

# Experience Singapore

issue  
**65**

JAN - MAR 2018



## an association for the ages

How ASEAN has remained relevant to  
its members and the wider world,  
51 years on from its founding

ENHANCING JUDICIAL  
EDUCATION

/ 06

STRONGER,  
TOGETHER

/ 08

ON THE  
HORIZON

/ 10

# Experience issue 65 Singapore

JAN - MAR 2018

## ED'S NOTE

Dear readers,

From an assembly of fledgling states at its inception in 1967, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is today both an economic power and a beacon of political stability in an increasingly volatile world. As the association enters its 51<sup>st</sup> year, what are the challenges it faces, and what new goals does it hope to achieve? These and other questions are examined in An Association For The Ages (pages 3-5).

Much of ASEAN's success can be attributed to the close cooperation among Member States in order to pursue shared goals for the common good. Stronger, Together (pages 8-9) explores these collaborative efforts such as anti-drug efforts and climate change. Besides what has already been achieved together, many possibilities for future mutually-beneficial partnerships exist for Member States. E-commerce and maritime tourism are huge potential growth areas, and On The Horizon (pages 10-11) looks at what can be done to boost these sectors.

In Enhancing Judicial Education and Training Opportunities, we take a look at how Singapore is giving back to the legal community through upholding and harmonising judicial standards across ASEAN Member States. One way it is doing this is via training efforts conducted by the Singapore Judicial College under the auspices of the Singapore Cooperation Programme. Enhancing Judicial Education And Training Opportunities (pages 6-7) details some of its initiatives.

As we invite you to enjoy the contents of this newly-revamped issue of *Experience Singapore*, we ask you to share in our hopes that ASEAN continues to demonstrate the benefits of having a shared vision among Member States. May it serve as living proof that working together – instead of against one another – is the way forward for all nations.

*Teo Lay Cheng*

Director  
Strategic Communications Directorate  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs Singapore

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### 03 **focus**

#### **An association for the ages**

How the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) remains a relevant and reliable partner – both to its members and the world.

### 06 **reflections**

#### **Enhancing judicial education and training opportunities**

MFA's Singapore Cooperation Programme and the Singapore Judicial College.

### 08 **in singapore**

#### **Stronger, together**

Close cooperation helps ASEAN Member States (AMS) meet pressing challenges effectively and efficiently.

### 10 **joining hands**

#### **On the horizon**

As ASEAN enters its 51<sup>st</sup> year, *Experience Singapore* explores shared opportunities that the regional bloc can tap on together.



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SINGAPORE

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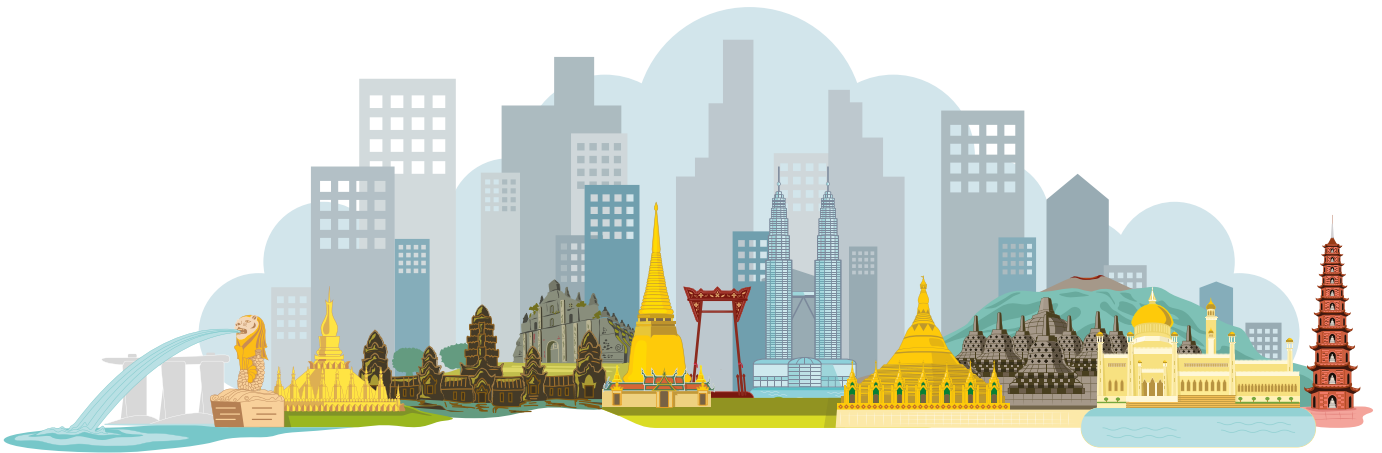
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# an association for the ages

