

DPM Heng and 3 other panellists to discuss outlook for S'pore's economy amid virus crisis

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With the annual debate on the budgets of the various ministries having come to an end last week, Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Heng Swee Keat will share further views on the outlook for Singapore's economy amid the coronavirus outbreak, as well as longer-term structural issues, during a roundtable organised by The Business Times and The Straits Times tomorrow.

The ST-BT Budget Roundtable 2020, with OCBC Bank as the presenting sponsor, will feature Mr Heng alongside three other panellists.

They are OCBC Bank head of global commercial banking Linus Goh, Ademco Security Group managing director Toby Koh and Institute of Policy Studies senior research fellow Faizal Yahya.

The moderator for the session is Straits Times associate editor Vikram Khanna.

They will discuss the latest assessment of the coronavirus outbreak and its impact on both the global and Singapore economy, including the question of whether Singapore will be able to dodge a recession.

Also to be discussed are the vulnerable sectors and how small and medium-sized enterprises are coping; what additional support measures, if any, might be needed; and the outbreak's impact on the banking sector.

The roundtable will also address topics such as engagement with the region, how to encourage the hiring of older workers, and monetisation options for seniors living in public housing.

Amid rising social expenditures, the panellists are also expected to address the age-old question of whether additional revenue-raising measures - beyond the upcoming goods and services tax hike, which is expected to take place some time between 2022 and 2025 - will be needed.

Full coverage of the roundtable will be in Thursday's edition of The Straits Times, while video highlights will be available on the websites of both The Straits Times and The Business Times.

After the roundtable is over, Mr Heng will also do a live radio interview on Money FM 89.3 from 12.45pm to 1pm with presenter Elliott Danker.