiplomacy.com

People of Uzbekistan Say YES to Constitutional Reforms

By Nomita Dhar

IN Diplomacy had the opportunity to observe first-hand and gather direct insights on the country's commitment to growth and progress



(Above): President Shavkat Mirziyoyev leading his family (above) and all Uzbeks into the future with a new constitutional 'map'

UZBEKISTAN has taken a significant step towards a more democratic and inclusive society with the recent referendum on a new Constitution. The referendum, held on 30th April 2023, saw an overwhelming 90.21% of voters in favour of the proposed changes. The referendum question asked citizens whether they accepted the Constitutional Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan," which aimed to introduce significant amendments to address critical issues such as human rights, social rights, and economic rights, while strengthening the role of parliament and civil society institutions.

The referendum process was completely transparent and under public control, with 383 international observers directly observing the preparation and holding of the referendum. More than 43,000 representatives of the country's five political parties and citizens' self-governing bodies were able to directly observe the referendum. The Central Election Commission and other agencies responded immediately to the cases reported in the media and social media.

The newly minted version of the Constitution will lengthen presidential terms from five to seven years,

allowing President Mirziyoyev to serve two more seven-year terms when his current tenure ends in 2026. Furthermore, proposals were initiated in the referendum to abolish capital punishment and protect against unlawful and indefinite imprisonment. The newly updated Constitution will see an increase in the number of articles from the current 128 to 155, with about 65% of the norms enshrined in the existing Constitution being updated.

These changes largely focus on ensuring and protecting personal, social, economic, political, cultural, and environmental rights and interests of citizens of different social strata. The updates aim to give fresh impetus to further democratize the public administration system, ensure human rights and freedoms, increase the role and responsibility of public authorities, and limit their powers by legal frameworks.

Overall, the referendum was a great success, with 16,673,189 citizens casting their votes, which corresponds to 84.54 percent of the total number of voters. According to the preliminary results of the referendum, 15,040,055 people or 90.21 percent voted in favor, 1,559,200 people or 9.35 percent voted against, and 73,934 ballots were declared invalid.



(Top): President Shavkat Mirziyoyev - the prime mover for reforms and changes to bring democracy and prosperity to the nation. (Above): Ms Nomita Dhar was amongst the many international observers invited to observe the historic occasion

The Constitutional Law "On the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan" was adopted by the people of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the referendum.

The new Constitution marks an important milestone for Uzbekistan as it moves towards a more democratic and prosperous nation. The envisaged changes aim to set clearer guidelines for Uzbekistan's development plans, including greater political openness and friendly relations with the world community and neighboring states. With the passage of the new Constitution, Uzbekistan is poised to make further strides towards achieving its goals of becoming a more democratic and inclusive society.

For more reports and photos visit:
www.indiplomacy.com

SOME KEY CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

Article 1: Statement of the fundamental characteristics of the Uzbek statehood: Uzbekistan is a sovereign republic, legal, social, secular, democratic state.

Articles 17 and 18 Constitutional priorities reflected in the new edition of the Constitution: Central Asia is a priority for Uzbekistan which desires to maintain a geopolitical balance in Central Asia, as well as to form a balanced multifaceted system of relations with the leading states of the world and international organizations.

- Now reads: 'The Republic of Uzbekistan is a

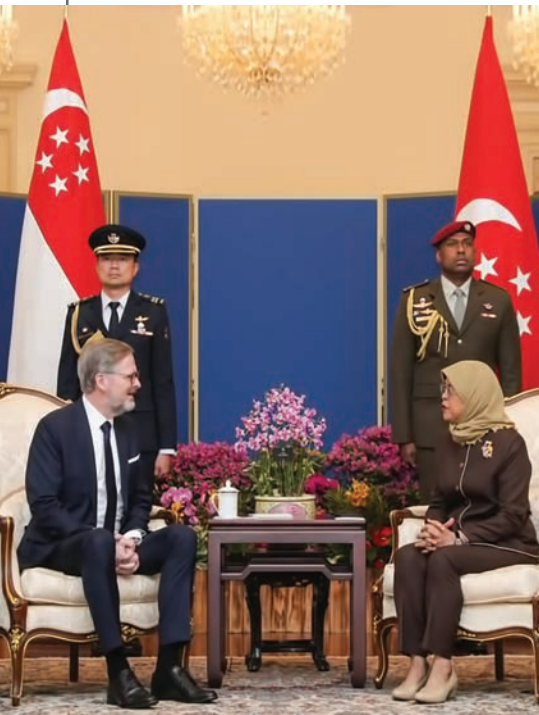
full-fledged subject of international relations. Its foreign policy is based on respect for human rights and freedoms, sovereign equality of states, non-use of force or threat of force, inviolability of borders, territorial integrity of states, peaceful resolution of disputes, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states, and general principles of international law, based on other recognized rules and norms.

