

S'pore, Turkey sign MOU to fight terror

Both countries also start work on a bilateral free trade pact

By CASSANDRA CHEW

SINGAPORE and Turkey have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on counter-terrorism and begun work on a bilateral free trade agreement.

The signing yesterday was witnessed by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who was on a two-day visit to Singapore, the first by a Turkish prime minister in 18 years.

In his remarks after the signing, Mr Lee said: "Turkey is keen to engage Asia, just as Singapore is keen to strengthen ties in Europe, and Singapore and Turkey can be gateways to our respective regions for the other party."

Responding, Mr Erdogan said: "I do believe we can forge useful alliance and partnerships with Singapore especially when it comes to the widescale infrastructure and energy investments going on in Turkey."

Yesterday, the two countries

agreed to enhance cooperation in three key areas: economic, financial and counter-terrorism.

On the economic front, Mr Erdogan brought with him a delegation of 80 businessmen to attend the third Turkey-Singapore Business Forum, also held yesterday.

Bilateral trade in 2012 stood at \$1.46 billion, but Mr Erdogan expressed confidence that it can grow to between \$3.8 billion and \$6.3 billion.

It should be boosted by a comprehensive free trade agreement (FTA), work on which has begun.

Beyond the FTA, the two leaders also discussed enhancing air links between the two countries.

On financial cooperation, they agreed to start a regular dialogue between their finance ministries on issues such as macroeconomic development, multilateral cooperation and long-term financing.

Mr Erdogan extended an invitation to Mr Lee and his wife, Ms Ho Ching, to visit Turkey. Mr Lee accepted immediately.

Mr Erdogan's trip follows an exchange of visits between their deputies, Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Ali Babacan and Singapore Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam, in 2012.

That year also marked the opening of economic agency IE Singapore's overseas centre in Istanbul in May and the Singapore embassy in Ankara in July.

After the signing, Mr Lee hosted Mr Erdogan to an official lunch. In the morning, the Turkish leader called on President Tony Tan Keng Yam. He met the Speaker of Parliament, Madam Halimah Yacob, in the afternoon.

Mr Erdogan also visited the National Orchid Garden, where an antelope dendrobium hybrid orchid was named after him and his wife, Emine. He later received a briefing on the Singapore port at PSA Singapore.

Unusually for a visiting leader, Mr Erdogan paid a visit to the grave of the first Consul-General of the Ottoman Empire to Singapore, Ahmet Atallah Efendi, at Telok Blangah Cemetery. He was sent to Singapore in 1901 and died in 1903.

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Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and PM Lee shaking hands after witnessing the signing of the MOU yesterday. Mr Erdogan is the first Turkish PM to visit Singapore in 18 years. Mr Lee hosted the Turkish leader to an official lunch after the signing ceremony. (Below) Mr Erdogan calling on President Tony Tan yesterday morning. ST PHOTOS: SEAH KWANG PENG



CHOA CHU KANG MURDER

Second suspect arrested

By YEOW SAM JO and ELENA CHONG

THE police arrested a second suspect, a 64-year-old Singaporean man, on Wednesday in connection with the death of Mr Dexmon Chua Yizhi, 37, whose body was discovered in the Lim Chu Kang Road area on New Year's Day.

The first suspect, Chia Kee Chen, 53, has been remanded for another week for further investigation. Yesterday, the prosecution applied for him to be remanded further at the Central Police Division lock-up given the complexity of the case.

He was charged in court last Thursday with the alleged murder of Mr Chua between Dec 28 and 29 last year. Chia's lawyer Sunil Sudheesan said he had no objection to further remand as he acknowledged there were accomplices. He requested access to Chia at the lock-up, but the prosecution objected.

Chia will return to court on Jan 16. If convicted of murder, he could be sentenced to death or life imprisonment.

Mr Chua's family filed a missing person report on Dec 29 after he failed to return home. His body was found near Sungei Gedong Camp.

The police said last week they are also looking for an Indonesian in his late 20s, identified as Djatmiko Febri Irwansyah, to aid in investigations. Preliminary investigations revealed he had left Singapore.

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Anyone with information on Djatmiko Febri Irwansyah should contact the police on 1800-255-0000 or submit the information at www.spf.gov.sg/CrimeStopper. All information will be kept strictly confidential.

Mas Selamat's son placed on 2-year detention order

By LIM YAN LIANG

THE son of terrorist Mas Selamat has been placed on a two-year detention order, the Home Affairs Ministry said yesterday.

Masyhadi Mas Selamat, 25, the Jemaah Islamiah (JI) leader's eldest son, has been detained since Nov 21 last year. He was arrested in Indonesia on Oct 20 and deported to Singapore 10 days later.

The ministry said in a statement that he went to JI religious schools in Indonesia from age 13 and imbibed JI's radical teachings

there. He underwent paramilitary training when he was older.

"He has, among other things, conducted JI surveillance activities and disseminated radical propaganda online in support of jihadist violence," it added.

Meanwhile, restriction orders against five JI members who were part of the 15 arrested in December 2001 have been allowed to lapse as they have been deemed "responsive to rehabilitation efforts". They are Mohamad Anuar Margono, Jaafar Mistooki, Mohamed Elias Mohamed Khan, Hashim

Abas and Mohamed Nazir Mohd Uthman.

The same order against a sixth JI member, Hosnay Awi, was also lifted. The father-in-law of dead Indonesian bomb-maker Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, he was arrested in November 2003.

A person under a restriction order cannot, among other things, change his residence, travel abroad, or print, distribute or contribute to any publication without the approval of the Internal Security Department.

The ministry said three Singa-

porean JI members have been placed under such an order for two years.

Zakaria Rosdan, 23, and Muhammad Khairul Sofri Osman, 29, had been self-radicalised by on-line videos and websites "through which they imbibed the violent ideology of jihadist ideologues". They have had their movements curtailed since last month.

Similarly, JI detainee Mohd Azmi Ali was issued the order last month following his release from preventive detention.

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Masyhadi was arrested in Indonesia on Oct 20 last year and deported here. He has been detained here since Nov 21.

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