

**CONFERENCE
ON
REPORTING RELIGION: DILEMMAS OF PUBLIC DISCOURSE**

*6 – 7 April 2011 (Wednesday & Thursday)
Banquet Suite, M Hotel*

PROGRAMME
(as at 5 April 14:30)

6 APRIL 2011

8.30 am – 9.00 am

Registration

9.00 am – 9.30 am

Opening Remarks

Associate Professor Cherian George
Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information
Nanyang Technological University &
Adjunct Senior Research Fellow
Institute of Policy Studies

Ms Joanne Ng
Director
Organisation and Strategy
Temasek Foundation

Mr Arun Mahizhnan
Deputy Director
Institute of Policy Studies

9.30 am – 10.30 am

Keynote Address

Chairperson

Mr Arun Mahizhnan

Speaker

Professor Jeffrey Haynes
Associate Dean, Research and Postgraduate,
Faculty of Law, Governance and International Relations &
Director
Centre for the Study of Religion, Conflict and Co-operation
London Metropolitan University
United Kingdom

Question-and-Answer Session

10.30 am – 11.00 am

Tea Break

11.00 am – 12.30 pm

PANEL I: Religion: Asian trends

This panel seeks to understand the apparent rise of religiosity in Asia. What are the forces behind it, and what are the numbers? What issues does such a rise raise for relations within society? This panel will also seek to understand the state and religion in Asia. Most countries are constitutionally secular, though some have an established religion. What are the different configurations that Asian countries have adopted, and what are the implications?

Chairperson

Professor Ang Peng Hwa
Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information &
Director
Singapore Internet Research Centre
Nanyang Technological University

Speakers

Dr Mathew Mathews
Research Fellow
Institute of Policy Studies

Dr Suzaina Bte Abdul Kadir
Senior Lecturer
Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy

Dr Liang Yongjia
Senior Research Fellow
Asia Research Institute

Question-and-Answer Session

12.30 pm – 2.00 pm

Lunch

2.00 pm – 3.30 pm

PANEL II: Singapore: Time to shine a light on religion?

Media in Singapore treat religion with great sensitivity – and often not at all. What are the benefits and costs of this special treatment? Does it subject religious institutions to less scrutiny than they deserve? Does it ghettoise religion and unfairly exclude it from the public sphere? Can reporting on religion increase without either promoting it or damaging social relations? Is there room for much more open discussion of religion in the public domain?

Chairperson

Mr Tan Tarn How
Senior Research Fellow
Institute of Policy Studies

Speakers

Ms Zuraidah Ibrahim
Deputy Editor
The Straits Times
Singapore Press Holdings Ltd

Associate Professor Tan Seow Hon
School of Law
Singapore Management University

Mr Asad-ul Iqbal Latif
Visiting Research Fellow
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies

Question-and-Answer Session

3.30 pm – 4.00 pm

Tea Break

4.00 pm – 5.30 pm

PANEL III: Reporting religion: How much and how?

What space for the sacred in secular media? What should be the goal of religion reporting: Is it a way for media to build an emotional connection with their readers? Or to act as a watchdog on powerful religious institutions? Or to create a space for inter-faith dialogue? Does the goal vary from country to country?

Chairperson

Mr P N Balji
Director
TF-NTU Asia Journalism Fellowship
Nanyang Technological University

Speakers

Dr Eric Loo
Senior Lecturer
School of Journalism & Creative Writing
Faculty of Creative Arts
University of Wollongong
Australia

Mr Darshana Ashoka Kumara
Radio Journalist
Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation &
Fellow
TF-NTU Asia Journalism Fellowship
Sri Lanka

Ms Paromita Pain
Freelance Journalist
India

Dr Rachmah Ida
Lecturer
Department of Communications
Airlangga University
Indonesia

Question-and-Answer Session

5.30 pm

End of Day 1 Programme

PROGRAMME

7 APRIL 2011

9.00 am – 10.30 am

PANEL IV: Religious media in Asia

Media serving particular religious communities are booming. What is their impact within and between religious communities? What should society expect of them?

Chairperson

Dr Mathew Mathews

Speakers

Mr Mohamed Nawab Bin Mohamed Osman
Associate Research Fellow
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies
Nanyang Technological University

Associate Professor Pradip Thomas
School of Journalism and Communication &
Co-Director
Centre for Communication and Social Change
The University of Queensland
Australia

Question-and-Answer Session

10.30 am – 11.00 am

Tea Break

11.00 am – 12.30 pm

PANEL V: Reporting intolerance

How should “neutral” media cover extremism and intolerance? What is the role of journalism in promoting peace and tolerance, whether to pre-empt conflict or in a post-conflict society?

Chairperson

Associate Professor Cherian George

Speakers

Mr Imtiaz Alam
Secretary General
South Asian Free Media Association
Pakistan

Ms Prangtip Daorueng
Freelance Journalist
Thailand

Mr Roby Alampay
Senior Manager for New Media
TV5 &
Editor-in-Chief
InterAksyon.com
The Philippines

Question-and-Answer Session

12.30 pm – 12.45 pm

Closing Remarks

Mr Arun Mahizhnan

Associate Professor Cherian George

12.45 pm – 1.30 pm

Transport to Jamiyah Singapore for lunch

1.30 pm – 2.45 pm

Lunch Visit to Jamiyah Singapore

2.45 pm

End of Programme