

Clinton meets Mr Lee at Istana

By BEN NADARAJAN

IN A week when several of the United States' top leaders converge in Asia, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton arrived in Singapore yesterday morning for the start of a two-day visit.

In what may be her final tour of the region in this post, she met Singapore's first prime minister Lee Kuan Yew at the Istana and attended a dinner hosted by Foreign Minister K. Shanmugam.

Both sides reaffirmed the two countries' excellent bilateral relations and extensive cooperation, including in areas of economic engagement, and security and regional exchanges, a Ministry of Foreign Affairs statement said.

The two countries should hold its Strategic Partnership Dialogue in Singapore next year, and welcomed the concrete progress made under the Singapore-US



United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton meeting Singapore's former prime minister Lee Kuan Yew at the Istana yesterday. She also attended a dinner hosted by Foreign Minister K. Shanmugam. ST PHOTO: LAU FOOK KONG

Third Country Training Programme to support Asean community-building efforts.

The US recently decided to extend Singapore's Visa Waiver Programme, allowing Singaporeans convenient entry. Both sides are also currently in discussions to conclude an inter-governmental agreement on the US Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act.

Mrs Clinton will meet Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong this morning. She will then give a speech on Washington's econom-

ic strategy at the Singapore Management University (SMU) at an event co-hosted by the US-Asean Business Council, the American Chamber of Commerce in Singapore and SMU.

She will join President Barack Obama in Thailand tomorrow and later go to Cambodia for the East Asia Summit. US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta will also be in Thailand and Cambodia in a string of visits aiming to beef up security ties across the region.

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