

experiencesingapore

Connecting the World

Artist's Impression of
Arrival Hall at Terminal 3

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President Nathan Visits Indonesia

SINGAPORE'S President S R Nathan made a four-day State Visit to Indonesia in March this year.

President Nathan was received with full state honours at Indonesia's Istana Merdeka by a guard-of-honour and a 21-gun ceremonial salute, underscoring the close ties between Indonesia and Singapore.

In Jakarta, President Nathan called on President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono who hosted a State Banquet in President Nathan's honour.

"The relations between Singapore and Indonesia are built on solid foundations. We have strong linkages at all levels," said President Nathan in his Banquet speech.

President Nathan also met Vice-President Jusuf Kalla, as well



[L-R] Mrs Nathan, President Nathan, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and his wife. Singapore and Indonesia should forge closer ties and work together to meet the challenges posed by regional powerhouses India and China, the presidents of two Asean neighbours said.

as other eminent Indonesians.

During his visit, President Nathan paid his respects to the fallen warriors of Indonesia when he visited the National Heroes Cemetery. President Nathan also visited the graves of former

military chiefs and defence ministers, Benny Murdani and Abdul Haris Nasution.

President Nathan called on the Governor of Yogyakarta Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono X in Yogyakarta, who hosted an official

dinner at the Kraton in the President's honour. President Nathan also visited the Borobudur and Prambanan temples, both of which are symbols of Indonesia's rich historical and cultural heritage.

Visit of Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves of St. Vincent & The Grenadines to Singapore



Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves (right) of St Vincent and The Grenadines in the Caribbean called on Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong for lunch at the Istana during his visit to Singapore. He briefed Mr Lee on developments in the Caribbean region. They also discussed ways to strengthen links between St Vincent and The Grenadines and Singapore, especially in trade, investments and tourism.

THE Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Planning, Economic Development, Labour and Information of St. Vincent and The Grenadines Dr Ralph Gonsalves made a working visit to Singapore from 4 to 7 March 2006. During his visit, Dr Gonsalves met with Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. Both Prime Ministers discussed ways to strengthen trade and investment links between their countries.

Minister for Foreign Affairs George Yeo also called on and hosted Dr Gonsalves to lunch. Dr Gonsalves briefed Minister Yeo on developments in St Vincent and The Grenadines, including efforts at regional integration. They also exchanged views on strengthening bilateral political and economic cooperation.

Philippines Landslide – Extending a Helping Hand

IN response to the devastating landslide that buried the entire village of Guinsaunon, in southern Leyte province, Philippines on 17 February 2006, the Singapore Government extended humanitarian assistance to the victims of the landslide. The Singapore Government provided US\$30,000 worth of relief supplies such as medicine, food, blankets and tents for the survivors.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, on behalf of the people of Singapore, offered his condolences and sympathies to Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and the victims of the



Philippine Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo receiving Singapore's contributions from Ambassador Lim Kheng Hua at a symbolic ceremony in the Department of Foreign Affairs.

tragedy and their loved ones.

In his message to President Arroyo, Prime Minister Lee said he was "was saddened to learn of the landslide in Southern Leyte

which has resulted in devastation and the loss of many lives."

Prime Minister Lee added that Singapore officials were in contact with their Philippine

counterparts on the relief assistance Singapore could provide to the affected areas.

In addition to the relief assistance provided by the Singapore Government, the Singapore Red Cross separately donated S\$100,000 to the Philippine National Red Cross through the International Federation of the Red Cross to assist in relief efforts. Much needed medicine, food, blankets, tents and other materials were airlifted to the affected areas.

The landslide, believed to be the result of several days of heavy torrential rains in the area left a trail of destruction and death. Up to 200 people were feared dead and 1,500 others missing in the tragedy.



Deputy Chief of Mission Desmond Ng (second from left) and First Secretary Adrian Chan (second from right) receiving the relief supplies from a Singapore Airlines flight for the handover to the Philippines National Disaster Coordinating Council.

