

Sharing the future

Book
launched by
ESM Goh
Chok Tong
marks
50 years of
ties between
Singapore
and India



SITHARA DORIASAMY

FIFTY years of strong diplomatic relations between Singapore and India has been documented in a commemorative book released in Singapore by the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS).

The book, titled *Singapore-India: Towards A Shared Future*, was launched by Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong on June 18 at the National University of Singapore. About 150 diplomats, heads of think tanks, civil servants, academics and community leaders gathered at the launch.

Speaking at the sidelines of the launch, Mr Goh said: "We welcome more Indian interaction with the Singapore business people. But beyond businesses is the cultural and people ties which are very important." He added that when he was prime minister, he saw the potential of the Singapore-India relationship, in terms of trade, investment and cultural ties.

Two of Singapore's past high commissioners, Mr See Chak Mun and Mr Calvin Eu, who were present at the launch, were presented with a special edition of the book.

In his introductory remarks, Mr See, who is also a co-editor of the book, shared that ISAS chairman Ambassador Gopinath Pillai and former director of ISAS Prof Tan Tai Yong mooted the idea for the book to commemorate the 10th anniversary of ISAS, and 50 years of diplomatic relations between India and Singapore.

The book was first launched in India in February this year by President Tony Tan Keng Yam during his state visit to Delhi. It looks at how trade, colonial rule and the movement of people provided the basis for a long-standing partnership. There are about 6,000 Indian companies in Singapore.

In his foreword, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong noted that the publication is a "timely reminder of the strong and enduring friendship between our two countries". India's prime minister Narendra Modi penned similar sentiments in his foreword that the book "is a fitting tribute to our extraordinary fruitful journey so far and an inspiration for the road that lies ahead".

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Keeping close ties... Mr Goh (third from left) unveiling the ISAS commemorative book. With him are (from left) co-editors of the book, Mr See Chak Mun and Prof Tan Tai Yong, Indian high commissioner Vijay Thakur Singh, Ambassador Gopinath Pillai and Prof Subratra Kumar Mitra.

PHOTO: ISAS