

THE COMPASS



Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister officiates JCI launch



Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin (right) with Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah of the Sunway Group

The Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia, an independent think tank and the latest academic initiative of the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation, was launched on March 18, 2014 by Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

The Institute will focus on addressing the development problems facing Southeast Asia through its own research as well as a programme of public lectures and forums that will bring together policymakers, academics and citizens to exchange ideas on issues of concern.

With Malaysia undertaking economic reform with the aim of joining the world's high-income nations by 2020, Tan Sri Muhyiddin noted think tanks would have a vital role to play in that development.

"Malaysia must also upgrade its national software by increasing its capacity to plan, design and implement better public policies," the Deputy Prime Minister said at the official launch of JCI in March last year. "This is where JCI can play a transformative role. Malaysia will have better public policies where there are high-quality, non-partisan think tanks like JCI."

Tan Sri Muhyiddin stressed JCI's capacity to conduct interdisciplinary analyses on an unusually wide range of problems thanks to its close association with Sunway University, Monash University Malaysia and Harvard University, a view echoed by Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah, founder and chairman of the Sunway Group, which controls the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation.

"Many of Malaysia's most complicated problems are not unique to Malaysia," Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah said at the ceremony. "JCI will be, and has to be, a global citizen."

In this Issue

The Middle Income Trap phenomenon: First in Latin America, now Southeast Asia? — *pg.4*

The Trans-Pacific Partnership: Benefits and costs — *pg.6*

Sabah leaders call for new identity cards to be issued — *pg.8*

Colonial legacies and a wealth of resources; why Southeast Asia has developed differently from Northeast Asia — *pg.9*

JCI's Inaugural Conference — *pg.10*

Voices from the Podium — *pg.12*

Malaysia's domestic fault lines — *pg.14*

Challenges to Joko Widodo: Indonesia's cultural and political complexity — *pg.15*

Myanmar faces crucial test as reforms stall and election approaches — *pg.17*

Radical approach needed for Malaysian universities to reach global top 100 — *pg.19*

Trust schools show troubled Malaysian school system the way forward — *pg.21*

Looking ahead — *pg.24*

President's message

We are all united in the quest for improvement, whether individually or collectively. It is part of our common humanity. It's this quest that helps explain our perception of human progress. The unprecedented degree of material prosperity and socio-political empowerment in the world today are the results of our forefathers' dedication; their ability to devise increasingly compelling moral visions for the advancement of society, and to secure a stream of technological breakthroughs to realise those aspirations.

Self-enlightenment is achieved through social interaction, and this "synergistic self-enlightenment" is what that keeps the quest for improvements going, and is what generates both fresh ideas and new knowledge. This conclusion is supported by the impressive socio-economic attainments of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, which have no significant endowments of commercially valuable fauna, flora or mineral resources. These three countries succeeded because they implemented public policies that constantly enlarged and improved the brainpower of their citizens. They invested in education and encouraged innovation. Many Southeast Asian countries must now switch to this knowledge-based growth path if they are to catch up with the living standards in these countries.

The successful mobilisation of brainpower for socio-economic development has been difficult historically because it requires successful actions across several areas. Firstly, the state must create a set of coherent policies to create, attract and retain enough of each type of skilled individuals like administrators, entrepreneurs, artists, scientists and politicians. Secondly, policy debate must be institutionalised to ensure that innovative proposals

are thoroughly vetted, successful policies from elsewhere are adopted and adapted to the local conditions, and there is sufficient support from affected groups to allow the effective implementation of the new policies.

The mission of the Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia (JCI) is to help formulate public policies that will facilitate the switch to knowledge-led growth in Southeast Asia, and support the global quest for sustainable development. I am happy to report that JCI has made a satisfactory start in 2014 in policy research and public dialogue. I am much heartened by the collaboration in these activities that JCI has received from other research organisations.

Our foreign collaborators include the Brookings Institution (USA), Harvard University (USA), Fudan University (China), Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (Singapore), Keio University (Japan), Columbia University (USA), Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (Indonesia), Korea Institute for International Economic Policy, Thailand Development Research Institute, Universiti Brunei Darussalam, University of Tokyo, Seoul National University, and Peking University; and our domestic collaborators include the Centre for Public Policy Studies, Foreign Policy Study Group, Merdeka Center, Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs, Institut Kajian Malaysia dan Antarabangsa, and Institute of Strategic and International Studies.

I hope that in 2015 that you will support in your own way JCI's objectives, ensuring economic growth in Southeast Asia that is dynamic and socially inclusive, and global development that is truly sustainable.



Woo Wing Thye

Major events in 2014



From left to right: Tan Sri Datuk Seri Utama Pandikar Amin bin Haji Mulia, Professor James Chin, Professor Dr. A Selvanathan, Tan Sri Ramon Navaratnam, Dr Venkat Iyer, Yusmadi Yusoff

27 January 2014

JEFFREY CHEAH DISTINGUISHED LECTURE: Muhamad Chatib Basri (photo, top right), Minister of Finance, Republic of Indonesia, "The challenge from Quantitative Easing to economic management in Southeast Asia: Indonesia's Experience."

LINK:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CAHxqqUZENQ>

18-19 March 2014

INAUGURAL CONFERENCE: "Overcoming the Middle-Income Trap and Keeping Balance Amid Global Turbulence."

24 April 2014

FORUM: The US Pivot to Asia and Its Implications for the Region

23 June 2014

INAUGURAL SIR JOHN MONASH DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC LECTURE: Professor Woo Wing Thye, "The Middle-Income Trap Phenomenon: First in Latin America, now in Southeast Asia too?"

24 June 2014

FORUM: Myanmar: The road ahead

30 June 2014

FORUM: An Economic Perspective of Who in ASEAN Should Join TPP and Who Should Not



Muhamad Chatib Basri, former Indonesian Finance Minister, delivers the Jeffrey Cheah Distinguished Lecture



From left to right: Darell Leiking, Rasyidah Md Khalid, Professor Andrew Harding, Professor James Chin, Tan Sri Dr. James Masing, Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah, Professor Woo Wing Thye

15 July 2014

LOWY LECTURE SERIES: Professor Woo Wing Thye, "The Future of the Renminbi."

PODCAST:

<http://www.lowyinstitute.org/news-and-media/audio/podcast-future-renminbi-wing-thye-woo-stephen-grenville>

21 July 2014

FORUM: Is the Commonwealth still relevant? (Photo, top left)

22 August 2014

FORUM: 50 Years of Malaysia: Federalism Revisited (Photo, above)

28 October 2014

FORUM: The Jokowi Administration: What He Can and Cannot Do in Indonesian Politics

13 November 2014

JEFFREY CHEAH DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES: Professor Ghauth Jasmon, "Getting into the Top 100: What will it take to get there first?"