SCP COURSES FROM JUN TO JUL 2006

Course	Management of the Operating Theatre Complex	Course	Streamlining Trade Procedures For Effective Trade Flow	Course	Information Technology Management
When	15 August – 28 August 2006	When	15 August – 28 August 2006	When	22 August – 4 September 2006
Closing	27 June 2006	Closing	27 June 2006	Closing	4 July 2006
Agency	Singapore General Hospital	Agency	International Trade Institute of Singapore	Agency	Institute of Systems Science

These Training Awards are part of the Singapore Cooperation Programme (SCP) of technical assistance to developing countries. For more information on application procedures and terms of awards, contact the Technical Cooperation Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at tel: (65) 98199353 or fax: (65) 64793357. You can also visit our website at <http://www.scp.gov.sg>.

Improving Management Grows Trade

THE way that Singapore shares its world-class airport management expertise in bilateral government arrangements can help boost tourism and trade.

This is the view of Mr Victor Koh, Consultant and Lecturer with the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore's (CAAS) Singapore Aviation Academy (SAA) that just completed a three-week Airport/Terminal Ramp Operations & Management Programme.

Mr Koh is the former Chief of Apron Control Management Services at Singapore Changi Airport and a qualified veteran in this field for nearly 25 years. He co-ordinated and conducted the course at the SAA's premises in Telok Paku, Changi.

The course attracted 23 participants. The Singapore Government sponsored 16 of the participants through its Singapore Cooperation Programme (SCP) Training Awards.

They came from Brunei, Cambodia, Cook Islands, Cyprus, Egypt, Fiji, Hong Kong, Jordan, South Korea, Lebanon, Myanmar, Nigeria, Philippines, Samoa, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, Vanuatu, Vietnam and Yemen.

Course participants got an understanding of the intricacies of the complex airside environment with a view to achieving higher operational efficiency and safety in airside operations and management.

They gained relevant technical knowledge, insights, awareness of international requirements and strategies through a combination of lectures, case study discussions, practical exercises and on-site visits to ramp

facilities at Singapore's Changi Airport.

The two-module programme not only covered the technical aspects of airport management but even drilled down to pest, animal and bird control – things which can menace a good airport environment!

Operations, security, fire and safety, legislation and international certifications, air cargo management, and airport emergencies and crisis managements plans were also covered.

Singapore has provided technical

assistance to developing countries since the 1960s. As a country whose only resource is its people, Singapore believes that human resource development is vital for economic and social progress.

The Singapore Cooperation Programme (SCP) was established in 1992, bringing together under one framework various technical assistance programmes offered by Singapore. Since then, Singapore has sponsored training courses and study visits for well over 40,000 officials from 161 countries.



"Time for a break"....as fellow SAA course participants Ip Seng Choo from Macau (left) and Mohammed Ahmed Yousif from Yemen (centre) join Colin Chang-Tave from Seychelles for a well earned rest by the poolside.

(Below) Night out in town – participants of the Airport Terminal/Ramp Operations & Management winding down in a local pub.



He always responds to our email queries even after we've gone home," he said.

It was not all work and no play during the three weeks that the group was in Singapore. Participants also took in some of Singapore's tourist sights with a night-time boat cruise down the Singapore River passing Clarke Quay, Boat Quay and Merlion Park.

"Our Singapore hosts showed us how life is lived in Singapore, both during and after work. I even managed to learn the use of chopsticks for a Chinese meal," Colin added.

Camaraderie & Chopsticks in Singapore

COURSE participants took away much more than learning when they were in Singapore recently for the Singapore Aviation Academy's (SAA) 3-week Airport Terminal/Ramp Operations & Management Programmes.

"The networking opportunities, camaraderie and fun were equally important," said course participant Colin Chang-Tave. Colin hails from the Indian Ocean island nation of Seychelles and is Airport Manager (Operations) at Seychelles International Airport in Mahe.