- Uzbekistan pursues a friendly and peace-loving foreign policy with all countries
- The Republic may establish alliances, enter into commonwealths and other interstate structures, and separate from them in order to ensure the highest interests, well-being and security of the state and the people.'

Article 24 A new sentence to be added: 'The death penalty is prohibited in the Republic of Uzbekistan.'

Article 25 'Detention and imprisonment or other restrictions on freedom are allowed only by a court decision. A person cannot be detained for more than 48 hours until the court makes a decision. If the decision to detain or restrict freedom in another way is not adopted by the court within the specified period, the person should be released immediately.'

Full report online visit:
www.indiplomacy.com



Singapore and Cuba Celebrate Silver Jubilee of Diplomatic Ties

Fresh opportunities explored for mutually beneficial cooperation and collaborations for future-ready growth by Singapore and Cuba in their historic 25 years of diplomatic relations



SINGAPORE'S Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, concluded a successful visit to Havana, Cuba, where he met with several Cuban leaders to reaffirm the strong relationship between the two nations and explore opportunities for deeper collaboration in areas such as ports, tourism, air services, and biotechnology. The visit comes on the heels of the 25th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Singapore and Cuba, and highlights the commitment of both nations to multilateralism and global cooperation.

During his visit, Minister Balakrishnan met with Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel (pictured top right), as well as Deputy Prime Ministers Ricardo Cabrisas Ruiz

and Alejandro Gil Fernández. The leaders discussed expanding cooperation in key areas such as ports, tourism, air services, and biotechnology. Minister Balakrishnan also shared Singapore's development experience with the Cuban leaders, and expressed admiration for the resilience and determination of the Cuban people. In addition to his meetings with Cuban leaders, Minister Balakrishnan was hosted to lunch by Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, where the two discussed the importance of strengthening relations amidst a challenging external environment. They also welcomed the strong cooperation between Singapore and Cuba at the United Nations, particularly through the G77 chaired by Cuba.

Czech PM Fiala's Maiden Visit to Singapore Underpins Aim to Deepen Cooperation

Potential in high-tech industries and cybersecurity sectors as Singapore and Czech Republic push for stronger bilateral ties

CZECH Republic Prime Minister Petr Fiala made his first visit to Singapore from April 19 to 20, 2023. The visit coincided with the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Singapore and the Czech Republic. The Prime Minister was accompanied by a delegation from the Czech Office of the Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a business delegation. During his visit, Prime Minister Fiala held separate meetings with President Halimah Yacob, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, and Speaker of Parliament Tan Chuan-Jin.

The two Prime Ministers discussed the importance of free trade, multilateralism, and a rules-based international order. They also talked about the impact of climate change and the evolving security architecture in their respective regions. The leaders reaffirmed the warm and growing relations between Singapore and the Czech Republic and explored opportunities for cooperation in high-tech industries and cybersecurity. They also exchanged views on addressing social challenges that both countries face.

Prime Minister Fiala's visit was aimed at strengthening bilateral relations and paving the way for increased exchanges at all levels between Singapore and the Czech Republic. The visit was a productive one, with both sides expressing confidence that it will lead to further collaboration in the years to come. The visit is also significant for marking the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Singapore and the Czech Republic, which highlights the importance of maintaining strong ties between the two countries.

Singapore And Brazil Aim for Deeper Engagement in Various Sectors

Dr. V Balakrishnan's visit to Brazil heralds increasing cooperation in science, technology and innovation, education, climate change and energy transition between the two nations

FOREIGN Minister Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, visited Brazil from 16th to 18th April 2023 to discuss increasing cooperation between the two countries. During the visit both countries agreed to deepen collaboration in various fields, such as science, technology and innovation, education, climate change and energy transition, and trilateral technical cooperation.

Minister Balakrishnan had a series of meetings with Brazilian ministers and officials in Brasília, including the President of Brazil Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (pictured above right), Vice President and Minister of Development, Industry and Commerce, Geraldo Alckmin, and Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, Marina Silva.