17 December 2014

WEBCAST: The Sabah RCI Report

LINK:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJWVIVjhRnw



Woo Wing Thye speaking at Monash University Malaysia

The Middle Income Trap phenomenon: First in Latin America, now Southeast Asia?

Commitment to reform will help Malaysia achieve high-income goals

Economic and political reform initiatives based on international best practice, can lift Malaysia out of the “middle income” trap and help it join South Korea and Taiwan among the world’s richest nations, according to JCI President, Professor Woo Wing Thye.

“The good news is that there’s agreement on what needs to be done,” he told the audience at the inaugural Sir John

relatively easy to become a middle income nation, different development strategies were necessary to create a high income economy.

Professor Woo explained how the standard of living in West European economies had converged over time because countries learned from each other’s policy successes and mistakes. Average GDP per capita has been about 70 percent of the United States’ over the past 50 years. There is no parity in per capita income even though the GDP per hour worked in Western Europe and the USA is almost the same because Europe has longer holidays and an ageing population.

In Latin America he noted there was also a convergence between the five nations under study (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico) between 1960 and 2006, but the average living standard had remained unchanged at about

“THE 1970 NEW ECONOMIC POLICY FRAMEWORK CAN NO LONGER WORK FOR MALAYSIA TODAY. WE HAVE GOT TO LET THE MARKET WORK AND SOMETIMES THAT MEANS FIGHTING VESTED INTERESTS.”

Monash Distinguished Public Lecture at Monash University Malaysia in June. “The question is why we aren’t doing what we said we would do.”

Professor Woo said reform would be helped by a generational change” with younger Malaysians more demanding of their government and less willing to accept the way things were done in the past.

He used historic data to show that ever increasing prosperity is by no means guaranteed, noting that while it was

30 percent of the level in the United States.

“The term, “Middle Income Trap” was invented for countries that have never closed the distance between themselves and the most advanced countries in the world,” Professor Woo said. “It’s not that there’s no growth, it’s just that they are not growing any faster than the U.S. The result of this relative economic stagnation has been political instability, resulting in bouts of economic nationalism and military rule.”

He noted that in comparison to Western Europe and Latin

America, East Asia had a mixed record in catching up to the U.S. Malaysia and Thailand, dubbed “miracle economies” by the World Bank in 1993, were unable to continue that success after 1995.

In the 1960s, Professor Woo said, Malaysia was richer than both South Korea and Taiwan, yet the two countries’ had now eclipsed Malaysia and narrowed the gap with the United States. “It’s a worrisome situation,” he said.

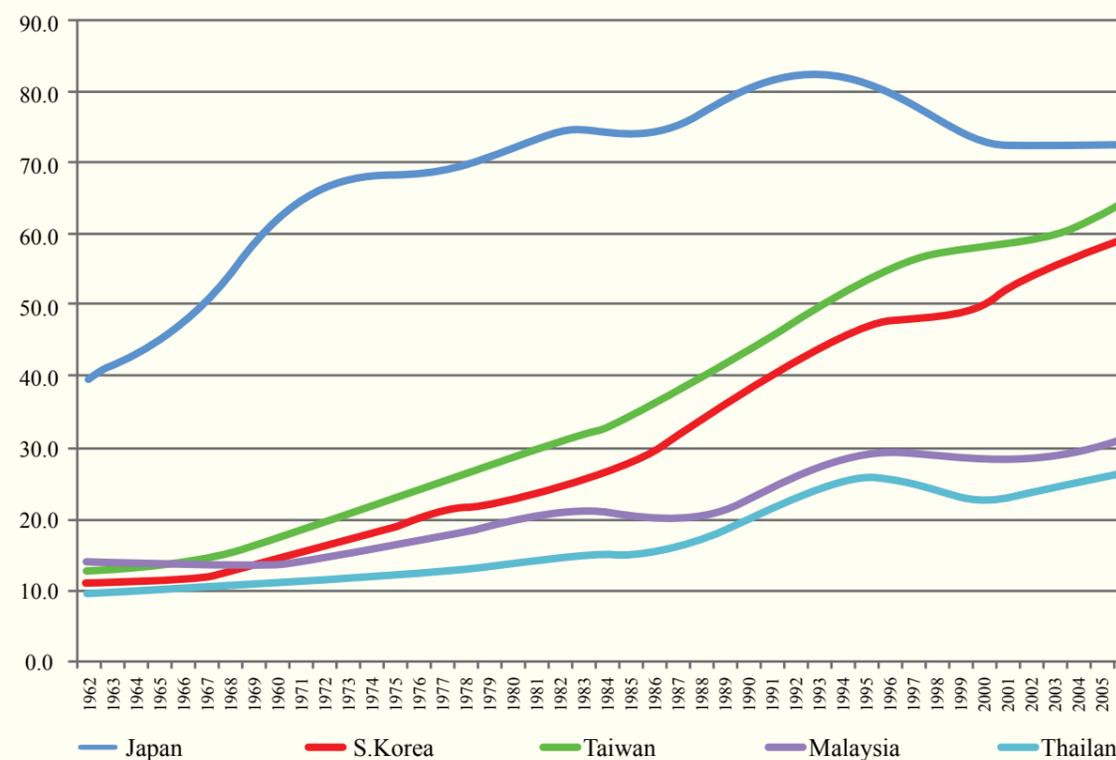
In the ten years until the Asian Financial Crisis, Malaysia expanded at roughly 9.4% a year Professor Woo told the audience, but from 2001-2005 the rate slowed to 4.5% and from 2006 – 2010 decelerated further to 4.2%. He attributed the slowdown to socio-economic policies that have triggered massive capital flight and the departure of some of the country’s most talented people; negative effects that were masked by a huge inflow of foreign direct investment prior to China’s decision to join the World Trade Organisation in 2001.

“The 1970 New Economic Policy framework can no longer work for Malaysia today,” he warned. “We must recognise that the competitiveness of the private market economy and stability of the political system are the ultimate determinants of growth. The highly interventionist policies of Malaysia are now weakening stability, in addition to weakening competitiveness, because these policies are no longer socially-inclusive in their impact. We have got to let the market work and sometimes that means fighting vested interests, usually domestic monopolies.”

Professor Woo said signing free trade agreements such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership would strengthen the government’s hand in facing down those who oppose reform, noting that China’s accession to the WTO had given it the opportunity to restructure problematic state-owned enterprises.

Professor Woo Wing Thye is also a Research Professor at Sunway University and a Professorial Fellow at Monash University Malaysia.

The standard of living in selected Asian economies relative to the U.S.



