



Lee Kuan Yew  
School of Public Policy



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# global-is-asian

A Newsletter of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy

## US Sets New Priorities in Asia



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## global is asian

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# Message from the Dean



WELCOME TO THE SECOND ISSUE OF *GLOBAL-IS-ASIAN*, the quarterly newsletter of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy.

The world will learn many lessons from the ongoing global financial crisis, which has morphed into a global economic crisis. Of course, we cannot learn all the lessons yet because we do not yet know whether this crisis is just another severe cyclical downturn or a possible breakdown in the global economic system as we know it. Not even the CEOs and financial experts gathered at the World Economic Forum in January 2009 seemed to have a clear understanding of how big this crisis is and what we need to do to get out of it. Everybody was lost in Davos.

One big lesson the world will certainly learn is the renewed importance of public policy education. In the heydays of the financial bubble, too many good minds were lured into Wall Street. They created mountains of derivatives, in a belief that they were creating new instruments for risk management and economic value. Now we know that many went overboard and created “financial weapons of mass destruction.” To avoid a repetition of this debacle, the world now realises that it needs good governance, even in the arena of financial markets previously lauded by many as a model of self-regulation. Good governance is what public policy education is designed to deliver.

The name of this newsletter, *Global-is-Asian*, may have generated a chuckle or two. However, the name also embodies two serious ideas: globalisation and the growing global importance of Asia. In the current crisis, the name may also prove to be prescient. Certainly, Asian countries have also been hit hard by the crisis. Many of them, however, already had in place sensible policies for dealing with the effects of globalisation—e.g., conservative financial regulation, stable macroeconomic policies, prudential banking systems, and an emphasis on good governance. Hence, as the world grapples with the crisis, it may be time to pay more attention to perspectives coming from Asia. A key goal of our school, communicated through this newsletter, is to generate more of such perspectives on key global challenges.

  
*Kishore Mahbubani*

# US Sets New Priorities in Asia

TEXT | NATALIA OLYNEC



**US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (L) meets with Chinese President Hu Jintao in Beijing on February 21. Clinton called here for a deeper partnership between the US and China, saying the world powers needed to unite to tackle the economy and climate change.**

(OLIVER WEIKEN/AFP/Getty Images)

The new administration of US President Barack Obama will give higher diplomatic priority to the Asian countries and is likely to promote greater multilateral cooperation in areas such as the global economic crisis, climate change, and security, scholars at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy said.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF THE REGION** was highlighted by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's decision to make her first foreign trip as secretary of state to Asia, rather than to Europe or the Middle East.

"There has been a general feeling that perhaps we didn't pay an appropriate amount of attention to Asia over the last years," Clinton said at the Asia Society in New York ahead of her trip in February. Her tour included visits to Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, and China.

"There will certainly be an effort to broaden

the relationship with China, which will be a dramatic change," Ann Florini, director of the Centre on Asia and Globalisation at the LKY School, said in an interview. "There will be less of an effort to use bilateral relationships to play different actors off against each other and more of an effort to engage multilaterally on a range of global challenges."

While the US is certainly preoccupied with a growing recession at home and two ongoing wars, it will have to pay close attention to a region with close to \$5 trillion in reserves and sovereign wealth funds that are helping to finance the ballooning US budget deficit, said Huang Jing, visiting professor at the LKY School and senior overseas economic analyst for China's Xinhua news agency.

"The most important consequence of US-China relations in the past years is they created an inescapable interdependence," said Huang. "China and the US will continue to help each other to prevent a type of doomsday for both countries."

The US should place special focus on shoring up Asia's three largest economies and on giving them a greater voice in international and economic affairs, Florini said. *continued on page 6 >*



# BBC World Debate:

## Will the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Be the Asian Century?



**Kishore Mahbubani, Constanze Stelzenmuller, Pratap Bhanu Mehta, Huang Jing, John Ikenberry, and Nik Gowing**

The LKY School hosted the BBC World Debate on December 6, 2008, where a panel of leading intellectuals held a lively exchange of views on the topic “Will the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Be ‘the Asian Century?’”

**THE DEBATE**, which was broadcast internationally, was moderated by BBC World News presenter Nik Gowing and recorded in front of a live audience of high-level delegates from the S.T. Lee Global Governance Project Conference, organised by the LKY School’s Centre on Asia and Globalisation.

Panel members included John Ikenberry, Professor of Politics and International Affairs at the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University, Pratap Bhanu Mehta, president of the Centre for Policy Research, a leading think tank in India, Kishore Mahbubani, dean of the LKY School, Constanze Stelzenmuller, director, Berlin Office, the German Marshall Fund of the US, and Huang Jing, a visiting professor at the LKY School and a well-known scholar of Sino-US relations and Chinese politics.

Panelists discussed a range of questions including: Power is shifting from West to East, but how far and how fast will it go? Could Asia

become the global centre of gravity? Should the West resist a loss of power and influence? Will the global economic downturn accelerate the shift of power to the East?

In a discussion about international organisations such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, Mahbubani said there are limited opportunities for Asians to take leadership roles.

“The West dominates global institutions,” he said. “You still have a rule that says to become the head of the IMF, you must be European. To become head of the World Bank, you must be American. That is the kind of anachronism that has to go.”

Asia’s rise would bring greater parity in the world, rather than the decline of the West, said Ikenberry.

“The West will have to move over and share,” he said. “I don’t think this is really the end of the institutions of the West.”

Asian countries must be ready to make active contributions to the debate on how international institutions should be governed and on “how we should solve or address crises together,” said Stelzenmuller.

Asian countries must build their capacity to provide leadership, Mahbubani said. “The demand for Asian leadership is going to grow by leaps and bounds in the coming years.” **gisa**

# Asians Must Come Together for a Better Future

In the first of a series of editorials, Visiting Professor Huang Jing, a panelist on the BBC World Debate, shares his views on Asia's place in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**THE UNFOLDING GLOBAL RECESSION** is claiming hefty tolls on Asia, causing substantial slowdowns from well-developed Japan to energetic China, and from booming Dubai to prosperous Mumbai.

The challenge Asia faces now is fundamental. In retrospect, from the "East Asian miracle" led by Japan to "Asia's rise" driven by China and India's rapid growth, virtually all Asian economies (except the oil producers) have followed the same export-led development model, preconditioned by open and prosperous external markets on the one hand, and steady inflows of foreign investment on the other. Now with shrinking external markets, the freeze on capital liquidity, and efforts by various developed countries to stimulate (and protect) their dominant industries, this export-led development model has run out of gas.

Facing such a gloomy prospect, all Asian countries, especially the leading powers such as China, Japan, and India, have adopted various stimulus plans to reenergise their domestic economies. However, Asia's policymakers as well as business leaders must not overlook the bigger picture of inescapable interdependence, thanks to unprecedented economic integration amidst globalisation in the past decades. Such interdependence has predetermined that Asian countries must make a joint effort to pull themselves out of this dangerous turbulence and sustain prosperity and stability.

