

S'pore and Xinjiang's Kashgar share similarities: PM Lee

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Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong (L) in Xinjiang, Kashgar.

SINGAPORE: Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said Singapore and Xinjiang's Kashgar share interesting similarities in terms of their multi-racial and multi-religious societies, as well as the challenge in ensuring economic development while maintaining local cultural and historical traditions.

Mr Lee is in Kashgar on the fifth day of his official visit to China.

Touring Old Kashgar, which still retains much of Xinjiang's traditional culture, Mr Lee visited families who have been living in the old settlement for generations.

In Kashgar, about 90 per cent of the population are Uyghur people, with eight per cent Han Chinese and the remaining minorities.

Singapore is increasing its exchanges with Kashgar as a way to deepen understanding. One example is Singapore Management University's (SMU) project in Kashgar, where its students have set up three cultural centres in Kashgar to help preserve ethnic cultures here.

SMU has also started another project in Kashgar to teach English to university students.



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Mr Lee also visited the Id Kah Mosque in Kashgar, where he was hosted by the chief imam. Id Kah Mosque is one of the largest ancient mosques in China.

From Kashgar, Mr Lee went to Shenyang, Liaoning province, arriving in the late evening.