* per capita GDP of country/per capita GDP of USA %, with GDP in PPP\$ terms

Find out more:
<https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2013/wp1371.pdf>
<http://www.adb.org/features/middle-income-trap-holds-back-asias-potential-new-tiger-economies-12-things-know>
<http://www.americasquarterly.org/node/2142>



Chia Siow Yue

The Trans-Pacific Partnership: Benefits and costs

The controversial trade deal will benefit smaller, open economies

The breadth of the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, the United States' dominant role and the secrecy of the continuing negotiations are feeding opposition to the trade pact, and hindering the chances of an early agreement, according to Chia Siow Yue, a Senior Research Fellow at the Singapore Institute of International Affairs at a forum on the topic organised by the Jeffrey Cheah Institute in June.

the U.S. with over 300 million people to Brunei with just 400,000.”

But after more than 20 rounds of negotiations, progress appears to have stalled.

Chia argues the U.S. enthusiasm for TPP reflects concern over the growth of free trade agreements among East Asian countries, particularly proposals for an Asian-wide FTA. Washington wants to expand its strategic interests in the region and secure a foothold in the region for U.S. exports, but it also envisaged the partnership as a “gold” standard for trade deals.

The result has been a set of proposals whose scope goes far beyond traditional trade pacts. In those kinds of arrangements, controversies usually centre around tariff reductions and eliminations. Although those issues also remain sensitive in the TPP, it is the non-tariff “behind the border” provisions such as government procurement practices that have triggered vociferous concerns and even street protests.

In the U.S. there are problems too. Some politicians – even within President Obama’s own party – are opposed to the deal – and the President does not have so-called “fast-track” authority, meaning Congress would be free to inspect any agreement line-by-line and call for renegotiation.

Malaysia, which joined the talks in 2010, has been among the most open about the process, Chia noted. The Ministry of International Trade and Industry says the deal will give Malaysian companies access to a market of 793 million people with a combined GDP of \$27.5 trillion, but adds that intellectual property rights, labour rights, state-owned

“MALAYSIA ASPIRES TO BE A DEVELOPED COUNTRY.”

The TPP started life nine years ago as P4, an initiative of the four APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) economies of Singapore, Brunei, New Zealand and Chile, Chia explained. The objective of P4 was to create an extremely liberal trading regime, removing nearly all tariffs, and with an accession clause that would allow other APEC members to join.

But it was only when the U.S. expressed interest in joining in 2008 that other governments began to take notice, Chia said. That triggered what she described as a “domino effect,” with Peru, Australia, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico and finally Japan joining the talks.

“It is quite a diverse membership,” noted Chia. “From

enterprises, government procurement and the environment remain “difficult” areas.

Chia notes that adopting higher global standards is not necessarily a bad thing given Malaysia’s own ambitions. “Malaysia aspires to be a developed country,” she said. “What are the aspirations of a developed country? Surely you want a labour force that has a living wage and is not subject to exploitation by unscrupulous employers. And you want to protect your environment. You don’t have to apply all the standards immediately, you can ask for a longer lead-time and some carve-outs. There will be compromises.”

Indeed, Chia believes it is the smaller more open economies like Malaysia and Vietnam, who stand to gain most from

TPP, not least because neither has an existing bilateral free trade agreement with the U.S. A larger trade pact will also

for the smaller businesses that still dominate many Asian economies.

“YOU DON’T HAVE TO APPLY ALL THE STANDARDS IMMEDIATELY, YOU CAN ASK FOR A LONGER LEAD TIME AND SOME CARVE-OUTS. THERE WILL BE COMPROMISES.”

help streamline the “noodle bowl” created from overlapping multilateral and bilateral agreements that have different customs regulations and rules of origin, making life simpler

Chia Siow Yue is a Senior Research Fellow at the Singapore Institute of International Affairs.

Concerns About TPP

- 1 The investor-state-dispute settlement, which allows foreign companies to sue host governments for perceived “harm” to their business interests.
- 2 Stringent protection of Intellectual Property Rights, which endangers developing countries’ access to cheap generic drugs and material downloaded from the Internet.
- 3 Control of state-owned enterprises and the opening of government procurement markets to foreign companies.
- 4 Enforcement of labour rights, through accession to the ILO Conventions.
- 5 Enforcement of environmental regulations.



Container ship moored at commercial dock

Find out more:

<http://www.ustr.gov/about-us/press-office/fact-sheets/2011/november/outlines-trans-pacific-partnership-agreement>

https://wikileaks.org/tpp-ip2/#article_gzz

[http://www.miti.gov.my/storage/documents/1ed/com.tms.cms.document.Document_c5ada311-c0a8156f-72160910-3ecf-cd41/1/TPP%20-%20Briefing%20Notes%20-%20Website%20\(FINALrev1\).pdf](http://www.miti.gov.my/storage/documents/1ed/com.tms.cms.document.Document_c5ada311-c0a8156f-72160910-3ecf-cd41/1/TPP%20-%20Briefing%20Notes%20-%20Website%20(FINALrev1).pdf)

<http://www.asean.org/news/asean-statement-communicues/item/regional-comprehensive-economic-partnership-rcep-joint-statement-the-first-meeting-of-trade-negotiating-committee>



Darell Leiking, Datuk Madius Tangau and Professor James Chin

Sabah leaders call for new identity cards to be issued

The Malaysian government should issue new identity cards to the entire population of Sabah, following the release of the Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) report on illegal immigrants in the Borneo state.

This was the consensus between two political leaders, Datuk Madius Tangau, President of the United Pasokmomogun Kadazandusun Murut Organisation, which is part of the ruling Barisan Nasional coalition, and Darrel Leiking of the opposition Parti Keadlian Rakyat, in a JCI webcast on the RCI report in December.

Commission to publish all the documents that came before it. But PKR's Leiking suggested the RCI could instead allow people to download the documents if they were interested in reading the submissions, arguing it was important that all the information be made widely available.

Both politicians agreed that Dr. Kamal Sadiq should have been invited to appear before the enquiry.

Dr Sadiq, an American academic, wrote his doctoral dissertation on how illegal migrants were able to become Malaysian citizens and acquire Malaysian identity cards. Although his research was mentioned many times in the RCI, he did not appear before the proceedings.

On the crucial issue of why the RCI did not name the

"MORE LIKELY THAN NOT PROJECT IC EXISTS."

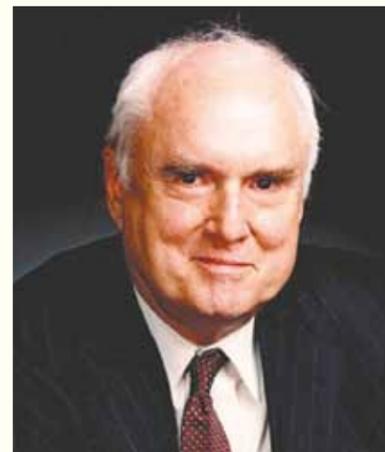
Both argued issuing the cards would be the most effective way to resolve the issue of illegal migrants in the state – who are thought to number in the millions. A witness from the National Registration Department told the enquiry that Malaysia had changed its design for the identity card – given to all Malaysian citizens - at least three times.