This global recession has also exposed a vital weakness in Asia's development. Despite increasing economic integration, regional institutions in Asia are strikingly insufficient. Although various regional organisations or quasi-organisations – such as ASEAN, ASEAN+3, APEC, East Asian Summit (EAS), the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) – have



played active roles in promoting mutual confidence in regional affairs, few are capable of enforcing abiding rules to shape the policies of their member countries. The existing institutions are too weak and fragmentary to effectively manage international affairs, especially the conflicts caused by different interests in the region. Without effective institutional frameworks and mechanisms to coordinate their actions, Asian countries can neither optimise the benefits of economic integration nor minimise their vulnerability in times of crisis.

Although eight of the world's top ten foreign reserve holders are in Asia – China, Japan, Russia, Taiwan, India, South Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong (Brazil and Germany rank the 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> respectively), with nearly US\$5 trillion in their holding, Asian countries appear incapable of taking

any initiatives to either prevent their hard-earned assets from being washed away by the financial tsunami, or help stabilise (and reconstruct) the world's financial architecture that is weakened by the collapse of Wall Street's credibility.

Indeed, while it is premature to develop an Asian currency right now, there is an increasing urgency for the Asian countries to work out a coordinating mechanism on financial affairs. This is not just to reduce their high financial vulnerability. More importantly, Asia's rise, driven by China and India's fast growth and continuous regional integration, cannot be sustained without an effective regional financial regime through which Asian countries can optimise their financial options and better protect their interests.

Despite deep-seated suspicions and enormous differences in cultures, political systems, as well as the levels of development, economic integration has irreversibly involved all Asian countries on the same course of destiny vis-à-vis their future development. Only by coming together can Asians weather the current storm and, more importantly, turn the formidable challenges into unprecedented opportunities for a better future.

The current global recession has made this task more pressing. After all, Asia's rise, as envisioned by LKY School Dean Kishore Mahbubani in his book, *The New Asian Hemisphere*, cannot be truly accomplished unless the Asian community is firmly established upon the framework of effective and viable regional institutions. **gis**

*Huang Jing, PhD (Political Science), Harvard University, is a visiting professor at the LKY School. An authority on Chinese politics, China's foreign relations, and security issues in Asia Pacific, Huang is the senior overseas economic analyst for China's Xinhua news agency and the overseas advisor to The China Foundation for International and Strategic Studies.*

NOTABLE  
LECTURES

DEC  
MAR  
2009

“Obama Takes Office:  
From Making History to  
Effective Administration  
in a Time of Crisis”



**Jeffrey D. Straussman**  
Dean of Rockefeller College of  
Public Affairs & Policy, University  
at Albany, State University of  
New York

**Theodore R. Marmor**  
Adjunct Professor of Public Policy,  
Harvard Kennedy School

**Alan Altshuler**  
Ruth and Frank Stanton Professor  
of Urban Policy and Planning,  
Harvard Kennedy School

Three senior analysts of American public policy discussed the challenges facing President Barack Obama as he prepares to tackle the ongoing financial crisis and international conflicts amid unusually high expectations both at home and abroad.

“If the economic crisis is not cured promptly or the international crisis is not alleviated, then Obama will be blamed,” said Altshuler. “The question is: how boldly should he act? Should he act quickly or strive to overcome partisan divisions even if it requires more political compromise? The argument on both sides is very strong.”

“A New Approach to  
Multilateralism During  
the Financial Crisis”



**Robert B. Zoellick**  
11<sup>th</sup> President of the World Bank  
Group

Zoellick spoke to a packed audience of more than 300 people. Responding to a rapid volley of questions from a panel of students who shared the stage with him along with LKY School Dean Kishore Mahbubani in a dialogue, Zoellick said the Bank is addressing key criticisms it faces such as the underrepresentation of developing countries.

“You could not think of a better partner for the World Bank than Singapore,” Zoellick said. “Singapore has the ability to be an interconnecting point in the region. It is a wonderful testimony to the ongoing process of building a stronger international system.”

## “Turnaround of Indian Railways”



**Lalu Prasad**  
Minister for Railways, Government of India

Indian Minister of Railways Lalu Prasad told a standing-room-only audience the story of how he engineered the dramatic turnaround of railways with a budget of just \$200 million when he took the top post of this national institution in 2004. The revival of the railway behemoth is now a popular case study in policy and business schools around the world. Prasad rejected advice from the World Bank to increase fares, layoff employees, and privatise the core business of the organisation. Instead, he kept the railways' 1.4 million employees, reduced fares, improved efficiency, and started partnerships with private companies.

“Our vision is to be the number one railway the world over,” Prasad, dressed in a traditional white Indian kurta, told an audience of about 600 people that overflowed into an adjacent hall to watch the lecture on a large screen video. “It is our earning horse.”

## “Peace with Nature”



**Oscar Arias Sanchez,**  
President of the Republic of Costa Rica

The President of Costa Rica presented his initiative “Peace with Nature,” an invitation to all the countries of the world to unite and make a consolidated effort to strengthen their actions and political commitment to reverse the trends of environmental degradation caused by the impact of human activities on the planet’s ecosystems.

“In order to achieve the common goal of maintaining and restoring the ecosystems that sustain life on Earth, it is essential that all nations, both developed and developing, form a global alliance under a new ethic that recognises our interdependence.”



*<continued from page 1 >* “Obama’s first challenge is to try to figure out how to transform the fundamental global architecture in some truly useful way that would be acceptable to China, India, and Japan going forward, that would also be accepted domestically in America,” Florini said. “We’re going to have to try to redesign a global economic governance system under these conditions of extraordinary stress when governments are going to be all but consumed by domestic pressures.”

### Protectionism

One fear among the Asian countries is that the US will adopt protectionist measures under pressure from millions of voters who have lost their jobs and have seen their savings dwindle, said Tommy Koh, chairman of the Institute of Policy Studies and Singapore’s ambassador-at-large.

“At a time like this it is very tempting to be expedient and to resort to protectionist measures in order to save jobs,” Koh said at the launch of the Asia Foundation’s report “America’s Role in Asia” at the LKY School. “Protectionism is not the answer. On the contrary, protectionism will lead to trade wars, which will lead to an economic disaster for all of us.”

### Climate Change

One of the biggest challenges of the Obama administration will be coordinating efforts with China and other Asian countries to fight climate change, Florini said.

“Obama is going to have to try to persuade the rest of the world to continue to take climate change seriously and impose costs on industries that are very carbon intensive at a time when they are preoccupied with the economic catastrophe that they’re facing,” she said.

### Human Rights

Finding common ground on other sensitive issues such as Tibet and human rights will be more difficult as the US needs Chinese cooperation in dealing with the global economic meltdown in areas such as financial regulation, economic stimulus packages, and currency and trade policies.

“Although Obama can’t say this publicly, I think human rights will simply be a low priority in light of the economic challenges in both countries,” said Jeffrey Straussman, dean of the

Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy at State University of New York at Albany on a visit to the LKY School.

In terms of security, the US is likely to seek to include the Chinese in multiparty talks with the North Koreans. Clinton’s trip came as North Korea increased rhetoric against South Korea, a US ally.

“The US has to find constructive ways to engage with North Korea and reduce the prospect, though low, that North Korea could lash out and South Korea would be the immediate victim,” Straussman said.

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**“Human rights will simply be a low priority in light of the economic challenges in both countries.”**

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### Security

Obama’s biggest security concern in the region will be the conflict in Afghanistan and ensuring stability in Pakistan and neighbouring India, said Alan Altshuler, Stanton Professor of Urban Policy and Planning at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government & Graduate School of Design on a visit to the LKY School.

