

Singapore



An update
from the Singapore Embassy

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GENERAL ELECTION SPECIAL ISSUE

Singapore Votes *An Election of Many Firsts*



About 94% of registered voters cast their vote on May 6.

In his first election since becoming Prime Minister in August 2004, PM Lee Hsien Loong's People's Action Party (PAP) was returned to government with a "strong mandate" of 66.6 percent of the valid votes. The tally surpassed PM Lee's own expectations of a win between 60 and 65 percent. A total of 1,149,668 Singaporeans or 94% of registered electors in the contested electoral divisions cast their votes on May 6 in Singapore.

Comparing the results to the pre-September 11 election that took place in 1997, PM Lee said at a post-election press conference held at 2am on May 7: "We did better and won 66.6 percent of the votes. That is a very good result." He added: "Given the many changes in society and the world during these 10 years, I think it is very good that we have been able to maintain such a high level of support among Singaporeans."

The last election was held in 2001, shortly after the September 11 terrorist attacks when the PAP won with a majority of 75 percent of the valid votes. The country galvanised behind the Government.

This election was also an

election of many firsts. It was PM Lee's first election as Prime Minister and the first election where Singaporeans in eight cities overseas were allowed to vote at overseas polling centres,

including Washington and San Francisco. For the first time in 18 years, Singapore's long-governing PAP was not returned to power on Nomination Day on

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Photos: Singapore Press Holdings

In his first election as Prime Minister, PM Lee Hsien Loong's Peoples' Action Party was returned to government with 66.6% of the votes.

Singapore Votes

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April 27, as 47 of the 84 seats in Parliament, more than half, were contested (*see side bar on Singapore's Electoral System*). Among the seven GRCs returned unopposed were PAP teams led by Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew, Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong and Deputy Prime Minister Wong Kan Seng.

This time round, the PAP won 82 of the 84 seats in Parliament, with the remaining two seats going to veteran opposition members Mr. Chiam See Tong of the Singapore Democratic Alliance (SDA) and Mr. Low Thia Kiang of the Workers' Party (WP). The opposition members have defended their seats six and four times respectively.

Referring to the winning opposition candidates, PM Lee said that the verdict showed the two men were "credible people" with "standing on the ground". He also noted that the strength of support for the three opposition parties, namely WP, SDA and the Singapore Democratic Party, showed that the dominant factor was the credibility of each.

"This shows that voters want opposition parties who are credible, who are of higher quality, and it augurs well for the future. I hope it will encourage opposition parties to upgrade themselves and the quality of party politics here," said PM Lee.

PM: Whichever part you voted for, let's close ranks as Singaporeans

With the Elections behind him, PM Lee urged Singaporeans to "come together again as one people". He said at his post-election press conference: "Our unity and cohesion has been one of Singapore's key strengths and we must continue to make it so. But I want also to continue to encourage honest, open, serious debate on issues because neither the PAP nor the Government, nor, may I say, the opposition, has all the solutions and answers to all the questions and problems... Whichever party you voted for, let us close ranks, stay together and move ahead. The election results are a big step forward towards keeping Singapore a shining red dot for many years to come."

Singapore's Electoral System

Singapore's Parliament is based on the Westminster model. Under this model, the Prime Minister is the head of government, unlike the U.S. system where the President is the head of the Administration. The electoral system in Singapore is a mixture of Single Member District/Plurality Vote (SMDPV) and Group Representation Constituencies (GRCs) where slates of five to six candidates are fielded. The winner is decided on the basis of "first past the post". The GRCs must include at least one ethnic minority candidate to ensure minority representation in Parliament.

According to the Electoral Boundaries Review Committee, there should be about 26,000 electors to each MP, give or take about 30 percent. In other words, a single-seat constituency should have between 18,000 and 34,000 electors; a five-member GRC should have between 90,000 and 170,000 electors; and a six-member GRC between 108,000 and 204,000.

Since the General Election in 2001, the number of electors has gone up by 120,917 to a total of 2,157,840.

Singapore's Parliament is unicameral. It has 84 elected seats as well as seats for Nominated MPs (NMPs) to provide for a wider representation of independent and non-partisan views in the House. Any Singapore citizen above 21 years old, who can secure a proposer and a seconder with no less than four other signatories, can apply to be an NMP. The NMPs are appointed by the President on the selection and recommendation of a Special Select Committee of Parliament. They serve a two-and-a-half year term. In addition, in order to ensure that Parliament will be represented by some opposition views, there is a provision for the appointment of up to three Non-Constituency MPs (NCMPs). The best losers from the opposition parties with the highest number of votes are offered these NCMP seats. The number of NCMPs is reduced by one for each opposition party candidate returned to Parliament. Ms. Sylvia Lim of the Workers' Party has accepted the NCMP position.

