



THINK TANK

News from the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

Ngee Ann Kongsi Donates \$3 Million to RSIS

On 27 November 2007, Ngee Ann Kongsi donated \$3 million to the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies Endowment Fund. Together with a matching grant from the Government, the donation will be used to establish the Ngee Ann Kongsi Professorship in International Relations. Mr. Teo Chiang Long, President of the *kongsi*, presented the cheque to President S R Nathan at a lunch ceremony held at the Istana on that day.

Ngee Ann Kongsi is one of Singapore's oldest non-profit charitable organizations. The *kongsi* (or cooperative) was founded in 1845 by Teochew immigrants from China. Since then, its dedication to philanthropy has benefited Singaporeans from all walks of life, regardless of cultural and religious backgrounds.



President Nathan presenting a memento to Mr. Teo Chiang Long of Ngee Ann Kongsi for the kongsi's donation of \$3 million to launch the Ngee Ann Kongsi Professorship in International Relations

According to the Vice-Chairman of Ngee Ann Kongsi, Mr. Lim Kee Ming, education is one of the key concerns of the *kongsi*. The organization contributes towards this by donating to tertiary institutions such as NTU and RSIS and also through disbursing scholarships and bursaries to needy and deserving students.

Mr. Lim stresses that the *kongsi* believes that education promotes peace and harmony in the region and it enriches as well as equips people with the necessary knowledge and skills to deal with the challenges of a constantly changing world. Hence, the *kongsi* hopes that the donation to RSIS will help contribute to that end.

Income from the *kongsi's* dona-

tion will be used to invite eminent professors in the field of International Relations to teach and to conduct research at RSIS.



Dr. Su Guanng receiving President Nathan, who is Patron of the RSIS Fund Raising Committee

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Conference on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

The 32nd Oceans Conference, titled “Freedom of the Seas, Passage Rights and the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention”, was held in Singapore from 9 to 10 January 2008. Jointly organized by RSIS and the Center For Oceans Law And Policy, University Of Virginia School Of Law, the conference brought together a large number of experts in the field of Maritime Studies and Maritime Law.

In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Barry Desker, Dean of RSIS, described the evolving nature of maritime law. He said that seafarers were once free to conduct their naval operations indiscriminately with little regulation. Since then, however, many things have changed and the maritime environment has become more regulated. These are the results of many multilateral agreements between countries, restricting activities at sea to ensure the safety and security of navigation and to protect the environment.

In his keynote address, Deputy Prime Minister Professor S. Jayakumar added that it was agreements like the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), adopted 25 years ago, that has helped to establish a legal framework for international communication and served as an important instrument for settling disputes. It has also introduced innovative regimes—like the transit passage regime—and played a crucial role in establishing order in exploration activities in the sea.

Professor Tommy Koh, Chairman of the Institute of Policy Studies and President of the Third UN Conference on the Law of the Sea from 1980 to 1982, provided



Professor S. Jayakumar delivering the keynote address

the background on freedom of navigation. He highlighted that UNCLOS has expanded its membership and is today an important instrument for seafaring activities. However, as pointed out during the conference, more needs to be done to ensure consistency in regulations between countries still.

Some experts are of the opinion that cooperative relations may be the key to success in areas such as security of navigation, which may complement the role of the maritime forces.

Another focus of the conference was on Maritime Scientific Researches (MSR). The MSR provides a knowledge base to support ocean development and environmental sustainability. It provides an understanding of the oceans based on research in areas of climatic and meteorological variations and patterns. One of the main issues surrounding the MSR pertains to the jurisdiction of hydrographic surveying in the EEZ. Many countries argue that legislations on this issue have not been clear on the kind of activities allowed in their own EEZ. More control and regulation on the matter was proposed.

Nevertheless, it was concluded that UNCLOS is still functional and can continue to serve the international community nonetheless. Due changes may be necessary to update the MSR regime and to close legal loopholes.

Due to the effects of climate change and global warming, scientific explorations in the Arctic may be possible in the near future. Therefore, in order for countries to participate, it is important for everyone to abide by UNCLOS guidelines. On this, participants agreed that consent and cooperation among countries must be sought. UNCLOS should also be updated to ensure safety of navigation as well as better management of marine resources.