“There’s the expanding possibility that the northern territories of Pakistan and the wilds of Afghanistan could flower even more as the breeding grounds for global terrorism,” Altshuler said. “We worry about Pakistan being diverted from the terrorism threat and more focused on the tensions with India.”

Another of Obama’s greatest contributions could be to mend relations with Islamic countries, said Kishore Mahbubani, dean of the LKY School.

Obama should “deliver a thoughtful speech about America’s relations with the Islamic world” on a special visit to Indonesia, where Obama spent part of his childhood, said Mahbubani. Obama should explain “how the Islamic world could modernise itself and how America needs to change its relations with the Islamic world. That would make a big difference.” **gisa**



# Young Dubai Leaders Study at LKY School



**Professor Neo Boon Siong teaches a seminar entitled “The Singapore Story”**

**THE LEE KUAN YEW SCHOOL** hosted a study visit on February 2-4 for young leaders from Dubai entitled “Managing Global Cities.” Participants were part of the Elite Programme run by the Mohammed Bin Rashid Programme for Leadership Development.

The Elite Programme is targeted at talented young professionals in their mid-20s who have proven academic excellence and strong leadership potential, and who hold positions in organisations that promote the region’s human and socioeconomic progress.

The visit is part of the government’s efforts to identify and prepare promising young UAE nationals to be future leaders capable of managing the strategic initiatives of their local and federal government.

The 19 participants attended daily sessions on different key themes, including governance and national competitiveness, sustainable urban development, Asian geopolitics, and regional financial outlook. The programme covered the future planning of cities and the critical elements that have contributed to Singapore’s success. The group also had the opportunity to visit the NEWater Visitor’s Centre and interact with Harry Seah, director of the water quality and technology office.

The establishment of new initiatives and overall progress in the field of public policy is a high priority in Dubai, said Fatma Belrehif, a project manager at the Knowledge & Human Development

Authority in Dubai, who participated in the course.

“The course enabled us to put a variety of elements in perspective and allowed us to clearly understand global interconnectivity not only in terms of the challenges faced by the world, but also the common need to establish solutions for the world,” said Belrehif.

Maha Bu Muhair, urban innovation officer at the Centre for Research & Urban Innovation in Dubai, said lessons learned from Singapore’s experiences could be applied to the development of Dubai.

“We have learned many lessons from all of you in providing us a big picture and understanding of Singapore, and what role ‘we’ need to play in shaping our city—Dubai,” said Bu Muhair, urban innovation officer at the Centre for Research & Urban Innovation in Dubai. **gisa**



**Rahma Al Owais, manager, business development, and Adel Al Shared, CEO, Mohammed Bin Rashid Programme for Leadership Development**

## LKY School Offers Good Governance Course for Mongolian Officials

**THE LKY SCHOOL CONDUCTED** an executive education programme on “Good Governance Capacity Building for Mongolia” on December 8–12, 2008 for high-level state secretaries from the Mongolian government.

Mongolia has a rich tradition of statehood and could look to the legacy of Chinggis Khaan in such areas as rule of law and equality before the law, said Purevjav Gansukh, Mongolian ambassador to Singapore. The LKY School’s executive education programme “served well” the challenge of strengthening Mongolia’s governance system in response to what the LKY School’s dean, Kishore Mahbubani, has referred to as “new realities created by . . . rapidly globalising economies,” Gansukh said.

Participants came from the following ministries: Finance; Health; Education; Foreign Affairs and Trade; Minerals and Energy; Justice and Internal Affairs; Nature and Environment; and Road, Transportation, Construction, and Urban Development.

Courses included Dynamic Governance; Managing Policy Changes: Leadership and Strategy; Policy Innovations in Singapore; Corruption: Causes, Consequences, and Control; and Challenges of State-Building: National Identity, Political Leadership, and Institutions.

Mongolia is very interested in expanding cooperation and relations with other Asian countries, including Singapore, Gansukh said. In January of 2008, Mongolia upgraded its Consulate General in Singapore to a full embassy. **gisa**



**Executive Programme on Good Governance Capacity Building for Mongolia December 8-12, 2008**

## Taiwan Executives Study Globalisation and Leadership at LKY School

**THE LKY SCHOOL DESIGNED** and delivered an eight-day executive programme on Globalisation and Leadership for senior executives from Taiwan R.O.C. on December 1–10, 2008. Faculty members led the delegation through a broad range of topics, including Recent Global Financial Turmoil: Policy Lessons for Asia, Globalisation and Political Changes

in China, and Dynamic Governance: Role of the Public Service in Singapore.

The course incorporated the experience of Singapore, drawing on lessons from study visits to the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau, Urban Redevelopment Authority, Civil Service College, and the NEWater Visitor Centre. **gisa**

## Healthcare Policy Executive Training Attracts Regional Health Professionals

**THE LKY SCHOOL COLLABORATED** with Diagnostics Pte Ltd to deliver a three-day Healthcare Policy and Management executive training programme on December 10–12, 2008. The 18 participants from Singapore, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia included mainly healthcare professionals. The programme, designed by LKY School Associate Professor Phua Kai Hong in consultation with Diagnostics, provided essential tools for understanding healthcare policy formulation, planning and management of healthcare facilities, and evaluation of healthcare quality.

Topics included Strategic Planning and Financial Management in Healthcare, Healthcare Organisational Behaviour, Health Human Resource Management,

Healthcare Reforms, and a case study on hospital corporatisation.

One of the participants, Maria Estela Felipa M. Aceron, vice-governor of Oriental Mindoro, Philippines, was particularly interested in the field visits to hospitals and other healthcare facilities. She said she would use the executive programme as a “guiding tool in the formulation of policies as well as in the adoption of programmes that will help uplift the quality of health services” in her province in the Philippines.

Suhumaran N., director and consultant of Star Essential Training, Consultancy and Services, called the course an “eye-opener” and said he appreciated the insights provided by the professors on healthcare quality in Singapore. **gisa**

# Unicef Urges Policymakers to Support Children during Financial Crisis

TEXT | NATALIA OLYNEC



**Street children in Jaipur, India**  
Photo by Michael Culme-Seymour

**ASIAN GOVERNMENTS** must find ways to increase their support for women and children even as government revenue dwindles during the global financial crisis, officials from the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) said at a conference held at the LKY School on January 6–7.

More than 150 East Asian and Pacific scholars and leaders from government and nonprofit organisations gathered at the conference to examine best policy practices regarding the impact of the crisis on child health and nutrition, labour, education and social protection. Participants also studied the lessons from the 1997–1998 Asian economic crisis and discussed how they can be applied to the current financial turmoil affecting countries across the globe.

"The UN Convention on Children's Rights, which has been ratified by all nations, is clear: children should get help first, especially in economically difficult times," said Anupama Rao Singh, Unicef director for East Asia and the Pacific.

The economic crisis is causing increased unemployment and is forcing many families to send their children to work and to cut back on nutrition, education, and healthcare. Malnutrition hurts not only the children, but also the economy as it stunts growth and intellectual

development, according to Unicef.