There are 24 registered political parties in Singapore. Most are inactive. Three contested in this election.



Photo: Singapore Press Holdings

PM Lee urged Singaporeans to "come together again as one people" and move ahead.

New Policy Makers

On May 22, 2006, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong announced several changes to the Singapore Cabinet that strengthened core areas like education, foreign affairs and youth engagement, while simultaneously creating opportunities for younger Members of Parliament to gain experience in political office. Five of the new Members of Parliament-elect were appointed to political office: Rear Admiral (NS) Lui Tuck Yew, Mr. Masagos Zulkifli, Ms. Grace Fu, Mr. Lee Yi Shyan and Mr. Teo Ser Luck.

The other changes in the Cabinet include Mr. Raymond Lim taking over as Transport Minister from Mr. Yeo Cheow Tong who will retire from Cabinet. Mr. Tharman Shanmugaratnam, who is currently Education Minister, will also assume Mr. Lim's post as Second Finance Minister. Minister for



Some of the new Members of Parliament. From left: Mr. Baey Yam Keng, Ms. Grace Fu and Dr. Lam Pin Min

"It will be a very interesting new Parliament because we've brought in new people, each with views and perspectives and who are not at all hesitant at speaking up and pressing their point." — PM LEE

Community Development, Youth and Sports, Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, will also take on the post of Second Minister of Information, Communications and the Arts.

Profiled here are the new Ministers of State who were recently appointed as part of the Cabinet changes. Ministers of State are ranked below a Minister and above a Parliamentary Secretary, and are generally appointed to assist the Minister in his work.

From left: Mr. Masagos Zulkifli, Ms. Lee Bee Wah and Mr. Lee Yu Shyan

Lui Tuck Yew, formerly an officer in the Republic of Singapore Navy and subsequently Chief Executive Officer of the Maritime Port Authority and the Housing and Development Board, was recently appointed Minister of State for Education. He holds a Bachelor's degree in National Sciences from the University of Cambridge and a Master's in International Relations from the Fletcher School, Tufts University. His Naval career included appointments in the Plans, Intelligence and Operations Departments and commanding a Missile Gun Boat (MGB), the MGB squadron and the Fleet, before becoming Chief of Navy. He volunteers with a group that provides pet-assisted therapy to residents at a home for people with special needs, as well as Singapore's Institute of Mental Health.

Newly appointed Minister of State for National Development **Grace Fu** is currently the Chief Executive Officer, South East Asia & Japan of PSA International Ltd (PSA). She is responsible for the PSA businesses in Singapore, Thailand, Brunei and Japan. Prior to 17 Nov 2004, she was Chief Executive Officer, Singapore Terminals of PSA. She graduated with a Bachelor of Accountancy (Honours) degree in 1985 at the National University of Singapore where she later obtained a Masters degree in Business Administration. She is also a Fellow of the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants, UK and a Non-Practising Member of the Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Singapore.

Lee Yi Shyan, recently appointed Minister of State for Trade and Industry, received his undergraduate training in Chemical Engineering at the National University of Singapore. He has also attended Harvard's Management Development Program and

Tsinghua University's Executive Program. He has held a range of posts within the Singapore civil service, being a Systems Engineer at the Ministry of Defence, an overseas representative of the Economic Development Board, Deputy Chief Executive of the Productivity and Standards Board and, most recently, Chief Executive of International Enterprise Singapore, the government's trade promotion arm.

Former Deputy Speaker **S. Iwaran** has been appointed Minister of State for Trade and Industry, a ministry where he previously served as Deputy Secretary. Prior to that he held senior positions in a range of public organisations, including the Ministries of Home Affairs and Education, the National Trade Unions Congress and the Singapore Indian Development Association, as a member of Singapore's elite Administrative Service. He is currently the Managing Director of Temasek Holdings Pte. Ltd. He obtained his Bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of Adelaide and, later, a Masters in Public Administration from Harvard.

Koo Tsai Kee has been appointed Minister of State for Defence. A former Colombo Plan scholar, he studied Surveying at the University of New South Wales and later earned separate Masters of Science and Philosophy degrees at University College London. He began his career as an Assistant Surveyor at the Hunter District Water Board, Newcastle, Australia, before taking up various posts at the Nanyang Technological University and the National Trade Unions Congress. He was previously Senior Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministries of Defence and the Environment & Water Resources.

