

First Indian law firm sets up in S'pore

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A leading Indian law firm specialising in legal and tax counselling, Nishith Desai Associates, has opened its office in Singapore, making it the first of its kind to set up an office here.

While the idea had been in the works for two years, the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement between Singapore and India was the catalyst.

"Singapore has a worldwide reputation as a flourishing centre for trade and business that is well-executed. We anticipated that the relationship between the two countries would develop further, so there's a great opportunity for mutual benefit," said Mr Nishith Desai, head of the award-winning firm.

So far, the firm has offices in Mumbai and Bangalore as well as Silicon Valley in California, United States. The fourth office in Singapore will start with a small operation under Mr Vijay Sambamurthi and Mr Prashant Kataria, a move that will be expanded if the market calls for it.

The company specialises in areas such as international tax, finance, information technology and intellectual property, and has worked with GLCs such as DBS and SingTel.

Education Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam said: "This is a new dimension in terms of India's presence in Singapore. It will bring the kind of business intelligence and cross-border traffic we are already seeing." — VINITA RAMANI