

PM Lee and Najib in Putrajaya for Leaders' Retreat

■ BY LYDIA LIM

PRIME Minister Lee Hsien Loong will visit Putrajaya, Malaysia, today for a Leaders' Retreat with Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak.

They will discuss ways to further strengthen bilateral ties, following the full implementation of the Points of Agreement on Malayan Railway Land in Singapore last July, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) said in a statement yesterday.

The two prime ministers will also take stock of the progress of the joint iconic project in Iskandar Malaysia, and explore ways to further enhance connectivity and cross-border exchanges between the two countries, the MFA said.

Iskandar Malaysia is a development region in south Johor.

Mr Lee will be accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean, who is also Coordinating Minister for National Security and Minister for Home Affairs.

His delegation includes eight other ministers: Minister for Trade and Industry Lim Hng Kiang; Minister for Information, Communications and the Arts Yaacob Ibrahim; Minister for National Development Khaw Boon Wan; Minister for Defence Ng Eng Hen; Minister for the Environment and Water Resources Vivian Balakrishnan; Foreign Minister and Law Minister K. Shanmugam; Minister for Transport and Second Foreign Minister Lui Tuck Yew; and Acting Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports Chan Chun Sing.

Malaysia's Foreign Ministry also released a statement on today's retreat.

It said the two prime ministers would be appraising the progress of existing bilateral cooperation, and new ways to further strengthen the "already cordial relationship between Malaysia and Singapore".

It also noted the significant progress in bilateral cooperation in Iskandar Malaysia.

The cooperation followed from an agreement signed on June 27 last year, relating to the Points of Agreement on railway land.

The progress in the Iskandar region reflects the "strong commitment by the leaderships of both countries to elevate the bilateral ties to a greater height", the Malaysian Foreign Ministry said.

Today's retreat is the third between the prime ministers of Singapore and Malaysia.

The first took place in May 2007 in Langkawi, followed by a second retreat in May 2010 in Singapore.