

How to stay 'stable and strong'

Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's **address at the National Day Rally** in August has been seen by many observers to be a landmark speech. Singapore is at a turning point, and the major policy shifts in housing, healthcare and education all aim to facilitate the country's entry into a new phase of development and nation-building.

While the rally was ostensibly domestic in nature, external forces were also behind the changes Lee unveiled. These include increased regional and global competition, technological advances, fluid international finance and talent flows. It is a reminder of how the international environment directly impacts Singapore's domestic politics, and how Singapore's internal transformations will determine the country's ability to succeed in the global arena.

There is also one other important shift to note. Small states like Singapore can, indeed, survive and thrive. As Lee acknowledges, Singapore is "stable and strong"; it is charting a bold, new way forward from a position of excellence and strength. This reinforces Foreign Minister K. Shanmugam's recent remark that in becoming economically and politically successful, "Singapore has overcome its small geographical size." Likewise, the recent 90th birthday celebrations of Lee Kuan Yew have sparked numerous reflections on Singapore's achievements.

This shift in rhetoric suggests that Singapore's longstanding narrative of vulnerability – a narrative that has galvanized its strategic policies for the last four decades in areas from education to defense to foreign relations – is evolving into one that is more about sustaining its success.

Given that the domestic and the external are intertwined within Singapore's framework of Total Defense – which connects socio-economic factors and security matter – how might these domestic shifts influence Singapore's foreign policy, its armed forces and the institution of National Service?

New Avenues in Foreign Policy

A more complex environment as highlighted by Lee in his rally speech means Singapore will have to continue honing its proactive stance in foreign policy. An acute sense of smallness and vulnerability has long pushed the government to adopt a complex mix of foreign policy strategies. These strategies range from the more hard-nosed belief of needing great power balancing and Singapore having its own credible military force, to being a firm adherent of international law and economic multilateralism while strongly

advocating the construction of common norms, values, and identity, especially under the aegis of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

To date, Singapore's foreign policy record has been reputed for its coherence and for being able to "punch above its weight." In recent years, Singapore has begun to undertake more active, if selective, roles in the global arena. These include Singapore holding a non-permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council in 2001-2002, participating in peacekeeping and humanitarian missions in places like Afghanistan, Indonesia, East Timor, Japan and China, as well as more recently becoming a permanent observer in the Arctic Council. These events reinforce the view that Singapore's foreign policy has been shifting from one of merely "coping" with vulnerability, to one of strength and sustaining success.

Indeed, **recent academic literature on small states suggests** that contrary to prevailing assumptions, they are not necessarily powerless. They can deploy multiple dimensions of foreign policy power to effect changes in global politics. These take the forms of addressing international humanitarian and ethical issues, or of pushing through initiatives for regional cooperation. To these ends, Singapore has been exemplary in seizing opportunities to enlarge its diplomatic space and strengthen its security.

Interestingly, Singapore's domestic shift towards a more "compassionate" paradigm of social policies can begin to open up new avenues in foreign policy; for instance, more proactive international advocacy in social equity, human development and rights. As highlighted in Shanmugam's **recent speech at the** United Nations General Assembly, poverty eradication and sustainability are integral to national development and global stability.

With the signing of the ASEAN Human Rights Charter (AHRC) in November of last year, Singapore may find it increasingly difficult to remain silent on issues pertaining to welfare and rights. These issues will continue to invoke the efficacy of the AHRC and, by extension, ASEAN. Consequently, ASEAN's long-standing principle of non-interference will have to evolve into **something more vocal**.

Inevitably, any official stance that Singapore takes in regard to welfare and rights will reflect on its own reputation and record. How well Singapore can articulate a foreign policy of social equity, human development and rights – more pressing now with the AHRC – will depend on how much progress it makes on these issues domestically. This is yet another reflection of the blurring lines between the internal and the international. The nascent transformation towards a more compassionate Singaporean polity is a

significant first step to advancing Singapore's foreign policy from a position of material and moral strength.

Defense Consolidation

Given Singapore's socioeconomic priorities, as signaled in the recent NDR Speech, the SAF is likely to be concerned with consolidating and honing its current set of capacities for the foreseeable future. This also ties in with Shanmugam's emphasis on sustainable development, a key facet of which is increased urban management to cope with socioeconomic demands. The planned decommissioning of Paya Lebar Air Base to make room for socioeconomic development and the relocation of its air force assets to Changi East Air Base is one such notable aspect.

With the exception of the projected future purchase of the F-35 Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter, as well as the recent orders for eight new multi-function littoral patrol vessels and Aster-30 air defense missile systems, the SAF acquisition patterns seem to be incremental. Recent purchases have aimed to sharpen the latent capabilities of its existing platforms via systems enhancements, as seen in the recently-concluded mid-life upgrade of the navy's missile corvettes. This is a plausible scenario even with defense spending likely to remain pegged to a percentage of gross domestic product, as it has been for decades.

This incremental approach is enabled by the fact that capacity-building efforts in the 1990s and the first decade of the millennium paid off in furnishing the SAF with a balanced set of capabilities. Some notable force projection capabilities, for instance the KC-135RS aerial refueling tankers and the *Endurance* class landing ship tanks, have proven their worth in regional and international operations in the past decade.

Without stretching beyond its present overseas commitments, the existing force projection capacity is considered sufficient to meet the SAF's operational requirements. With the existing capacity at its disposal, the SAF may either maintain or scale back on its commitment to "out-of-the-area" international operations in distant regions such as in the Gulf of Aden. The Ministry of Defence also announced earlier this year that the SAF's deployment to Afghanistan, arguably its longest and most complex operation, would come to an end by the middle of the year. However, the SAF will continue to remain an active participant in global affairs, especially in regional security, given its continued emphasis on Singapore's immediate security milieu.

Rethinking National Service

National Service (NS, or conscription) has been a remarkably robust national institution that has remained largely unchanged in form and function since its inception in 1967. Most Singaporeans still see NS as crucial to Singapore's defense. However, an increasing number have broadly questioned the relevance of the current system given the intensive, regular training over many years that is required to raise a credible and capable conventional military, as well as the exclusion of females, and to a lesser extent, some permanent residents, from NS.

That last point in turn leads naturally to the issue of fairness, as well as the inefficacy of NS as a nation-building tool if a large segment of the population is excluded. In fact, recently published results of a survey of Singaporean perceptions of NS by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) suggests these observations may be overstated and Singaporeans do not resent the current NS system as deeply as anecdotal evidence might suggest. However, they are unequivocal in indicating more should be done to allow Singaporean females and PRs to contribute directly to Singapore's defense in the interest of fairness and inclusivity. The results also reveal that a significant number of NS men do indeed feel that they are discriminated against at work because of their NS obligations. These sentiments could become more acute and possibly even more militant in the future if they are not appropriately addressed now.

