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Taiwan to beef up medical cooperation with the ASEAN

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Singapore: As a part of the Taiwan government's New Southbound Policy, Minister of Science and Technology Mr Yang Hung-duen said that Taiwan aims to medical exports and expand cooperation on health care education and technology with members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. In a recent interview with Liberty Times, Mr Hung-duen said that Taiwan would work to beef up medical exports to ASEAN countries.

Health care spending in ASEAN markets has been growing in recent years, presenting considerable commercial opportunities for firms in Taiwan's biomedical and pharmaceutical sector.

The New Southbound Policy seeks to elevate the scope and diversity of Taiwan's export economy and minimize overreliance on any single market. In addition to Southeast Asia, it extends to six South Asian countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, and encompasses inbound investment and tourism, as well as educational and cultural exchanges.

"The nation boasts advanced medical technology in areas ranging from in-home care services to complex clinical surgery," he said. "We intend to work with the Ministry of Health and Welfare to collect information on the effectiveness of Taiwan-made equipment in local hospitals so as to provide a solid basis for promoting medical exports to ASEAN countries."

Mr Hung-duen further added that the Taiwan government has been working to promote exchanges with researchers in Southeast Asian countries with the goal of establishing regular platforms for communication. He also mentioned that the major

objective of increased collaboration is to encourage outstanding students from Southeast Asia to pursue medical studies in Taiwan.

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"When these doctors return home to practice, they will likely choose medical equipment from Taiwan due to their familiarity with the devices. This could prove to be an important export channel for equipment manufacturers," he said.

In a bid to bolster exports to the region, the government-supported Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA) organized a medical trade mission comprised of representatives from 17 Taiwan firms in July to Myanmar, Thailand and Singapore. The group held talks with 248 local companies and signed deals worth US$8.39 million.

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