"Whilst much of the current discourse seems focused on countries' economic resilience, I would suggest that an equally important focus ought to be on the social impact of the crisis, and in particular, its implications for children given their added vulnerabilities," said Vivian Balakrishnan, Singapore's minister for community development, youth, and sports. "We must not compromise their future, even as we deal with the current economic challenges."

**"We can find 8,000 billion dollars to bail out rich banks, but we cannot find six billion dollars to feed the children of the world," said, Mahbubani, who was a beneficiary of free milk programmes in Singapore as a child. "Something is very wrong here."**

The recent crisis could increase rates of maternal anaemia in East Asia by 10 percent to 20 percent;

raise the prevalence of low birth weight by 5 percent to 10 percent; and boost the overall under-five child mortality in severely affected countries of Southeast Asia and the Pacific Region by 3 percent to 11 percent, Balakrishnan said. In 2007, the International Labour Organisation projected that almost 20 million children were vulnerable to becoming or would have become child workers in East Asia and Pacific by 2016.

"Our choices now will determine whether we restore the rapid development of this region or let decades of social progress towards the Millennium Development Goals erode," Indonesian Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati said at the conference. The goals include reducing by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five child mortality rate and cutting by half the proportion of people living on less than \$1 a day.

Governments should reassess their priorities during the crisis, said Kishore Mahbubani, dean of the LKY School.

He cited data showing that feeding programmes for malnourished children worldwide would cost \$6 billion a year. This compares with more the \$8 trillion used by governments to bail out the world's richest banks over the past few months.

"We can find 8,000 billion dollars to bail out rich banks, but we cannot find six billion dollars to feed the children of the world," said Mahbubani who was a beneficiary of free milk programmes in Singapore as a child. "Something is very wrong here." **gis**





In Conversation:

## Anupama Rao Singh

Regional Director, Unicef East Asia and Pacific Office

### **What are the key areas where children will be most vulnerable to the effects of the financial crisis?**

Children all over the region will be affected since they are the most vulnerable members of society. The East Asia and the Pacific Island economies are extremely diverse and every nation is being hit by this crisis in different ways. Thailand and Singapore are dealing with the fall-out of their export-oriented policies, while the Pacific Island nations, which are extremely isolated, are having to deal with higher fuel costs for their imports.



**Anupama Rao Singh, Regional Director, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Office, visits a Unicef programme at A-latt-chaung village across Rangoon River, Myanmar**

*Photo credit: UNICEF/EAPRO/Myo Thame*

**“And we all should understand that crisis or no crisis, there is absolutely no justification – social or economic – for cutting programmes for children.”**

### **What are the key challenges for Unicef and governments in responding to these needs?**

Monitoring and assessing the impacts of the crisis on children in a short span of time will be a major challenge. We are exploring ways in which rapid data collection through reliable methods can be set up. From the government side, it is crucial that they are able to understand the economic rationale – in addition to the social – of investing in social protection programmes during this downturn. We at Unicef will support this endeavour within each country and among countries in the region as well.

### **How will the UN Millennium Development Goals be affected by the crisis?**

The main impact will be reduced official development aid flowing into developing countries and also the tendency of governments to contemplate reducing spending on social protection, health and education programmes that will help achieve these goals.

The East Asia and Pacific region is on track to achieving some goals by 2015, set as the goals' target year. However, there are some worrying indicators such as the maternal mortality ratio, which is the ratio of the number of women who die during or shortly after pregnancy per 100,000 live births. This rate increased between 2000 and 2005 in Cambodia despite the increased development work happening there. Since the goals are measures of progress in human development – something that provides the basis for development in general – we should not let the economic crisis affect programmes that are aimed at achieving these goals.

### **What have been the achievements of the conference?**

The conference has heightened public awareness through considerable media coverage in the region. Crucially, it has

spurred national governments into action in the region. A number of countries who sent delegations to the conference – such as the Pacific Island nations and Lao PDR – have expressed a desire to organise similar initiatives at the sub-regional and national level very soon. The conference also emphasised the importance of collecting reliable data to monitor the social impacts of the crisis to help design effective interventions.

### **What are the main policy solutions that must be implemented to address the concerns raised at the conference?**

We advocate for increased social protection programmes that especially shield children and other vulnerable populations from the impacts of the economic crisis. This must be done through improved data collection to help design effective interventions.

Building or expanding social protection systems can be an effective and integral part of economic stimulus and recovery. **gisa**

*More information on the impact of the economic crisis on children at: [http://www.unicef.org/eapro/media\\_9170.htm](http://www.unicef.org/eapro/media_9170.htm).*



# ANZ Sponsors Scholarships for Vietnamese Students

TEXT | PANOS VRAHIOTIS

THE AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND Banking Group (ANZ) is sponsoring scholarships for Vietnamese students studying at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy. With these scholarships, ANZ aims to bolster partnerships in key regions.

LKY School Dean Kishore Mahbubani described the scholarship as “a visionary move and sound investment by ANZ, at a time when most people and organisations are thinking of cost-cutting.”

Governance goes hand in hand with the marketplace, Mahbubani said at a signing ceremony on January 8. He cited the partnership of the LKY School with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which has resulted in the training of 900 Vietnamese public servants through the school’s executive education programme.

Michael Correa, head of markets in Asia at ANZ, said the company’s strength lies in the quality of its staff and maintaining the company’s status as a major regional player.

The scholarship includes full tuition, room and board, and expenses for the Master in Public Policy



Kishore Mahbubani, LKY School dean; Michael Correa, head of markets in Asia at ANZ; Bill Foo, CEO of ANZ Singapore

(MPP) programme. Successful applicants will also be given the opportunity to specialise in the Economic and Policy Analysis track of the programme as well as enroll in electives selected by ANZ. The students will complete internships at ANZ Singapore during term breaks and work for two years at the ANZ Vietnam office upon graduation. **gisa**

# LKY School Hosts “People of Liberia” Photo Exhibition



Blue-eyed girl, Liberia

THE LKY SCHOOL HOSTED the “People of Liberia” photo exhibition by UN Fellow Lino Sciarra on

December 2–12. The exhibit offered an intimate view of the human faces, and especially the children, who are affected by war and benefit from development programmes.

Liberia witnessed fourteen years of civil war fuelled by the competition for control over the revenues generated from diamonds, timber, iron ore, and rubber. The warring parties committed horrific atrocities, recruited thousands of child soldiers, resorted to mass rape, displaced hundreds of thousands of people, and destroyed the country’s infrastructure and economy.

Since the establishment of the

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in October 2003 much has been achieved. Liberia has known five years of uninterrupted peace. However, Liberia is still one of the most underdeveloped countries in Africa, with the majority of its population living below the poverty line without access to basic services.