"Our challenges differ from First World airports, and through this course in Singapore I have managed to meet people from island nations such as Fiji, Samoa, the Cook Islands and Vanuatu, who face similar issues as the Seychelles," he said.

The exchange of ideas and case examples were invaluable, he added. Somewhat of a senior attendee as he was at the SAA for other courses two years back, Colin was all praise for the programme.

Sharing feedback from fellow participants, he commended the professionalism of the lecturers and tutors, as well as the detailed information provided to course participants. Hands-on lessons, case studies and on-site visits added dimensions to the learning.

"We feel privileged to have the opportunity to be here in Singapore. It is no secret Singapore Changi Airport is the number one airport in the world. The fact that you are willing to share with us your experiences to help us improve our airports speaks volumes. It is highly commendable for the Singapore government to want to share their experiences with us. We all appreciate it," Colin said.

"It is from my first Singapore training visit that I still manage to keep in touch with my friends in the Caribbean to bounce ideas off them. Our course leader, Victor Koh, has been an invaluable resource even after the course.

WORLD CYBER GAMES IN SINGAPORE

It was a "war of sorts" as cyber game warriors from the world descended on Singapore last November for the World Cyber Games (WCG) Grand Final 2005, to determine the champion-of-champions in the arena of electronic gaming.

With names like Dead or Alive Ultimate and Counterstrike, there was much "combat" underway – virtually, of course. But this was also a battle of electronic wizardry, with games consoles across a landscape of LED screens as champion teams from some 67 countries came together, including the United States, Britain, Australia and Japan.

Singapore itself won another battle – gaining an edge over other major contenders like Taipei, Milan and Hanover for the right to stage this key event. Some 700 gamers took part in the WCG Grand Finals.

Only a month before, Singapore had hosted another important cyber gaming calendar event – the Cyberathlete Professional World Tour – to indicate the republic's seriousness in building up the cyber games industry.

Following its successful hosting of the WCG Grand Finals, Singapore has been chosen to host the first WCG 2006 Asian Championship in June 2006.

Once seen as a fringe activity, cyber gaming can be a key economic contributor, says Singapore's Infocomm Development Authority. The agency to develop Singapore's information infrastructure and industry expects the local cyber gaming industry to double in size over the next three years. The WCG games itself saw some S\$53 million in tourist dollars added to the economy, according to Singapore's Economic Development Board.

The global pie for the industry is expected to expand to US\$91.4 billion by 2009. Electronics games are only one segment of the digital media industry, which experts see expanding to US\$2.9 trillion in global spending in



(Above) Banks of computer terminals mark the competition floor at the World Cyber Games.

(Below) Three-year-old Amin Golnam is the youngest participant in the World Cyber Games ever. The Iranian toddler took part in his country's World Cyber Games' national finals after following his cousin here. Although he lost all his matches in soccer game Fifa 2005, organiser International Cyber Marketing was so impressed by his pluck that they flew him here to witness the grand finals as a guest.



two years' time.

Singapore's EDB is investing about S\$1 billion to build up the industry by 2018, as it aims for a slice of the digital animation and special effects sector – the other two segments of this fast-growing industry.

Singapore is boosting its global standing in this industry, having already attracted two of the world's top names to set up operations – Lucasfilm Animation of Star Wars fame and Electronic Arts (EA), the world's top game publisher, whose sales topped US\$5.1 billion last year.



(Above) The Cyber Team Singapore, consisting of winners in the World Cyber Games Singapore national finals. They also represented Singapore at the World Cyber Games grand finals in November 2005.

(Below, L-R) Jonathan Seah and Herman Ng of Rapture Gaming pictured with Dawn Of War, a Real Time Strategy game akin to Warcraft, which was featured at the World Cyber Games 2005. Herman and Jonathan are strategic partners to organise World Cyber Games in 2005.