How the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) remains a relevant and reliable partner – both to its members and the world.



The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has come a long way since it was formed in 1967. The regional group was set up by five nations – Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand – to promote cooperation, peace and stability in the region. It has since grown from strength to strength: ASEAN now makes up 6.2 per cent of the world's gross domestic product (GDP), nearly twice as much as in 1967. The group is also the world's sixth-largest economy, with a combined GDP of US\$2.55 trillion in 2016.

Last year, ASEAN marked its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a celebration in Manila. In his keynote address, Philippine President Mr Rodrigo Duterte, speaking in his capacity as ASEAN Chair, traced the history of the organisation. He noted that while there had been pessimism about its initial prospects, ASEAN "proved that what we share is more valuable than our differences", and that together "we (ASEAN) prevailed".

## ASEAN: THE NEXT 50

This year, that mantle has been passed to Singapore. As ASEAN Chair for 2018, the Republic has adopted the themes of "Resilience" and "Innovation". Its priorities for the year include the promotion of e-commerce. Singapore will also work to improve trade facilitation, so that companies can expand

internationally. "We want to focus on strengthening ASEAN's resilience and expanding our innovative capacity," said Singapore's Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan. He added that such an approach will help Member States mitigate pressing challenges and make the most of future opportunities.

Singapore's efforts will support cooperation across ASEAN's three community pillars to implement the 'ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together' which is a regional blueprint that seeks to bring about closer economic, geopolitical and socio-cultural integration among all ASEAN Member States (AMS). The blueprint was adopted following a public consultation exercise in some countries, including Singapore.

## FAST FACT

The AEC is not intended to be:

- A customs union: There are no common tariffs
- An economic or monetary union: There is no single economic policy or currency; Member States set and decide these for themselves



## ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

Perhaps the most keenly-watched of the three pillars is the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). By transforming the region into a single market, the AEC hopes to remove barriers to trade and facilitate the flow of investment, capital and skilled labour. Such initiatives are estimated to grow the region's aggregate output by seven per cent by 2025, thereby boosting its competitiveness and connectivity.

Individual states, too, will see benefits, say economists and researchers. In a commentary published in Singaporean newspaper *TODAY* last year, Dr Tham Siew Yean, Senior Fellow at ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute, referred to the AEC as a "solid pathway to prosperity" for Member States. The AEC's efforts to build a single market and manufacturer will allow local businesses to expand overseas, providing them with larger customer bases. Such regional growth is projected to create some 14 million jobs and ramp up the demand and supply of office space in Member States.

Regional governments have taken upon themselves to educate businesses of the opportunities offered by the AEC. For instance, Vietnam's Ministry of Foreign Affairs partnered the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN (ERIA) last July to share the opportunities of AEC with Vietnamese businesses. "ERIA is very happy to work with the Vietnamese government and businesses to support these efforts," said Professor Hidetoshi Nishimura, the institute's president.

## A COMMUNITY THAT CARES

Meanwhile the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) aims to continually lift the quality of life of the region's people. To do this, it adopts a holistic approach to its programmes, choosing to focus on issues such as healthcare, the environment and gender equality. Such an approach will ensure that benefits, too, are holistic and meaningful.