The photographs shown in the exhibition were taken by Sciarra between October 2006 and June 2008 while he served as field officer in Fishtown and Buchanan, Liberia. He returned to continue his work in Liberia in December. **gisa**

# LKY School Conducts Outreach to Saudi Arabia

ASTRID S. TUMINEZ, assistant dean of executive education and director (Research), and Elaine Lew Ee Ling, manager, external affairs, donned their abayas in November and headed to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to promote the LKY School and its programmes to potential candidates. They visited colleges, universities, and private organisations in Jeddah, Riyadh, and Dammam to discuss the programmes offered at the LKY School and its generous scholarships. Tuminez delivered a speech on the “Foundations of Leadership in a Globalised World” to an enthusiastic group of students and faculty at Alfaisal University in Riyadh. **gisa**



Astrid S. Tuminez and Elaine Lew Ee Ling with Saudi educational administrators in front of the palace of King Faisal

# CAG Launches Governance Project at Conference

THE CENTRE ON ASIA AND GLOBALISATION (CAG) convened a conference on December 4-6, 2008 on *"Governance of a Globalising World: Whither Asia and the West"* to launch the three-year S.T. Lee Project on Global Governance, which explores how the international community can cooperate more effectively.

The project, co-chaired by CAG Director Ann Florini and LKY School Dean Kishore Mahbubani, addresses two key sets of questions. First, how can states, the private sector, and civil society better organise to address the deficiencies in global governance in a world of emerging multipolarity and deepening globalisation? Second, how can, and should, Asia translate its emerging economic clout into positive political influence that will strengthen global governance?

The inaugural conference of the project brought together more than 50 leading scholars and policymakers from Asia, Europe, and North America to explore issue areas where governance is needed but not well provided.

Strobe Talbott, president of the Brookings Institution, argued in his keynote address that the century that has just begun is neither Asian nor American, it is a global century. The United States has an inescapable responsibility to work with the

global community in building a more effective system of governance, Talbott said.

George Yeo, Singapore's minister for foreign affairs, stressed the need to put human beings at the heart of global governance. While globalisation has bound all of humanity together, we are still separated by deep historical and cultural differences, he said.

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## How can, and should, Asia translate its emerging economic clout into positive political influence that will strengthen global governance?

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"When we talk about global governance, when all is said and done, it has to be built around the human being – respect for human beings, respect for the diversity of human beings," he said.



■ Kishore Mahbubani, George Yeo, and Strobe Talbott at the S.T. Lee Project on Global Governance conference



(from left to right) Huang Jing (Visiting Professor, LKY School), Ann Florini (Director, CAG), Dr Lee Seng Tee (philanthropist), Wang Gung Wu (Chairman, LKY School), Kishore Mahbubani (Dean, LKY School)

In the following two days, the conference participants closely examined key issues of global governance from a variety of perspectives. They began by discussing the concept of sovereignty in the context of globalisation and the changing world order, drawing from a workshop on concepts of global governance that immediately preceded the main conference. The conference then examined global governance through the lens of geopolitics, in the session on “Global Governance and the Major Powers.”

“When we talk about global governance, it has to be built around the human being – respect for human beings, respect for the diversity of human beings.”

Subsequent sessions singled out key global issues for which improved global governance is clearly essential: health, energy, and the economy. The conference ended with the BBC World Debate on the potential shift of power to Asia, and a final report on the next steps for each component of the S.T. Lee Project.

Following this successful conference, the S.T. Lee Project will establish a number of high-level study groups to carry out detailed research. Over the remaining two years of the project, these study groups will hold workshops and develop research papers aimed at shaping the debate on global governance. **gisa**

*The full report on this conference is available on the CAG homepage ([www.lkyspp.nus.sg/CAG](http://www.lkyspp.nus.sg/CAG)). For further information on the Project, contact Sung Lee, Project Manager of the S.T. Lee Project on Global Governance, [slee@nus.edu.sg](mailto:slee@nus.edu.sg)*



■ George Yeo, Singapore’s Minister for Foreign Affairs.



# IPS Explores Key Issues Facing Singapore

TEXT | TAN TARN HOW

## THE INSTITUTE OF POLICY

**STUDIES'** flagship annual conference, Singapore Perspectives 2009, explored on January 19 several main issues facing the island-state's development. The conference theme was "The Heart of the Matter," and more than 600 participants listened to panel discussions on four topics:

- Can Singaporeans Afford a High-Cost Singapore?
- Can Singaporeans Remain Rooted?
- Can Singapore Preserve Its Hub Status?
- Can Government Do Less and Singaporeans Do More?

Among the highlights was the opening address by Peter Ong of Gallup who said the government should engage citizens in new ways to foster a stronger sense of pride and passion for the country.

Singapore's poorest 30 percent of the population are facing "a double whammy" of falling wages and increasing living costs, said Laurence Lien, chief executive officer, National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre.

Singapore has pushed up the costs of doing business too quickly, said Inderjit Singh, executive chairman, Tri Star Electronics Pte. Ltd. He called for a more sustainable

**Singapore's poorest 30 percent of the population are facing a "double whammy" of falling wages and increasing living costs.**

model for economic development, one that would rebalance the strategy of attracting multinational corporations here to one that was more focused on developing local enterprises.

Singapore's strategy of becoming a hub has moved from the concept of companies using Singapore as a "home" rather than a "host," said Tan Chin Nam, chairman, Media Development Authority. Singapore's weakness as a hub was that it lacked critical mass and a hinterland, according to Manu Bhaskaran, director and CEO, Centennial Asia Advisors Pte. Ltd. To gain scale,

Singapore could embrace the Iskandar Development Project Region in Johor, he said. The government needs to have a strong hand in certain sectors of the economy to ensure development, argued Debra Soon, chief editor, Mediacorp News.

Regarding national identity, if Singaporeans feel affirmed, accepted and secure in their sense of citizenship, they would be even more generous in welcoming foreigners into Singapore, said Tan Ern Ser, associate professor, Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore.

Playwright Eleanor Wong called for tolerance for alternative narratives of citizenship. She said rootedness that resonated within each individual is needed, rather than holding on to the single "emperor's" narrative where loyalty of subjects was predominant.

Singapore has reached the stage of development where it cannot afford not to have a protected space for Singapore civil society, argued Philip Jeyaretnam, partner, Rodyk & Davidson. He said Singapore should move away from the current emphasis on efficiency at the expense of the social process of value-setting. **gisa**



IPS Singapore Perspectives Conference



# IWP Executive Programme Trains Leaders in Water Governance

TEXT | RITA PADAWANGI



■ K.E. Seetharam, founding director of IWP, welcomes participants

THE INSTITUTE OF WATER POLICY at the LKY School launched its first executive programme on “Leadership in Water Governance” in November 2008 to help policy makers and public sector managers in Asia efficiently manage and develop their water resources.

Conducted in partnership with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and PUB, Singapore’s water utility, the programme contributed to capacity building among policymakers and water sector managers with the goal of promoting sustainable water resources management. Twenty senior managers and policymakers from throughout Asia attended the programme to study cases from the region which underscore the importance of leadership in the water sector.

“The root of the problem is less outright availability of water, than the need to properly manage our water resources,” said Michael Barrow, co-chair of the ADB’s water committee, in opening remarks at the conference.

Ek Sonn Chan, general director of Phnom Penh Water Supply Authority (PPWSA) in Cambodia, described how a war-torn city plagued by corruption and waste was rebuilt to become one of the most efficient and successful water management cases in Asia. Since 1993, the city reduced non-revenue water from 72 percent to 6 percent; increased bill collection to 99.9 percent from 48 percent; and boosted water metre coverage to 100 percent from 13 percent.

Another success story was shared by Tony Aquino from Manila Water Company (MWC), in which leadership proved to be a key factor in the private sector.

