

**Conference  
on  
Race, Religion and Language**

Thursday, 9 October 2014  
Venus Ballroom (Level 3)  
Furama RiverFront Hotel

**Programme**

(As at 5 September 2014)

8.30 am – 9.00 am

**Registration**

9.00 am – 9.15 am

**Opening Remarks**

Mr Janadas Devan  
Director  
Institute of Policy Studies

9.15 am – 10.45 am

**PANEL 1**

**Findings from the Inter-ethnic Harmony Study**

From July to September 2014, IPS conducted a series of Focus Group discussions with members of the Chinese, Indian, Malay and other ethnic communities of different ages and backgrounds. Over a hundred participants were part of these 18 focus group discussions. The groups examined the IPS-OnePeople.sg Indicators of Harmony, discussed the current concerns of ensuring racial and religious harmony, and provided recommendations to achieve this.

**Speakers**

Dr Mathew Mathews  
Senior Research Fellow  
Institute of Policy Studies

Dr Teng Siao See  
Research Fellow  
Institute of Policy Studies

Dr Chiang Wai Fong  
Research Fellow  
Institute of Policy Studies

Mr Mohammad Khamsya  
Research Assistant  
Institute of Policy Studies

**Question and Answer Session**

10.45 am – 11.00 am

**Tea Break**

11.00 am – 12.30 pm

**PANEL 2  
Building a Racially Harmonious Society**

Allowing Singaporeans to express their racial and ethnic identities builds social cohesion but also highlights differences. Do our ethnic management policies then reinforce or hinder mutual understanding and relationships across racial groups? Some contend that the CMIO framework, while useful for governance in the early years of nation building, has served its utility. Are there new models to address the racial and ethnic diversity of the Singaporean population? If racial categories continue to be important to the future of Singapore, how can we promote healthy racial pride and identity but prevent chauvinism and prejudice? How do we ensure that racial minorities continue to feel a strong stake in a Chinese majority society?

**Speakers**

Dr Nazry Bahrawi  
Lecturer  
Humanities, Arts and Social Design  
Singapore University of Technology and Design

Ms Ang Yiting  
Assistant News Editor  
*Lianhe Zaobao*  
Singapore Press Holdings

**Chairperson**

Dr Sharon Siddique  
Director  
Sreekumar.Siddique & Co Pte Ltd  
and  
Visiting Professorial Fellow  
Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities  
Singapore University of Technology and Design

**Question and Answer Session**

12.30 pm – 1.30 pm

**Lunch**

1.30 pm – 3.00 pm

**PANEL 3  
A Common Language to Unite or Divide**

The success of English as a working language in Singapore has caused a rising preference for the use of English in all public places, and even as a marker of Singaporean identity. To what extent should English be promoted over other official and heritage languages? How has our language management policies impacted the linguistic proficiencies and language attitudes of

Singaporeans?

### **Speakers**

Associate Professor Viniti Vaish  
Office of Education Research  
National Institute of Education

Dr Tan Ying Ying  
Assistant Professor  
Division of Linguistic and Multilingual Studies  
School of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Nanyang Technological University

Associate Professor Mukhlis Abu Bakar  
Asian Languages and Cultures Academic Group  
National Institute of Education

### **Chairperson**

Associate Professor Vincent Ooi  
Department of English Language and Literature  
and  
Assistant Dean (External Relations and Student Life)  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
National University of Singapore

### **Question and Answer Session**

3.00 pm – 3.15 pm

### **Tea Break**

3.15 pm – 4.45 pm

### **PANEL 4**

### **Negotiating the Sacred and the Secular**

Increased religious fervour has sometimes been equated with greater exclusivity and societal tension. State management efforts have attempted to reduce religious conflicts and ensure that religion remains in the private sphere. Commentators, while unanimous on the state's achievement in preventing overt religious tension, are more sceptical about its success in fostering inter-religious understanding or ensuring the preservation of a common space for all Singaporeans. Others, however, are concerned that secularisation might deny some religious people their liberties. Is there a better way for state and society to manage the sacred and the secular?

### **Speakers**

Professor Vineeta Sinha  
Head  
South Asian Studies Programme  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
National University of Singapore

Dr Geoffrey Benjamin  
Senior Associate  
Centre for Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS)  
College of the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences  
Nanyang Technological University

Dr Azhar Ibrahim  
Visiting Fellow  
Department of Malay Studies  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
National University of Singapore

**Chairperson**

Dr Lai Ah Eng  
Adjunct Senior Fellow  
University Scholars Programme  
National University of Singapore

**Question and Answer Session**

4.45pm – 5.00pm

**Closing Remarks**

5.00 pm

**End**

