

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh meets Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore Mr Heng Swee Keat in Singapore

Both leaders agree to take bilateral defence cooperation to new heights

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Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh called on Deputy Prime Minister & Finance Minister of Singapore Mr Heng Swee Keat in Singapore today. During the meeting, Raksha Mantri expressed satisfaction at the increasing engagement of the Armed Forces of India & Singapore in conducting joint exercises. Both leaders also agreed to take the increasing bilateral defence cooperation to greater heights.

Shri Rajnath Singh also referred to India's stand on the South China Sea and the Indo-Pacific region. He stressed that the Indo-Pacific for India means an open, inclusive and stable region, connected through secure seas, integrated by trade and anchored by the unity and centrality of ASEAN.

Raksha Mantri reiterated India's stand that the implementation of international laws and norms, freedom of navigation, unimpeded lawful commerce and peaceful settlement of disputes is the only way to ensure a rule-based order in the Indo-pacific region. He conveyed Mr Keat that the vision of India's comprehensive agenda of regional cooperation is rooted in 'Sagar' (Security and Growth for All in the Region').

Shri Rajnath Singh also communicated India's stand for not joining the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

Among other engagements on the first day of his visit to Singapore, Raksha Mantri visited the Sembawang Air Base and took a familiarisation air sortie in Super Puma Helicopter of Singapore Air Force. He also visited Singapore naval ship RSS Stalwart.

Shri Rajnath Singh paid homage to Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi at his Marker in Singapore. He also paid tributes to great freedom fighter Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and Indian National Army (INA) martyrs at their memorial. On this occasion, he met Major Ishwar Lal who had served INA under the leadership of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. At the memorial, Raksha Mantri also interacted with the NCC cadets, who are on a visit to Singapore.

Raksha Mantri will co-chair the 4th India-Singapore Defence Ministers' Dialogue tomorrow before concluding his visit.

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