Professor S. Jayakumar with U.S. Ambassador to Singapore, H.E. Patricia L. Herbold

Launch of the Consortium for Countering the Financing of Terrorism (CCFT)

A seminar on “Countering the Financing of Terrorism (CFT)” was held on 12 February 2008. Co-hosted by the Association of Banks in Singapore (ABS), the Commercial Affairs Department (CAD) and the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), it received more than 320 distinguished participants and delegates from law-enforcement and other government agencies, financial regulatory bodies, the financial sector, foreign dignitaries and academia. The Ministry of Home Affairs signalled its strong support with a delegation led by its Permanent Secretary, Mr. Benny Lim.

The seminar, which was organized to build awareness of the importance of continuing efforts to stop terrorist financing, also witnessed a milestone in the inauguration of the Consortium for Countering the Financing of Terrorism (CCFT). Joint endorsements by the Ministry of Home Affairs, the ABS and RSIS demonstrated their serious intention in building a strong partnership in the fight against terrorist financing.

Sir James Sassoon, President of the Financial Action Task Force, United Kingdom, delivered the keynote speech. His support for the initiative underscores a fun-



Sir James Sassoon, President of the Financial Action Task Force, United Kingdom, delivering the keynote address at the CCFT Conference

damental truth: a global effort comprising international organizations, national governments and the private sector is of utmost importance in denying opportunities for terrorist and criminal groups from raising and transmitting funds for their activities.

As home-grown jihadists have displaced Al-Qaeda Central as the new face of global terrorism, it is important to strengthen the understanding of the dynamics of terrorism and terrorist financing. Al-Qaeda has successfully embedded its virulent ide-



Dr. Rohan Gunaratna, Head, International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, speaking on “Dynamics of Global and Regional Terrorism Landscape”

ology of global jihad against Western governments, their citizens and their allies. This is seen as its most effective strategy in radicalizing communities all over the world, generating anti-West sentiments and breeding suicide bombers.

Money is indispensable in terrorist planning and preparation. This means that the financial sector has an important role to play in the detection and disruption of the financing of terrorist activities.

Traditionally, financial investigations usually take place after an attack, as a reactive measure, when law enforcement authorities try to uncover the operational financial infrastructure of the attack. Today, the mounting challenge is to ensure that all sectors work together in carrying out pro-active investigations. This can be realized through sharing information across the conventional silos, and developing detection measures and resilience for a strong financial system.

The stakes are high and the threat is real. With a strong public-private partnership, Singapore and the world will be better placed to deal with the scourge of terrorism.



(Left to right) Sir James Sassoon, President, Financial Action Task Force, United Kingdom; H.E. Paul Madden, British High Commissioner, Singapore; Ms. Teo Swee Lian, Deputy Managing Director, Prudential Supervision, Monetary Authority Singapore; Mr. David P. Conner, Chairman, ABS, Director & CEO, OCBC Bank, Singapore

Assessing the Terrorism Threat of the 2008 Beijing

In 2007, the Peoples Republic of China invited ICPVTR threat specialists to share their assessment of the terrorist threat to the Olympics Games, which will be held in Beijing in August 2008. Dr. Rohan Gunaratna, head of ICPVTR, and Arabinda Acharya, Manager of Strategic Projects in ICPVTR, met with specialists of the Olympic Security Committee and travelled to Xingjiang in Western China to review the threat.

They were also invited to speak on the threat to the Beijing Olympics at a conference titled, “Harmonious Development of Religion, Society and Economy: The Development of Islamic Groups in South Asia and Southeast Asia and the Influence on China”. The conference, held in Beijing on 17–18 October 2007, was jointly organized by the Institute of Ethnic Minority Groups Development Research and the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies.

Speaking at the conference, Dr. Gunaratna outlined the global terrorist threat and its implications for China. Dr. Gunaratna remarked that China’s specialist counter-

terrorism capabilities need to be strengthened in order to address the current and emerging terrorist threat effectively. He suggested Beijing could seek U.S. and European assistance to strengthen both its preventive and defensive capabilities.

