

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL DELEGATION'S FIRST DAY IN SINGAPORE - 18 AUGUST 2014

- Meeting with The Government of Singapore Investment Corporation Pte Ltd (GIC)
- Tribute paid at the Indian National Army Monument
- Site visit to the Jurong Bird Park, managed by Wildlife Reserves Singapore

Meeting with The Government of Singapore Investment Corporation Pte Ltd (GIC)



In just a few decades, Singapore has, through nothing more than the skills, energy and determination of its people, built an advanced economy with a strong reserves position. As one of the world's largest global investors, with well over US\$100 billion of assets in more than 40 countries worldwide, GIC manages most of the Singapore Government's financial assets for the long term.

Earlier today, Dr Amit Mitra (West Bengal's Minister of Finance, Commerce & Industries), with Sanjay Mitra (Chief Secretary, IAS), C M Bachhawat (Additional Chief Secretary, Commerce & Industries Department, IAS), Dr Krishna Gupta (Managing Director, West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation, IAS), Satish



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Chandra Tewary (Additional Chief Secretary, IT Department, IAS) Alapan Bandyopadhyay (Principal Secretary, Transport Department, IAS), Rajiva Sinha (Principal Secretary, Micro & Small Scale Enterprises & Textiles Department, IAS), participated in a closed door session with the Chief Operating Officer & President of GIC Real Estate, Goh Kok Huat, and key representatives from his office. With GIC having already made substantial investments in India's HDFC Bank funds, further investment possibilities by GIC were discussed, with a few investment plans for West Bengal in the pipeline.

Tribute paid at the Indian National Army Monument



Located within Singapore's Esplanade Park, the Indian National Army Monument was erected in 1995 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, and is one of the 11 World War II sites marked to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the end of WWII. The World War II plaque marks the site of the Indian National Army memorial which was destroyed after the war, and is dedicated to an unknown soldier of the Indian National Army during the Japanese Occupation.

The words inscribed on the war memorial were its motto, which is *Ittefaq* (Unity), *Etmad* (Faith) and *Kurbani* (Sacrifice). The construction of the monument was

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proposed by Subhas Chandra Bose, the co-founder of the INA and Head of State of the Provisional Government of Free India.

Addressing her delegation after laying down a tributary wreath at the monument, Ms Banerjee expressed her intent to discuss with Singapore's Prime Minister, Mr Lee Hsien Loong, the possibility of rallying more awareness around Bose's bravery and sacrifices.

"I am very happy to be here, and more so that this is my first stop within Singapore. Netaji was a great hero and important part of our history and freedom struggle. I am grateful that this memorial has been honoured by Singapore's National Heritage Board and hope to discuss further tributes to Netaji's memory with the local Government," said Ms Banerjee.

Site visit to the Jurong Bird Park, managed by Wildlife Reserves Singapore



Singapore's Jurong Bird Park took flight in 1971, and has since become one of the most renowned bird sanctuaries with some of the largest free-flying aviaries in the world. In habitats that mirror their naturalistic environments, Jurong Bird Park is Asia's largest bird park at 20.2 hectares, with a collection of more than 5,000 birds across 400 species.

Led on a tour of the Jurong Bird Park by its head Wildlife Ranger, Ms Banerjee was introduced to key features that have contributed to the success of the Park –

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among them are its layout and refreshing natural ambiance, entertaining bird shows and award-winning captive breeding and conservation efforts.

With eco-tourism being a key focus area for West Bengal, Ms Banerjee visited the Park to gain a view of how its features and collaborative efforts can lend to successful initiatives in this sector. Drawing comparisons to Kolkata's new Eco Tourism Park Prakriti Tirtha – which currently has been divided into ecological zones, theme gardens and urban recreational spaces – Ms Banerjee developed a renewed perspective on the importance of events and activities that will draw people to the Eco Tourism Park around the year, such as its current activities like boating, cycling and zorbing, as well as its cultural events at Rabi Aranya and its now annual Vokatta kite festival.

Preview of 19 August 2014 – Tomorrow marks a big day for the Government of West Bengal, with Ms Banerjee slated to meet Singapore's Prime Minister, Mr Lee Hsien Loong, as well as key representatives of the esteemed Changi Airport Group. Ms Banerjee's delegation of industrialists will also be participating in a site visit to the PSA International Pte Ltd (formerly Port of Singapore Authority), one of the world's largest port operators.

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