PM Lee's New Cabinet

The new Cabinet was sworn-in by President SR Nathan at a ceremony on May 30, 2006 at the Istana.

Mr. Lee Hsien Loong / Prime Minister and Minister for Finance

Mr. Goh Chok Tong / Senior Minister, Prime Minister's Office

Mr. Lee Kuan Yew / Minister Mentor, Prime Minister's Office

Prof. S. Jayakumar / Deputy Prime Minister and Coordinating Minister for National Security and Minister for Law

Mr. Wong Kan Seng / Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs

Mr. George Yeo / Minister for Foreign Affairs

Dr. Lee Boon Yang / Minister for Information, Communications and the Arts

Mr. Mah Bow Tan / Minister for National Development

Mr. Lim Boon Heng / Minister, Prime Minister's Office

Mr. Lim Hng Kiang / Minister for Trade and Industry

Mr. Teo Chee Hean / Minister for Defence

Mr. Lim Swee Say / Minister, Prime Minister's Office

Assoc. Prof. Yaacob Ibrahim / Minister for the Environment and Water Resources

Mr. Khaw Boon Wan / Minister for Health

Mr. Tharman Shanmugaratnam / Minister for Education and Second Minister for Finance

Dr. Ng Eng Hen / Minister for Manpower and Second Minister for Defence

Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan / Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports and Second Minister for Information, Communication and the Arts

Mr. Raymond Lim / Minister for Transport and Second Minister for Foreign Affairs

The following Members of Parliament were also appointed as senior officials on May 30 (unless otherwise stated):

Senior Ministers of State

Assoc. Prof. Ho Peng Kee / Ministry of Law and Ministry of Home Affairs

Dr. Balai Sadasivan / Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts

Mr. Zainul Abidin Rasheed / Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministers of State

Mrs. Yu-Foo Yee Shoon / Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports

Mr. Heng Chee How / Ministry of Health

Mrs. Lim Hwee Hua / Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Transport

Mr. Gan Kim Yong / Ministry of Education and Ministry of Manpower

Mr. S. Iswaran / Ministry of Trade and Industry
(with effect from July 1)

Assoc. Prof. Koo Tsai Kee / Ministry of Defence

Ms. Grace Fu / Ministry of National Development
(with effect from August 1)

Mr. Lee Yi Shyan / Ministry of Trade and Industry

RAdm (NS) Lui Tuck Yew / Ministry of Education

Senior Parliamentary Secretaries

Mr. Hawazi Daipi / Ministry of Manpower

Dr. Amy Khor / Ministry of Environment and Water Resources

Mr. Masagos Zulkifli / Ministry of Education

Parliamentary Secretaries

Dr. Mohammad Maliki bin Osman / Ministry of National Development

Mr. Teo Ser Luck / Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports

Opposition Veterans Returned to Power

Credible men with standing on the ground. That is how Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong described Singapore's two veteran opposition Members of Parliament (MPs) Mr. Chiam See Tong of the Singapore Democratic Alliance (SDA) and Mr. Low Thia Kiang of the Workers' Party (WP). Both men were returned to Parliament on May 6 when they garnered resounding victories in their respective constituencies.

The 71-year-old Mr. Chiam See Tong was elected for the sixth time to his constituency Potong Pasir with 55.8 percent of the votes. Mr. Chiam heads the SDA which is an alliance of four opposition parties. His own party is the Singapore Peoples' Party. Mr. Chiam has been representing his constituency since 1984.

"I'm happy for him in a personal way... It's a sweet victory for Chiam See Tong," said Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong.

Leader of WP Mr. Low Thia Kiang also won a resounding

victory in his constituency Hougang. The 49-year-old defended his seat for a fourth term and improved his vote margin by seven points, getting 62.7 percent of the votes. Looking at the results of the Election, he noted that the "greatest breakthrough" for his party was in putting up a young team and connecting with young Singaporeans. The WP slate of candidates emerged the most popular of the opposition camp with an average of 38.4 percent in the wards it contested, compared to the SDA's average of 32 percent and the Singapore Democratic Party's 23 percent.

"If the opposition did not have some credible new faces, there would be no real competi-

tion. And younger voters would have found it difficult to connect with the opposition. This would affect our future prospects," said Mr. Low. He added that everyone "should move toward a more mature democracy in which the rules of engagement are more civilised, rather than look at each other as enemies".

Adding another feather to the WP's cap, their chairperson Ms. Sylvia Lim was selected to take up the Non-Constituency MP seat in Parliament. (*See sidebar on Singapore's Electoral System*) The party was offered the seat after its team in the Aljunied Group Representation Constituency (GRC) led by Ms. Lim polled 43.9 percent of the

valid votes. Popular feedback showed that this law lecturer was the favoured candidate and that she was thought to be "suitable and capable".