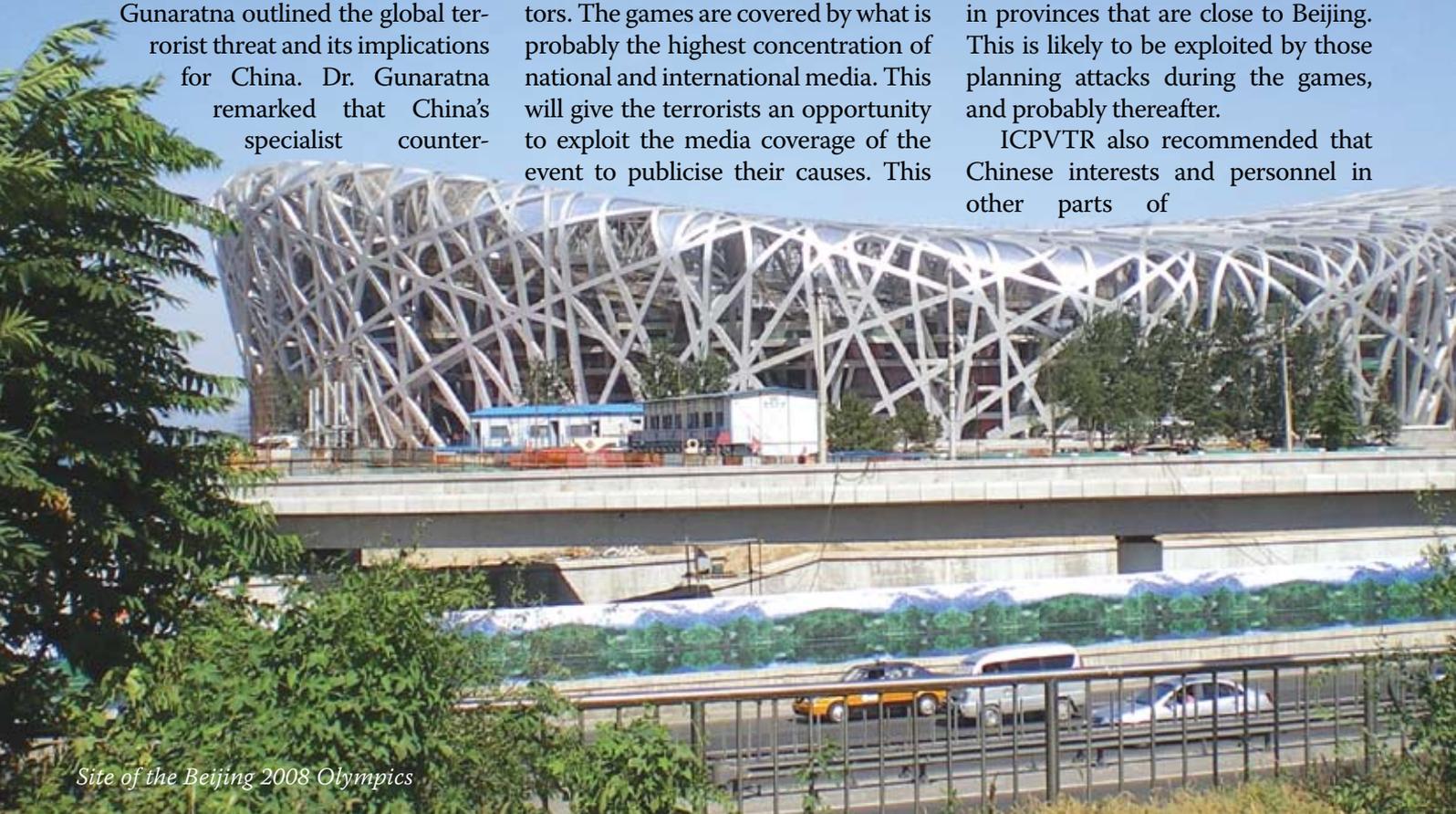
Arabinda Acharya gave a detailed analysis of the terrorist threat to the Beijing Olympics based on the evolving intention and the capabilities of groups as well as the opportunities available to groups planning to carry out terrorist attacks during the games. This involves terrorists not only in China but groups operating in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in Pakistan.

It was suggested that the Olympics is an ideal stage for launching a spectacular terrorist attack. The games feature participants from virtually every country in the world and very high-level dignitaries—including heads of states—from most participating countries are likely to be among the spectators. The games are covered by what is probably the highest concentration of national and international media. This will give the terrorists an opportunity to exploit the media coverage of the event to publicise their causes. This

was the case at the infamous incident during the 1972 Munich Olympics when terrorists belonging to the Black September Organization of the Palestine Liberation Organization infiltrated the Olympics village and seized 11 Israeli athletes.

