

Mr. George Yeo, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Singapore visits CECRI

Chettinad Palace amazing: Singapore Minister Visits region near Karaikudi along with Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram C. Jaishankar and M. Balaganessin

SIVAGANGA: "It is simply amazing to see the architectural marvel of the Chettinad Palace and heritage buildings in the Chettinad region," said G. George Yeo, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Government of Singapore, after visiting the palace along with Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram at Kanadukathan near Karaikudi on Saturday.

"It showed that the people [Chettians] of the region had not only visited and established their promising entities in various countries, including Vietnam, Singapore and other places, but also cared for their native place by establishing beautiful bungalows, initiating philanthropist ventures and others," said Mr. Yeo, who spent nearly an hour at the palace along with his wife Jennifer. He was impressed by the massive front door, corridor, high ceiling, collection of antics, pillars and others.



IMPRESSED: Minister for Foreign Affairs, Singapore, George Yeo, at the Central Electro Chemical Research Institute at Karaikudi on Saturday. Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram is in the picture.

Mr. Chidambaram and Meena Muthiah, founder, Chettinad Vidyashram, Chennai, explained the method of construction and the importance attached to the palace and houses in the region. Expressing surprise at the economic prosperity of Tamil Nadu, Mr. Yeo told The Hindu that he was impressed. Many development activities were taking place. The people and the region had seen improvement in all aspects. He said that he had visited this part of Tamil Nadu as a guest of Mr. Chidambaram. He was his friend for many years. It had given him an opportunity to interact with people, philanthropists and to see the treasures.

Mr. Yeo said he was overwhelmed by the contribution of philanthropists of the region, who had established several institutions. They had even built temples in foreign countries for the common cause.

Later, he visited Central Electrochemical Research Institute at Karaikudi. V. Yegnaraman, Director (in-charge), explained to him the research facilities and ongoing projects. He said he never expected a highly sophisticated laboratory (Central Electrochemical Research Institute, Karaikudi) in the region.

He also visited Canara Bank Artisan Training Centre at Managiri, Thiruvankadamudayan Temple at Ariyakudi and other places. Calvin Eu, High Commissioner, Singapore; Ajit Singh, Singapore Consul General; Karti Chidambaram, AICC member; and a Singapore delegation accompanied Mr. Yeo.

In Pudukottai, Mr. Yeo visited the historically significant rock-cut Jain monument at Chithannavasal. Accompanied by Mr. Chidambaram, Mr. Yeo and his wife viewed the paintings on the rocks and the idols of Lord Mahavira and Parshwanatha, the 23rd Thirthanakara of Jainism. Mr. Chidambaram explained to Mr. Yeo that the paintings together with the monument were being preserved for several centuries. The couple were impressed when they entered the yoga chamber. Standing in a corner, the Minister realised how well the chamber, which echoed his breath, had been designed. Later, speaking to reporters, Mr. Yeo described Chithannavasal as a "treasure." "The reverberation of one's own breath at the chamber testifies to both the architectural acumen of the hoary past and also their mastery and precision in practising 'yoga.'"