These concerns have highlighted how a policy with an ostensibly external focus is now being challenged, perhaps even undermined, by internal issues beyond defense. By serving as the bedrock of the SAF, a key pillar of Singapore's defense, NS has done much to relieve Singapore of the acute strategic insecurity it has traditionally felt. But as the national narrative shifts away from emphasizing such insecurity, NS will now have to adapt to a new sense of domestic and material insecurity, one that is palpable in Singapore society and that is exacerbated by the perceived sacrifice in time and opportunity that individuals incur in serving in the NS. Arguably, as a key contributor to Singapore's defense, and therefore the peace that has facilitated the nation's prosperity, NS may ironically be a victim of its own success. This is undoubtedly a good problem to have, but one that still needs to be addressed.

The key challenge NS faces is being able to mediate the tension of remaining an institution that serves the primary functional (and very practical, even specific) critical security need of external defense, with the perception that it is equally an internal homogenizing agent of national identity construction (commonly known as nation-building) that should be experienced by all. While both can occur concurrently, and arguably have done so for quite some time, the inherent differing objectives of both have caused friction. For example, present operational needs do not call for the enlistment of

all liable Singapore residents (most notably, females are not enlisted), yet nation-building through a common experience, which NS is touted as doing, should naturally include as wide a swath of society as possible. Above all, if NS is truly a nation-building experience, then its cost should be shouldered by all who consider themselves part of the nation. This is NS' Gordian knot.

Perhaps the way forward is to reconsider the meaning of National Service. As it is most immediately understood, NS is a practical defense policy designed with the specific aim of raising sufficient manpower for the uniformed services key to Singapore's security. Current practical considerations preclude the possibility that all Singapore residents can be enlisted to serve. As such, NS will never be truly equitable, and until the specific aims of the policy change, it will be difficult to broaden its scope. The sacrifices made by those who do NS, ones that others do not make, should therefore be appropriately acknowledged and rewarded, given that perfect equity, at least in practical terms, is simply unattainable. This is a key task the Committee to Strengthen NS (CSNS) has been assigned to determine.

This traditional understanding of NS should, however, exist in a broader ecosystem of other national service policies that collectively serve to build Singapore society. While part of the value of conscription is its compulsory nature (thereby making it a shared experience), an equally important aspect is that it provides an avenue through which different people can come together to work towards a common goal at a national level. Few other activities provide such important nation-building space at a national level. To that end, the establishment of the Voluntary Youth Corps, which was announced during the rally, will go some way towards broadening the conception of service to the Singaporean nation. NS will be just one mechanism for nation-building within a broader national service network.

Recent statements by Singapore's leadership have signaled Singapore is now better placed to address its vulnerabilities – both internally and externally – and that its guiding philosophy is evolving into one of consolidating and sustaining its success. Yet, as it navigates the international arena with confidence and autonomy, the policies that guide how Singapore positions itself in the world will ultimately be informed by domestic concerns, even if they are not spoken of in the same breath.

Dilemmas and challenges for SG security

It is a well-known fact that Singapore, a tiny city-state in the heart of Asia, has always placed a premium on its security. The Lion City is a highly militarized country that dedicates huge

resources to its defence establishment, making it one of the [five largest importers of arms](#) in the world in 2012. Singapore still retains its mandatory conscription policy (called National Service) for young male citizens around the age of 18. One-third of the current Cabinet is made up of ex-professional soldiers, indicating that issues of security and defence remain high on the agenda of the ruling elites in the country.

Beneath the façade of immense wealth and a majestic skyline is a nation that never really shook off its sense of vulnerability. When Singapore first gained independence in 1965, it looked like it was set to be a client state of its bigger neighbours. According to the late [Michael Leifer](#), an expert on Singapore's foreign policy, the ethnic composition of its population, different from that of Indonesia and Malaysia, "registered the alien regional identity of Singapore through an analogy with an embattled Israel standing alone in the Middle East against its adversary Muslim neighbours". The Athenian invasion of Melos in 416 B.C. and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 are doomsday scenarios which defence planners in Singapore can relate to. The scenes from a recent locally produced [film](#) showcased a war-torn Singapore served as a firm reminder of its precarious situation to a generation that has not witnessed the early turbulent days of the nation.

Similar to other small states, Singapore's approach to foreign policy is one of expediency. Singapore's security policy is built on the "twin pillars of deterrence and diplomacy", a [consistent theme](#) that its leaders advocate. A sophisticated and well thought-out foreign and diplomatic policy, based on but not an exact replication of the classical balance of power, seeks to engage various great powers so that they would have vested interests in the survival and well being of the country. Coupled with the well-trained and technologically advanced Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) as a credible deterrence force, these twin pillars tilt the cost-benefit analysis against any potential adversary to display the imagery of what Leifer called, a "poisoned shrimp".

The road for ensuring Singapore's security, however, continues to be bumpy. Challenges brought about by challenges, [changing social needs](#), and a deteriorating security climate indicate higher political risk brought about by likely policy changes.

Globalisation versus militarisation

Despite Singapore's significant achievements in the realm of economics and in the international arena, the leadership still lacks confidence in the allegiance of its citizens. The roots of a strong need to enforce loyalty can be traced back to the early days of independence when Singapore

was separated from the Malaysia federation. The 1965 separation happened abruptly, and people on the island were then forced to decide, to which side to pledge their allegiance.

An important yet rarely mentioned topic is that of dual citizenship, which the incumbent People's Action Party (PAP) government refuses to grant. At the crux of the issue of dual citizenship is a dilemma with which policy-makers in Singapore are struggling. A defence policy that relies heavily on a citizen military force through conscription is at odds with allowing dual citizenship and not compatible with a globalised world, in which human mobility is extremely high. Although the topic of dual citizenship is an important one that has implications for Singapore's global status and the well being of many Singaporeans, political leaders have constantly paid only lip service and swept it under the carpet on the pretext of the citizens "being not ready" and "unlikely to enhance their long-term commitment to the nation". Officials have been sketchy about defining what that means.

One key argument put forth by the government emphasises that in a small country with limited resources, a diligent and strict immigration policy ensures that foreigners who want to become citizens have to be committed, put in serious considerations, and pay a significant price (in the form of giving up their citizenship in another country). This argument, however, flies in the face of an (until recently) lax immigration policy which has led to an admission by its Prime Minister (PM) of "a lack of 20/20 foresight", when infrastructure and housing failed to catch up with the boom in population.

Singapore's leaders constantly stressed that to continue to be economically vibrant, it needs immigrants to augment its workforce (Singapore is facing an ageing population due to low birth rates as the total fertility rate fell to 1.20 child per woman in 2011). Herein lies an uneasy conflict of 'interests' for the government. As it is unfeasible for new immigrants to be conscripted, Singaporeans have complained about the unfairness of a free-rider problem (immigrants enjoy a safe and secure environment, 'paid for' by two years of conscription of most young male Singaporeans) and questioned the rationale behind why they have to 'earn their citizenship'. While the Singapore government has been trying to sharpen the distinction (in terms of their existence in the country) between Singaporeans, Permanent Residents and foreigners to appease dissenting opinions, there is a limit to such measures before they are labeled as 'xenophobic'. A member of parliament from the incumbent PAP even proposed a "National Defence Duty" to correct the "current imbalance", a move that some criticised as 'cheapening a solemn duty'.