Through its association with Al-Qaeda and the Islamic Movement in Uzbekistan (IMU) in Pakistan, ETIM members appear to have received extensive training in conducting high-profile terrorist operations, including kidnapping and assassination, bombings using IEDs and suicide attacks. There are indications that some ETIM members, with support and help from sympathetic groups in Pakistan, have sneaked into China with the intention of carrying out terrorist attacks during the games. It is also ICPVTR’s assessment that the terrorist threat in China is no longer confined to Xinjiang Province. There are signs of a high degree of radicalization among Muslims living in other parts of China, especially in provinces that are close to Beijing. This is likely to be exploited by those planning attacks during the games, and probably thereafter.

ICPVTR also recommended that Chinese interests and personnel in other parts of



Site of the Beijing 2008 Olympics

the world should be on alert during the Olympics. ETIM has developed a network with like-minded groups through its long association with Al-Qaeda. As evidenced from a large number of attacks and foiled attacks post-September 11, Al-Qaeda's operations now span the world. ETIM can leverage on the support of associated groups in South, Southeast and Central Asia, Europe, the Middle East and Africa to target Chinese interests. An attack anywhere during the games will attract a disproportionate amount of media attention, which will serve the purpose of these groups.

ICPVTR continues to monitor developments and provides periodic assessments of the threat. In this respect, ICPVTR has leveraged on its various projects, especially its own field research in China and Pakistan and its informatics projects involving the monitoring of jihadi websites, chat rooms and forums and analysis of various statements from jihadi leaders.

All Men Are Made Equal – That's Why Women are Made to Lead!

The fight against terrorism often conjures up images of solely an operational and kinetic battle. In reality, the world of counter terrorism is as multi-faceted as the elusive enemy whom counter-terrorism and threat specialists work towards understanding and analysing.

The International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) is one of the world's largest counter-terrorism research and training centres. Based in the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at the Nanyang Technological University, over 50 per cent of the staff of the centre are women.

The contribution of women staff to ICPVTR from its very inception has indeed been outstanding. They have excelled both as resident analysts as well as field staff. Predominantly, the resident analysts have conducted training courses for defence and security personnel, they have also lectured at training academies, universities and other specialist institutions internationally. Along with their male counterparts, women analysts conduct regular briefings, provide in-depth analyses and threat projections on the threat landscape for top government officials in this region and beyond.

Moreover, the women analysts continue to carry out field research in critical areas of interest in both South and Southeast Asia. These include threat flashpoints such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, eastern Indonesia, Pakistan and southern Philippines. Operating in adverse conditions, they have built specialist counter-terrorism capabilities and capacities in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Operating in male-dominated societies is indeed difficult. Conservative cultures built on the foundation of patriarchal societies present obstacles. Nonetheless, a solid understanding of the culture and traditions of the countries have enabled these women researchers to overcome such barriers. On the other hand, women also have access to a wide pool of resources even under these circumstances, which male researchers sometimes might not have access to. This includes the ability to interact with the wives, children and female relatives of key actors in these conflicts. This interaction allows for greater understanding of the important personalities that propel the conflicts in these global flashpoints.

The numerous achievements of the ICPVTR women analysts would not have been possible if not for a working environment that offers equal opportunities for both male and female analysts alike, and this has allowed all analysts to grow as individuals and to push the barriers of conventional wisdom in the spirit of excellence. Breaking stereotypes and pushing boundaries, the work of these women continue to make a difference.

India and China: Rivals or Partners?

On 17 January 2008, Ambassador Shyam Saran, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of India, was invited by RSIS to deliver a Distinguished Public Lecture on the topic, “India and China: Rivals or Partners?”

In his lecture, Ambassador Saran focused on the geopolitical power game between the two superpowers. He argued that, with history as a guiding factor, relations between China and India would generally be peaceful. Unlike the rise of other major powers, both India and China have already been global players long before the era of colonialism and imperialism.

Ambassador Saran pointed out that both countries share a deep-rooted sense of each other as flourishing great “civilizational” powers, as there has been no major clashes of culture or trade wars between them. Instead, there has been substantive exchanges of goods, ideas and culture between the two for many centuries. Thus, to him, the suggestion of any in-



Ambassador Shyam Saran (right) with Professor C. Raja Mohan who was chairing the distinguished talk

evitability of conflict as a result of their recent rise to power is rather unfounded.

More importantly, Ambassador Saran pointed out that there are other indicators that China and India relations are warm. For example, India’s Manmohan Singh has been holding dialogues with top Chinese leaders, who have also expressed their willingness to work with India in the domain of civilian nuclear

energy. This is important in terms of the energy challenge and the climate-change challenge.