The two were divided on veteran opposition politician Lim Kit Siang's call for the RCI to make public its submissions. Datuk Madius noted UPKO's evidence to the RCI amounted to more than 20 volumes and it would be difficult for the

principals behind what has become known as "Project IC," Leiking said that because the government selected the Commissioners it was impossible for them to name those responsible.

But Datuk Madius said the RCI's terms of reference did not involve naming those responsible. Moreover, he added that the enquiry did not conclusively establish that there even was a Project IC. The RCI concluded that it was, "more likely than not Project IC exists."

For the full Webcast please go to:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJWVIVjhRnw



Professor Dwight Perkins

Colonial legacies and a wealth of resources; why Southeast Asia has developed differently from Northeast Asia

Histories, cultures reflected in different growth trajectories

The contrasting success of the economies of Northeast and Southeast Asia reflects the fundamental differences between the two regions in their approach to development, Professor Dwight Perkins argued in his talk at the inaugural JCI conference.

"NORTHEAST ASIA HAS DONE BETTER LARGELY BECAUSE IT HAS DEVELOPED STRATEGIES THAT FIT THE PARTICULAR SITUATION OF NORTHEAST ASIA. SOUTHEAST ASIA HAS SOMETIMES GOT THOSE STRATEGIES RIGHT, BUT A GOOD DEAL OF THE TIME IT HAS NOT."

Professor Perkins, the Harold Hitchings Burbank Professor Emeritus of Political Economy at Harvard University, noted that while governments in the Northeast have tended to adopt strategies attuned to their cultural and political histories, those in the Southeast have been hobbled by political interference and rent-seeking.

As a result, he said, Southeast Asia, had failed to meet its full potential.

"Northeast Asia has done better largely because it has developed strategies that fit the particular situation of Northeast Asia," the professor told the audience. "Southeast Asia has sometimes got those strategies right, but a good deal of the time it has not."

For much of their history, countries such as Japan, Korea and China, largely governed themselves allowing them to learn from experience, whether of success or failure, he noted.

Southeast Asian nations, in contrast, only secured independence at the end of World War Two and had to cope not only with learning how to govern their own nations, but also how to deal with the consequences of colonial rule. At the same time, borders were less clearly defined and populations considerably more diverse than the largely homogenous countries of Northeast Asia. Moreover, while countries in Northeast Asia had long valued education – crucial to economic success – few of the colonial powers saw the benefit of educating the people of the countries that they'd colonised; a situation that was particularly marked in Indonesia.

Professor Perkins also drew attention to the wealth of natural resources – coal, oil, gas and gold - in Southeast Asia, compared with countries in the Northeast, which were forced to innovate and in order to build their economies.

"Countries that were really quite poor in Northeast Asia have surpassed those of Southeast Asia and kept on growing," he

said, but cautioned that past performance was no guarantee of continued expansion. "Growth is not automatic. You can make mistakes, you can stop half way through, you can never get started and, as Japan has demonstrated, you can have stagnation even at a very high income."

Dwight Perkins is Harold Hitchings Burbank Professor Emeritus of Political Economy at Harvard University.

Overcoming the Middle-Income Trap and Keeping Balance Amid Global Turbulence

JCI's Inaugural Conference, March 18-19, 2014

Hundreds of scholars attended the Jeffrey Cheah Institute's inaugural conference, which took place in March last year and included a luncheon address from Professor Kiyohiko Nishimura, the former Deputy Governor of the Bank of Japan, as well as insights from experts including Professor Young-Kwan Yoon, the former Foreign Minister of South Korea, Dr. Chalongsob Sussangkarn, former Finance Minister of Thailand, Tan Sri Rastam Mohd. Isa, Chief Executive of the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (Malaysia), and Professor Anwar Nasution, former Senior Deputy Governor of Bank Indonesia.

Southeast Asia, China and the Return of Big Power Rivalry



His Royal Highness Sultan Nazrin Muizzudin Shah speaks on Southeast Asia, China and "big power" rivalry



Guests, including Khazanah Nasional Managing Director Tan Sri Dato' Azman Mokhtar (seated right), Harvard-educated economist Professor Tan Sri Dato' Dr. Lin See Yin (seated second right, front) and JCI President Professor Dato' Woo Wing Thye (seated third right, front), listen to the Sultan's speech.

The trajectory of the Chinese Economy and its implications for ASEAN

The second panel of the conference discussed the Chinese economy and its impact on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. The panellists included Professor Fan Gang, Director of the National Economic Research Institute and a former member of the Monetary Policy Committee of the People's Bank of China, Dr. Ooi Kee Beng, Deputy Director of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore and a Senior Fellow at JCI and Professor Dato' Dr. Tan Tat Wai, Group Managing Director of Southern Steel and Research Professor at Sunway University. Professor Helen Bartlett, Pro Vice Chancellor and President, Monash University Malaysia, chaired the session.



Participants listening to the panel discussions



Professor Fan Gang, Professor Helen Bartlett, Dr. Ooi Kee Beng, Professor Dato' Dr. Tan Tat Wai.

Human capital needs for the 21st century: the role of higher education

The conference opened its second day with a discussion on higher education, which was chaired by Professor Joyce Teo Siew Yean, Director of the Institute of Policy Studies at the University of Brunei Darussalam. The speakers included Professor Peter Heard, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research and Higher Degrees and Dean, Faculty of Science and Technology at Sunway University, Professor Tan Sri Dr. Lin See Yan, an adviser to the Malaysian government and Dr. Wan Mohd. Zahid Mohd. Noordin, former Director-General in Malaysia's Ministry of Education.



From left to right: Professor Peter Heard, Professor Joyce Teo Siew Yean, Professor Tan Sri Dato' Dr. Lin See Yan, and Tan Sri Dato' Dr. Wan Zahid Mohd. Noordin

Building the Regional Architecture for Growth and Sustainability

The fourth session was devoted to regional economics. Dr. Chalongsob Sussangkarn, Distinguished Fellow at the Thailand Development Research Institute and a former Minister of Finance in Thailand, Professor Fukunari Kimura of Keio University, Professor Jorge I. Dominguez, Vice Provost for International Affairs at Harvard University and Professor Tham Siew Yean, Deputy Director at the Institute of Malaysian and International Studies at the National University of Malaysia and a Research Associate at JCI. Dr. Jayant Menon, Lead Economist in the Office for Regional Economic Integration at the Asian Development Bank, chaired the session.



Dr. Chalongsob Sussangkarn, Professor Fukunari Kimura, Dr. Jayant Menon, Professor Jorge Dominguez, Professor Tham Siew Yean

During the lunch break, Professor Kiyohiko Nishimura, discussed the reform efforts of Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the challenges facing Abenomics.