While the public discourse in Singapore is predominantly about the implications of immigration on the local population, it should be noted that not all is rosy for foreigners either. In a world where expatriate packages are becoming increasingly rare, more emphasis is going to be placed on long-term living costs, which can be alleviated with potential citizenship in a work destination. This, coupled with sharp rises in the cost of living and the significant 'price' to pay for a citizenship, means Singapore may have a harder time convincing talent to set roots in the country. The world-class reputations of Singapore schools and businesses account for little if they are unable to retain talent in the workforce. Cases of foreign talent and overseas students sponsored by the Singapore government who treated Singapore as a “stepping stone” have already caused dissent in the local population.

The issue of disallowing dual citizenship also presents many Singaporeans with hard choices and deprives them of potential gains. Consistent with the large proportion of foreigners in the country (according to a population report in 2012, permanent residents and foreigners make up almost 40 percent of the total population in Singapore), marriages between citizens and non-citizens accounted for 39.4 percent of total marriages in 2011. Many couples are thus faced with the difficult scenario of either spouse having to give up citizenship in another country if they wish to settle down in Singapore. Similarly, thousands of Singaporeans study and work abroad in various parts of the world, but are unable to apply for citizenship in their host country. All these have significant repercussions because it affects job opportunities, property ownership and access to other wide-ranging benefits such as in healthcare and social welfare.

Changing priorities for changing needs

Singapore is often known for its prudent and sustainable public policies such as its healthcare and social welfare model. Strict fiscal discipline is the norm and the health of Singapore's public finance has always been subject of envy. Upon closer examination, one notices that these models are built on strong principles of self-reliance and individual responsibility to guard against over-consumption and moral hazard. While these are much lauded principles, it also means that the Singapore government has been able to shift the financial burden of healthcare and social welfare to its citizens. In 2005, the out-of-pocket share of total health expenditure has increased to almost 70 percent and was the highest among countries of similar level of development. Faced with an ageing population and increasing costs of living, Singaporeans have begun appealing for more government spending, especially in healthcare. The low level of total government spending (at around 14-17 percent of GDP) is among the lowest in the developed world. Many (including economists and policy experts) have questioned the feasibility of such low level of government spending, particular in healthcare, in tackling the future social

and demographic challenges the country will face. A well-known economist once criticised that “Singapore’s social policies are not future-ready”.

Given the strict discipline of maintaining the healthy status of public finance and a balanced budget, increasing spending on social welfare and healthcare would indicate an impending need for cuts somewhere else. Having reached the stage of a developed economy, it is **unlikely** that the additional spending can be supplemented with high rates of economic growth that the country has witnessed for the past few decades. The Singapore government is already exploring other possible options to boost revenue to finance increasing social spending (e.g. changes in the tax system) but is very **mindful** about the negative impact on the competitiveness of the economy. Despite efforts to **prime** the population, increasing income taxes will be an unwise and risky move in a **political climate unfavourable** to the current PAP government.

The bull’s eye may likely fall on the huge defence spending. A simple breakdown of the **budget for 2013** unveiled that the amount of S\$5.7 billion (£3 billion) allocated to the Ministry of Health and S\$1.8 billion (£1 billion) to the Ministry of Social and Family Development pale in comparison to the S\$12.3 billion (£6.5 billion) that is given to the Ministry of Defence, which accounted for **23 percent of the total government expenditure**. This has been a long-standing pattern in government spending. While defence spending will probably remain opaque due to strategic concerns, it is likely that there will be increasing pressure from both the general public and the ruling elites to re-examine the fundamental rationale behind this significant slice of spending. The country’s leaders may have to reshuffle their existing policy priorities and introduce significant changes to the way resources are allocated to changing needs. Begging this question is a re-visit to the defence and strategic posture that Singapore has hold on to since independence. In other words, how can Singapore continue to safeguard its national interests and defend itself from threats in a less costly but more cost-efficient way? Singapore is not alone in this. Such questions are currently being asked in the **United States**.

How to do it better and cheaper in a worsening security climate?

Finding the answers will not be easy since surrounding conditions have always been tricky for Singapore and there are signs of more hostility in Southeast Asia. There is always the presence of an unnerving distrust in Singapore’s relationships with Malaysia and Indonesia. Frequent threats of cutting off its water supply (up to 40 percent of Singapore’s water supply comes from Malaysia) and provocative episodes such as the joint airborne exercise by Indonesia and Malaysia less than 20km from Singapore on its National Day in 1991 are still vivid memories in the **minds** of Singapore’s strategic thinkers.

Further military build-up as a response to the South China Sea dispute by ASEAN members such as Vietnam, Malaysia and the Philippines further contributes to the deteriorating security climate in the region. Recent cracks in ASEAN, due to the 'divisive tactics' employed by China have pushed Singapore towards engaging the United States (US) even more. Statesmen like former PM [Lee Kuan Yew](#) and his son, the current PM, [Lee Hsein Loong](#) have embarked on a calibrated and delicate attempt to call on the US to balance China's influence in Asia, while advocating against an outright American containment policy in view of the huge economic weight the Chinese has in the region. This maneuver has caused tensions in the relationships of Singapore with China and also between ASEAN member states. The recent deployment of an advanced US combat ship to Singapore's Changi Naval Base was met with Chinese suspicion and skepticism, reflected in the tone of the [news coverage](#) by a Chinese state media agency.

To achieve a truly secured environment, Singapore has to continue to flex its diplomatic and financial muscle in ASEAN to maintain solidarity and unity. Singapore is not Germany, and it should not move in the direction of making ASEAN a 'transfer union' (an extremely loaded word in the EU). Yet, Singapore does have expertise and resources that could be used to bolster ASEAN's functional capabilities. What is lacking is, arguably, political will and leadership. Limited by its small size, Singapore is not likely to become the leader in ASEAN, but it will be able to act as a strong wingman for likely candidates such as Indonesia.

ASEAN has come a long way in trying to maintain the peace in the region, but an underfunded and weak ASEAN Secretariat stands in the way of continuing that mission. The imperative goal is to strengthen the operational capabilities and effectiveness of the ASEAN Secretariat. The 2012 annual budget for the Secretariat was a mere US\$15 million (in comparison, the EU's was over 147 billion Euros). The lack of resources for the ASEAN Secretariat rendered it useless in a time when ASEAN unity is essential. An unwillingness to boost the capacity of the Secretariat also obstructs the creation of effective confidence-building and conflict resolution mechanisms between ASEAN members. It has also been quoted as one of the reasons for the [failure to meet the goal of establishing the ASEAN Economic Community by 2015](#). The incapability of ASEAN to provide development funds to the less developed members has also caused them to turn to China, trading their allegiance for much needed resources for economic development.

