



## First IPS-Nathan Lecture to take place on 20 October 2014

By Andrew Yeo  
*IPS Research Assistant*

In July 2014, the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) named Singaporean businessman Ho Kwon Ping its first S R Nathan Fellow for the Study of Singapore. Mr Ho, Chairman of the Singapore Management University Board of Trustees and Executive Chairman of Banyan Tree Holdings Limited, has been researching topics related to public policy and governance in Singapore, and will put forth his ideas in a series of lectures in 2014 and 2015.

The first of five lectures is on the future of politics in Singapore, and the prospects of the ruling People's Action Party (PAP) in the age of social media. IPS interviewed Mr Ho for his thoughts in the run-up to the first lecture on 20 October:

Q: As the first S R Nathan Fellow, how do you intend to conduct the series of five lectures?

A: By being the first speaker I have no precedent to follow and therefore can even try to do something new and perhaps even set the tone of the lectures, to make them a unique fixture in the local lecture circuit. I hope that my lectures, while not academic, will be analytically rigorous; and while future-speculative, will not be irresponsible. And being held during [Singapore's] 50th anniversary celebrations is also a plus and minus — there are so many talks going on, but people are also more interested in the next 50 years.

Q: What do you hope to achieve with these lectures?

A: I hope above all to stimulate discussion about the future and the trade-offs we have to make as a society. There are a lot of issues facing Singapore that are long term in nature, broad in scope, and complex in execution. Civil society can only grow deeper and broader if the issues that are tackled are wide-ranging and open-ended in discussion, with no subjects off-limits.

Q: What topics will you cover, and why have you chosen them?

A: I feel that the future of Singapore should cover these five broad topics: politics and governance; economics and business; society and identity; demography and family; and security and sustainability. Those five pretty much cover Singapore in total, no?

Q: What advice would you give to young Singaporeans today about their future?

A: At the risk of sounding corny, it would be *carpe diem*, "seize the day", or the Nike slogan, "Just Do It". Don't sit around and complain about how the best is behind us and life is going

to be harder in future. Just think about how you want to live the one life you have, and go do it. Don't think about why you should not do this or that, before you even try. Act on your beliefs, your hopes and dreams. Chances are, if you're lucky, you'll achieve only about half of what you dream of, so dream big but don't be disappointed if you don't get everything you want.

*Andrew Yeo is a Research Assistant (Special Projects) at IPS, and contributes to the work of the S R Nathan Fellow for the Study of Singapore.*

*The IPS-Nathan Lectures will begin on 20 October 2014. This first lecture will be held at the Theatre, University Cultural Centre, National University of Singapore, 50 Kent Ridge Crescent. To indicate your interest in attending, please sign up [here](#).*

*The second lecture will focus on Economy and Business and is scheduled for 12 November 2014 at the Auditorium, Shaw Foundation Alumni House, National University of Singapore, 11 Kent Ridge Drive. Please visit the S R Nathan Fellowship for the Study of Singapore page on the IPS [website](#) for updates on the IPS-Nathan Lectures.*

*Registration for both lectures will start at 5.00 pm. Each lecture will begin at 6.00 pm and participants should be seated by 5.50 pm. The event should end by 7.30 pm.*

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*If you have comments or feedback, please email [ips.eneews@nus.edu.sg](mailto:ips.eneews@nus.edu.sg)*



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