"I think we are very gratified by our showing at the polls. The fact that support at the GRC level, and more than 58,000 people voted to have a WP voice at the GRC, made the decision easier," said Ms. Lim of her decision to accept the NCMP post.



Member of Parliament Mr. Low Thia Kiang of the Workers' Party



Member of Parliament Mr. Chiam See Tong of the Singapore Democratic Alliance

The Overseas Vote

For the first time in Singapore's history, Singaporeans overseas participated in the General Elections by casting their votes in eight overseas polling stations in five countries, including Washington DC and San Francisco.

When the registration of overseas voters closed early this year, the number of eligible electors stood at 1,017. Then after Nomination Day, 553 were eligible to vote as 47 seats in the 84-seat Parliament were contested. On polling day, 324 of the 553 registered voters who live in contested constituencies back in Singapore, cast their votes.

The overseas Singaporeans kept up to date with the latest election news from home through web sites and the Internet. During the nine-day election campaign, the number of blog articles on Singapore's elections grew nearly

10-fold compared to before Nomination Day. Singapore being one of the most plugged-in and Internet-savvy countries in the world, it was no surprise that the election was closely watched and discussed online. Observers noted that this was the first election in which the Internet had an impact on Singapore's political culture.

When the polls closed at the overseas polling centres, the ballot boxes were brought back to Singapore under tight security and were counted in front of the candidates or their election agents at the school. The results showed that eight in 10 Singaporeans voted for the People's Action Party. The Workers' Party received 34 votes (10.2 percent), while the Singapore Democratic Alliance got 26 votes (7.8 percent) and the Singapore Democratic Party three votes.

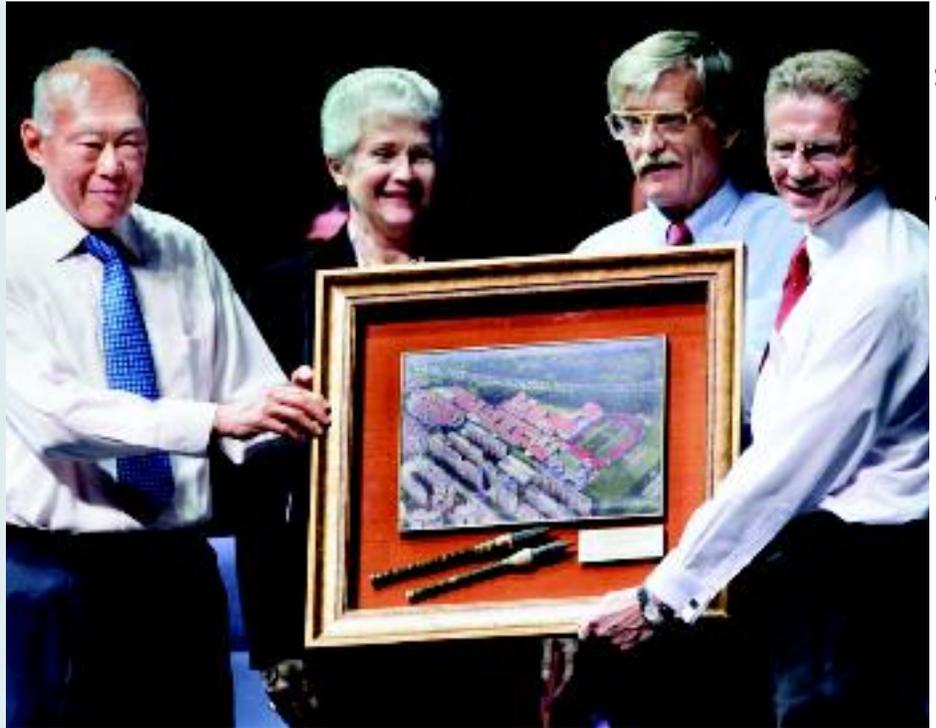
Singapore American School Celebrates 50 Years

The Singapore American School (SAS), one of the earliest international schools to be established in Singapore, has just celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Started in 1956 with 105 students and 10 teachers, the SAS now has more than 3,000 students and is the largest of the 35 international schools in Singapore.

Speaking at the anniversary celebrations, Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew congratulated the staff and students on the success of SAS, noting that education is a key consideration when expatriates decide whether to relocate for work.