It is also vital for ASEAN members to strengthen and improve communication with each other. The organisation failed to issue a joint communiqué for the first time in its history due to differences with regards to the South China Sea dispute. When the Philippine government unilaterally submitted a case against China to UNCLOS in January, it failed to receive explicit support from its fellow ASEAN members. A press statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

in Singapore suggested that the Philippines did not consult ASEAN and its members prior to the submission by claiming that it “[first knew about this action from media reports](#)”. Without a united front, individual claimant countries in ASEAN face highly asymmetrical negotiating power vis-à-vis China.

For Singapore, investing more in ASEAN and getting its counterparts to do likewise is tantamount to embarking on a strategic plan with potentially huge benefits in the future. The day Singapore can claim that it is truly secured is the day it has achieved zero prospect for hostility with its neighbours. Laying one's bet on a multilateral framework that could enhance cooperation and peace such as ASEAN is undoubtedly a better and more cost-effective option to achieve that goal compared to expanding military capabilities that run the risk of engaging in a security dilemma. Other benefits can also come in the form of closer economic ties and a better investment climate. This is not to say that the tiny nation should completely “put down its guns” but instead, it is a call to embrace a more holistic and forward-looking vision of security.

Hitherto, Singapore's brilliant foreign, diplomatic and defence policy contributed to not only its survival but its triumph as a thriving market economy and an international player that often punches above its weight. Facing challenges from globalization, demographic changes, the need to continue to be economically relevant and a deteriorating security climate in its neighbourhood, the Singapore government today finds itself in a difficult situation to have all the right answers. These challenges would require its leaders to embrace a more holistic definition of security and defence so as to embark on new policy directions both at home and abroad. Being a global centre of finance and shining beacon of economic achievements, what Singapore does to circumvent these challenges will be closely watched by policy-makers, businesses and investors all over the world. Nevertheless, the track record of the ruling elites in Singapore brings a sense of optimism that they will be able to find pragmatic and comprehensive answers to the challenges. At stake is the continuous relevance and survival of their country.

Ambassador Bilahari Kausikan is Policy Advisor with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and former Permanent Secretary of the Foreign Affairs Ministry. This is an excerpt of a speech, “The Sovereignty of Small States”, given at the Singapore Perspectives organised by the Institute of Policy Studies held on Jan. 26, 2015.

“Singapore is a small state located in Southeast Asia”

What does 'sovereignty' mean to a small country like Singapore?

We did not seek independence, but had independence thrust upon us.

I have been told that Mr Lee Kuan Yew once said that 'small island states are a political joke'. I cannot trace the source of that quote and if anyone can help I would be very grateful. But even if apocryphal, it implies a concept of sovereignty based on which our founding fathers sought independence within Malaysia rather than alone. I suspect it was difficult for that generation to even conceive of Singapore apart from what was then called Malaya. Obviously, and thankfully, that concept of sovereignty proved mistaken or was rendered mistaken by the Herculean efforts of our pioneer generation.

The concept of sovereignty is constantly evolving. Rather than try to define the elephant, I propose to take its existence for granted and instead consider what sovereignty means to Singapore by deconstructing a single sentence: 'Singapore is a small state located in Southeast Asia'.

"Singapore is a small state"

This seems straightforward, but is it really? What do we mean by 'small'? We are of course a physically small country. A moderately athletic person could without too much difficulty walk across it in a day. But as a trading centre, as a logistics hub, as a port and airport and as a financial centre we are far from 'small'. In trade, connectivity and finance, among others, we loom quite large internationally, far larger than our physical size may lead one to expect.

Sir Stamford Raffles established modern Singapore as a trading centre in 1819. Some recent archaeological studies suggest that we may have been a significant trading centre since the 14th century, even before the concept of sovereignty in its current form existed. Trade requires connectivity, logistics and finance. But the point is that they are essentially similar functions and we have performed them as a British colony, as part of Malaysia and only in the last fifty years — which is but the blink of an eyelid in the sweep of history — as a sovereign and independent country. There is therefore no reason to assume that sovereignty and independence are necessary conditions for us to perform such functions. We could conceivably do so even if our independence and sovereignty comes, by some blunder of policy, accident of politics or malicious whim of the Gods, to be severely compromised.

Size – physical size — matters and small states are intrinsically irrelevant to the workings of the international system. It is impossible to conceive of a world without large countries like the US, China, India, Indonesia, Brazil or Russia, or even without medium sized states like Australia, Japan, France or Germany.

But the world will probably get along fine without Singapore as a sovereign and independent country. After all it has only had to put up with us for fifty years. For small states relevance is not something to be taken for granted but an artefact: created by human endeavour, and having been created, preserved by human endeavour. The creation and maintenance of relevance must be the over-arching strategic objective of small states.

How do we create relevance?

The bedrock of relevance is success. I have always told our Foreign Service Officers that if Singapore's foreign policy has been successful, it is not due to their good looks, natural charm or the genius of their intellect: the most brilliant idea of a small country can be safely disregarded if inconvenient, whereas the stupidest idea of a large country must be taken seriously, in fact the stupider the idea the more seriously it must be taken because of the harm a large country can do. If we succeed it is only because Singapore as a country is successful. Singapore's success invests our ideas and actions with credibility.

Success must be defined first of all in economic terms. Will a barren rock ever be taken seriously? I know that it has become fashionable in certain circles to claim that economic success is not everything and that there are other worthy goals in life. I do not disagree as far as individuals are concerned. If any of our compatriots chooses to drop out of the rat race and devote his or her life to art or music or religion or even to just *lepak* in one corner, I respect their choice and wish them well.

But the country as a whole does not have this luxury. A world of sovereign states is in fact a rat race, and often a vicious one, in which the weak go to the wall. There can be no opting out for a sovereign state. And to be crass about it, small countries will always have fewer options than large countries but rich small countries have more options than poor small countries and that tilts the scales in our favour. This is crucial because a small state cannot be just ordinarily successful. If we were no different from our neighbourhood, why should anyone want to deal with us rather than our larger neighbours who, moreover, are well endowed with natural resources? To be relevant we have to be extraordinary. Being extraordinary is a strategic imperative.

“A small country in Southeast Asia”

And that brings me to the second part of the sentence with which I began. Singapore is not just a small country, but a small country in Southeast Asia; not the South Pacific or South America or Europe or, thankfully, the Middle East. This seems obvious but I think is nevertheless insufficiently appreciated.

A year or so ago I was flabbergasted and disturbed when asked — asked in all seriousness and not just to take the mickey out of me, which would have been acceptable — by a Singaporean PhD candidate in political science, why Singapore could not pursue a foreign policy akin to that of Denmark or Switzerland. The question aroused all my prejudices about the academic study of international relations. It makes a vast and I thought glaringly obvious difference where a country is situated. That a Singaporean PhD candidate who presumably knew something about her own country as well as the subject she was studying could ask such a question made me worry about the future of our country.