Professor Kiyohiko Nishimura delivers his luncheon address

Managing the International and Domestic Fault Lines in East and Southeast Asia

After lunch, the topic of discussion turned to the political, cultural and economic divides around the region. The speakers included Professor Yoon Young-Kwan of Seoul National University, former Foreign Minister of South Korea, YAM Tunku Zain Al-'Abidin ibni Tunku Muhriz, Founder and President of the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) and Professor James Chin, Director of the Governance Programme at JCI. The panel was moderated by Tan Sri Dato' Dr. Ramon Navaratnam, the Chairman of the Centre for Public Policy Studies.



Professor Yoon Young-Kwan, YAM Tunku Zain Al-'Abidin ibni Tunku Muhriz, Tan Sri Dato' Dr. Ramon Navaratnam and Professor James Chin

Southeast Asia in the 21st Century

The final session, chaired by JCI President Professor Dato' Dr. Woo Wing Thye, focussed on the future of Southeast Asia. Professor Anwar Nasution, Professor of Economics at the University of Indonesia, Dr. Vu Quoc Huy, Head of Department at the Institute for Regional Sustainable Development at the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences and Professor Dwight Perkins, Harold Hitchings Burbank Professor Emeritus of Political Economy at Harvard University all gave presentations.



Professor Anwar Nasution, Professor Dato' Dr. Woo Wing Thye, Dr. Vu Quoc Huy and Professor Dwight Perkins

Voices from the Podium

Hundreds of scholars attended the Jeffrey Cheah Institute's inaugural conference, which took place over two days in March, and included a luncheon address from Professor Kiyohiko Nishimura, the former Deputy Governor of the Bank of Japan, as well as insights from experts including Professor Fan Gang, the Director of the National Economic Research Institute and a former member of the Monetary Policy Committee of the People's Bank of China.



"People realise corruption is about power. When you have too much power and too much public money then it's too easy to have corruption. It's about the survival of the Party and the survival of the political regime."

Professor Fan Gang, Director of National Economic Research Institute, Professor at Peking University and former member of the Monetary Policy on China's reform measures



"Universities (need) to question what their real role is in the 21st century. Traditionally, we turned out 'great thinkers.' We turned out people who could question our societies and the direction they were going in – but now universities have been criticised for not turning out the kind of graduates that business and industry need to succeed and I think in today's world that's no longer tenable."

Professor Peter Heard, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Higher Degrees and Dean, Faculty of Science and Technology, Sunway University addresses the role of universities



"The forces pulling at the region are real, but as long as ASEAN remains beneficial to dialogue with the big powers, the organisation and its members can feel safe."

Dr. Ooi Kee Beng, Deputy Director, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore and Senior Fellow, Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia on the role of ASEAN



"We are not homogenous. There are varying levels of development. That's why, in the case of ASEAN, it's important to put emphasis on narrowing the development gap. ASEAN has helped in ensuring peace and stability in the region to the extent that in many ways it has helped contribute to the individual development of the countries concerned. There is still much that needs to be done in respect of regional co-operation and integration but as we can see ASEAN is now moving towards the establishment of the ASEAN Community by the end of 2015."

Tan Sri Rastam Mohd Isa, Chief Executive, ISIS, speaking on the development differences between Northeast and Southeast Asia.



"Although Southeast Asia may look like a region where everything is similar, the reality is that it's very different. The sort of similarities that you find are actually very superficial. People like to think that Malaysia and Indonesia are very similar because of a similar language and culture, but that's not true. If you look at the history of Southeast Asia you will see there are many regime types, very different levels of economic development and different stages of democratisation."

Professor James Chin, Senior Fellow, Governance Studies Programme at the Jeffrey Cheah Institute on the fault lines in Southeast Asia



"There's a pressing need to show the Prime Minister (Shinzo Abe) is free from wishful thinking. He needs to explain structural reform to boost investment, deal with (Japan's) demographic challenge and lay out the road map for financial consolidation."

Professor Kiyohiko Nishimura, Chairman, Faculty of Economics, University of Tokyo, Deputy Governor, Bank of Japan 2008 – 2013, on Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his reform efforts



Tunku Zain Al-'Abidin Ibnu Tuanku Muhriz

When we in IDEAS* call for more parental choice, one criticism is that it might deepen fault lines even more.

But for us, diversity does not necessarily need to result in fault lines, especially if a society possesses a strong shared sense of history, of opportunity and of destiny. This is the biggest challenge of Malaysia today: people in power are fully aware of the existence of fault lines but don't respond to them cohesively. You get formulations like 1Malaysia that call on citizens to rise above fault lines, but they co-exist alongside policies that depend and expand fault lines. Inevitably, there is derision.

The role of civil society is therefore crucial; it is here that communication across fault lines can occur; the first step to building bridges across them. If there is no communication, fault lines could eventually lead to earthquakes. For example, calls for greater autonomy, if ignored, may one day grow into calls for secession.

Sometimes, domestic fault lines spill over into the international arena, which we sometimes see from aggressive nationalists. When two neighbouring countries claim ownership of islands or art forms, vocal minorities on both sides will call for sanctions or even war against the other country: thus the fault lines of domestic politics can become a major determinant of foreign policy.

That is why it is in the interests of regionalism that national leaders take greater steps to manage domestic fault lines. If they don't, Asean's projects are unlikely to reach beyond elites. It will be difficult to engender affinity towards Asean while there continue to be so many sources of division and tension within countries.

So for our and the region's sake, the fault lines that are cracking our country apart must be addressed. There are

It is vital that we recapture that optimistic, purposeful Merdeka spirit while recasting our differences as opportunities to know each other, mutually benefit and strengthen each other. This would not only enable us to manage our fault lines, but provide immunity from future ones as well.

This column is based on a talk given by Tunku Zain Al-'Abidin Ibnu Tuanku Muhriz at the JCI's Inaugural Conference. He is the Founder and President of Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs, Malaysia.



Rival party flags on display during Malaysia's 2013 General Election

**The Institute of Democracy and Economic Affairs is Malaysia's first think tank dedicated to promoting market-based solutions to public policy challenges.*



Indonesia's bustling city, Jakarta.

Malaysia's domestic fault lines

Country needs to rekindle shared sense of history and culture

Malaysia has fault lines in terms of politics, ethnicity, language, religion, culture, socio-economic status and educational background. Divisions can arise from different expectations of the role of the state and different world views on any matter of public policy, or even what it means to be a good citizen. There's also the generation gap.

But the political fault lines are the most serious, criss-crossed by other fault lines. Every area of public policy is politicised not just because of the usual party politics, but also because the presence of fault lines triggers stakeholders to act in certain ways.

THE EMERGENCE OF CIVIL SOCIETY HAS HELPED TO MODERATE THE DEBATE; BUT WHETHER OR NOT THEY SUCCEED CAN ONLY TRULY BE TESTED IN THE POLITICAL ARENA AT GENERAL ELECTIONS.