Environmental cooperation is especially important in the region, given the vulnerability of

**"There has been no outright conflict, war or battle between ASEAN Member States. And in this day and age, this is an achievement worth celebrating."**

**Dr Vivian Balakrishnan**  
Singapore's Minister for Foreign Affairs

## CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

ASEAN currently comprises:

BRUNEI • CAMBODIA • INDONESIA • LAO PDR • MALAYSIA • MYANMAR • PHILIPPINES • SINGAPORE • THAILAND • VIET NAM



Despite their geographical proximity, these countries are extremely diverse, with each having its own unique cuisine, customs and even fashion. While ASEAN promotes a common vision for AMS, the bloc is also keen to celebrate the diversity of each nation.

Singaporeans had an opportunity to taste this diversity at the recent Experience ASEAN festival, held in the Republic from 12 to 14 January this year. Embassies and High Commissions of the AMS set up stalls to let

visitors try their local fare. While celebrating the diversity of Southeast Asia's cuisines, the festival also offered a charming reminder of its similarities through a limited-edition plush toy. Named Paddie (after padi, a rice grain), it was specially created for the festival to highlight the staple of the region.

Besides food, the festival also featured performances from local and regional acts, among them Philippine and Vietnamese bands, as well as an Indonesian cultural troupe.

## ASEAN AT A GLANCE

1999

The year that Cambodia joined ASEAN, bringing the regional bloc to its current membership of 10

38

ASEAN natural heritage parks

18.5%

Women hold 18.5% of legislative seats in the region

24

UNESCO Cultural World Heritage Sites



The First ASEAN Heads of Government Meeting was held in Bali, Indonesia

## BEYOND SOUTHEAST ASIA

A policy of inclusivity has doubled membership of the group from its initial five nations to ten. ASEAN has maintained longstanding relations with ten Dialogue Partners. Such partnerships have "anchored ASEAN's relevance on the global stage", noted Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Singapore's Ministry of Trade & Industry Ms Low Yen Ling. "Our businesses have also reaped benefits from ASEAN's strong connections within and outside the region."

Plans are also afoot for a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) among the ten AMS and six partners: China, Japan, India, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand. If ratified, the FTA will form the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership.



1-3 The Southeast Asian Global Undergraduate Leaders Programme is a project funded by the Singapore-ASEAN Youth Fund (SAYF) which was launched by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong in 2007. SAYF supports ASEAN youth projects that promote a greater understanding of ASEAN Member States, via workshops, networking opportunities and community service projects.



**Indonesia holds the record for the most number of wins at the ASEAN University Games. The Republic has won nine titles since the first Games in 1981.**



## ENGAGING YOUTH



While some of its members like Singapore are facing a rapidly-ageing population, for the most part, ASEAN is home to a young population. 60 per cent of ASEAN's population is below the age of 35 – in comparison, that figure is 39 per cent in East Asia and 34 per cent in Europe.

To show the value of regional cooperation to this up-and-coming

generation, ASEAN has rolled out a number of youth-centric programmes that cater to different interests. Member States contribute to these efforts in different ways. Singapore's National Youth Council disburses the Singapore-ASEAN Youth Fund, which supports ASEAN youth projects that promote youth interaction

and greater understanding of one another's countries.

For many of the region's tertiary students, the biennial ASEAN University Games are a highlight. Last held in Singapore in 2016, the Games see athletes competing in at least eight sports. They are also open to neighbouring Timor-Leste, which has won 21 medals since 2004.

many AMS to the detrimental effects of climate change. The Indonesian capital, Jakarta, is widely seen to be one of the world's most vulnerable cities to climate-related disasters like flooding and rising sea levels. (Read more about ASEAN's efforts to combat climate change on page 8)

### KEEPING ASEAN SECURE

A key factor to ASEAN's success has been the region's peace and stability. "We must give credit to ASEAN for simply preventing war among the original members," said Dr Balakrishnan. "There has been no outright conflict, war or battle between ASEAN Member States. And in this day and age, this is an achievement worth celebrating."