Southeast Asia is not a natural region. The main characteristic of Southeast Asia is diversity, which is another way of saying that there is nothing intrinsic to it. There are obvious differences of political form and levels of economic development. But the most important diversities of Southeast Asia are visceral: diversities of race, of language and of religion. ASEAN was intended, among other things, to mitigate these diversities to ensure a modicum of order and civility in inter-state relationships in a region where this was not to be taken for granted. ASEAN has been reasonably successful. But ASEAN can never entirely erase these primordial diversities because race, language and religion are the essence of core identities.

Singapore defines itself a multiracial meritocracy and we organize ourselves on the basis of these principles. We are not perfect — there is no perfection to be found this side of heaven — but we take these principles seriously. They are what make Singapore, Singapore. They also make us extraordinary because our neighbours organize themselves on the basis of very different principles. This is most obvious in the case of Malaysia. It was the irreconcilable contradiction between fundamentally different political philosophies that made it impossible for us to remain in Malaysia and, no matter how closely we cooperate — and despite occasional spats we do cooperate very closely in many areas — will make it impossible for us to ever be part of Malaysia again unless Malaysia abandons its basic organizing principle. And if you believe that will happen, there is a bridge I can let you have really cheap.

The essential issue is existential; not what we do but what we are: a Chinese majority country with neighbours whose own Chinese populations are typically a less than fully welcome minority and whose attitudes towards their own Chinese populations are too often projected upon us.

A Chinese majority multiracial meritocracy that has been extraordinarily successful compared to its neighbours is often taken as an implicit criticism of differently organized systems. That we are tiny speck on the map and have hardly any history to speak of is an additional affront. The intensity of such attitudes waxes and wanes; it manifests itself in different ways at different times. But it never disappears, because it is the structural consequence of the dynamic between two types of systems. Being extraordinary does not make us loved, but it is the price we must pay for survival and autonomy.

In different forms and various degrees such attitudes exist throughout Southeast Asia, and in China, Japan and even in western countries like Australia and the US. Examples spring to mind all too readily, but diplomatic prudence does not permit me to elaborate. Of course none of this is intended to imply that we cannot work with our neighbours or any other country: obviously we must, obviously we can and obviously we do and indeed, I dare say, we do so quite well. But these complexities are never going to go away and we ignore or deny them only at peril of compromising our autonomy, that is to say, our sovereignty. I believe that matters are going to get even more complicated because the external environment and our domestic environment are both changing and external and internal complexities will act and react with each other in ways that cannot now be predicted.

There are already signs of foreign policy being used for partisan political purposes. This is probably inevitable. Domestic debates over foreign policy are not necessarily a bad thing provided they take place within parameters defined by shared assumptions. Otherwise it is playing with fire. At very least it degrades the nimbleness of our responses if we have to argue everything out anew from first principles.

Shared assumptions come naturally, almost unconsciously, to countries with long histories. But with only fifty years of shared history, I am not entirely confident that this is the case in Singapore. There is something of an intellectual vacuum that is being largely filled by nonsense. We need to be better at educating ourselves about our own history. We do not in my opinion do a good enough job and the recent debates about our own political history are unfortunately notable only for their utter vacuity. What passes for critical thinking about our history is too often

simply crying white if the establishment should say black. And social media exacerbates the situation by conflating information with opinion and treating both as entertainment.

**SPEECH BY MR LEE KUAN YEW, MINISTER MENTOR, AT THE S. RAJARATNAM
LECTURE, 09 APRIL 2009, 5:30 PM AT SHANGRI-LA HOTEL**

**THE FUNDAMENTALS OF SINGAPORE'S
FOREIGN POLICY: THEN AND NOW**

Independence was thrust upon Singapore. The fundamentals of our foreign policy were forged during those vulnerable early years. They remain relevant because small countries have little power to alter the region, let alone the world. A small country must seek a maximum number of friends, while maintaining the freedom to be itself as a sovereign and independent nation. Both parts of the equation – a maximum number of friends and freedom to be ourselves - are equally important and inter-related.

Friendship, in international relations, is not a function of goodwill or personal affection. We must make ourselves relevant so that other countries have an interest in our continued survival and prosperity as a sovereign and independent nation. Singapore cannot take its relevance for granted. Small countries perform no vital or irreplaceable functions in the international system. Singapore has to continually reconstruct itself and keep its relevance to the world and to create political and economic space. This is the economic imperative for Singapore.

To achieve this, we have to be different from others in our neighbourhood and have a competitive edge. Because we have been able to do so, Singapore has risen over our geographical and resource constraints, and has been accepted as a serious player in regional and international fora. We earn our living by attracting foreign investments and producing goods and services useful to the world. Hence, we must always have the ability to be ourselves and be different from others in the wider region of East and South Asia. Had we disported ourselves like our better endowed neighbours, we would have failed. For Singapore, unlike others in our neighbourhood, is of no intrinsic interest to any developed country when they can invest in our larger neighbours endowed with more land, labour and natural resources.

At the same time, we must never delude ourselves that we are a part of the First World in Southeast Asia, a second and third world group of countries. Our region has its own special features. Singapore's destiny would be very different if we were sited in Europe or North America. We cannot transplant our island elsewhere. Therefore, a recurrent issue for Singapore is how to differentiate ourselves from our neighbours in order to compete and survive, and also get along with them. This is a perennial foreign policy challenge.

The Changing International Environment

As the world changes, small countries have to swiftly adjust their policies and positions in a pragmatic and clinical manner. We have to live with the world as it is, not as we wish it should be. We must remain nimble to seize opportunities that come with changing circumstances, or to get out of harm's way.

Let me outline the major changes in the international and regional environment since we became independent.

In 1965, the Cold War was at its height. The world was bipolar, divided into communist and non-communist blocs and a main fault line ran through Southeast Asia. The Vietnam War had been raging on for several years. That year, President Lyndon B Johnson upped the ante by bombing North Vietnam. All the non-communist countries of Southeast Asia faced serious internal threats from communist insurgencies or subversive movements supported by a China that was then in the throes of the launch of the Cultural Revolution.

All the non-communist countries of Southeast Asia were embroiled in disputes of varying intensity with one another. Singapore had just been “separated” from Malaysia and Indonesia was pursuing a policy of “konfrontasi” against Malaysia and Singapore. The Philippines claimed Sabah. Brunei with British help had suppressed an internal rebellion backed by Indonesia. There were also strong irredentist pressures on the borders between West Malaysia and Thailand, and between the Philippines and Indonesia. In these unpropitious circumstances, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was formed so that the non-communist states in Southeast Asia could contain and manage their differences to meet the greater threat from the communists.

