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Gan Kim Yong at SICC Awards 2026: Collaboration Key to Growth

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Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade Gan Kim Yong addressed the Singapore International Chamber of Commerce (SICC) Awards 2026, marking the event's 10th edition. He congratulated the organisers, judges, finalists, and award recipients, noting that the chamber has united local and international business communities for nearly 190 years.

Gan highlighted the growing complexity of the business environment, citing rapid technological advances, particularly in artificial intelligence, geopolitical tensions reshaping supply chains and trade relationships, and the need for companies to decarbonise while staying competitive. He observed that despite rising protectionism, new growth opportunities are emerging across markets and sectors.

He argued that no company can develop all necessary capabilities alone, and success increasingly depends on tapping into the strengths of others. For instance, a multinational might benefit from the specialised knowledge and agility of a local startup, while a firm with a promising idea may need research expertise, commercialisation partners, or overseas allies to enter new markets. As technologies become more complex, collaboration with universities, research institutes, training providers, and government agencies becomes essential.

Gan emphasised that collaboration is a growing engine of growth, and Singapore is well-positioned due to its openness and connectivity. He outlined three levels of collaboration: between large enterprises and SMEs or startups, between businesses and the research ecosystem, and across borders. He cited the Partnerships for Capability Transformation

(PACT) programme as an example of supporting company partnerships, but stressed that successful collaborations require businesses to see shared opportunities and invest effort.

On research and innovation, Gan noted Singapore's significant investments and the need to translate knowledge into marketable solutions. He called for closer ties between companies and universities or research institutes to test, commercialise, and scale ideas, as well as developing workers' skills alongside technology adoption. He also underscored the importance of internationalisation for Singapore firms, given the small domestic market, and the value of partners who understand local conditions. International companies in Singapore can leverage the local ecosystem to develop solutions for the region.

Gan introduced the new Best Cross-Border Collaboration Award, which recognises Singapore's ability to connect to opportunities abroad. The SICC Awards have expanded from two categories to five, covering technology, workplace, scalability, sustainability, and cross-border collaboration. He mentioned the 'Collaborate to Innovate' initiative as a way for other businesses to learn from winners' experiences.

He concluded by congratulating all finalists and winners, wishing SICC continued success, and looking forward to the chamber's 190th anniversary celebration next year.

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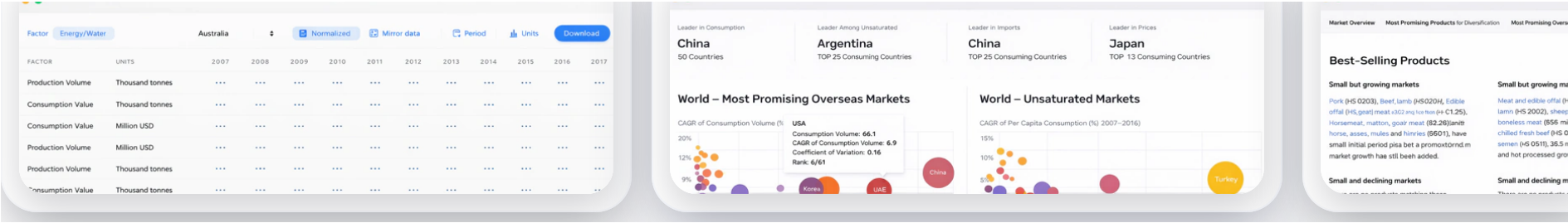
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