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### SM Goh meets Lombardy President; explores bilateral economic cooperation

By Melissa Hyak, Channel NewsAsia | Posted: 25 November 2006 1449 hrs

MILAN, Italy: Don't miss the boat to Asia's economic growth - that's Singapore Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong's message to Italy's richest region, Lombardy.

Mr Goh is now in Milan, as part of his visit to boost Singapore's bilateral cooperation with Italy.

The meeting with Lombardy President Roberto Formigoni must be the Senior Minister's most important in Italy, second only to his audience with Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi.

Lombardy's gross domestic product in 2003 was the highest for a region in Italy, as well as the whole of the European Union.

In their meeting, Mr Goh expressed his desire for Singapore and Lombardy to work together in international economic collaborations that are mutually beneficial, and suggested that Lombardy establish an Italy Centre in Singapore to act as a hub for small and medium sized enterprises in Italy to get the connections and information



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for business opportunities in Singapore and the rest of Asia.

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Using an analogy inspired by Singapore's reputation as a hub, Mr Goh urged Mr Formigoni "not to miss the boat" in Asia, that is docked in Singapore.

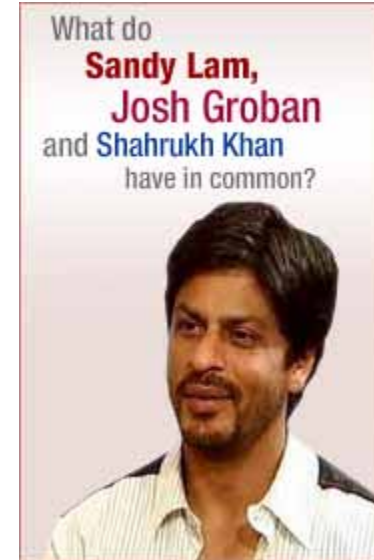
The two leaders agreed there should be an exchange of business delegations from both sides to further explore economic cooperation.

Mr Goh also met top members of Italy's business community at Lombardy's Chamber of Commerce, as well as at Banca Intesa, soon to be Europe's third largest banking institution.

An example of a success story in this Singapore courtship of Italy's commercial capital is Nanyang Technological University, which will launch a postgraduate programme with the oldest Master design school in Lombardy, the Domus Academy - an initiative both leaders of Singapore and Lombardy have called, 'extremely important'.

The Memorandum of Understanding was inked by the President of Domus Academy and the Dean of NTU's School of Art, Design and Media.

The signing was witnessed by Senior Minister Goh and the Italian Ambassador to Singapore. - CNA /dt



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