The world has completely transformed. The Cold War is over after the Berlin Wall fell in 1989 and the Soviet Union imploded in 1991. Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia have joined ASEAN. The threat of mutual nuclear annihilation during the Cold War has gone.

But it is not the “end of history” that an American has written in the euphoria of triumphalism. The Cold War divided the world into two blocs for more than 40 years from the end of the Second World War. Two heavily armed nuclear blocs made it a dangerous world. Once this over-arching strategic discipline of the bipolar Cold War was dissolved, long submerged conflicts broke out in many parts of the world, but fortunately not in Southeast Asia.

With the collapse of the communist ideology of how society and the economy should be organised, all states joined the global wave of the free market.

Singapore has since 1965 plugged into the international economic grid. We welcomed Multi-National Companies (MNCs) to invest and manufacture in Singapore when the conventional wisdom was that MNCs exploit Third World countries. As an open economy, we took full advantage of globalisation.

East Asian countries had been leading the pack in this globalisation wave. They distinguished themselves from other Third World countries by single-minded emphasis on development. Japan was the earliest to plug itself into the global system. The Newly Industrialising Economies of Hong Kong, Republic of Korea, Singapore and Taiwan followed suit from the 1960s; then came the Southeast Asian ‘tigers’: Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand. Vietnam reformed its economy in the 1990s.

The most dramatic transformations were China and India. China’s re-emergence in the world economy is the single most profound event of the 21st century. Two huge economies in China and India will reshape the world order before the end of the 21st century.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Singapore was berated in the Chinese media as a lackey of the American imperialists. The Malayan Communist Party (MCP) backed by China refused to recognise Singapore's independence. This changed after Deng Xiaoping visited Singapore in November 1978. It marked a dramatic change in Singapore's relations with China, and also China's relations with Southeast Asia. Deng visited Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur before he arrived in Singapore. He personally saw that China had fallen behind these supposedly backward cities. Also, he concluded that China had to stop supporting insurgencies in Southeast Asia if he wanted ASEAN to support the resistance to Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia.

In 1985, Dr Goh Keng Swee retired as Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister. He was invited to be Economic Advisor to the State Council on the development of China's coastal areas and tourism. China, a huge nation with an ancient history, was willing to learn from a tiny city-state.

Deng Xiaoping kept abreast of developments in Singapore and Southeast Asia. During a tour of southern China in February 1992, he said, "there is good social order in Singapore. They govern the place with discipline. We should draw from their experience, and do even better than them." Vice Minister of Propaganda Xu Weicheng led a delegation to Singapore for 10 days that same year. Since then, exchanges between Singapore and China have grown. Hundreds of Chinese officials continue to be trained in Singapore. Since 1996, we have trained over 16,000 Chinese officials.

Rebalancing the world

The post-Cold War world is in a state of flux. All countries are transiting to a different global order.

The present unprecedented global economic crisis has resulted from a lack of checks on the many financial products called "derivatives". There was insufficient oversight in international financial markets as layer upon layer of ever more complex financial instruments spun out of control. The world is suffering the consequences.

A mood for more regulations and control prevails in many economies. This could slide into protectionism. Protectionist measures to protect domestic employment will prolong the economic crisis with unpredictable geopolitical complications.

This crisis will hasten China's growth vis-à-vis the US. It is growing at 8%; the US may suffer negative or low growth. China has proven itself to be pragmatic, resilient and adaptive. The Chinese have survived severe crises – the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution – few societies have been so stricken. These are reasons not to be pessimistic.

The relationship between the US and China has already become the most important geopolitical issue of this century. Both countries realise that they need to work with the other. Neither wants conflicts. Both have to reckon with internal pressures from serious problems of growing unemployment.

However, American resilience and creativity should never be underestimated.

As the dominant global power, preserving the status quo is in US interests. As a rising power, China will not acquiesce to a status quo status indefinitely. Competition is inevitable, but conflict is not.

The US and China will both come through the present economic crisis. China is closing in on the lead the US enjoys. Their relations will remain stable, provided the world does not slide into protectionism. Each has to accommodate the core interests of the other.

The world, including East Asia, is not yet “decoupled” from the US. Multi-polarity where different poles are approximately equal in strategic weight is unlikely to emerge because the “poles” are not equal. A global economic recovery is not possible unless the US recovers.

After the crisis, the US is most likely to remain at the top of every key index of national power for decades. It will remain the dominant global player for the next few decades. No major issue concerning international peace and stability can be resolved without US leadership, and no country or grouping can yet replace America as the dominant global power.

Europe can become an economic force. Because its members have not submerged their sovereign interests, the EU cannot be a global strategic actor. This crisis has shown how divergent the national interests of EU members are.

China, the EU, Russia, India will be independent players. China has made beachheads in the Middle East, Africa and Latin America. It will be a global player in another three to four decades. China’s present preoccupations are domestic, and its relationships with the countries of North East and South East Asia.

Russia’s capabilities are limited. It wants to consolidate its influence in its “near abroad”. Japan will be distracted by domestic politics. India is an emerging power, but at present lacks a competitive industrial base. However, it is the dominant power in South Asia.

China will pull ahead of Europe, Japan, India and Russia. US-China relations are setting the framework for East Asia. In the latter 21st century, US-China relations will become the most important bilateral relationship in the world, like the US-USSR relationship during the Cold War.

The US needs support from its European, Japanese and other allies to deal with international issues. The West is less cohesive after the Cold War. On international issues, like climate change, conflicts in the Middle East, proliferation, terrorism, food and energy security, pandemics or promoting Third World development, the US is not assured of unanimous support.

The current financial and economic problems require a global rebalancing of consumption and savings: a change in economic relationships between the US and China. Both must change in their cultural habits and mindsets. The American consumers must spend within their means. The Chinese consumers must increase their domestic spending. This will be a difficult transition.

Globalisation cannot be reversed because the technologies that made globalisation inevitable cannot be uninvented. In fact, better and cheaper transportation and communications will further advance the forces of globalisation. Singapore has to embrace this reality and remain open to talent, capital, technology and immigrants to make up for our low birth rate (total fertility rate of 1.29) with around 35,000 babies each year.

Singapore's Future

Singaporeans must always be prepared to maximise our opportunities and manage the challenges. In an era of increasing rapid and convenient transportation and communications, political leaders frequently meet each other at bilateral and multilateral summits; and they become comfortable to phone each other through secure lines. Ambassadors do not influence foreign policy so significantly. Sound foreign policy requires a prime minister and a foreign minister who are able to discern future trends in the international political, security and economic environment and position ourselves bilaterally or multilaterally to grasp the opportunities ahead of the others. Able foreign ministry officers and diplomats who give insightful recommendations based on dealing with their counterparts and assessments on the ground can greatly assist the Foreign Minister and his cabinet colleagues towards this end. But ultimately, it is the Prime Minister and other key ministers who decide on changes in policies. At face-to-face meetings over long hours they can sense each other's thinking and leanings before their officials are privy to them. Hence, our foreign policy from 1965 was settled by the PM and his key ministers. A mediocre PM and cabinet will decline our standing with other countries and we will lose opportunities like the lead we enjoy in Free Trade Agreements or Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreements with the US, Japan, China, India, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand, and our close relations with the oil states of the Gulf.