Mr. Lee explained that the SAS was set up by a group of U.S. businessmen and their spouses, not the U.S. government, and encouraged Singaporeans to emulate America's self-help culture. "This cultural trait has made Americans great entrepreneurs who have the verve, vitality and vigour to keep adapting and changing their businesses and therefore their economy," he said.



Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew (left) was presented with a picture of the Singapore American School (SAS). Standing next to him are U.S. Ambassador Patricia Herbold, teacher Jim Baker and SAS superintendent Bob Gross.

Photo: Singapore Press Holdings



Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia (left) with Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong (right)

Saudi Arabia, Singapore Reaffirm Ties

Saudi Arabia and Singapore reaffirmed bilateral ties as well as the need for closer engagement between Asia and the Middle East, during a visit to Singapore by the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Prince Sultan Abdul Aziz Al-Saud.

The Crown Prince, who also is Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence and Aviation, held meetings with several Singapore leaders, including President S.R. Nathan, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew, Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Law Professor S. Jayakumar, and Minister for Defence Teo Chee Hean.

Saudi Arabia announced its support for a free trade

agreement between Singapore and the Gulf Cooperation Council, which is made up of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Bahrain and Qatar, and is the Middle East equivalent of ASEAN.

In addition, the two nations reiterated their support for the Asia-Middle East Dialogue "as a vehicle to promote mutual awareness and understanding between the two regions and expressed satisfaction with the progress of the Dialogue".

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong hosted an official dinner in honour of the Crown Prince.



Photo: Singapore Press Holdings

Steven Green: Singapore's Honorary Consul General in Miami

Representing Singapore in Miami FL is Singapore's Honorary Consul General (HCG) Steven Green. Former Ambassador Green's ties with Singapore are strong and deep. He served as the 12th U.S. Ambassador to Singapore from November 1997 to March 1, 2001.

"I am proud to fly the Singapore flag in the U.S., and I had the wonderful opportunity to spend four years in Singapore as the U.S. Ambassador there. My wife and I call it our second home and we made many close personal friends while in Singapore. In fact my daughter Andrea met her husband in the U.S. Embassy there and as a result I have two beautiful grandchildren. Singapore will always have a special place in our hearts and I am grateful to be able to pay Singapore back for the courtesies that have been shown to us," said Ambassador Green.

During his term, Ambassador Green spearheaded a number of strategic programmes that greatly enhanced U.S.-Singapore links in economic development, intellectual property, immigration and national security. Many of his accomplishments greatly expanded American business opportunities in Singapore and other ASEAN markets. Mr. Green also launched a pilot programme between the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Singapore's Productivity and Standards Board to create an

interactive marketing, sales and distribution channel linking millions of U.S. SMEs to prospective customers throughout the region. In 1999, he helped launch Singapore's Technopreneurship Fund providing over a billion dollars of Singapore venture capital to American technology companies.

Ambassador Green's enthusiasm in energising and expanding America's business interests in the region was reflected in his heavy involvement in the effort to commence bilateral negotiations for a free trade agreement between the U.S. and Singapore back in 2000.

While in Singapore, he also increased American corporate citizenship in Singapore by founding Friendship Works, a model program targeting U.S. business philanthropy and related volunteer action to specific areas of need in community building, education and health care.

Prior to becoming Ambassador, Mr. Green was and is now the Chairman and CEO of Greenstreet Partners, a private merchant bank. From 1988-1996, he served as Chairman and CEO of Samsonite Corporation. Samsonite was formerly the major operating subsidiary of Astrum International Corporation where he also served as Chairman and CEO from 1990-1995. In 1995, President Clinton appointed Ambassador Green



Photo: Steven Green

"My wife and I call Singapore our second home and Singapore will always have a special place in our hearts," said former U.S. Ambassador to the Singapore and current Singapore Honorary Consul General in Miami, Steven Green.

to the President's Export Council where he served on the Executive Committee and chaired the Strategic Communications Committee.

Ambassador Green is also active in national civic affairs through the Green Family Foundation, an organisation dedicated to supporting social programmes. He has served as a trustee and programme chair for the Children's Health Fund, the United States Olympic Committee's Champions in Life programme, the United Way and Florida International University.

Ambassador Green is married to Dorothea and has two daughters, Andrea and Kimberly. They are also proud grandparents of Steven Wesley and Olivia Tyler.

Singapore Treaty for Global Trademark IP Adopted

Member states of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) recently adopted a new international trademark treaty in Singapore that standardises and simplifies the procedures for registering trademarks.

Specifically, the new treaty — known as the Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trademarks — updates the 1994 Trademark Law Treaty and is an effort to bring it in line with the technological developments of the last decade.

Signatories included the U.S., the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Spain and France, as well as developing countries in Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America.