Answering questions from the audience after delivering his lecture, Ambassador Saran said, “There is a feeling that rather than being seen as rivals in this [East Asian] region, both India and China can work together ... as partners ... to create ... a more loosely structured architecture.”

Seminar on “(Un)Problematic Multiculturalism and Social Resilience”

The Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS) held a seminar entitled, “(Un)Problematic Multiculturalism and Social Resilience” on 21 Febru-



Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna speaking at the seminar

ary 2008. The seminar looked at how governments and analyst view multicultural policies and the questions of social resilience. It dealt with how, in recent times, fears of social fragmentation along ethno-religious lines have pressured governments to devise strategies to ensure their nations’ ability to weather attacks on their social fabric. This has led policymakers and analysts to believe that there is a need to strengthen the “social resilience” of nations to prevent potential conflicts that such societies are prone to. Underlying this is the assumption that culturally diverse societies are less cohesive than those

deemed relatively homogenous. Yet, despite the current onslaught of ethno-religious upheavals spilling over into developed cosmopolitan societies, multicultural nations today have not degenerated into chaos, as suggested by these policymakers and analysts. The seminar discussed the following questions: What are societies shoring up resilience against? What is being protected? How can we tell if we are successful?

The workshop addressed these issues by developing a framework for refining the current debate on social resilience. Specifically, it sought to critically assess the impact of ethnic

The Sentosa Roundtable 2008

On 17 and 18 January 2008, RSIS hosted the second Sentosa Roundtable on Asian Security, which was sponsored by the Sasakawa Peace Foundation of Japan. An annual dialogue for exploring new ideas and approaches to the management of peace and security in the region, the Roundtable is aimed at ascertaining prospects for the problems of and the pathways to security community in Asia. Over 80 academics, security analysts, civil-society activists and government officials from Asia and beyond attended the Roundtable.

Roundtable participants were invited to ponder whether regional institutions are significant or merely adjuncts to the process of regional community building in East Asia. To that end, the Roundtable assessed the relevance of Asia's inter-governmental institutions, namely, ASEAN, the ARE, APEC, the ASEAN+3, the East Asia Summit and the Six Party Talks. Participants also assessed a series of related issues: whether their aims and agenda cohere and complement or compete with one another; whether they were best defined in geographical terms or were issues-based; the question of regional leadership; and the effect of great as well



Professor Kishore Mahbubani (left) and Dr. John Ravenhill (right) on the panel discussing "Regional Institutions and Their Relevance to Regional Community Building"

as rising powers on their efficacy, among others.

The Roundtable did not simply consider inter-governmental or top-down arrangements. Bottom-up processes were deemed equally crucial. Participants also assessed the contributions of regional non-official networks (such as ASEAN-ISIS, CSCAP and PECC), trans-national civil-society arrangements (such as the ASEAN Peoples' Assembly, or APA, and the Solidarity for Asian Peoples Advocacy or SAPA), the regional media and other ancillary processes to community building.

Roundtable participants concluded that while East Asian regionalism has clearly benefited from the contributions of both top-down and bottom-

up forces, their impact has nonetheless been circumscribed by great-power dynamics, dependence on sovereignty and non-intervention norms, lack of state capacity and other factors that invariably delimit the content and scope of institutional progress.

Today, East Asia is nowhere near becoming a community, not least in terms of satisfying the demanding conditions hypothesized by the theorists of security community. Neither has the region degenerated into a "cockpit of great-power conflict", as some had assumed. Therein lies the hope for East Asia in its quest for community, and the role of the region's institutions in that process.

The Sentosa Roundtable will reconvene in January 2009 for its third round.

and religious diversity and homogeneity on the social cohesion of multicultural nations in the Asia-Pacific.

The workshop was divided into two panels. The first panel consisted of case studies focusing on how the notion of multiculturalism is understood by nations that are conventionally looked upon as culturally homogenous. The second panel constituted case studies of states for which the ethno-religious social divide is conventionally recognized as a threat to its social cohesion.