ASEAN is now more robust than in 1967. It has been an exception among Third World regional organisations. ASEAN has avoided being bogged down in post-colonial rivalries and tensions, and has focused on development.

Several ASEAN countries are in political transitions, working towards more sustainable and durable systems. Political circumstances will determine ASEAN's pace of progress. Placed between the giants of China and India, ASEAN countries have to combine their markets to compete and be relevant as a region. There is no other choice. ASEAN is also playing a major role in shaping a wider architecture of cooperation in the Asia-Pacific.

Conclusions

Let me return to the complexities of Singapore's relations with our neighbours. The events that led to our independence are receding into history. These different complexities are not the result of historical baggage, but of basic differences in political and social systems. Baggage is something we can discard. Political and social systems we cannot change so easily.

Singapore is a multi-racial meritocracy. Our neighbours organise their societies on the supremacy of the indigenous peoples, Bumiputras in Malaysia and Pribumis in Indonesia. Though our neighbours have accepted us as a sovereign and independent nation, they have a tendency to externalise towards us their internal anxieties and angst against their own minorities. This is unlikely to go away.

Time has worn down many of the sharper edges in our relations with our immediate neighbours. A habit of working together in ASEAN has also helped. Singapore is now more established, internationally and regionally. Forty years ago, many did not believe Singapore would survive, let alone prosper.

We have a strong economy, accumulated robust reserves, developed a civil service of integrity and ability, a mature and capable foreign policy team, and institutionalised our systems.

We have strategic relationships with the major powers. We have a credible defence capability. The SAF is an insurance in an uncertain world.

Each successor generation of Singaporeans must build on these assets and work out their solutions to new problems, seize new opportunities and avoid impending disasters in an ever changing world. The perennial challenge is to remain competitive. To be competitive, we must remain a cohesive, multi-racial, multi-religious nation based on meritocracy. We have to strengthen our national consciousness at a time when the forces of globalisation are deconstructing the very notion of nationhood.

All countries face this challenge. A country like America has over 200 years of history to bond its citizens. We have only 40 years. But so long as the succeeding generations of Singaporeans do not forget the fundamentals of our vulnerabilities, and not delude themselves that we can behave as if our neighbours are Europeans or North Americans, and remain alert, cohesive and realistic, Singapore will survive and prosper.

| Term / Relationship | Meaning / Examples |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Power (how is it measured) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard Power Soft Power | <p>Hard power refers to coercive tactics: the threat or use of armed forces, economic pressure or sanctions, assassination or other forms of intimidation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the ability to change the domestic affairs of other nations through military threats <p>Soft power includes debates on cultural values and ideologies, the attempt to influence through good example, and the appeal to commonly accepted human values. Means of exercising soft power include diplomacy, dissemination of information, analysis, propaganda, and cultural programming to achieve political ends.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sovereignty | Whereby a country has the authority to be independent in decision-making and no others should interfere with the domestic affairs of the country. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interdependence | <p>In an interdependent relationship, countries are mutually dependent on each other. May be economically, physically, socially, politically and culturally reliant and responsible on each other.</p> <p><i>Complex interdependence in international relations is the idea put forth by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, in reference to various, complex transnational connections (interdependencies) between states and societies.</i></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balance of power | Refers to the theory that national security is improved when there is an equilibrium of power amongst nations. This would ensure no one entity can impose its will upon others. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deterrence | A thing that discourages or is intended to discourage someone from doing something |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diplomacy | The official means by which sovereign nations conduct affairs with one another and develop agreement on their respective positions. Issues faced include war and peace, alliances, |

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| | boundaries, and trade, among many others. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foreign Policy | Foreign policy of a country consists of self-interest strategies chosen by the state to safeguard its national interests and to achieve goals within its international relations milieu (social environment). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raison d'être | The reason for which a person or organization exists |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raison d'état | Means "reason of state" and is otherwise known as "national interest", in other words, a country's goals and ambitions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter Government Organizations (IG Os) – UN, ASEAN, EU | Organizations which try to make the different nations and governments co-operate for common causes or interests. Some have the ability to institute common legislations, build economic zones, etc. while others cannot infringe on the sovereignty of constituent nations. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) | Organisations working independent from government powers (may be government sponsored) and usually work for humanitarian causes to fill the gaps. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multinational Corporations (MNCs) | Companies which operates in multiple countries. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burden of history and international relations | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic politics and international relations | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foreign Aid | Foreign aid is defined as financial flows, technical assistance, and commodities that are (1) designed to promote economic development and welfare as their main objective (thus excluding aid for military or other non-development purposes); and (2) are provided as either grants or subsidized loans. The aid (including financial, food, medicine/health care, etc.) provided by other countries in order to assist the |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singapore foreign policy | |
| ASEAN | |
| APEC | |
| ARF | |
| NATO | |
| Iskandar Development Region and Singapore | |
| Singapore-Malaysia | |

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| Water issue | |
| Pedra Branca | |
| Visit of Israeli President Chaim Herzog to Singapore in 1986 | |

Self directed group research

- South China Sea Territorial Disputes
- Ukraine-Crimea Crisis
- Situation in North and South Korea
- ISIS
- Israel, Hamas and the Gaza region

Essential

- Singapore: Foreign policy of an exceptional state

Core Readings (which you need to read):

Core 1 - [Ten Flatteners](#)

“Ten Flatteners” comes from a book by Friedman about globalization. Each flattener represents forces/factors that led to globalization:

1. **Collapse of Berlin Wall** (end of communism and start of economic mainstream (capitalism))
2. **Netscape going public** to allow manipulation of web browser as a form of communication tool to a broader audience
3. **Work flow software** to uploading of info for sharing
4. **Uploading** to share content accessible by everyone
5. **Outsourcing** to save money
6. **Offshoring** (relocation to another country) to take advantage of cheap labour forces in manufacturing
7. **Supply Chaining** to distribute products/services from manufacturer/supplier to customers
8. **Insourcing** to let small companies have capacity for bigger companies via logistics
9. **In-forming** (usage of search engines to gather information eg. Google)
10. **Steroids** that explain digitalization of content and processes that can occur everywhere/anywhere

Breaks down physical barriers → good for developing asian countries, but this is only in eco. context, does not factor in social and political

3 convergence that will reinforce the effect of flatteners on shifting of world economy

- Co-dependencies of flatteners
 - If one develops, the others will follow
- Need for companies to come up with new business models
 - Horizontal vs vertical collaboration
- Involvement of new countries in level economic playing field

Core 2 - [Social media freedom of expression](#)

Pros

- People who are awkward when interacting irl find it more comfortable to do it behind the screen while still reaching the same number of audience. Level playing field, person is more eloquent when he's comfortable

- Easier advertisement of information
 - No need for spontaneous replies when faced with criticism, can improve confidence
- Cons
- Some people have extreme views which could be offensive, might lead to problems (i.e racial conflicts, escalated disputes)

CorePlus Readings (which you should try to read):

CorePlus 1 - [Social Media - Promote or Limit Individual Liberty?](#)

Limitation of liberty via censorship (by the government due to political issues) could cause unknowing people to be aware of the change and increase public interest in the content the government is trying to suppress.