Peace and stability in the region is bolstered by a number of agreements, among them:

- The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in

Southeast Asia, a key code of conduct governing inter-state relations in the region

- The Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and the on-going discussions on a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea which promotes peaceful settlement of disputes and practical maritime cooperation in the South China Sea.

Such agreements form the bedrock of the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), which aims to preserve regional peace and stability and tackle emerging security challenges, be it terrorism or drug trafficking. "We must be mindful that security and stability are pre-conditions and mutually reinforcing steps towards greater prosperity and progress," noted Singapore's Defence Minister Dr Ng Eng Hen at last year's International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Shangri-La Dialogue, a key defence summit.



# enhancing judicial education and training opportunities

MFA's Singapore Cooperation Programme  
and the Singapore Judicial College.

Established under the auspices of the Supreme Court of Singapore, the Singapore Judicial College (SJC) is dedicated to the training and development of judges and judicial officers. While its local wing caters to the needs of the Singapore judiciary, the SJC also offers training and lends technical assistance to foreign judiciaries through its international wing.

The SJC's programmes focus on several core areas, namely bench skills, court leadership, judicial ethics, judicial resilience, legal development, social awareness as well as technology and sciences. The SJC has been privileged to have numerous ASEAN judges participate in these programmes, notably the annual Judiciary-Wide Induction programme. This flagship programme affords ASEAN judges the opportunity to interact with the newest appointees on the local bench, and to receive instruction on judge-craft and bench skills from senior members of the Singapore judiciary.



**The SCP programme enables more ASEAN judges to participate in SJC's flagship programmes on case management, court technology and court governance.**

management, affordable and accessible court services, as well as public trust and confidence. The SJC also conducted its "Parliamentary Law, Rules and Practices" programmes in Laos and Myanmar. The SJC will offer three new programmes on case management, court technology and dispute resolution mechanisms at the four IAI training centres.

The SJC also supports the judicial education and training efforts of the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices (CACJ). In this regard, the SJC was responsible for organising the second CACJ judicial training for ASEAN Judges in 2016 with a focus on alternative dispute resolution. 2018 will see the SJC conduct more of such training sessions. In line with the focus areas that the CACJ had identified for its judicial education and training programmes, the SJC will conduct a special series of four training workshops in Singapore tailored for ASEAN Judges on intellectual property rights enforcement, environment law, cross-border insolvency laws and the harmonisation of ASEAN commercial laws.

Through the SCP, the SJC looks forward to further collaborations with the MFA to advance the ASEAN initiative by broadening the horizons for judicial education and training opportunities in the ASEAN region.

1 Participants attending an SJC Programme at an IAI Training Centre organised under the auspices of the MFA-IAI Programme.

2 Participants attending an SJC Programme organised under the auspices of the MFA-SCP.

The SJC's collaboration with MFA's Singapore Cooperation Programme (SCP) makes for greater judicial education and training opportunities in the ASEAN region. The SCP programme enables more ASEAN judges to participate in SJC's flagship programmes on case management, court technology and court governance. This year, the SJC will offer a new training programme on the protection of women's rights in Singapore under the auspices of the SCP programme.

The SJC is also deeply committed to the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) and has actively conducted its basic and advanced programmes on the International Framework for Court Excellence in the IAI centres in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam. Through these programmes, the judiciaries are trained to assess their courts through the use of the framework in seven identified areas, including court leadership and



1



2

in singapore

# stronger, together

Close cooperation helps ASEAN Member States (AMS) meet pressing challenges effectively and efficiently.