"Singapore is honoured to play its part in facilitating international consensus on a key area of intellectual property," said Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Law Professor S. Jayakumar. "I am also delighted at the role played by Ambassador Burhan Gafoor in chairing this important conference."

Ambassador Gafoor, Singapore's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva, who was unanimously elected President of the WIPO conference, said he was impressed by the level of commitment shown by member states of WIPO to ensure a successful conclusion to the negotiations.

U.S. and Singapore Hold Second Annual FTA Review

The U.S. and Singapore have agreed to launch talks to speed up tariff reductions under their two-year-old free-trade agreement. The announcement was made during the second annual review of the U.S.-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (USSFTA) in Washington, DC.

The two nations also exchanged ideas on how they could continue to work together on promoting trade and intra-regional integration in Southeast Asia. In addition to reviewing the significant benefits produced by the USSFTA so far, the officials discussed ongoing implementation and explored ways to continue building on the USSFTA to expand trade and investment between the two countries.

The two countries welcomed the increase in trade between them, which totalled nearly US\$37 billion in 2005, up 12.6 percent since the USSFTA came into force in 2004. The U.S. has seen significant increases in exports to Singapore of aerospace equipment, chemicals and construction equipment. The officials also applauded the significant growth in investment flows in both directions.

Singapore is a key trading partner of the U.S. and a strong partner on a range of economic issues, including efforts to conclude the WTO Doha Development Agenda negotiations. Singapore is currently the U.S.' 16th largest

goods trading partner with US\$35.8 billion in total goods traded during 2005. Trade in services with Singapore totalled US\$8.3 billion in 2004. U.S. foreign direct investment in Singapore expanded to US\$56.9 billion in 2004, a 13 percent increase from 2003.

The USSFTA was signed by President George W. Bush and former Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong on May 6, 2003, and entered into force on January 1, 2004, making it the first comprehensive bilateral free-trade agreement with an Asian nation.



The biometric passport was displayed at a presentation by the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority.

Singapore to Issue Biometric Passports Starting August

Singapore's first biometric passports, which will include biometric data and new security features, will be introduced in August.

The new passports, to be issued by Singapore's Immigration and Checkpoints Authority, will feature an embedded tiny computer chip that identifies the holder through unique physical characteristics — know as biometric features — such as facial features and fingerprints.

Although no country currently requires a biometric passport for entry, Singapore's introduction of the biometric passports before October 26 of this year keeps Singapore in the U.S.' visa-waiver programme, which requires the 27 nations in the programme to issue biometric passports by that date. The programme waives the need for citizens from participating countries to obtain visas to visit the U.S. for trips of 90 days or less.

In addition, Singapore's Ministry of Home Affairs announced that it is studying ways to enhance its ability to track lost and stolen passports, noting that such passports can be forged and used by terrorist and criminals to travel between countries.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has requested regional governments to do more to cripple the mobility of terrorist and criminals, including adopt new biometric passports.

Business Briefs

Abbott to Build Regional Plant in Singapore

Illinois-based healthcare company **Abbott** will build a US\$280 million baby milk powder plant in Singapore.

The plant, which is expected to be completed by December 2008, is Abbott's first major capital investment in Asia and its largest investment in a plant making milk powder and similar products.

"We needed to have a manufacturing presence in the Asian area, and after a very extensive review, we chose Singapore because we believe it has the right fit," said Mr. John Ginascio, divisional vice president, Abbott Nutrition International. "We believe it will be very successful for us."

Hewlett-Packard Opens IP Licensing Centre in Singapore

California-based **Hewlett-Packard (HP)** has announced the opening of an intellectual property (IP) licensing centre to serve the fast-growing Asia Pacific market.

Located in Singapore, the centre will provide companies, governments, research institutes and universities in the region with access to HP's technology and IP through licensing agreements.

The Asia Pacific IP Licensing Centre will initially focus on developing new technology licensing agreements in Singapore, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, India and China, with plans to expand to other countries in the region as business needs arise. Licenses are available for HP's know-how, patents, trademarks and copyrights in a broad range of technology areas, including consumer electronics, emerging

technologies, semiconductors, networking, software and storage.

PSA Again Voted World's Best Port Operator

Singapore's **PSA International** has once again won the Best Global Container Terminal Operating Company award from the Asian Freight and Supply Chain Awards, which is organised by Hong Kong-based trade journal *Cargo News*.

PSA Singapore Terminals also was voted Best Container Terminal Asia for the 17th time by customers and industry professionals.