A major highlight of the visit was the conclusion of the MERCOSUR-Singapore Free Trade Agreement, which aims to foster private sector engagement between the two countries and other MERCOSUR State Parties. The Ministers also recognized the strategic role of science, technology and innovation for

the competitiveness of their economies and agreed to encourage interaction between the two countries' innovation ecosystems. In addition to economic cooperation, Singapore expressed support for Brazil's bid to host COP30 in Belém in 2025, and welcomed the candidacy of Brazilian scientist Thelma Krug as Chair of the IPCC. Both Ministers also agreed on the importance of ensuring that the energy transition and the mitigation of emissions in the energy sector occur in a fair and equitable manner.

Minister Maliki Kelantan Visit: Opportunities in Education And Infrastructure Sectors

DR Maliki bin Osman, the Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, Second Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Second Minister for Education, made a working visit to Kelantan and Terengganu, Malaysia from 15th to 19th April 2023. The visit aimed to strengthen Singapore's longstanding relations with Malaysian states and explore new areas of cooperation. In Kelantan, Minister Maliki was granted an audience with the Tengku Mahkota of Kelantan, His Royal Highness Dr

Muhammad Fa-lz Petra Ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Ismail Petra, and was hosted to a *buka puasa* (break fast) by Kelantan State Executive Councillor for Education, Higher Education Science and Technology, Datuk Dr Fadzli Hassan and his colleagues. Minister Maliki also had separate meetings with Minister of Domestic Trade and Cost of Living, Datuk Seri Salahuddin Ayub, UMNO Secretary-General, Datuk Asyraf Wajdi, PPBM Kelantan Chief, Kamarudin Md Nor, and other leaders.

Ethiopian Airline Resumes Direct Singapore-Addis Ababa Flight Connectivity 16th March 2023

WITH four direct weekly flights between Singapore- Addis Ababa, Ethiopian Airlines is signaling the resumption of air connectivity between the two nations after operations came to a halt in 2020 with the outbreak of the Covid pandemic. The airline will be using its latest fleet of B787 Dreamliners on this strategic route for passenger connectivity to the African continent. The Ethiopian Group CEO, Mr Mesfin Tasew, stated that the resumption of the route will strengthen trade and investment as well as tourism connections between Singapore and Africa. He said: "The flight will further expand our network in Asia and create air connectivity for passengers traveling between Africa and Singapore. The new flight will also facilitate trade, investment, and tourism ties between Africa and Singapore. In line with our plan for growing our network around the world, we will keep on opening new routes to enhance connectivity between Africa and the rest of the world via Addis Ababa." For the full report visit www.indiplomacy.com



National Museum Of Singapore Launches 'Explore Semangat Yang Baru' Exhibition 21st April - 29th October 2023

THE latest offering of Singapore's National Museum puts the spotlight on the inspirational history and founding values of the independent island nation led by the legendary PM Lee Kuan Yew, on the occasion of his 100th birth anniversary. Visitors to the Founders' Memorial's pilot exhibition, "Semangat yang Baru: Forging a New Singapore Spirit," can learn more about Singapore's history and founding values. The wide spectrum of exhibits on display provides an opportunity to explore the challenges faced by Singapore's founding leaders and generation during Singapore's nation-building years of the 1950s to 1970s, and how their values and principles shaped the foundation of independent Singapore. This exhibition also features artifacts such as a daching pig weighing scale contributed by Mr Tan Kah Hoe and Mdm Amy Phua, reflecting the tough decision of phasing out pig farming in Singapore to protect the environment. In addition, visitors can engage in interactive experiences such as role-playing tours and multimedia kiosks to discover which of the founding values they identify with most. For the full report visit www.indiplomacy.com

Norway Night: A Celebration of Partnership and Progress 26th April 2023



Norway's Ambassador, H. E. Eivind S. Homme, and Sun Media's Editor-in-Chief, Nomita Dhar

NORWAY Night, hosted by the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Singapore, brought together over 800 high-level decision makers from around the world on 26th April 2023. The event was supported by sponsors from the Norwegian industry and the Maritime & Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) and held at the iconic The Clifford Pier at Collyer Quay. The event provided a platform for leaders and executives to connect, share ideas, and explore new opportunities in various industries.



