

Infrastructure capability programme kicks off

Joint effort by Infrastructure Asia, World Bank and SMU will train senior and mid-level regional government officials involved in project preparation

Singapore
AMID gloomy economic forecasts triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic, infrastructure remains a bright spot that can increase business activity and employment, said Second Finance Minister Indraneel Rajah on Monday.

Growing economies need reliable infrastructure for carrying out essential functions when faced with external challenges, she said.

She was speaking at a virtual sign-

ing ceremony to launch an infrastructure capability development programme for regional government officials.

"Infrastructure can reinvigorate business activity and employment as we seek to re open our economies gradually," she said.

Adding that sustainable infrastructure will shape the future, she said: "Already, we have seen many countries in the region develop innovative infrastructure projects to address

both immediate needs and future trends. It is important that the region uses this time to continue to push forward on sustainability."

Developed by Infrastructure Asia (IA) and the World Bank Group, and delivered by the Singapore Management University (SMU), the Growing Infrastructure Programme will train senior and mid level regional government officials involved in project preparation.

In addition to creating a regulatory

environment that is friendly towards private sector involvement and public-private partnerships in infrastructure, it will also raise awareness of solutions offered by Singapore-based companies and Singapore's infrastructure ecosystem, said Ms Indraneel.

The first run of the programme will focus on clean energy, a sector which has been resilient despite the pandemic.

Many international financial sources remain available and very

keen to support clean energy projects, she said.

"The international private sector can hence continue to contribute to this area of infrastructure development," said Ms Indraneel.

Also witnessing the ceremony on Monday were World Bank Singapore director Jyoti Shukla, IA executive director Seth Tan and SMU president Lily Kong.

"We hope to support Asia's infrastructure development and at the

same time spread the word about Singapore based solutions," said Mr Tan.

Ms Shukla stressed the need to invest in well designed infrastructure for sustained economic growth.

"The World Bank Group is delighted to be a strategic partner in this critically important programme to harness Asia's collective expertise with collaboration between private players, governments and multilateral banks," she said. THE STRAITS TIMES

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