By sharing case studies from different economies and enabling opportunities for networking among practitioners and experts, the programme aimed to nurture leaders who practice good governance in the water sector, said K.E. Seetharam, founding director of IWP.

LKY School faculty members Scott Fritzen, Eduardo Araral, Jesuthason Thampapillai, Shreekanth Gupta, and Wu Xun delivered key lectures that covered regulation, water markets, water tariffs, and project appraisal. Other experts who delivered lectures included Anand Chiplunkar of the ADB and Arthur McIntosh, a water expert with extensive consulting experience in water supplies in various Asian countries.

Toshio Koike from the Department of Civil Engineering at the University of Tokyo also gave a public lecture on climate change and water. Speakers from PUB included Chan Yoon Kum, assistant chief executive, Tan Yok Gin, director of policy and planning, Harry Seah, director of technology and water quality office, and Pang Chee Meng, assistant director of the Environment and Water Industry Development Council (EWI), under Singapore’s Ministry of Environment & Water Resources.

**“The root of the problem is less outright availability of water, than the need to properly manage our water resources.”**

Participants toured the Changi Water Reclamation Plant and the Ulu Pandan NEWater Plant to witness technologies that process sludge into clean NEWater. PUB also demonstrated water conservation methods, leak detection technology, and a water metre workshop at the Woodleigh Waterworks. PUB hosted the closing dinner of the programme at the Marina Barrage, which is Singapore’s latest reservoir and the first in the central business district. **gisa**



■ Ek Sonn Chan, general director of Phnom Penh Water Supply Authority

# Faculty Spotlight

## Darryl Jarvis Associate Professor

Darryl Jarvis and Robert Falkner (International Relations Department, London School of Economics) are the joint recipients of the 2009-10 Global Public Policy Network (GPPN) collaborative research grant, awarded annually to support collaborative research with specific focus on policy-making and governance in the context of globalisation.

The \$30,000 grant will fund a comparative study of the emerging field of nanotechnology oversight in Asia and Europe. A research team from the LKY School and LSE will examine the impact of economic globalisation and technological diffusion on regulatory policies in key Asian and European countries. Additional funding for the project is provided by the LKY School.



## Kenneth Paul Tan Assistant Dean (Academic Affairs) & Associate Professor

Kenneth Paul Tan was awarded tenure and promoted to associate professor with effect from January 1, 2009. Tan was invited to present papers at the International Workshop on State and Secularism (Singapore), Conference on Cultivating a Singaporean Creative Class (Singapore), and International Conference on Governance, Ethics, and Trust in Public Administration (Korea). He was also awarded the LKY School Teaching Excellence Award. He was featured as one of "Singapore's movers and shakers" and was invited by *The Straits Times* (Singapore) to contribute an article on politics ("Equal Voice", January 3, 2009).



## Mukul Asher Professor

Mukul Asher presented a paper entitled "Social Security Reform Imperatives in Developing Asia" at the Conference on Asian Social Protection in Comparative Perspective in Singapore. The conference, which took place on January 7-9, was organised by the Lee Kuan Yew School, University of Maryland School of Public Policy, and Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management. Asher recommended the establishment of an Asian forum for dialogue on social security issues and experiences.



## Henri Ghesquière Visiting Professor

Henri Ghesquière presented a paper entitled "Why Many Countries Shun Best Practices" at the inaugural forum on "Civil Service Accountability and Good Governance in ASEAN: Experiences and Practices in the ASEAN Region and Beyond," held on October 27, 2008 in Bukittinggi, Indonesia.

The forum was an initiative by the ASEAN Conference on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM) and co-organised by Singapore Civil Service College (CSC) and Indonesia's National Civil Service Agency (NCSA), with support from the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund. It was a gathering of ASEAN Heads of Civil Services and experts to discuss the concept of good governance and its role in ASEAN. The paper was published in *The Straits Times* (Singapore) on November 1, 2008.



## Astrid S. Tuminez Assistant Dean (Executive Education) & Director (Research)

Astrid S. Tuminez gave a talk on "Building the Future Now: Foundations of Leadership in a Globalised World" in Astana, Kazakhstan, on November 28, 2008 to 300 Kazakh government officials, who were attending a conference on "Administrative Reform in the Context of Globalisation," sponsored by the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Tuminez's comments were broadcast on national TV in Russian and Kazakh and published by Kazinform, Kazakhstan's national information agency.

## Jesuthason Thampapillai Associate Professor

Jesuthason Thampapillai delivered a keynote paper to the 9th Global Conference on Environmental Taxation titled "Fiscal Balance and Environmental Taxes" on November 7, 2008. He argued that to deal with problems caused by cumulative pollution loads, the efficiency of environmental taxes needs to be assessed based on the notion of fiscal balance.

The conference, organised by the Asia-Pacific Centre for Environmental Law of the Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore (NUS) was held in Singapore. The Centre on Asia and Globalisation at the LKY School was one of the sponsors of the conference.



## Eduardo Araral Assistant Professor

Eduardo Araral was appointed member of the Advisory Group for Asia Society's Leadership Group on Water Security in January. The Advisory Group consists of water experts tasked to advise the Asia Society on water security issues in Asia. Araral is a member of the advisory panel along with K.E. Seetharam, founding director, Institute of Water Policy and visiting professor, LKY School. Jeffrey Sachs, Andrew Benedek, and Surin Pitsuwan are among the members of the Leadership Group.



**Sanjaya Baru**  
Visiting Professor

Sanjaya Baru attended the 5<sup>th</sup> Regional Security Summit, Manama Dialogue, organised by the International Institute of Strategic Studies in Bahrain on December 12–14, 2008. He addressed a plenary session on “Regional Security and India’s Strategic World View” with co-speaker UK Secretary of State for Defence John Hutton. The paper, delivered in the shadow of the Mumbai terrorist attack, gave recommendations for responses to terrorism.

Baru also addressed a plenary session “India’s Strategic World View: Preparing for a Multi-Polar World” at the National Seminar on Transformational Initiatives to Achieve Regional Power Status at the College of Defence Management, Government of India, Hyderabad, India on December 11, 2008. He gave a seminar talk on “A Multi-Polar India in a Multi-Polar World – Internal Challenges and External Opportunities,” at Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi on December 16, 2008. He spoke at a seminar on “Indian Republic at Sixty – The Rise of a Free Market Democracy” on January 23. He participated in the Second India-Singapore Strategic Dialogue in New Delhi on February 9–10. The participants from Singapore included Ambassador Tommy Koh and Ambassador Ong Keng Yong.



**Viktor Mayer-Schönberger**  
Associate Professor and Director,  
Information & Innovation Policy  
Research Centre

Viktor Mayer-Schönberger presented a paper at the 2008 Giga Net Symposium / United Nations Internet Governance Forum, the annual global diplomatic meeting on Internet Governance, in Hyderabad, India on December 2, 2008. In his paper, “Substance or Process,” Mayer-Schönberger suggested that lessons from information government be applied to Internet governance, specifically in the role of deliberation and transparency. Mayer-Schönberger also presented a paper and moderated a session on “Information Technologies and Globalisation Strategies for Schools of Public Policy” at the 2008 Global Public Policy Network meeting, held in Beijing on October 20–21, 2008. He appeared on German national television on January 5, discussing the privacy issues of the latest online offerings of video game console providers Sony, Microsoft, and Nintendo.