Looking at education for example, it's clear that government policy is heavily influenced by the legacy of ethnically-defined party politics on one hand, but also by calls for reform using the vocabulary of school-based assessments, Pisa rankings and decentralisation on the other. Pushing and pulling against this are the choices of parents, in turn determined by socio-economic position and cultural background.

those in government who realise this, as the formation of the National Unity Consultative Council suggests. Still, too many people have too much to gain by ensuring that fault lines persist. The emergence of civil society has helped to moderate the debate; but whether or not they succeed can only truly be tested in the political arena at general elections. Indeed, if politics provides the biggest fault line in this country, it will be through the political process that fault lines can begin to close.

Challenges to Joko Widodo: Indonesia's cultural and political complexity

Regionalism, vested interests among biggest issues facing new President



Dr. Farish Noor

Indonesia's new President Joko Widodo, popularly known as Jokowi, faces multiple challenges as he seeks to deliver on his electoral promises in a country where the provinces are increasingly powerful, communal identity growing and parliament dominated by the opposition, according to Indonesia expert Farish Noor, an associate professor at RSIS in Singapore.

Jokowi was elected in July 2014 in a hard-fought campaign against former army general Prabowo Subianto. Jokowi's success as mayor of Jakarta, as well as his 'everyman' demeanour and a reputation for probity helped secure him the most powerful position in the country.

Nevertheless, the new President, who was installed on October 20, faces formidable challenges, Farish told the audience at a lecture organised in the same month by the Jeffrey Cheah Institute at Sunway University. Jokowi faces not only a hostile opposition-controlled parliament, but also assertive politicians in the provinces, increasing communal identity among Indonesia's myriad ethnic groups and a growing, more demanding middle class.

"The complex nature of these challenges reflects the complexity of Indonesian society," Farish said. "Too many analysts tend to assume too much homogeneity and to look at the country through the lens of Jakarta. There are many Indonesias."

Farish, a Malaysian who has taught at a number of Indonesian universities and has travelled across the archipelago, says visiting provinces and districts outside Jakarta and the heavily populated island of Java provides a more nuanced and accurate picture of life in contemporary Indonesia.

to achieve his ambitious plans to modernise creaky logistics and communication networks across the archipelago, because the local tycoons who dominate key routes – and profit from the existing system – might be unwilling to give up control, according to Farish.

He highlighted how prices multiply depending on the distance not only from the capital, but major regional cities; a cup of coffee that might cost 1,000 rupiah in Yogyakarta, surges to 10,000 rupiah in the Papuan city of Jayapura in the far east of Indonesia. It's a similar situation with power. Many places are still not connected to the electricity grid, with communities reliant on generators in many parts of the country.

"This was a bread and butter election," Farish said. "Jokowi needs to translate ideas into policies."

Jokowi's decision to include in the Cabinet respected technocrats, eight women and ethnic minorities as well as people from the opposition, provides an indication of the political battle the new President faces. Jokowi may have the people's support but he lacks the backing of the Indonesian Parliament.

"It's a compromise Cabinet," Farish told the audience. "Jokowi's main problem is that he faces a hostile parliament."

"THIS WAS A BREAD AND BUTTER ELECTION."

The devolution that has taken place since the fall of Suharto in 1998 means that the power dynamic with the centre has changed. Farish argues ambitious politicians need no long court the powers in Jakarta to establish themselves locally and that has contributed to increasing demands from the periphery. In South Sulawesi, he noted, local newspapers devote a dozen pages to local events, with barely two or three on the rest of Indonesia. The size of the middle class has also grown and people no longer need to go to the capital to make their fortunes. The country's third fastest growing city, after Jakarta and Surabaya, is Balikpapan in Kalimantan.

"Today, across many parts of Indonesia there are movements everywhere for a greater sense of local identity," Farish said. "The relationship between the centre and the periphery has changed. Jakarta has become the lobbying point."

More assertive provinces may make it difficult for Jokowi

He cannot antagonise the opposition coalition because it controls parliament and can block everything."

Dr. Farish Noor is an Associate Professor at RSIS, Singapore.



Dr. Farish Noor delivering his lecture at Sunway University

Find out more:

<http://www.lowyinstitute.org/issues/indonesia-elections>

<http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/101east/2014/04/indonesia-rock-governor-2014428755300344.html>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/20/indonesia-jokowi-sworn-in-president-jakarta>



From left to right: Ambassador Redzuan Kushairi, Professor Woo Wing Thye, Merdeka Center Director Ibrahim Suffian, Associate Professor Jatswan Singh, Associate Professor Marco Bunte.

Myanmar faces crucial test as reforms stall and election approaches

Military retains significant influence despite democratisation

This year's election will be a crucial test of the pace and extent of Myanmar's democratic reforms and provide an indication of how much power the military is prepared to cede to civilian politicians including Aung San Suu Kyi.

"The whole democratisation process revolves around the military and the USDP," emphasised stressed Ambassador Redzuan Kushairi, the deputy chairman of the Foreign Policy Study Group at a forum on Myanmar organised jointly with JCI and the Merdeka Center. "It is a country that is very much controlled by the military. The 2015 elections will be crucial."

It was the military, which seized power in 1962 that designed and drafted the 2008 Constitution and set the direction for the current reforms. The document institutionalised a leading role for the military in the political process reserving a quarter of all parliamentary seats for serving officers. The

military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party, which forms the current government is led by the junta's former leader turned President, Thein Sein. The armed forces can veto any amendments to the Constitution, which require the backing of at least 75 percent of parliamentarians.

More than 2,000 political prisoners have been released since the reforms started in 2008 and Aung San Suu Kyi, who had been held under house arrest almost continuously since the 1990 poll, which her National League for Democracy won in a landslide, secured a parliamentary seat in 2012.

Legal reforms mean protests are now possible, within certain limitations, and journalists have greater freedom to report. The country's press freedom ranking rose to 145 in 2014, compared with 174 in 2011, higher than Asean partners including Singapore and Malaysia. The removal of international sanctions after Aung San Suu Kyi's release has led to a surge in international aid and investment.

"It's a far less repressive regime," Monash University Malaysia associate professor Marco Bunte told the forum. "But we still see a lot of coercion."

Despite the acceleration in economic growth triggered by the democratisation process, continued ethnic conflicts and the repression of the country's 1.3 million Rohingya, who

are Muslims and not recognised as citizens, threaten to undermine the advances of the past few years. The United Nations in April warned the treatment of the Rohingya, many of whom are now coralled into squalid camps with little food, water or medical attention, could amount to, “crimes against humanity.”

Professor Jatswan Singh.

Aung San Suu Kyi herself is forbidden by the Constitution from running for office and attempts to amend that provision have been rebuffed.