Singapore Tourism Awards

In another sign of a growing industry, 45 individuals and organisations were honoured recently at the Tourism Awards by the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) for their significant contributions in enhancing Singapore's image as a premier destination.

Singapore saw a seven percent increase in tourist arrivals in 2005, with figures touching 8.94 million. This was 40,000 more than the 8.9 million target set for the year. The industry now adds some US\$6.6 billion to the economy.

Tourism Board data shows that the rise in arrivals was led by double-digit increases in tourists from the relatively newer markets of Vietnam, the Philippines and India. In terms of total numbers, Indonesia, China and Australia were the city-state's largest source of visitors. The board also said total visitor days rose 14 percent to 30.6 million, with the average length of stay going up to 3.4 days in 2005.

Now into its 20th year, the Tourism Awards, seen as the "Oscars" of the industry, have evolved to keep pace with a changing tourism landscape. Singapore Tourism Board chairman Simon Israel said: "As Singapore faces an increasingly competitive tourism landscape, it is important for the industry to continue to place greater emphasis on innovation, creativity and experiential factors."

The Tourism Awards have grown over the years to cover the full spectrum of service industries related to tourism, including hotel, meetings and conventions, leisure attractions, food and beverage, entertainment, spa, retail and travel. Starting with only seven categories, there are now 30 award types reflecting an expanding economic sector.

20th Tourism Awards winners, Tay Liam Wee, Group Managing Director, Sincere Watch Ltd and Jennie Chua, President & CEO, Raffles Holding Ltd.



BEST LEISURE Attraction Experience SINGAPORE ZOO

THE Singapore Zoo, a world-class facility amongst its peers, continues to be a star visit for tourists to Singapore. The zoo walked away hands down with the Best Leisure Attraction Experience.

It is rated a top rainforest park where groups, families and students gather to learn and see nature, wildlife and conservation first-hand in a world removed.

"Our purpose is to inspire people to be closer to nature, so we try to show the animals, plants and habitat in their most natural environment," says the Singapore Zoo's executive director, Ms Fanny Lai.

More aptly described as a hybrid between a theme park and a serious zoological institution, the zoo is becoming well-known for its "edutainment" mission that advocates the learning process of wildlife, nature and conservation in a resort environment.

Zoo visitors get to see interactive animal shows and are introduced to a variety of educational programmes. There is also a viewing gallery in the Wildlife Research Centre where visitors can view, from a safe distance, medical treatments, including operations, to wildlife that the zoo conducts to ensure that the animals are in prime health.



BBC cameraman, Darren Conway, relaxing in his hotel



The Singapore Zoo is a star visit for tourists to Singapore.



room at The Scarlet Hotel.

NEW TOURISM ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR SCARLET HOTEL

THEY are known by their stars – four, five and even six star hotels. Some marbled and magnificent, all grand and glorious, upmarket hotels are homes for the well-heeled.

Of late, however, a new group of hotels is stealing some of the limelight. They have no star ratings but are affectionately referred to as boutique hotels. One such jewel is the Scarlet Hotel in Singapore's Chinatown, the creation of Mr Geeson P Lawadinata, winner of this year's New Tourism Entrepreneur of the Year prize at the Singapore Tourism Awards.

The well-appointed 84-room Scarlet Hotel, which opened in December 2004, has already won over enough seasoned travellers to make into the travel world's top publication – the CondeNest Traveller UK Hotlist 2005. The Scarlet also gained mention in DestinAsian 2005 and the Luxury Travel Awards 2005.

Describing his high-end boutique beauty as a "lady", executive director Lawadinata says this was his first step towards a dream of making Singapore the luxury boutique capital of Asia. His company pumped in S\$45 million to acquire and refurbish a row of shophouses

BEST SPA EXPERIENCE SPA BOTANICAL

SPA Botanica, located on Singapore's resort island of Sentosa, took top honours in a new Tourism Awards category designed to recognise the best spa in Singapore.