**Shreekant Gupta**  
Associate Professor

Shreekant Gupta spoke on February 20 on “Challenges of a Post-2012 Global Deal on Climate Change: What Copenhagen 2009 Needs to Deliver” at the National Sustainability Conference 2009 organised by NUS. Gupta was also invited to speak at the Climate Change Forum (CCF) at Cornell University as part of the ongoing public lecture series “Climate Controversies.” His lecture “Million Dollar Questions: Can (and will) the world craft a meaningful, inclusive, efficient and equitable climate agreement?” delivered on February 23, addressed the need for meaningful collective global action based on the twin principles of efficiency and equity to tackle the serious risks of climate change. He also led a seminar on global climate change for graduate students, post-doctoral fellows and faculty members at the university. *Faculty News continues on page 18 >*



## New Faculty

The Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy recently welcomed several experts on water management, governance, and economics.

**ASIT K. BISWAS**, distinguished visiting professor, is the founder and president of the Third World Centre for Water Management in Mexico, an independent think tank. Formerly a professor in the UK and Canada, Biswas was one of the most active members of the World Commission on Water and a member of the Governing Board of the World Water Council. He has been a senior advisor to 17 national governments, six heads of United Nations agencies, and most major international organisations. He is a past president of the International Water Resources Association and the International Society for Ecological Modelling. He is also the founder and co-chairman of the Club of Tokyo. He is the founder of the International Journal of Water Resources Development and has been its editor-in-chief for the past 21 years. He has been the author or editor of 64 books and published over 600 scientific and technical papers. Among his numerous prizes are the two highest awards of the International Water Resources Association (Crystal Drop and Millennium Award), Walter Huber Award of the American Society of Civil Engineering, and Honorary Degree of Doctor of Technology of the University of Lund, Sweden. In 2006, Biswas received the Stockholm Water Prize, the Man of the Year Award in Canada, and the Environment Prize in Aragon, Spain.



**HENRI GHESQUIÈRE**, visiting professor, has 27 years of working experience with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). His career path, which ranged from senior economist in the IMF Western Hemisphere Department, division chief of the Middle Eastern Department to director of the IMF-Singapore Regional Training Institute, enabled him to be involved as economist, mission chief, negotiator, and senior resident representative in IMF programmes and policies in 26 countries.



**JAK JABES**, visiting professor, was practice team leader for Democratic Governance and coordinator for the Asia Regional Governance Programme at UNDP’s Bangkok Regional Centre. Before joining the UNDP he was director of the Governance and Capacity Development Division of the Asian Development Bank. At ADB he has been the focal point for anticorruption work, launched a Network of Public Administration Institutions for the Asia Pacific region called NAPSIPAG, and provided support to the Pacific and East and Central Asia departments on their governance assessments, loans, and technical assistance projects. He was responsible for the ADB-OECD Anticorruption Initiative for Asia and the Pacific, endorsed by 27 countries.



**CECILIA TORTAJADA**, visiting professor, is president of the International Water Resources Association, vice president of the Third World Centre for Water Management and scientific director of the International Centre for Water in Zaragoza, Spain. She has been an advisor to six governments, several UN agencies, and Japan Bank for International Cooperation.





# Singapore Experience Programme Explores Life in the Island-State

**THE SINGAPORE EXPERIENCE** at the LKY School provides the school's mostly international students with a deeper and more critical understanding of Singapore issues by organising regular activities and events where they can interact with Singapore leaders and key players in the areas of business, media, the non-profit sector, civil society, the arts, and science & technology.

Students have responded enthusiastically to the programme. One student described it as "an opportunity to appreciate and understand the country more. . . I gained a better appreciation of the values and norms of Singaporeans." Another student explained how it is "most definitely useful given that one of the [courses] deals with the theories and the talks help us to put this in perspective."

## This semester's activities and events included:

### Visits:

Students visited the Marina Barrage, Land Transport Authority, Urban Redevelopment Authority, Changi Naval Base, Central Provident Fund Board, Port of Singapore Authority, Subordinate Courts, and the Institute of Technical Education.

### Bukit Timah Dialogues:

This is a series of weekly lunchtime seminars. Invited speakers are leaders in the public, private, and non-profit sectors. The line-up of speakers for this semester included entrepreneur Kenny Yap, former news editor P. N. Balji, urban planner and architect Liu Thai Ker, sociologist Sharon Siddique, Senior Minister of State Grace Fu, and novelist and law professor Simon Tay.

### Conversations:

In this series of informal discussions, small groups of students get to know key figures in Singapore's public sector. Speakers are asked to organise their conversations around a challenging decision that they had to make personally. This semester's speakers included former Member of Parliament and CEO of New Board Aerospace & Technology Ng Pock Too, CEO of National Healthcare Group and Tan Tock Seng Hospital Lim Suet Wun, and LKY School Dean Kishore Mahbubani.

### Angsana Evenings:

These are formal dinners where eminent speakers are invited to engage with students in lively dialogue. This semester's Angsana Evening featured Tan Pin Pin, director of documentary films *Singapore GaGa* and *Invisible City*. [gisa](#)



Students visit the Marina Barrage

*continued from page 17* > Faculty News

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# MPM Student Reflects on Studies at the Harvard Kennedy School

Toh Han Li, a member of Singapore's Legal Service, spent a semester last year studying at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University as part of the LKY School's Master in Public Management programme.

elections in history, the election of the first African-American president. We studied the history of voting rights and how minorities such as African-Americans had been disenfranchised for so long and celebrated the election along with them.

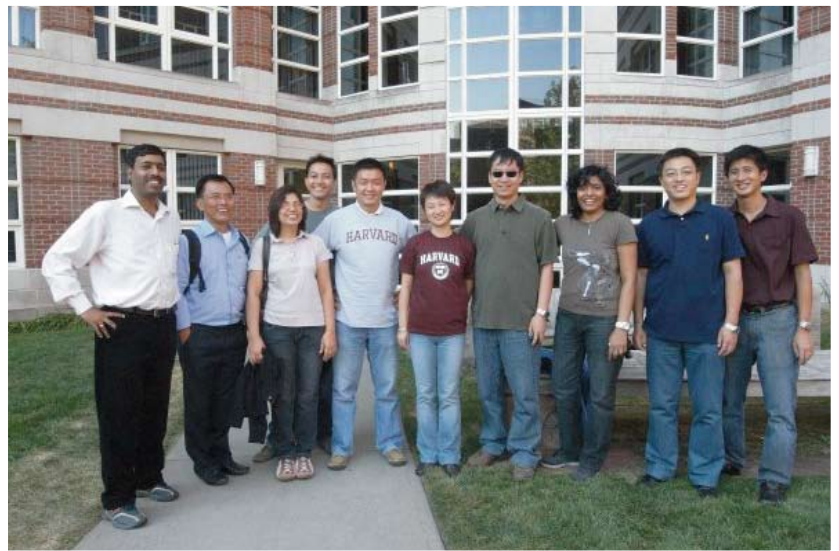
Boston is also a fantastic base from which to explore and experience the history and beauty of New England. Many of us made trips to see the dramatic fall foliage in Vermont and New Hampshire.