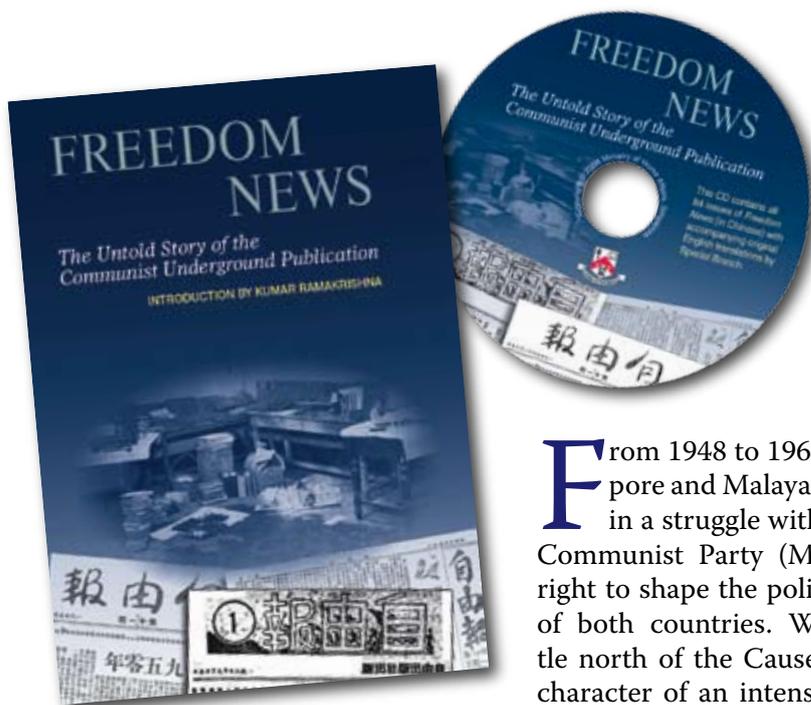
The speakers on both panels then evaluated the impact of ethnic and religious diversity on the social

fabric of the respective case studies vis-à-vis two other threats. Firstly, a comparative analysis of the impact of ethno-religious diversity with that of other potential threats would bring to sharper focus a calibrated assessment of the various threats to social cohesion. Secondly, the identification of indicators to facilitate the comparison would serve as a basic framework to reflect on and flesh out what nations aspire to secure, necessary for meaningful social policies to be devised.

Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna, at the closing of the seminar, reflected that one of the

themes that came through during the discussions was that there were no-one-size-fits-all multicultural policies. Such policies had to be customized as each nation is unique in its own context. He stressed that while it was good to think about "best practices", these policies needed to be applied with care as the political dynamics within each social context is different. More importantly, with a strong advocate for space for individual preferences of identity to be expressed, the question remains with regards to how that could enhance the practice of social resilience.

Freedom News



FREEDOM NEWS The Untold Story of the Communist Underground Publication

*Introduction by Kumar Ramakrishna
S. Rajaratnam School of
International Studies, 2008*

*344 pages, case bound
Plus CD containing all 84 issues of
Freedom News (in Chinese) with
accompanying original English
translations by Special Branch*

From 1948 to 1960, both Singapore and Malaya were engaged in a struggle with the Malayan Communist Party (M.C.P.) for the right to shape the political destinies of both countries. While the battle north of the Causeway took the character of an intense rural insurgency, the conflict in Singapore took a different form. The British colonial authorities of Singapore faced a sophisticated urban subversion campaign by the Singapore Communists, targeted at restive Chinese students and workers. Against this backdrop, the M.C.P. published a clandestine newspaper called *Freedom News*, which sought to mobilize support for the Communist cause among the citizenry on both sides of the Causeway against the “British Imperialists” and persuade young Singaporeans and Malaysians that World Communism represented the

28 April 2008

S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies Seminar “The Australia 2020 Summit – An Experiment in National Agenda Setting” by Dr. Sam Bateman, Senior Fellow and Adviser to Maritime Security Programme, RSIS
RSIS Seminar Rooms 2 and 3

6 May 2008

Launch of the RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies
Traders Hotel, Singapore

16 May 2008

Seminar on “Climate Change and Non-Traditional Security: Beyond Climate Wars?” by Dr Lorraine Elliott, Senior Fellow in International Relations, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University.
RSIS Seminar Rooms 2 and 3

wave of the future.

This volume reproduces, for the very first time, copies of all issues of *Freedom News* ever published. The collection is supplemented with an introduction written by Dr. Kumar Ramakrishna—and based on hitherto classified internal papers of the old British Special Branch—that seeks to situate *Freedom News* against the tumultuous events of this crucial period in Singapore’s history. The documents in this collection provide extremely useful insights into the motivations and aspirations of intelligent and determined men who, had they succeeded in wresting control of the country, would have changed the fortunes of our nation forever.

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