The 6000 square metre tropical garden spa is only minutes away from the buzz of downtown Singapore. The outdoor spa pavilions have their own bath and private garden, allowing guests to enjoy spa treatments in the surrounds of nature, yet in complete privacy.

Besides providing a relaxing retreat from the city, this tropical sanctuary allows a return to the past – a peek into Singapore's colonial heritage. Prior to Singapore's fall to Japan during World War II, the buildings that now house Spa Botanica's modern facilities used to hold elements of the British Army.

The spa's location was another point for its win. It is only eight kilometres from the Orchard Road area with free shuttle buses from the city and from the nearby HarbourFront subway station.



Spa Botanica @ The Sentosa Resort & Spa – customers are allowed to use their lounging areas and hotel pools after a treatment.



Scarlet on Erskine Road was originally the shared living quarters of immigrant Chinese women servants. The boutique hotel is a good example of the creative use of old space for new purposes.

along Erskine Road to transform it into the "beautiful lady" that it is today.

The hotel is reminiscent of a baroque opera house, with reflective black marble floors in the lobby, red draperies held by thick gold cords and richly upholstered lounge chairs. Said Mr Lawadinata: "It was a desire to create a hotel with a unique personality – something dramatic, theatrical and sensual."

COVER STORY

CONNECTING THE WORLD



Singapore continues to strengthen its position as a key global air hub after an exceptional year of hosting increasing numbers of air passengers, aircraft and airfreight.

In 2005, new airlines, more flights, more travellers and more freight made it a record-breaking 12 months for Changi Airport, Asia's sixth busiest airport. More than 32 million people passed through Changi Airport's doors, an increase of more than five per cent over the previous year's figure of 30.35 million.

And in the first three months of 2006, Changi Airport handled a record number of 8.2 million passengers – the highest-ever figure for a first quarter in its 25 year history. For the full year it expects to surpass 2005's 32 million passengers.

Changi Airport's strong showing reflects the increasing numbers of airlines and flights using Singapore. As at 1 April 06, some 83 international and regional airlines operate a total of 4,100 flights every week to 180 cities in 55 countries.

The new carriers that have started using Singapore from 2005 include China's Yangtze

River Express, Indonesia's Adam Air, Pakistan International Airlines, and two private Indian carriers – Jet Airways and Air Sahara.

Budget carriers with low-cost fares, such as Tiger Airways and Jetstar Asia, now fly from Singapore to regional destinations such as Jakarta, Bangkok, Manila, Ho Chi Minh City and Macau.

In the highly competitive aviation industry, the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS) is sparing no effort in developing Singapore as a competitive global airhub. The airport authorities



The sunflower garden in Terminal 2 of Changi Airport. Changi Airport now has no fewer than six thematic gardens for departing passengers to enjoy before they leave.

have set aside S\$300 million over three years to boost its partnership with airlines.

The existing two international passenger terminals are being upgraded with a third international terminal coming online in 2008. The S\$45 million Budget Terminal was opened in March 2006 and in August 2008, Changi Airport will boast Asia's first stand-alone luxury terminal offering five-star facilities and service to the well-heeled and the jet-set. Wong Woon Liong, Director-General of CAAS, said that the new 2000 sq m JetQuay CIP

Terminal is part of CAAS' efforts to provide the widest range of services, from budget to the ultra exclusive at Changi.

AEROSPACE INDUSTRY

On the aerospace front, Singapore is gearing up to become the region's hub for aerospace activities like aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO). Singapore's aerospace industry, involving manufacturing as well as maintenance, now accounts for 25 per cent of Asia's aerospace/MRO activity. It is one of

Singapore's fastest-growing industries, registering an output of S\$5.2 billion in 2005, up from S\$4.4 billion in 2004.