## THE ONE-YEAR MPM PROGRAMME

is designed to enhance the skills of senior managers working in the area of good governance. Students spend one semester at either the Harvard Kennedy School or at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs in addition to the eight months spent at the LKY School.

Toh, who graduated from the MPM programme in January 2009, is currently Assistant Chief Executive (Legal & Enforcement) of the Competition Commission of Singapore.

In this interview, Toh reflects on his time in the US and compares it to his experience at the LKY School.



■ Toh (far right) and classmates at Harvard

**Our class motto, "Leading change, transforming lives," unites and inspires us to create public value in our own organisations.**

## What was your most memorable learning experience at HKS?

In our class on "Ethics in Public Life," we were exposed to a wide variety of controversial and challenging ethical dilemmas such as the wearing of headscarves in schools, the Danish cartoons controversy, the dropping of the atomic bomb, freedom of the

press (the case study was in fact on Singapore), and pervasive corruption. We learnt that it is crucially important to understand the strongest argument against your own position to appreciate other views and analyse and strengthen your own opinion.

## What was life like outside of the classroom?

Harvard blends itself seamlessly into Cambridge such that you feel that the different schools, theatres, cafes, restaurants, and book stores form part of the Harvard experience. Many world leaders who are Harvard alumni, such as Al Gore, come back to give talks.

We were fortunate to be at Harvard during what was probably one of the most important US Presidential

## How did your relationship with your classmates change as a result of this experience?

The small class size of the MPM programme facilitates the forming of deep and lasting friendships. Activities such as excursions to Chek Jawa wetlands on Pulau Ubin or just studying together have helped bond our different cultures and personalities into one. To paraphrase the words of author Anaïs Nin, each of my classmates represents a world in us, a world not born until they arrived, and it is only by this meeting that our new world is born. I am already planning a trip to visit some of my classmates in their home countries. Our class motto, "Leading change, transforming lives," unites and inspires us to create public value in our own organisations. **gisa**

# A Double Degree Student From Columbia Shares Her Asian Adventures

TEXT | LIM MEI MEI

An interest in microfinance and China led Helen Victoria Chou, 26, a Texas native, to study at the LKY School as part of the double degree, Masters of International Affairs – Master in Public Policy, with the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), Columbia University.



■ Chou (fourth from the left) with classmates during Cultural Night

**HELEN VICTORIA CHOU** holds a B.A (Honours in Economics & East Asian Studies) from Harvard University and also worked as a financial services strategy and risk management consultant for Oliver Wyman Financial Services.

"I felt the best educational experience given my background and my goals would be found at a place like the LKY School, located at the hub of Asia," Chou said in an interview. "All my education has been in the US. The LKY School provided an ideal combination of classes, classmates, and location to help me better understand Asia, and hopefully China."

Chou said her experience at the LKY School gave her exposure to ideas she never encountered in the US.

"My classmates are truly from all over the world – Kyrgyzstan, Vietnam, China, Pakistan, India, Tajikistan – and many have worked with their governments specifically on the policy issues we cover in class," she said.

She especially appreciated the accessibility of LKY school professors.

"The school takes great care to ensure that a professor's main priority is the education of the students," Chou said. "The class size at the LKY School is less than a quarter of the size of my incoming class at SIPA. It is quite easy to walk into a professor's office on any given day."

During her stay in Singapore, Chou attended lectures by Singapore's Minister of Education Ng Eng Hen, Japan's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Masaharu Kohno, and former US Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker.

She also travelled with seven classmates to Beijing for the Global Public

Policy Network Conference on "Harmonising Globalisation," an opportunity to hear the perspectives of some of today's most powerful policymakers.

In Singapore, she attended a play followed by a panel discussion on race in the city-state.

"The discussion was a rare opportunity to delve into the subtleties

**"The school takes great care to ensure that a professor's main priority is the education of the students."**

and the unspoken sentiments of race relations, experienced daily by the very diverse population of Singapore," she said. "My experience in Singapore introduced me to a truly unique coexistence of diverse cultures."

Outside of the classroom, Chou supported her class football team and attended weekly showings of movies from around the world.

"I've done night cycling, sung karaoke, eaten chili crab, visited Sentosa island, attended potluck dinners – all with a huge throng of classmates and friends," she said. She has also travelled to Thailand and Bali and had a memorable tour of the Indian countryside with the family of new friends that she met in Singapore.

Chou now hopes to stay in Asia and focus on the growth of the microfinance industry in China.

"I now understand that my interest has always been in the power of public policy to impact a huge number of people," she said. "The LKY School gave me an in-depth view of public policy and the many approaches of Asian countries towards development and governance." **gis**

# Senator Tamura Calls on Japan to Start Sovereign Wealth Fund

Senator Kotaro Tamura of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) is one of LKY School's best-known former students. A former vice-minister for finance, economic, and fiscal policy in the Japanese Cabinet Office, Tamura-san has been a member of the House of Councillors (Senate) of the Japanese Diet since 2002, where he currently chairs the Committee on Land and Transport.



**PERHAPS BEST KNOWN** for his flamboyant fashion sense, Tamura-san has achieved prominence by leading calls on the Japanese government to establish a Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF) and deploy its assets to help reverse the economic downturn. Recently featured in *Barrons*, *the Financial Times* and *The Economist*, Tamura-san gave this interview to LKY School Vice-Dean, Stavros Yiannouka.

**SY: You have presented some bold proposals for tackling the current financial crisis. From where did you derive inspiration for your ideas?**

**KT:** I was so impressed by the creation of the Government Investment Corporation (GIC) and Temasek during my studies at the National University of Singapore. Japan has the largest balance sheet in the world. It is five times bigger than that of the US. Therefore, Japan should set up a SWF, in order to make the most productive use of its substantial national wealth.

**SY: What obstacles do you face in having your proposals adopted and how do you hope to overcome them?**

**KT:** Ironically, the current economic turmoil and crisis within the ranks of the LDP may provide the necessary impetus for accepting bold

economic proposals such as mine. Senior members of the party and government are beginning to see that a SWF could help to stabilise the current sharp downturn in capital and real estate markets. I am therefore discovering that many obstacles are automatically disappearing.

**SY: In many ways Japan should be Asia's natural leader when it comes to financial and economic matters. Why has it been reluctant to take on a leadership role?**

**KT:** What is happening right now could be seen as more of an opportunity than a crisis. Japan and its financial institutions are in a better position compared to others. Nomura and MSBC have taken stakes in US investment banks and Japan is pushing hard to establish an Asian Monetary Fund.

**SY: Should there be greater regional cooperation in tackling the crisis?**

**KT:** Yes! In particular, China and Japan should be playing a bigger role not only in Asia but also in the world. Between us we have huge foreign reserves. This money should be spent in order to help rescue ailing economies in the region and even to help the US and EU.

**SY: Finally, you have said that in this crisis there are also opportunities. What do you see as the opportunities emerging from this crisis for Japan?**

**KT:** I think that this is perhaps the biggest and last opportunity for Japan to play a leading role in Asia and in the world with our big money and advanced next generation technologies (bio, nano, environment, substitution-energy, and food production). I think we are ready to help rescue the world economy and lay the foundations for the next generation of economic and financial structures. **gisa**



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