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DPM Tharman visited Kenya, Rwanda to deepen engagements in Sub-Saharan Africa region



Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam visited Kenya and Rwanda from June 12 to 15, 2018. PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO

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Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam this week met government leaders in Kenya and Rwanda, as part of Singapore's deepening engagements in the growing Sub-Saharan Africa region.

Mr Tharman, who is also Coordinating Minister for Economic and Social Policies, visited Kenya (June 12-13 and 15) and Rwanda (June 13- 14), said a press release from the Prime Minister's Office today (June 16).

During the call on President of Kenya Uhuru Kenyatta at the State House in Mombasa on Friday, Mr Tharman and Mr Kenyatta discussed ways to deepen bilateral cooperation in port operations, aviation, fintech, skills development and Kenya's ambitious plans for housing development.

The two leaders also discussed issues on public sector reform.

In Kenya, Mr Tharman also met Deputy President William Ruto.

Other senior officials Mr Thaman met are Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs and International Trade Monica Juma, Cabinet Secretary for the National Treasury and Planning Henry K Rotich, Cabinet Secretary for Industry, Trade and Cooperatives Adan Mohammed, Cabinet Secretary for Transport and Infrastructure Development James Macharia, Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife Najib Balala, as well as Governor of the Central Bank of Kenya Patrick Njoroge.

To strengthen bilateral economic links, and support the growing number of Singapore companies interested in Kenya, Enterprise Singapore Nairobi Overseas Centre was launched during Mr Tharman's trip.



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Both countries also signed the Bilateral Investment Treaty and the Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement.

In Rwanda, Mr Tharman called on Prime Minister Edouard Ngirente.

DPM Tharman also had fruitful discussions with other key Rwandan leaders, including Minister of Infrastructure Claver Gatete, Minister of Finance and Economic Planning Uzziel Ndagijimana, Minister of Trade and Industry Vincent Munyeshyaka, and Governor of the National Bank of Rwanda John Rwangombwa.

They explored how Singapore and Rwanda could deepen cooperation and technical assistance in a range of areas, including public sector management, aviation safety, land use planning, water management, skills development and domestic financial market development.

Prime Minister Ngirente also conveyed the interest of President Paul Kagame, who was in Russia at the time of Mr Tharman's visit, in extending Rwanda's close partnership with Singapore.

Mr Tharman and Dr Ngirente also witnessed the signing of the Bilateral Investment Treaty and the Bilateral Air Services Agreement.

To commemorate the over one million Rwandans killed during the 1994 Rwandan Genocide, Mr Tharman and Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry Koh Poh Koon laid a wreath at the Kigali Genocide Memorial.

DPM Tharman returns to Singapore on Saturday (June 16).