

**MINISTER FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY LIM HNG KIANG TO ATTEND
18th ASEAN ECONOMIC MINISTERS' (AEM) RETREAT
IN NAY PYI TAW, MYANMAR
25 - 26 FEBRUARY 2012**

Minister for Trade and Industry, Mr Lim Hng Kiang, will be in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar from 25 to 26 Feb 2012 to attend the 18th ASEAN Economic Ministers' Retreat.

As ASEAN moves closer to the target of achieving an ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) by 2015, it is important for ASEAN to keep the implementation of commitments on track. In Nay Pyi Taw, the Ministers will discuss the current status of implementation and exchange views on the challenges in realising the AEC.

In addition to internal economic integration issues, the Ministers will also consider ways to further enhance ASEAN's external relations with its Dialogue Partners so that ASEAN continues to be well-connected to the global economy and remains central to regional developments. In particular, the Ministers will discuss the implementation of the ASEAN Framework on Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), a key initiative which was endorsed by the Leaders at the 19th ASEAN Summit in Nov 2011. The RCEP initiative aims to deepen ASEAN's engagement with its FTA Dialogue Partners, in the first instance, with a view to bring greater benefits to our companies through measures such as the deeper integration of production processes and simplification of customs clearance procedures which would lower business costs, among others.

Mr Lim will be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

**MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
24 Feb 2012**