PSA said the awards reinforce its position as one of the world's leading global port operators and PSA Singapore Terminals' standing as the world's largest container transshipment hub. It has a network of 200 shipping lines with connections to 600 ports in 123 countries. Last, year PSA handled 41.2 million standard containers worldwide, with its flagship Singapore terminal handling 22.3 million containers.

Singapore-based Firm Wins Boeing Deal

Singapore-based **Diethelm Keller Aviation (DKA)** has been awarded a contract worth more than US\$50 million to manufacture food and beverage trolleys and other food-service equipment for the new **Boeing 787** aircraft.

"We are proud that as a Singapore-based company, we have competed with and beaten other global competitors," said Mr. Chia Chee Seng, DKA's chief executive officer. DKA, which is part of the Swiss-based Diethelm Keller Group, has a manufacturing facility in Singapore's Changi North Crescent.

Singapore Technologies Engineering Buys BR Lee

Singapore Technologies Engineering is acquiring North Carolina-based road construction equipment maker **BR Lee Industries** for US\$129 million.

BR Lee is the number one maker of asphalt pavers and brooms in the U.S. and has an extensive distribution network. The company will become a wholly owned subsidiary of **Vision Technologies Land Systems**, a unit of ST Engineering.

BR Lee, with its LeeBoy (founded 1964) and Rosco (founded 1928) brands, is a leader in the road construction and maintenance equipment market. Its customers range from large road building contractors, small to medium specialty contractors and government agencies in the U.S.

VeriFone Makes Singapore Asia-Pacific Headquarters

California-based **VeriFone Holdings Inc.**, a leading global provider of secure electronic payment systems, has announced the official opening of its Asia-Pacific headquarters, **VeriFone Singapore Pte. Ltd**, which will be responsible for the company's global supply chain management and house a research and development centre.

The global supply chain center in Singapore employs the latest technologies to contribute to an increase in supply chain efficiencies and cost savings as well as in its speed and flexibility of response to regional customer demands and market opportunities. With the establishment of an Asia-Pacific headquarters, VeriFone is making a significant investment in the region with immediate plans for staffing of 69 people, including finance, supply chain, R&D and marketing.

A*STAR Signs Materials Study Deal with Corning

Singapore's Institute of Chemical and Engineering Sciences (ICES), part of the **Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR)**, will collaborate with New York-based **Corning Inc.** in areas related to material science and process engineering.

The collaboration will allow for the study of new ways in which Corning materials, such as high-tech ceramics, can be used in chemical processes and environmental technology. The arrangement also includes sponsorship by Corning of a post-doctoral candidate to work with the ICES' technical team.

Dr. Joseph Miller, Corning's executive vice president and chief technology officer, said that A*Star "has consistently proven its capability to conduct leading applied science research".

Merrill Lynch Plans Global Support Centre in Singapore

Merrill Lynch, the New York-based investment bank, will establish a global support centre in Singapore for its private banking and global markets businesses.

The announcement further boosts Singapore's role as a regional financial hub with a growing number of foreign banks investing in information technology and operations centres there.

"The office will be state-of-the-art and the third leg among our support centres — the other two being in Jacksonville, Florida and Camberly in the United Kingdom," said Mr. Raymond Yu, Merrill's Asia-Pacific chairman. "We picked Singapore because we've been here since 1973 and we wanted to re-affirm our commitment to this country."

Singapore Arts Festival Storms in June

The Singapore Arts Festival celebrates its 20th anniversary this June with a line-up of characteristically adventurous and original arts programmes. Organised by the National Arts Council, the Festival is Singapore's premier arts event and is an international festival with a distinctive Asian flavour.

The Festival has become prime arena to showcase established faces and budding gems from the dynamic local arts community. As a pioneer of innovative arts programming in Singapore, the Festival also paved the way for the multitude of new arts activities and platforms today, helping to establish Singapore as an artistic hub for arts lovers from Singapore, Asia and beyond. The Festival has also become an important global player, commissioning new creations, introducing emerging global talents and collaborating with renowned festivals and arts centres around the world.

Promising something for everyone, the Festival boasts an eclectic mix of mainstream and classical productions, contemporary and cutting-edge programmes. This year, it takes place from June 1 to 25 and

presents a multifarious selection of 24 main productions. Of these, there are six world premieres, six Asian premieres and three co-productions involving festivals and arts organisations in the U.S., Vietnam, Japan, France, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Brazil.