## A COMMON MENACE

Formed in 1971, Singapore's Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) is tasked with eradicating drugs from the Republic. The agency has adopted a harm prevention approach, which comprises preventive education, tough laws and robust enforcement, and a structured and evidence-based rehabilitation framework that has helped it carry out its role successfully.

Today, Singapore remains relatively drug-free, without any large-scale trafficking or production syndicates. "Our integrated and holistic drug control approach has allowed us to keep the drug situation in Singapore under control," shares CNB's Deputy Director Mr Sebastian Tan. "There is no area in the country where drug activities take place openly and our people enjoy a high level of safety and security."

However, that situation is very different outside Singapore's borders. Drug production in the zone is growing, says Mr Tan, 43. Southeast Asia is home to the 'Golden Triangle', a transboundary zone notorious for producing illicit drugs. There has also been a seven-fold increase detection of clandestine narcotics-manufacturing facilities in the region.

Such trends are worrying to not only AMS within the Golden Triangle but also to countries beyond ASEAN, given the extensive movement of goods and people in this region. "Illicit drug seizures throughout the region have increased and so has the population of abusers," explains Mr Tan. "The proximity of the Golden Triangle to Singapore, coupled with our position as a transport hub, renders us vulnerable to regional drug developments."

He adds that active cooperation among regional agencies is necessary to combat Southeast Asia's drug situation. Last year, CNB conducted 12 joint operations with partner anti-narcotics agencies in ASEAN, among them the Narcotics Crime Investigation Department of the Royal Malaysian Police. Such joint operations are complemented by platforms such as the Airport and Seaport Interdiction Task Forces which allow enforcement officers on the ground to share information and coordinate efforts to tackle drug trafficking.

## TACKLING NEW THREATS

New psychoactive substances (NPS) – which contain chemicals that produce similar effects to illegal drugs – are an emerging challenge for narcotics agencies in the region. To share best practices, CNB conducted a joint training on NPS for ASEAN and Pacific Island countries in September 2017. "The course provided an insight to various aspects of NPS and highlighted that we need a combined effort from countries to effectively counter it," says Mr Tan.



**"A similar stance across ASEAN ensures that we treat the drug menace as a common and shared responsibility. It facilitates cooperation on multiple fronts – legal, enforcement and demand-supply related issues."**

**Mr Sebastian Tan**  
Deputy Director, Central Narcotics Bureau





Beyond enforcement, AMS also tackle the drug menace at a policy level. "The ASEAN workplan (2016-2025) adopted at the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drugs in 2016 is an important agreement for us, as it unites the region with a common vision of being drug-free," says Mr Tan. As part of this vision, AMS will continue to buck global trends by rejecting the legalisation of cannabis.

This common vision and strong cooperation among AMS is essential to the region's collective fight against drugs, says Mr Tan. "Drug trafficking syndicates respect no national boundaries and there are growing pressures for more liberal approaches towards drug control," he explains. "Therefore, the region must come together and work closely to realise the vision of a drug-free ASEAN."

#### A REGIONAL RESPONSE

The negative effects of climate change are already being felt throughout the world, with last year's string of natural disasters highlighting the economic, social and environmental cost of changing weather conditions. Disasters like Hurricane Harvey and the floods in Pakistan demand that the world comes together to respond to this transnational issue.

For its part, ASEAN is working closely together to address climate change and mitigate its effects, says Assistant Director (International Policy) at Singapore's National Climate Change Secretariat

#### A YEAR OF ACTION

Singapore has designated 2018 as the Year of Climate Action. As part of this initiative, the Republic has implemented policies that help consumers pick up energy efficient habits and save on their utility bills, encourage the use of public transport and go car-lite. "All these efforts, particularly at the grassroots level, help to bring about greater ownership of climate action and caring for our environment," says Mr Rahman.



