

30th Anniversary:

Diversities

New and Old

25 – 26 October 2018

*Sands Grand Ballroom (Level 5), Sands Expo and Convention Centre
Marina Bay Sands, Singapore*

CONCEPT

Singapore has achieved a remarkable standard of living since gaining independence some 53 years ago. The city-state has one of the highest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in the world, surpassing that of Japan, United Kingdom, and Australia (The World Bank, 2017). On the social front, the multi-racial and multi-religious communities in this country have maintained a largely harmonious relationship for decades, a rare feat in an increasingly fractious sea of identities.

Notwithstanding these accolades, there are nascent signs that the city-state is facing greater and more volatile headwinds in the years to come. What has been particularly noticeable is the proliferation of new schisms arising from different lifestyles, values and wealth. These fault lines are symptoms of a deteriorating sense of “togetherness” in a rapidly evolving world.

For Singapore as a city-state to continue to prosper, there is an imperative to forge a new social compact that is not zero-sum based and to reach a consensus in managing the plurality of differences. The goal of this conference is therefore to discuss the new Singapore polity that will be inclusive for all.

PROGRAMME
(as at 3 August 2018)

Thursday, 25 October 2018

- 6.30 pm – 7.00 pm **Registration**
- 6.55 pm Guests to take their seats in the ballroom.*
- 7.00 pm – 7.10 pm **Welcome Remarks**
- Mr Janadas Devan
Director
Institute of Policy Studies
- 7.10 pm – 7.20 pm **Special 30th Anniversary Remarks by**
- Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong
- 7.20 pm – 8.20 pm **Dinner**
- 8.20 pm – 8.25 pm **Video**
- 8.25 pm – 9.10 pm **Dialogue with Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Deputy Prime Minister and Coordinating Minister for Economic and Social Policies**
- Chairperson**
- Professor Tommy Koh
Special Adviser
Institute of Policy Studies
- 9.10 pm – 9.25 pm **30 Years and Beyond**
- 9.10 pm – 9.20 pm Cake Cutting*
- 9.20 pm – 9.25 pm Toast*
- 9.25 pm **Dessert Bar**

Friday, 26 October 2018

7.45 am – 8.30 am **Registration**

8.30 am – 8.45 am **Opening Remarks**

Mr Janadas Devan
Director
Institute of Policy Studies

8.45 am – 10.15 am **PANEL I**
Unequal and Immobile Structures

This panel will look at factors that serve to create class disparities in Singapore society. The discussion will focus on the use and impact of policy levers in mitigating the negative outcomes of issues such as the income divide, gaps in the social safety net, the cycle of poverty and the emerging underclass.

Chairperson

Mr Manu Bhaskaran
Adjunct Senior Research Fellow
Institute of Policy Studies
and
Partner and Member of the Board
Centennial Group Inc

Speakers

Mrs Josephine Teo
Minister for Manpower
and
Second Minister
Ministry of Home Affairs

Dr Walter Theseira
Senior Lecturer
School of Business
Singapore University of Social Sciences

Question-and-Answer Session

10.15 am – 10.45 am **Tea Break**

10.45 am – 12.15 pm **PANEL II**
Emerging Forms of Social Identities and Social Formation

This panel identifies the challenges created by emerging forms of social identities including those shaped by new intersectionalities that fall outside of our traditional policy frameworks. The panel will discuss the future of the Singapore identity discourse and what it means to be different. Ultimately, the focus will be on the processes required for building national unity and the search for a new social compact. Examples of emerging social identities are those created by non-CMI resident communities such as the Filipinos and Myanmarese, Caucasian PRs, unmarried single-parent families, LGBTQ marital unions, same gender family structures, surrogate offspring and separatist religious identities.

Chairperson

Associate Professor Eleanor Wong
Vice Dean, Student Life & Global Relations
and
Director, Legal Skills Programme
Faculty of Law
National University of Singapore

Speakers

Mr Desmond Lee
Minister for Social and Family Development
and
Second Minister for National Development

Professor Paulin Straughan
Dean of Students and Professor of Sociology (Practice)
School of Social Sciences
Singapore Management University

Question-and-Answer Session

12.15 pm – 1.15 pm

Lunch

1.15 pm – 2.45 pm

PANEL III Politics of Diversity Management

This panel discusses how reconstituted social groups and identities have resulted in changing ideologies and contending political demands. The fluid socio-demographic landscape may, however, lead to “push-backs” between competing social camps. How do we then balance these opposing demands so as to create an environment for constructive dialogue? Are the current policies and frameworks sufficiently flexible and porous to accommodate the diversity of these “voices”? What policy levers can we rely on to bring us back as one? Opposing groups are formed by situations such as those brought about by the class divide, the longevity divide, inter-ethnic/intra-ethnic divide, Interfaith/Intra-faith divide, political divide, the divide over sexual orientations, the divide over disabilities/different abilities and even neighbourhood divides.

Chairperson

Associate Professor Suzaina Kadir
Vice Dean (Academic Affairs)
Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy

Speakers

Dr Janil Puthucheary
Senior Minister of State
Ministry of Transport
and
Ministry of Communications and Information

Professor Cherian George
Department of Journalism
and
Director
Centre for Media and Communication Research
Hong Kong Baptist University

Question-and-Answer Session

2.45 pm – 3.15 pm

Tea Break

3.15 pm – 4.45 pm

**PANEL IV
Dialogue**

A general round-up of the points of discussion surfaced from Panels I – III.

Chairperson

Ms Debra Soon
Chief Marketing Officer
Mediacorp Pte Ltd

Speakers

Mr Chan Chun Sing
Minister for Trade and Industry

Ms Chua Mui Hoong
Opinion Editor
The Straits Times
Singapore Press Holdings Ltd

Ms Han Yong Mei
Editor
NewsHub
Chinese Media Group
Lianhe Zaobao
Singapore Press Holdings Ltd

Question-and-Answer Session

4.45 pm – 5.00 pm

Closing Remarks

5.00 pm

End

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