Examples:

- Iranian protest over irregularities in election in 2009 (organised over Twitter)
- Facebook page actually worked in organising a protest in Tahrir Square over young man beaten to death by Egyptian police (fb and youtube played essential part)
- Internet access has been cut off (Egypt - 2011, Xinjiang province traditionally Muslim area shut down for 6 months in 2009, Pakistan - 2009 (growing sacrilegious content))
- Chinese internet censored to local sites, discussions manipulated so it's pro-govt, but American technology helped to overcome this

CorePlus 2 - [Social Media - how it has changed Singapore](#)

In the 2011 GE, social media (soc-med) gave more coverage and campaigning. SG uses more soc-med than US, mostly for entertainment. Rare few who use it for politics hardly post their own opinions on situations, preferring to share content instead.

- >80% of Singaporeans have internet
- Singaporeans one of biggest social media users, surpassing US
 - Social networking sites: (US)69% vs (SG)93%. Twitter: (US)16% vs (SG)37%
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ Singaporeans have fb, top users (time spent per session)
 - 18% write personal blog, almost 50% say they read blogs
 - $\frac{2}{3}$ use to stay in touch, almost 50% use for celebs and entertainment, 19% use to follow political figure
 - Post links to political articles: 18% vs (SG)23%
 - Like or promote political material: 25% vs (SG)15%
 - Post comments: 22% vs (SG)13%
 - Encourage action: 20% vs (SG)10%
- GE caused 60% jump in social media usage from March-April 2011
- 2500% increase in online chatter on SMRT services after MRT breakdowns
- "National Conversation" initiative only got less than 5800 likes and 54 subscribers (fb and youtube)
- 2013 survey: 53% think govt using social media effectively, 1 in 3 under 40 think efforts are ineffective vs 19% over 40s
- 42% of swinging voters (switched since 2011) under 40, nearly 1 in 5 identified social media as source of information

CorePlus 3 - [Censorship in Singapore](#)

Presented stand (in article): Singapore's government has taken the passive aggressive approach to censorship. They have put in place regulations that allow them to change the terms of the licenses at anytime. (Compliance is necessary)

MDA says that targeted websites must take down content in 24 hours and put up \$50,000 performance bond. Government's reason for taking down is racist comments. All of 20 something requests MDA gave were successful for past 17 years. Only 1 was not for sex-related ads: takedown request to Youtube for 'Innocence of Muslim' video, and Youtube not on list of targeted websites ((MDA did not license the website that has actually received takedown notice due to potentially inflammatory content))

Pop Industry:

A1 - [Why TS pulled her music from Spotify](#)

1. Art of music isn't valued
2. Even non-subscribers can listen and stream without paying

A2 - [Spotify hits back](#)

1. Spotify won't go with paying because of piracy so no one will use their app if they can get songs free

A3 - [How much do musicians actually make from Spotify](#)

1. To hit min.wage
 - a. Physical CDs: 105 copies
 - b. iTunes album downloads: 1,126 downloads
 - c. Spotify: 1,093,750 streams
 - d. Youtube: 4,500,000 streams

Repercussions on Business:

B1 - [Did iTunes kill the music sales](#)

- Overall music revenue from \$11.8 billion (2003) to \$7.1 billion (2012)

B2 - [How small businesses are making the most of social media to grow](#)

1. Advertising their pages and products
 - a. Pinterest can help craft businesses get customers
 - b. Using multiple sites - not just facebook or just twitter etc.
 - c. Don't be the guy who only tweets once, focus on the platforms you use

B3 - [How facebook can ruin your business](#)

1. Negative feedback
 - a. Convergys Corp: 1 bad tweet/comment can lose up to 30 customers
 - b. Business Insider: >70% consumers trust reviews more than ads
 - c. comScore survey: reviews have significant impact on offline purchase behavior
2. News travels quickly
3. Nothing dies on facebook
4. Use fb only for adverts., doesn't build engaging relationships with consumers
5. Transparency - if you speak/post bad comments, your company gets bad reviews
6. 'Silent' type companies - no response to customer service issues
7. fb is always changing - if you can't keep up, you lose customers

How Social Media Changes Politics in Singapore:

C1 - [5 Ways Social Media has Changed Politics in Singapore](#)

1. More opinions
2. Broader discussions with people you don't know

3. Enables greater flow of information and partially levelling playing field for opposition
4. Faster dissemination of information
5. Youths are engaged too, more connection with younger generation

C2 - [Nicole Seah and the social media effect](#)

Article addresses reasons for Ms Seah's popularity during the elections

1. Against a backdrop of one-party dominance and state control, she represented something entirely outside of the institution and, in using social media to communicate, she is giving herself a platform to connect with voters outside of the confines of Singapore's media.
2. She is the preferred youth candidate

She basically made use of social media, which is 'fresh' to the Singaporean voters and appeals to the younger audience

Other stuff to know:

Social media is a community

- expands boundaries
- joins other communities

What 1 tweet can do: (MAMI - what you'll be saying when you get in trouble)

- Magnified - scrutinised in new ways
- Amplified - can become talk of the town
- Modified - twisted meaning
- Intensified - become a witch hunt

Social Media

- Virtual World
- A mode of communication to address the masses and self-expression
- Traditional media: radio, newspaper, television, advertisements, magazines
- Social: Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr
- **SOCIAL MEDIA IS LIBERATING BUT CAN CAUSE HARM.**
 - Depends on who the harm is targeted at, level of tolerance of those threatened

Social media VS Traditional media

- More effective
- Free from all (who have internet)
- Bottom up approach - Anyone and everyone can create news, might not be true

Is social media liberating?

Effects of social media (MCE Tunnel "Leakage" Case)

Problem is **magnified** → **Amplified** and spread → Over-reaction and slamming of government, situation **intensifies** → Issue **modifies** from issue about the pipe to the government not doing its job.

Amplified, Intensified and Modified are considered the **echo chamber**

CAN be used for good purposes (petitions, raising money)

Governmentality (flagging and reporting insulting posts on social media)

- Govern: Taking control, having power and authority
- Mentality: Psychological (intangible)

- People in social sites influencing what people do and post, so most people limit themselves and restrict what they post to avoid being judged (SELF-GOVERNING)
- Eg. you don't wear a dress in public (if you're a male) because you know it's frowned upon and you'll be judged
- Eg. Amos Yee does not give a shit about governmentality