Signaling the Singapore Government's strong commitment to boost Singapore's position as Asia's premier aerospace and air services hub, the Economic Development Board (EDB) and JTC Corporation recently unveiled an S\$60 million plan to develop 140 hectares of land adjacent to Seletar Airport in northwest Singapore as an aerospace park. When completed in 2018, the Seletar Aerospace

Park will house aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul specialists, component and equipment makers, training centres and businesses such as private air-transport operators.

"The Park will capitalize on the huge growth potential in Asia for MRO and manufacturing system services, while also solidifying Singapore's position as Asia's leading aerospace/MRO hub," said Mr Ko Kheng Hwa, EDB Managing Director.

In his speech at the Official Opening Ceremony of Asian Aerospace 2006 on 20 February 2006, Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister S Jayakumar noted that as the largest and most comprehensive MRO location in Asia, Singapore is home to some of the world's leading aviation companies including Rolls Royce, GE Aviation Services Operation and Pratt & Whitney. These MNCs regard Singapore as an attractive location because of the availability of local and foreign talent, a strong intellectual property regime, a cost-competitive business environment, and a vibrant research framework.

Singapore also has several world-class aerospace design and manufacturing operations as well as the regional headquarters for the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

With the "Singapore brand", excellent infrastructure, and the strong partnership between industry and government, Singapore is well-placed to take advantage of the growth opportunities in the aviation industry and strengthen its position as an aviation hub.



Free roaming buskers mingling with passengers at Changi Airport's Terminal 2 Departure/Transit Lounge.



Singapore's Budget Terminal, which spans 25,000 sq m, houses 13 retail shops and five food and beverage outlets.

AIRFREIGHT SUPPORT VITAL

Regularly ranked amongst the world's best air passenger facilities, Singapore's Changi Airport is also conscious of the need to provide the best in airfreight support to enhance its position as a global logistics hub.

Towards this end, the Changi Airfreight Centre (CAC) offers airlines, cargo agents, shippers and consignees the benefit of a 24-hour one-stop service centre. It is the many back-end activities conducted here that sustain Singapore's lead as a regional

trading centre.

Located at the northern end of the Changi airport, the entire CAC is operated as a Free Trade Zone (FTZ) where companies can easily move, consolidate, store or repack cargo without the need for documentation or customs duties. Only goods that are leaving the CAC need documentation to pass through the centralised customs and security checkpoint marking the end of the FTZ.

The CAC contains eight airfreight terminals, four cargo

agents' buildings and 10 freighter aircraft parking bays. The eight terminals are operated by the two ground handling companies – Singapore Airport Terminal Services (SATS) which operate six and the Changi International Airport Services (CIAS) which operates two.

The four cargo agents buildings, managed by the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS), provide warehouse and office space to more than 200 international and local freight forwarders.

To cater to the needs of time-

definite shipments, there are two dedicated Express & Courier Centres. One is operated by SATS for general express and courier shipments and another is operated by DHL as their Singapore Regional Hub. Other international air express players such as FedEx, UPS and TNT use other facilities there.

The airfreight centre also has an airmail transit centre, a trade permit office and an animal and plant quarantine unit.

Almost every aspect of the cargo handling process in the centre involves using technology to increase the efficiency of cargo handling. State-of-the-art



(Above) Travellers passing through Changi Airport enjoy a wide range of amenities, including free city tours, swimming pool and use of over 280 Internet terminals

(Below) Changi Airport T2 new facilities and opening of the new Skyplex. The skyplex, located within the departure terminal, will benefit passengers on transit who will get to watch movies and football matches.



infrastructure such as automated stacker systems, mechanised materials handling systems and container/pallet elevating transfer vehicles speed up the handling process within the airfreight terminals by automating many of the labour-intensive tasks.

One of the most useful tools used by the air cargo community since 1989 is TradeNet. It expedites cargo documentation by providing a computerized electronic link between the cargo community and other regulatory bodies such as Singapore's trade development agency called International Enterprise

Singapore and the Customs & Excise Department.