#### FAST FACT

Among other things, the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation seeks to:



Reduce energy intensity in Southeast Asia by 20% from 2005 levels by 2020



Increase the amount of renewable energy in the region's energy mix to 23% by 2025

**"Everyone can play a part to address climate change, and we will work with our ASEAN and international partners to drive further action."**

**Mr Anshari Rahman**  
Assistant Director (International Policy), Singapore's National Climate Change Secretariat

Mr Anshari Rahman. It does this through joint plans like the ASEAN Action Plan on Joint Response to Climate Change and the ASEAN Post-2015 Strategic Plan on Environment, explains Mr Rahman, 34.

#### As ASEAN Chair for 2018, how will Singapore shape ASEAN's approach to climate change this year?

We plan to hold ministerial discussions and coordinate various working groups that we chair on the ASEAN Regional Energy Policy and Planning Sub-Sector Network and the ASEAN Working Group on Climate Change (AWGCC). Through these platforms, we will continue to work with fellow AMS and international partners to share experiences on how we can tackle climate change more effectively and promote green growth.

#### Why are such meetings and discussions important?

They are an opportunity to learn from one another's experiences and share best practices. In this vein, Singapore is promoting the adoption of economic tools like carbon pricing to tackle climate change. We are working on an initiative under the AWGCC to enhance understanding on such schemes as well as the various approaches available.

Such meetings also help ASEAN communicate its climate change priorities and efforts to the larger international community and signal the bloc's support for the universal and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement. I am heartened that all 10 AMS have ratified the Agreement.

#### What are some problems that climate change poses to Southeast Asia, besides the well-documented rising sea levels?

Other impacts include more frequent and intense rainfall. Among the indirect impacts are adverse effects on food security and labour productivity, as well as changing migration patterns from climate-induced displacement. Climate change could even lead to higher insurance premiums for natural disaster coverage.

#### What is the most daunting hurdle that is preventing action on climate change in Southeast Asia — and how can this be overcome?

There are many barriers to climate action: developmental priorities, lack of coordinated government action, data uncertainties, and gaps in capacity and know-how. These are not limited to this region. We can help other countries overcome such challenges by sharing experiences and best practices, as discussed earlier. This benefits all parties as we need everyone's effort if we're going to meet the Paris Agreement's temperature goals of keeping within 1.5 to 2 °C above pre-industrial levels.

# on the horizon

As ASEAN enters its 51<sup>st</sup> year, *Experience Singapore* explores shared opportunities that the regional bloc can tap on together.

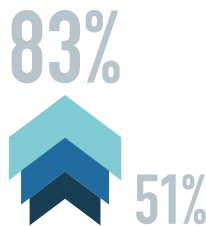


Today's world offers new avenues for growth and prosperity – vastly different ones from those available in 1967, when ASEAN was formed. Back then, the majority of its members were newly-independent nations with fledgling economies. Today, the group is set to become the world's fourth-largest economy by 2050, according to McKinsey, a global consulting firm.

Key to getting there is ASEAN's firm commitment to helping Member States take advantage of opportunities for economic growth. From agreements that support the liberalisation of air services to partnerships that further the use of renewable energy, ASEAN continually works to find economic bright spots for all ten countries.

## FAST FACT

In 2017, Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba increased its share in Southeast Asian online retailer Lazada to 83%, up from 51%.



This commitment to common growth stems from a belief among all AMS that the success of one nation has a positive impact on all. "ASEAN's future is in its togetherness," noted Malaysia's Minister of Youth and Sports Mr Khairy Jamaluddin in an editorial last year. "We can either leverage on our collective strengths to soar together towards greater heights or go separately to face a more dangerous and challenging world."

## CONNECTED CONSUMERS

One sector that ASEAN has its pulse on is the booming e-commerce market, which refers to commercial transactions made over the Internet. According to tech outlet Tech In Asia, Internet and mobile activity is buzzing in Southeast Asia. The Competition Commission of Singapore estimates that the region is home to some 480 million Internet users and more than 700 million mobile subscriptions. This environment is ideal for e-commerce to thrive.