Reception to Mark Poland's Constitution Day in Singapore 26th Apr 2023



THE Embassy of the Republic of Poland celebrated its Constitution Day on 26th April 2023 which officially falls on 3rd May 2023. Ambassador Magdalena Bogdziewicz and her spouse, Mr. Pawel Bogdziewicz, hosted a National Reception at the Conrad Centennial Hotel Ballroom in Singapore ahead of the official event in May. Poland's Constitution Day commemorates the adoption of the country's Constitution on 3rd May 1791, which was the first modern written constitution in Europe and the second in the world, after the United States Constitution.



(From left): Ambassador Magdalena Bogdziewicz and Nomita Dhar, Editor-in-Chief IN Diplomacy

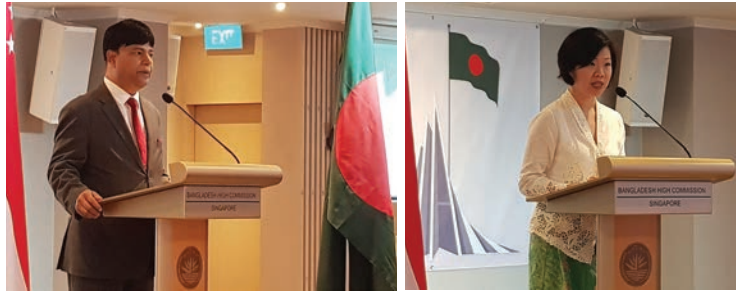
EVENTS

Bangladesh National Day Reception - A Day to Remember 28th April 2023

BANGLADESH celebrated its National Day after the fasting month of Ramadan and held it on the 28th of April 2023 at the Parkroyal Hotel's Emerald Ballroom. The occasion marked the country's most important historical milestone - its independence on 26th March 1971. Bangladesh High Commissioner to Singapore, H.E. Md Tauhedul Islam, in his welcome speech recalled the great sacrifices and the visionary leadership that led to the birth of Bangladesh and also acknowledged Singapore for being one of the first countries in the world to recognise the new nation in 1972. Today Singapore has become the fifth largest investor in Bangladesh and hosts more than 150,000 Bangladeshi workers here.

The Guest of Honour representing Singapore at the event was Ms Sim Ann, the Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and National Development. She was accompanied by two Singapore Members of Parliament, Mr Seah Kian Peng and Ms Hany Soh. The 52nd Bangladesh Independence and National Day Celebrations also stood out for the High Commissioner's impassioned plea during his address that any country while celebrating independence to also give a thought to the plight of those less fortunate who are starving and living in poverty as one billion people go to bed hungry daily. He hoped everyone can work towards alleviating such a situation.

The Singapore Senior Minister of State in her address said Bangladesh and Singapore are friends and have celebrated the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties last year with several milestone events. She said despite COVID both countries have kept up their engagement at the political level. One example of this she said was the official visit by Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen in April last year and this year in May Singapore's Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, Second Minister for Education and Second Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr Maliki Osman will make a bilateral visit to Bangladesh. She hoped "Both countries will find avenues to collaborate as Bangladesh moves towards realising its enormous economic potential."



(Above, from left): MP Ms Hany Soh; MP Mr Seah Kian Peng receiving a memento from High Commissioner Md Tauhedul Islam and Senior Minister of State Ms Sim Ann



FHA 2023 Returns to Showcase Innovations & Sustainability in F&B Industry 23th - 26th Apr 2023

THE highly anticipated Singapore mega exhibition on the F&B industry had attracted 68 group pavilions and over 1300 exhibitors. Notably, the China Pavilion had made a comeback after the pandemic, and highlights included young talent food and beverage competitions, feature zones, and a range of seminars on sustainable food solutions.

Among the top highlights of the event were the world's first plant-based egg yolk substitute and a zero-waste booth pilot, reflecting the event's dedication to creating a sustainable future for the F&B industry.

Mr Poh Chi Chuan, Executive Director of Exhibitions & Conferences at the Singapore Tourism Board, said, "We are excited to debut the zero-waste booth pilot at FHA-Food & Beverage 2023. Sustainability is critical to the future of our MICE industry, and we hope that the pilot will encourage the industry

to opt for such booths and continue to innovate for sustainability."

FHA-Food & Beverage 2023 also held the first-ever Young Talents Escoffier competition, that drew in exceptional culinary talents from various countries.

Esteemed judges such as Philip Golding and Alan Palmer presided over the event, lending their expertise to recognize the exceptional skills of the participants.

