

# THE STRAITS TIMES

## S'pore companies ink MOUs with Nanjing



Senior Minister for State for Trade and Industry Koh Poh Koon speaking at the Singapore-Nanjing Special Projects Cooperation Panel in Nanjing yesterday. Next to him is Mr Lee Yi Shyan, a member of the Singapore delegation. Dr Koh witnessed the signing of the MOUs with Nanjing mayor Lan Shaomin. ST PHOTO: DANSON CHEONG

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Projects are in areas such as clean tech, logistics and innovation

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Singapore and Nanjing have agreed to deepen collaboration, with seven Singapore companies and an educational institution inking deals in such areas as clean technology, logistics and innovation yesterday.

The memorandums of understanding (MOUs), which involved projects amounting to US\$230.25 million (S\$308 million), were signed at the sixth Singapore-Nanjing Special Projects Cooperation Panel (SNCP) meeting.

The SNCP, established in 2013, is the only city-level cooperation platform that Singapore has with China, and aims to boost cooperation through special projects. It comes under the Singapore-Jiangsu Cooperation Council.

Three of the MOUs involved projects on the Singapore-Nanjing Eco Hi-Tech Island (SNEHTI), a provincial-level development zone supported by the Singapore, Jiangsu and Nanjing governments. Nanjing is the capital of Jiangsu province.

Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry Koh Poh Koon, who witnessed the signing of the MOUs with Nanjing mayor Lan Shaomin, said the deals "reflect a deepening and the broadening of the relationship" between the two cities.

"We are moving from traditional industrial park development or property management, into the cutting edge... creating an ecosystem to support entrepreneurship, incubators, accelerators and technologies like artificial intelligence."

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Dr Koh, who co-chaired the SNCP meeting with Mr Lan, made these comments to Singapore media after the deals were signed.

One of the deals, between Sembcorp Properties and Chinese firm Umore Cleantech Consulting, has to do with developing an innovation centre that will help water companies commercialise their solutions for the Chinese market, Enterprise Singapore (ESG) said in a statement yesterday. Others include agreements to set up innovation centres and research labs.

Some of these centres will be located on the SNEHTI, a 13.54 sq km zone being built on an island in the middle of the Yangtze River. Construction began in 2009 and is expected to be completed in 2020.

Dr Koh said the island could be a test bed for clean technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) and could tap Singapore's experience and be a model for sustainable development. He added Singapore firms can "tap the growing AI ecosystem in Nanjing" and find partners in the city.

Mr Lan, in his speech at the meeting, invited Singapore businesses to pick Nanjing, especially the SNEHTI, as the site for their projects.

"I hope the development of the island will improve relations between Singapore and Nanjing, and both sides will work hard to build the island into an international industrial park, development platform and model area," he said.

Singapore is Nanjing's fourth-largest foreign investor, with 390 projects reaching \$4.02 billion in cumulative investments, said ESG.

Dr Koh is in Nanjing with Finance Minister Heng Swee Keat. They will attend the inaugural Sino-Singapore Artificial Intelligence Forum today.

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