Today, virtually all trading declarations sent by the cargo community can be processed within 30 minutes, with some even under five! Complementing this is the Advance Clearance for Courier and Express Shipments System (ACCESS) which enables the Customs & Excise Department to clear all incoming courier and express shipments before their physical arrival in Singapore. This allows shipments which are due for inspection by Customs to be packed separately for clearance at the centralised checkpoint.

SINGAPORE AIRSHOW 2008

Singapore is set to host its own new air show in 2008. The Singapore Airshow 2008 will make its debut from 26 February to 3 March 2008 at a new dedicated 25 hectare site near Changi Airport. The new Singapore Airshow will replace the Asian Aerospace which held its last exhibition in Singapore in March 2006.

At a ground-breaking ceremony for the event's new location on 25 January 2006, Singapore's Trade and Industry Minister Lim Hng Kiang expressed confidence that Singapore will remain the home of the world's third biggest air show despite a change in organisers from 2008. "Most people in the business will recognise the Farnborough, Paris and Singapore airshows as the biggest airshows in the world. We want to continue this tradition and track record. I think the brand is Singapore, and we have not lost the brand", said Minister Lim.



The Airbus 380 display at Asian Aerospace 2006. People mingle around models of the Airbus A380 during Asian Aerospace exhibition.

The new-look Singapore Airshow has already sold out of exhibition space, 20 months ahead of its 2008 debut. Response has been so good that an extra 10,000 sq m will be added to the original 30,000 sq m exhibition hall, making it at least 30 per cent bigger than the Asian Aerospace. "We are making the decision now to expand the hall as we want to ensure that all exhibitors get to showcase in the main hall. We have the luxury, as we have yet to build the site," said Singapore Airshow and Events's managing director, Jimmy Lau. Exhibitors who have signed on include Airfoil Technologies International, BAE Systems and Boeing, Eurocopter, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon International, Rolls Royce International and ST Engineering have made similar commitments.

With 40,000 sq ft of air-conditioned exhibition halls, adjoining apron space for static displays, sites for live demonstrations and exhibitor chalets, the organisers are confident that the Singapore Airshow would do as well, if not better than Asian Aerospace. As Raytheon vice-president and regional executive Michael Kaufhold puts it: "It is absolutely clear in our minds that Singapore will continue to be the venue for the airshow to be at, in this part of the world."

Singapore's aerospace industry has been growing strongly, registering a record output of S\$5.2 billion, a 17 per cent increase over 2004, with some of the world's leading aviation companies locating their R&D centres in Singapore. The Singapore Airshow will provide a further boost to Singapore's status as an aerospace hub.

Soaring High

By S Jayakumar

The aviation sector is an integral part of the global economy. According to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), aviation's global economic impact is estimated at close to US\$3 trillion, with the industry accounting for about 29 million jobs globally.

With increasing deregulation and affordability, demand in the aviation sector is set to soar. The Asia Pacific sector is expected to lead the growth. The region's passenger and freight traffic is forecast to grow annually at 6.8 and 8.5 per cent respectively from 2005 to 2009. These figures are significantly higher than the global forecast of 5.6 and 6.3 per cent for the same period. Reflecting the strong growth in Asia, approximately 1/3 of the new orders that Boeing and Airbus secured last year were from Asian customers.

Since the SARS pandemic in 2003 and the uncertain global outlook in 2004 the outlook for the global aviation industry today is positive and confidence in the industry has largely been restored. In 2005, international passenger traffic grew by 7.6% and freight traffic by 3.2%. Airbus and Boeing also announced a record number of orders for new aircraft last year, which surpassed their previous records by a significant margin.

