

TEO SER LUCK TO ATTEND CENTRAL CHINA EXPO AND VISIT YA'AN BIFENGXIA CONSERVATION BASE

Minister of State (MOS) for Trade and Industry Teo Ser Luck will be attending the Central China Expo (CCE) from 16 to 18 May in Changsha, Hunan Province of China. During this official trip, he will also be visiting the Ya'an Bifengxia Conservation Base in Sichuan province, where the two giant pandas on a 10-year loan to Singapore currently reside.

2. The CCE, in its seventh year, is an annual platform approved by China's State Council to promote economic and trade cooperation as part of China's strategy to spur the economic growth of the six central provinces in China. This year's expo is themed "Opening and Rise, Green Development". During the trip, MOS Teo will meet Chinese officials and key business leaders to gain a deeper understanding of the overall development of Central China. This will pave the way for Singapore's small and medium enterprises who are exploring opportunities in the Central China region.

3. MOS Teo said: "Central China is entering an exciting phase where the economy is undergoing rapid transformation. There will be a lot of opportunities for Singapore's small and medium enterprises as the region opens up to more foreign investment."

4. Last year, Singapore's bilateral trade with Hunan increased by 47.1 percent, to reach US\$197 million. Singapore companies had invested in 177 projects in Hunan as of end-2011.

5. The panda loan, a key bilateral initiative, was signed during Chinese President Hu Jintao's state visit to Singapore in 2009. Singapore is the ninth country to receive this loan after the United States, Germany, Japan, Austria, Thailand, Australia, the United Kingdom and France.

6. MOS Teo said: "The Singapore government deeply appreciates the panda loan from China. Singaporeans are eagerly looking forward to the arrival of Kai Kai and Jia Jia. They are both a visible symbol of our strong and growing diplomatic ties with China, and a welcome addition to our tourism and leisure landscape as a star attraction within the upcoming River Safari. We will continue to engage our Chinese counterparts to enhance our trade and diplomatic relations."

7. Kai Kai and Jia Jia are scheduled to arrive in Singapore later this year, as part of a joint collaboration between Wildlife Reserves Singapore (WRS) and the China Wildlife Conservation Association (CWCA).

8. The pandas will be housed in WRS' upcoming River Safari attraction, the first major addition to the Mandai cluster since the Singapore Zoo (1973) and the Night Safari (1994). The \$160-million River Safari project occupies 12 hectares and will be home to over 150 plant species, 300 animal species and over 5,000 individual animal specimens.

MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
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