As the election approaches, surveys suggest many people in

*“IT IS A COUNTRY THAT IS VERY MUCH CONTROLLED BY THE MILITARY.
THE 2015 ELECTIONS WILL BE CRUCIAL.”*

All the speakers expressed concern at organisational problems within the NLD, arguing it had failed to challenge the government on key issues, particularly the treatment of the Rohingya, while a lack of democracy within the party deprives younger politicians the opportunity to advance. The NLD also appears to have made little effort to prepare for the election, despite the chance that it could take place within a year, noted University of Malaya Associate

Myanmar are worrying about bread-and-butter issues – jobs and the cost of living – but also the country’s continuing ethnic conflicts. The NLD won 43 of the 45 seats contested in the polls held for “vacant” seats two years ago, but the Myanmar military has devised a transition that ensures its continuing influence over the political process whoever the voters back in 2015.



Students at Sunway University



The Shwedagon Pagoda is in Yangon, Myanmar

Find out more:

<http://www.burma-center.org/en/publications/documents/item/288-constitution-of-the-republic-of-the-union-of-myanmar/>

<http://rsf.org/index2014/en-index2014.php>

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/south-east-asia/myanmar/251-the-dark-side-of-transition-violence-against-muslims-in-myanmar.aspx>

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14476&>

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/20/opinion/denying-democracy-in-myanmar.html?_r=0



Professor Ghauth Jasmon

Radical approach needed for Malaysian universities to reach global top 100

Bold leadership, serious research, more citations and autonomy a necessity

Malaysian universities are failing to move into the global Top 100 universities because their research is generally not of top class quality and they have a dearth of “star” academics whose work would attract a huge number of citations and propel their universities up the rankings.

The government’s original target of two institutions in the Top 100 globally by 2015 and three by 2020, as outlined in the National Higher Education Strategic Plan (PSPTN), is unlikely to be met. In fact, with the frequent change in politicians holding the Higher Education minister portfolio over the years, the interpretation of PSPTN seems to receive differing degrees of attention from the various ministers, and university management is often left to interpret the direction to take on its own.

Only a radical response will help the country’s institutions of higher education scale the international rankings. Indeed, the significance of these university rankings should not be underestimated. To all intents and purposes, the world’s best universities are engaged in a fierce “global reputation race.” In Asian countries like Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Japan and China, the country’s leaders pay great attention to the rankings to gauge the relative performance of their universities. Unfortunately, this does not appear to be the case in Malaysia at the moment.

Three main indicators - Shanghai Jiao Tong Academic Ranking of World Universities, Times Higher Education World University Rankings and QS World University Rankings - measure performance in a range of areas including teaching, international outlook and research. Malaysia’s top university currently was only able to participate in the QS survey - considered the easiest of the 3 ranking systems - which gives research a weighting of 20 percent, compared with 70 percent for the Times survey and 90 percent for Shanghai Jiao Tong.

If we focus on scientific fields, University of Malaya's (UM) citations, as measured by the Scientific Citation Index, remained steady from 1981 – 1996 while rivals, National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University first overtook UM and now leave it far behind.

The leading global institution, Harvard University in the United States, had 1.7 million citations between 2001 and 2005, while Universiti Malaya had just 8,212. Malaysia's performance also lagged other developing nations including South Africa, Iran, Thailand, Egypt and Croatia.

The key to improving research, and thus citations, is bold and enterprising leadership. Vice-Chancellors need to champion academic excellence and quality research as practised by the world's top universities and push through crucial reforms even in the face of stiff resistance. The VCs need to have the clout and ability to attract into the university large sums of money for high end, cutting edge research. They also need to lure top students and academics from around the world and to keep them in the system.

It's a policy that has paid dividends for Singapore's Nanyang Technological University. Its recruitment of high profile scholars had led to more citations and a sustained improvement in its global ranking. Of 15 "superstar" researchers in the world, whose publications are "gold," NTU has one. In 2014, NTU was named the world's best "young" university and ranked at No. 39 in the QS' wider rankings.

University of Malaya, Malaysia's top public university, has been moving up the rankings and came in at 151 in the QS survey.

It is certainly doing the right things – employing better academics, strengthening its advisory board with the recruitment of Nobel Prize laureates and deepening its international links. A High Impact Research scheme was established in 2011 and the government has awarded it huge amounts of research funding. But, like the leading football clubs in the English Premier League, it has to do more to attract the top stars.

That will not be easy, but it is possible.

Malaysia could start by focussing – much like the government's Talent Corp programme - on convincing the brightest and best Malaysians to return home.

Local universities must also consider a number of other measures to improve their research performance and make them more attractive propositions for world-class scholars, such as an exchange scheme to allow more Malaysian postdoctoral students to study in the world's top universities and more foreign postdoctoral researchers to spend time in Malaysian universities. More money also needs to be made available for junior scholars.

Incentives should also be created to reward high performers whether among staff or students and universities must set their own standards for evaluation. Such a benchmarked standard should be used fairly and equitably so that even poorly performing senior academics will be required to conform to the new culture of excellence.

The government should also allow the full implementation of the autonomies that were given in 2012, a move that was intended to be a catalyst to excellence.

An independent, internal system for appointing members of each University Board as well as top management should be created to remove concerns about political interference. At the moment, such appointments are entirely in the hands of the Minister of Education, leaving universities constrained by the fear that what they do may cross the line and upset the government.

There is an urgent need too for all universities to reach a certain minimum number of staff having doctoral degrees. From now on, doctorates must be compulsory for all academics and scholars should be grouped so the best researchers (the top 20 percent) focus mainly on research while the rest mostly teach. Moreover, research should be focussed on a few selected key disciplines with incentives provided for publication of quality journal papers.

Only then will Malaysia's institutions be able to compete more effectively on the world stage and build an international reputation.

Professor Ghauth Jasmon is a Senior Fellow at the Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia and was Vice Chancellor of the University of Malaya from 2008 - 2013.



A classroom at a Malaysian Trust School
Credit: Yayasan Amir

Trust Schools show troubled Malaysian school system the way forward

Focus on teacher training and development gets results

by Kate Mayberry

Malaysia's national schools are in crisis and the government knows it.

The Education Blueprint¹ released in 2013 acknowledges both the scale of the problems facing the system and the need for action. Setting out ambitious targets for improvements in the performance for teachers and students up until 2020, it aims to place the country among the world leaders in education.

But can it?

Compared with the leading countries in international educational benchmarks², such as Singapore, Japan and Hong Kong, the gap is daunting. Malaysia's 15-year-olds are performing as though they have been in school for three years less than teenagers in the top ranked countries.

But Malaysia also lags countries that spend the same, or less per student; a reality that is all the more disappointing because, traditionally, the government has invested a

considerable amount in education, helping ensure more children now attend school at both primary and secondary level than they did at independence in 1957.

