

# Flight plan to free up 800 ha of land

## New home for Paya Lebar Air Base; 'Jewel' attraction at Changi Airport

By **CAI HAOXIANG**

[SINGAPORE] An 800 ha (8 sq km) area larger than Bishan or Ang Mo Kio will be freed up for new homes, offices, factories and parks once Paya Lebar Air Base relocates to a Changi site.

This will not just provide breathing space for Singaporeans but rejuvenate an even bigger area around it, said Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong last night.

"If you move the airbase, you remove the height restrictions on a big area around the airbase now constrained because you have to take off, land, provide safety," he said.

"That frees us to develop new, exciting plans for the big chunk of eastern Singapore, going all the way down to Marina and Marina South."

Mr Lee did not provide an exact timeframe for the development process. But he said the changes are for 2030 and beyond and will not be completed for another 20 to 30 years after that.

"The potential is there. We can dream," he said.

All these plans show Singapore's fundamental mindset and spirit to plan long-term and aim high,

said Mr Lee. "If we can carry off these plans, we don't have to worry about running out of space or possibilities for Singapore," he said.

More importantly, they are "acts of faith in Singapore and in ourselves" that Singapore will still be worth investing in a generation from now, can thrive against fiercer competition, and can continue to elect honest, capable and trusted leaders, he said.

In his speech, Mr Lee revealed infrastructural plans for other parts of the island: an iconic expansion to Changi Airport's Terminal 1 in the shape of a jewel, and a waterfront city by Tanjong Pagar that is two and a half times the size of Marina Bay.

The open air carpark outside Terminal 1 will be the site of a major development project codenamed "Project Jewel". According to the animation showed to the audience, the expansion currently looks like a donut-shaped jewel.

Water will pour down from the top of the donut "hole" as people walk around an indoor garden with cascading waterfalls inside, where there will also be shops and restaurants inside.

"We have Gardens by the Bay, this one is Gardens at the Airport," Mr Lee quipped.

### INFRASTRUCTURE



- Paya Lebar Airbase to move to Changi, freeing up land for homes, offices, factories
- New 'Jewel' project at Changi T1; T5 to be ready by mid-2020s
- Build new SAF airbase, fourth runway at Changi East
- Move all container ports to new port in Tuas from 2027

The expansion is targeted not just for visitors but also for Singaporeans to go for family outings, for students to study, and for newlyweds to take photos, Mr Lee said.

Another longer-term plan is for a fifth terminal and a third runway to be built by the mid-2020s, he said. This will double Changi's current capacity. Changi Airport currently has a capacity of 73 million passengers a year, and 85 million after Terminal 4 is added.

Changi Airport began operations in 1981 and has been upgraded over the years. Today, it has three terminals. Terminal 4 is under construction and will open in 2017.

The planned expansion is necessary because with rising incomes in Asia, air traffic is booming. Changi, with a record 51.2 million passengers passing through its gates last year, will fast approach its limits.

Mr Lee cited two geographically well-placed airports expanding: Kuala Lumpur International Airport and Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport, both aiming to serve 100 million passengers a year.

"Do we want to stay this vibrant hub city in Southeast Asia, or do we want to let somebody take over our position, our business, and our jobs? That's our choice," Mr Lee said.

Meanwhile, a fourth run-

way will be built at Changi East with a new Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) airbase. The site is also where Paya Lebar Air Base will relocate to.

Finally, Mr Lee mentioned previously-announced plans for Tanjong Pagar, where prime land will be freed up for a Southern Waterfront City with commercial and housing projects.

This will happen after the existing container port facilities in the City Terminals and Pasir Panjang Terminal are consolidated and relocated to 1,700 ha of reclaimed land in Tuas Port, from 2027 onwards. The new "city" will cover 1,000 ha, stretching from Shenton Way to Pasir Panjang.