

Singapore, Thailand to work together on carbon credits, food security

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New Areas of cooperation



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Singapore and Thailand can build on their close connectivity to work together on carbon credits and food security issues, Prime Minister Lawrence Wong said on Thursday (Nov 28).

Mr Wong highlighted the green economy as one area in which the two countries can expand cooperation during a joint press conference with his Thai counterpart Paetongtarn Shinawatra in Bangkok.

Noting that Thailand is stepping up its production of green power through sources such as hydrogen and biofuels, Mr Wong said the two sides can work towards an implementation agreement on carbon credits collaboration, which will open up new opportunities for our companies.

He added that food security was something which he had previously discussed with Ms Paetongtarn, when they met on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit in Laos last month.

Back then, Ms Paetongtarn had updated him on her priorities on the issue too, said Mr Wong.

This is also important for Singapore, as we import most of what we consume, and we are continually looking to enhance our food security, he said.

In her remarks, Ms Paetongtarn said that Thailand is keen to strengthen Singapore's food security, by increasing premium rice and organic egg exports to Singapore.

Singapore will also host Thai civil servants on scholarships to study in some master's programmes at universities in the country, Mr Wong announced, during his one-day introductory visit to the Thai capital.

"This builds on a long-standing exchange that we already have between our two civil services," said Mr Wong.

The two leaders had earlier witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for the arrangement, between Mr Piyawat Sivarak, secretary-general of Thailand's Office of the Civil Service Commission, and Mr Albert Chua, the permanent secretary of Singapore's Foreign Affairs Ministry.

Another area is food security. In fact, we have discussed this back in October when we met in Laos, in the ASEAN Summit; Prime Minister then updated me then about her priorities in food security. This is also important for Singapore, as we import most of what we consume, and we are continually looking to enhance our food security. So, I am happy that both sides have agreed to come together, discuss ways in which we can strengthen our collaboration in this area. ^ ^

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Now, Singapore and Thailand have much to be optimistic about. We are not only strengthening our bilateral ties, but also working together as part of ASEAN. And ASEAN has tremendous potential to be a key centre of economic growth for our region, given our diverse markets, our size, and youthful population. But to maximise ASEAN's potential, we need to accelerate the integration of our economies. ^ ^

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So one area is to strengthen our digital connectivity. And I thank Thailand for the hard work that it has put in, as Chair of the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA), that will deepen the integration of the digital economy for ASEAN, and Singapore supports fully Thailand's leadership in this area. ^

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Another area of integration is in our Power Grid. We now have a power link from Lao PDR to Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore. We look forward to Thailand's support for Phase 2 of this power integration project. This will form the building block for a broader ASEAN Power Grid, which can help to strengthen our energy resilience and sustainability. ^

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Of course, the strong partnership between Thailand and Singapore is built on very close people-to-people ties. Many of our citizens study, live and work in each other's countries. And there are frequent tourist flows between our two countries. These exchanges enrich both our societies and deepen our connections. ^ ^

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Earlier, the Prime Minister and I witnessed the signing of the MOU on Postgraduate Scholarships for Thai civil servants. This builds on a longstanding exchange that we already have between our two civil services, and I hope the MOU that we are signing, and the exchange of students will facilitate even more mutual learning and sharing of best practices between our officials, as well those from ASEAN and beyond. ^ ^

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And finally, I would like say I look forward to Prime Minister and her spouse visiting Singapore next year, when we mark the 60th anniversary of diplomatic ties, as well as other high-level visits that will happen between the leadership of our two countries. The 60th anniversary will be a timely occasion for us to showcase the progress made in the various areas we discussed today; whether it is on food, energy, or digital connectivity; and look at new ways in which we can bring more benefits to our people and bring our people even closer together. ^