

High-5 and Take-5 on International Friendship Day 2022

4 April 2022 (Monday)

Jayden Yu Zheng En (3-5)

Good morning Ms Tan, Mrs Selva, Mr Tan, teachers and all Gessians. I am Jayden from class 3-5 from Dragon Scouts Group.

Today I will be explaining to you the importance of International Friendship Day by using Singapore's relationship with Vietnam as an example. Firstly, please allow me to explain what International Friendship Day is. International Friendship Day is a day dedicated to the understanding of Singapore's relations with neighboring countries and beyond. It aims to alert us students towards geo-political realities inherent in Singapore, as well as developing the spirit of friendship and partnership among different countries and different people.

Singapore's relationship with Vietnam is best expressed in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN. This Association was founded on August 8th, 1967. The nations within the association helps each other economically and politically, which includes Vietnam and Singapore. A good example of this is the recent agreement of the two nations to work together to recover from the pandemic.

An article by CNA quotes "Singapore and Vietnam have agreed on the importance of closer cooperation to help both sides recover together and emerge stronger from the Covid-19 pandemic". It is also stated in an article by The Straits Times- quote "Singapore ranks consistently as one of Vietnam's largest trading partners, and has been the leading source of foreign direct investment into Vietnam for two years running." As well as also stating that Singapore is the top ASEAN investor in Vietnam, with cumulative investments of US\$62.6 billion (S\$84.2 billion) in over 2,600 projects in 45 out of 63 provinces in Vietnam.

In fact The Straits Times states that "Both countries supported each other with critical medical supplies and equipment during the pandemic, and are looking into resuming safe travel, noted Dr Balakrishnan, who in June last year was the first Singapore minister to visit Vietnam since the Covid-19 pandemic began.". Singapore and Vietnam have also agreed to establish a digital economic working group to identify useful areas of cooperation. So both countries have been supporting each other during this pandemic.

If you ask me, this clearly demonstrates that Singapore would not have made it as far as it has without the good relations with our ASEAN friends. So we must maintain and uphold these relationships and bonds. Thus, it is very important for us to commemorate International Friendship Day every year.

You will be hearing more from our Dragon Scouts later during the Aroozoo READ.
Happy International Friendship Day to all of u!

6 April 2022 (Wednesday)

Lok Iris (3-7)

Good morning school leaders, teachers, staff and all Gessians. I am Iris from Dragon Scout Group.

Today, I will be sharing with you about International Friendship Day! I am here to share about our special relationship with our neighboring countries in ASEAN. I'm sure most of you have heard about ASEAN. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, was established on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand. It is a regional grouping that promotes economic, political, and security cooperation among its 10 members: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

For today, we will be focusing on the relations between Singapore and Malaysia. Malaysian-Singaporean relations, refers to the bilateral relations between Malaysia and Singapore, after the separation of Singapore from Malaysia in 1965. Ties between the two countries remain intact despite several diplomatic issues that have arisen over time. Malaysia, being one of Singapore's closest neighbours, has always held "special importance" to us. Indeed, Singapore and Malaysia are each other's second most important trading partners and Singapore is Malaysia's largest source of foreign direct investment (FDI).

Going through the pandemic together has strengthened the two countries' relationship significantly. Supply chains both ways never failed, even in the depths of the crisis as both countries worked to facilitate the safe movement of goods, services and people. In fact, trade in goods and services increased in 2021! It is estimated that trade export value from Singapore to Malaysia will grow from US\$40.4 billion in 2020 to US\$92.3 billion in 2030. Singapore and Malaysia enjoy a strong and complementary economic relationship, being each other's largest foreign direct investors and second largest trading partners. As the global supply chain continues to shift in favour of Asean markets and with more economies reopening, there lies significant opportunities for businesses to further grow the Malaysia-Singapore corridor.

This example proves that it is important to forge friendly relations between Singapore and Malaysia due to its win-win situation as both countries can benefit and show growth. International Friendship Day was proclaimed in 2011 with the idea that friendship between peoples, countries, cultures and individuals can inspire peace efforts and build bridges between communities. I hope that through my sharing, you can understand the importance of all countries having good friendships with each other.

Thank you for your attention!