While e-commerce thrives in some parts of the region, it is not happening uniformly. According to the World Trade Organization, Singapore saw five per cent of its retail sales made online in 2015. In Vietnam, this figure was less than one per cent. But in true ASEAN fashion, the regional body has come together to devise a plan to digitise its economy to support more transactions online. The ASEAN Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Masterplan 2020 was launched in 2015 to propel the group's economy to become





2



1 It is estimated that there will be 4.5 million cruise passengers vacationing annually in Southeast Asian waters by 2035.

2 AMS have pledged their commitment to improving ports in order to support larger vessels.

3 The picturesque Maratua Island Beach located within Indonesia's Derawan Archipelago.



3

## “We have the archipelagos in ASEAN to rival the Aegean, the Caribbean or the South Pacific.”

**Mr Lee Hsien Loong**  
Prime Minister of Singapore

a digitally-enabled one. Besides targeting consumer sales, ASEAN has also laid out plans to support transactions and payments made by small-to-medium enterprises in the region.

As ASEAN Chair this year, Singapore is also working to develop e-commerce trade rules, while also lowering barriers to entry for firms. “This would allow the seamless movement of e-commerce goods across the region,” explained Senior Parliamentary Secretary of Singapore’s Ministry of Trade & Industry Ms Low Yen Ling at a summit last year.

Efforts to promote e-commerce in the region support the growth of many firms and enable them to expand their presence. Take for example, ShopBack, a service provider that gives consumers cash rebates when they shop online. Since its launch in 2014, the Singapore firm has gained a digital foothold in the region and forged partnerships with e-commerce merchants in four other AMS. Thanks to this increased regional presence, consumers in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines can now use the service. If e-commerce takes off in more AMS, ShopBack could expand its customer base by millions.

Another thrust of the masterplan is its focus on digital inclusivity beyond urban populations. Under the plan, broadband services across ASEAN will be made more affordable to support communities that are isolated or underserved.

### SAILING THE HIGH SEAS

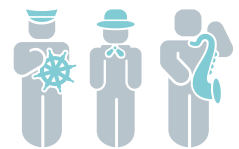
Scattered around Southeast Asia are some 25,000 islands, both inhabited and uninhabited. A number of

these are home to world-famous attractions, from the powder-soft beaches of Thailand’s Ko Phi Phi to the famed Komodo dragons that roam the eponymous Indonesian isle. Combine these attractions with the region’s year-round warm weather and you have a top-notch cruise destination. As Singapore’s Prime Minister Mr Lee Hsien Loong put it candidly once, “We have the archipelagos in ASEAN to rival the Aegean, the Caribbean or the South Pacific.”

ASEAN’s ambition of becoming a tourist haven was boosted following the endorsement of the ASEAN Declaration on Cruise Tourism in January this year. Under the declaration, AMS made a commitment to accelerate cruise tourism development, which will see ports being improved to support larger vessels. This will open up new destinations and routes within the region.

The growth in cruise tourism will spur further advancements for local industries and stakeholders across the region. These developments are expected to lead to some 4.5 million passengers vacationing on the seas around Southeast Asia by 2035 – that’s nearly 10 times the figure of 2016.

Highlighting the need for regional partnerships, Chief Executive of the Singapore Tourism Board Mr Lionel Yeo said, “Cruise development needs to be a concerted regional effort and Singapore will continue to actively engage with our ASEAN counterparts to encourage regional cruise development, and jointly promote Southeast Asia as a cruising playground for the world.”



# 34,000

The number of jobs created by Southeast Asia’s cruise industry in 2014.

A NEWSLETTER OF THE  
SINGAPORE COOPERATION PROGRAMME



**FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH**

With a combined GDP of US\$2.5 trillion in 2017,  
the ASEAN region – home to  
more than 628 million people – is set to become  
the world's 4<sup>th</sup>-largest economy by 2050.