Opening the season on June 1 is the world premiere of *Quest*, the landmark collaboration between two leading Singapore arts companies — the Singapore Dance Theatre and Singapore Chinese Orchestra. Another key highlight is *Death and the Ploughman* as directed by charismatic American contemporary theatre master Anne Bogart and staged by the SITI Company from the U.S. Bogart and SITI Company will also conduct an intense four-day International Workshop on Suzuki and Viewpoints Acting



Photo by Al Zanjik (courtesy, Wesner Centre for the Arts)

Death and The Ploughman by SITI Company

Method for acting professionals from Singapore and Asia.

Other stunning Festival gems include *Play On Earth*, the breakthrough transcontinental collaboration by Station House Opera (UK), *Geisha* by TheatreWorks (Singapore), *Bella Figura* by Nederlands Dans Theater I (The Netherlands) and *Shanghai Beauty* by Jin Xing Dance Theatre (China).

Expanding in scale and reach, this year's Festival also features a comprehensive Outreach programme. With a delight-

ful smorgasbord of over 400 free performances, exhibitions and special events, the Festival looks set to enrapture audiences of all ages and cultures.

For more information on the Festival, visit www.singaporeartsfest.com

For ticketing matters, visit www.sistic.com.sg



Quest by Singapore Dance Theatre and Singapore Chinese Orchestra

Photo by Albert Lam

Expats Rate Singapore #1

Singapore is the favourite location in Asia for expatriates, according to two recently conducted surveys.

In one survey conducted by Mercer Human Resource Consulting, expatriates ranked Singapore ahead of Tokyo, Hong Kong, Shanghai and other Asian cities. Mercer said Singapore's strong positioning as the highest-ranked Asian city "is mainly due to its strong political and social environment, its repositioning as a knowledge-based economy, excellent health services and vibrant cultural scene".

Another survey conducted by ECA International, ranked Singapore first out of 257 locations worldwide for Asian expatriates to live because of its clean air, infrastructure and low crime rate.

ECA said that, for Asians, "Singapore scores very well on all factors".

Top photo: The Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Explosive (CBRE) Defence Group conducting a Reach-Back to the CBRE Data Center to seek specialist advice via satellite communications in Exercise Pacific Protector '06.

Bottom photo: SAF CBRE and the Australian Defence Force Incident Response Regiment working together to remove "live" radioactive material from the aircraft's cargo hold in the Exercise.

Singapore Participates in Proliferation Security Initiative Exercise

The Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) sent a 15-member team from the SAF Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Explosive Defence Group to participate in Exercise Pacific Protector '06, a Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) exercise hosted by Australia. The exercise included participants from Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, the United Kingdom and the U.S.

PSI is a multinational initiative to address the growing challenge posed by the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), with exercises held regularly to enhance the ability of PSI countries to work together to prevent the illicit transfer of WMD and other related materials. Since 2003, Singapore has participated in a number of PSI exercises, including hosting a PSI maritime interdiction exercise in August of 2005.



Photos: MINDEF



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Las Vegas Sands Wins Integrated Resort Bid

strengthen Singapore's position as a leading MICE (meetings, incentive travel, conventions and exhibitions) destination and the proposal also possesses unique design elements that will provide a memorable image for Marina Bay."

Las Vegas Sands committed the highest development investment of US\$2.4 billion. The total investment, including the land price and associated capital cost, will exceed US\$3.13 billion.

The Marina Bay Sands will house some 2,500 rooms in three hotel towers above which will be a one-hectare Sky Park offering a view of the cityscape. There will also be a 3,000-seat amphitheatre for a nightly Light and Water Show, an outdoor Event Plaza on the waterfront promenade, an ArtScience Museum and six signature restaurants with celebrity chefs. Sands has also pledged to provide over 10,000 jobs at the resort with 75 percent going to the locals. The casino is expected to take up less than five percent of the total floor area.

Group president and chief operating officer William Weidner said: "We are confident we have the strengths and capabilities to achieve this mandate based on our unique ability to develop successful, iconic integrated resorts from the ground up."

Las Vegas Sands Wins Bid to Build Singapore's First Integrated Resort

Called The Marina Bay Sands, Singapore's first integrated resort will be built by Las Vegas Sands which staved off fierce competition for the Marina Bay project from three other bidders including Harrah's Entertainment and MGM Mirage. The Resort will be the centrepiece of the Marina Bay landscape come 2009.

The bidding process which started in December 2004 attracted 19 bids from consortiums from the U.S., Australia and South Africa. Speaking at the press conference, Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) S. Jayakumar said: "Sands has submitted the best overall proposal that meets our economic tourism objective. In particular, the proposal will significantly

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Photo: Las Vegas Sands

A scale model of The Marina Bay Sands to be built by Las Vegas Sands which won the bid to build Singapore's first Integrated Resort.

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