SINGAPORE IS WELL-POSITIONED TO RIDE THE GROWTH IN ASIA PACIFIC

As a leading global aviation hub in Asia, Singapore is well-positioned to take advantage of these growth opportunities. Singapore's Changi Airport is widely recognised as one of the premier airports in the world. More importantly, it is also seen as one of the most 'secure' airports. Last year, Changi Airport handled a record 32.4 million passengers and 1.83 million tonnes of air cargo. The new terminal for budget carriers opening next month and the brand new Terminal 3 coming up in 2008, will further buttress Singapore's role as a leading air hub in the region. Let me add that Singapore's safe and secure environment and excellent infrastructure are factors which encourage commercial and defence aviation people to come here and network together.

Singapore's aerospace industry, which encompasses both manufacturing and maintenance, is also growing strongly. Last year, it registered a record output of \$5.2 billion, a 17 per cent increase over 2004. In the last 15 years, the aerospace industry here has grown by a compounded annual rate of more than 12%.

As a "one-stop shop" for "Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul" or MRO, Singapore is the largest and most comprehensive MRO location in Asia. Rolls-Royce, Pratt & Whitney and General Electric, all have significant MRO operations here. Singapore is also home to ST Aerospace and SIA Engineering Company who are among the top MRO companies in the world. Singapore also has several world-class aerospace design and manufacturing operations as well as the regional headquarters for the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the IATA among others.

NEW GROWTH AREAS

Apart from attracting more aerospace manufacturing projects, we are also developing two new areas – "research and development (R&D)", and "training and education".

Recognising the merits of globalising their R&D and tapping low-cost foreign expertise, Rolls-Royce, Thales and Boeing have recently entered into partnerships with our local universities and research institutes to further their research

in areas like advanced materials, repair technologies, predictive maintenance and fuel-cells. EADS, Pratt & Whitney and GE, among others, have found Singapore to be an attractive location for R&D activities because of the availability of talent – local and foreign, a strong intellectual property regime, a cost competitive business environment, and a vibrant research framework. We hope that more companies will also be persuaded to base their R&D centres here.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

We are also placing greater emphasis on training and education. As the aviation industry in this region grows, we expect greater demand for more aviation-related training. Aviation training here will receive a boost when Altheon opens its state-of-the-art simulator training centre for pilots and cabin crew, later this year. The company expects to train more than 6,000 personnel per year in its S\$100 million facility. This is recognition by industry players that Singapore is a good place to offer specialised training services, which perhaps could eventually develop into an aviation training campus.

CONCLUSION

I am confident of the tremendous prospects presented by the aerospace industry both globally and in Singapore. With its strategic location in Asia, Singapore is an ideal host city for a world-class airshow. With the strong partnership between the government and the aerospace community, industry leaders and decision makers from the commercial and defence aviation sectors can easily congregate here to network and broker deals.

This will be the last edition of the current Asian Aerospace show series. I would like to thank Reed Exhibitions and the Singapore Technologies Group for having this airshow here for many years.

As you all know, Singapore will continue to host an airshow with all the elements of trade exhibition, static and flying display and conferences, elements which are essential to making it a world-class event. It will be held biannually at this same period from 2008 onwards. Feedback from industry participants indicate that the success of airshows here

are due in no small part to the so-called

"Singapore brand" – our infrastructure,

our aviation industry, and, equally important, the strong partnership between industry- and government.

Key government agencies, like MINDEF, CAAS and EDB, have shown their support by ensuring high-level representation at airshows in Singapore. With the Singapore brand

deeply intertwined with airshows here, I am pleased to announce that the organisers have heeded the advice of industry players and renamed the next series of airshows starting from 2008 the "Singapore Airshow". With its new, dedicated site at Changi, the government will give its full backing to the new airshow. We look forward to your continued support and seeing you here again at the Singapore Airshow in 2008.



The above is an edited extract of Deputy Prime Minister, Coordinating Minister for National Security and Minister for Law, S Jayakumar's speech at the Official Opening Ceremony of Asian Aerospace 2006, at the Suntec City Convention Centre on 20 February 2006.

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