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Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Mrs Lee waving over a live video feed from Munich to Minister for Trade and Industry (Industry) S. Iswaran (second from left) and Siemens representatives in Singapore yesterday. PM Lee opened the Siemens Digitalisation Hub together with Siemens AG chief executive Joe Kaeser in a ceremony that took place simultaneously in Munich and Singapore. ST PHOTO: KEVIN LIM

Siemens Digitalisation Hub to help boost Smart Nation effort

MUNICH • A new facility in MacPherson that brings together data scientists, software engineers and specialists from other fields will help boost Singapore's efforts to become a Smart Nation, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said yesterday.

The Siemens Digitalisation Hub will develop and commercialise projects in areas such as urbanisation and digital industrialisation, which can be rolled out to the rest of the world.

It "will be the first of its kind globally", PM Lee said as he opened the facility yesterday together with Siemens AG chief executive Joe Kaeser in a ceremony that took place simultaneously in Munich and Singapore.

They also unveiled a plaque to mark the occasion at the engineering giant's Munich headquarters.

Through the hub, Siemens will partner with Singapore companies and universities on major projects.

It is already working with Singa-

pore Power to develop smart grids – electricity supply networks that use digital technology to detect and react to changes in usage – for Singapore and the region, and with ST Electronics to co-create new mobility applications.

PM Lee, who was guest of honour at the event, said Siemens has been a steadfast and valuable partner in developing Singapore's industries and workforce in sectors such as oil and gas, power, transport and healthcare.

He noted that the company first set up a technical bureau that operated as a sales office in Singapore in 1908.

"I think it is fair to say that that beginning has led to success," he said.

Today, Siemens employs more than 1,500 people in its Asean regional headquarters in Singapore, while its spin-off companies like semiconductor manufacturer Infineon also have a significant presence, contributing another 4,000 jobs, he added.

PM Lee told his audience in Munich and Singapore that the digital economy is a major element of Singapore's future.

Singapore currently hosts about 50 per cent of South-east Asia's data centre capacity, and the IMD World Competitiveness Centre recently ranked the country first in global digital competitiveness, he noted.

"We have built a strong digital infrastructure and in Singapore, we hope companies can try out innovative ideas expeditiously, in a favourable, conducive environment, with a supportive government – before scaling up for the region and the world," he added.

He said schools have introduced basic coding skills and universities have rolled out compulsory undergraduate modules on digital literacy to make sure that Singapore's workforce has the right skills and capabilities to support these efforts.

Noting that Siemens also provides training for its workers, PM Lee said that Singapore values working with companies that put in effort to train and develop their employees.

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