The Blueprint lays down a number of measures designed to lift standards, from improving English proficiency to introducing more course and project work as a way of inculcating thinking skills. It also highlights a number of initiatives that are supposed to improve the quality of teachers and encourage schools to aspire to excellence.

Among these are Trust Schools. The scheme, which began in 2010, is designed to be "transformational," working within the system and using existing resources to achieve better results.

Billed as a Public Private Partnership (PPP), the main backer of the programme is Yayasan Amir, the philanthropic arm of sovereign wealth fund, Khazanah Nasional (Khazanah provided 100 million ringgit for the pilot project involving ten schools). LeapEd Services, the company that devised the educational approach, is also part of Khazanah. Since the only truly "private" element is the corporate sponsors that provide the funding for their chosen school(s), private sector involvement is extremely limited. Khazanah itself describes the system as "semi-privatised."³

Malaysia's Trust Schools are then a "very weak"⁴ example of a PPP, even though the plan was inspired by reforms in the United States, Britain and Sweden that ceded control of

Find out more:

http://sunway.edu.my/university/sites/default/files/jcdss/JCDSS_13Nov2014_slides.pdf
<http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/2014-15/world-ranking>
<http://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings>
<http://www.shanghai ranking.com>

a swathe of public education to private companies, some of which operated their schools for profit.

But the scale of private sector involvement is not the only way in which the Trust Schools differ from the schemes that were its inspiration. In Malaysia, as overseas, Trust Schools were awarded a number of autonomies, including more say over the school's teaching staff and curriculum, but few of these have been fully implemented. Moreover, the Ministry of Education retains overall control over the teachers and leadership of the school making it difficult, although not completely impossible, to transfer staff who may not share the Trust School ethos.

Despite the limitations, however, the Trust School programme has made progress. The first ten schools, all of which completed the scheme at the end of 2014, have seen performance improve; a situation most marked among the institutions that were hovering at the lower end of the Malaysian ranking system at the time of conversion. Schools that joined the scheme in 2013 have reported similar improvements.

Most of that success can be attributed to changes in the classroom that empower teachers and have been identified internationally as crucial to the transformation of any education system.⁵ Unlike a traditional Malaysian school, teachers in Trust Schools are encouraged to try new methodologies and to approach teaching holistically; there is a sense that exams are not the be-all and end-all of school life. In a Trust School, hitherto quiet, rather utilitarian, classrooms become lively centres of learning, children are

more engaged in classroom activities and peer learning is encouraged.

Indeed, the results observed within Trust Schools are also evident in some private schools, where more engaged teachers and continuous training have led to strong performance. Sri KDU, a private Malaysian curriculum school, for example, emerged as Malaysia's top scorer in TIMSS and PISA, with scores at similar levels to regional educational powerhouses such as Singapore.

Trust Schools, of course, are not without their critics – Professor Charles Sabel from Columbia Law School, who researched the broader work of Pemandu⁶, questions their truly transformative nature. Others point to the high cost – according to Khazanah, delivery of the programme averages about 900 ringgit per student per year for each of the five years.⁷ Moreover, it is still not known whether the pilot schools will be able to maintain their Trust School ethos once they graduate from the programme this year and return to the mainstream. They are, after all, only a fraction, of the entire system.

But the declining reputation of government schools means reform is no longer an option; it is a necessity. Confidence in state institutions has fallen so low that parents are increasingly looking for alternatives – whether private local curriculum, private international curriculum or vernacular language – undermining the unity-building objective of mainstream schooling and raising the risk of deepening inequity.

The question then is how the programme can be expanded up so that more of the children in Malaysia's 10,000 state schools can benefit. The scheme was developed to make use of existing educational resources with the additional funding paying largely for teacher training and development.

Currently, this money comes from corporate sponsors – mostly government-linked companies - who appear to be quite hands-off.

The scheme could be made more attractive to the private sector by giving sponsors the chance to work more closely with their chosen school. They could, for example, be encouraged to provide support for extra-curricular activities, deliver classes in their organisation's particular area of expertise or develop intern and volunteer programmes for more senior students.

The government should also consider footing some of the bill. The Blueprint urges a review on the "efficiency and effectiveness" of how funds are spent. That evaluation should also consider streamlining the many initiatives that share the same goal – improving outcomes – and curtailing programmes that are not delivering. It could then allocate

some of that money to assist in the development of Trust Schools.

The 2015 Budget would suggest there is a willingness to do this; the spending plans included ten million ringgit to set up 20 more such schools.

As the scheme expands, and given the experience overseas, Malaysia must keep a close eye on the performance of the schools that are converted. Rapid expansion and a lack of oversight have both been identified as key risks in terms of private participation in state education, particularly in Sweden, where some school operators went bankrupt.⁸

The next generation of Malaysian children and their parents are demanding a better education. A Trust School system that's transparent and accountable appears to be one of the best approaches the country has yet devised to achieve that goal. More of Malaysia's children should have the opportunity to benefit from the programme.

Kate Mayberry is a Senior Analyst with the Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia.

¹ Malaysian Education Blueprint, 2013-2025, Executive Summary, p E-4
http://www.moe.gov.my/upload_files/articlefile/2013/articlefile_file_003114.pdf (accessed 13 August, 2014)
² Trends in International Maths and Science Study (TIMSS) and Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)
³ Interview with Loh Tzu Ann, Director, Education, Khazanah Nasional. 18 July, 2014. The terms were agreed in a Public Private Sector Operating Management Agreement with the ministry in 2010.
⁴ The Malaysian Trust School Model: It's good but is it sustainable? Dr. Arran Hamilton, Policy Ideas No. 11, February 2014
<http://ideas.org.my/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/20141302-IDEAS-PI-11-Trust-Schools-FINAL.pdf>
⁵ World Bank <http://blogs.worldbank.org/education/are-great-teachers-born-or-made>
⁶ Pemandu manages and co-ordinates the reform plans of the Malaysian government
⁷ Email correspondence with Shahnaz al-Sadat, Executive Trustee, Yayasan Amir, August 2014. This does not include development costs in terms of the teaching methodology and training programmes.
⁸ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/11/swedish-elections-cracks-showing-nordic-model>



Students at a Malaysian Trust School
Credit: Yayasan Amir



"My experiences were so rich they have continued to serve as intellectual fodder even many months after my return. The ways in which I am currently approaching my research would not be possible without the experiences I had in Malaysia."

Lina Verchery, doctoral student, Harvard University,
Jeffrey Cheah Travel Grant recipient 2014.

Jeffrey Cheah Travel Grant

The Jeffrey Cheah Travel Grants provide an opportunity for academic exchange between academics, scholars and staff of the Sunway Education Group and Harvard University in the United States. The programme is co-ordinated by JCI. Among 2014's recipients, Sunway University's Professor Poh Chit Laa used the grant to prepare for collaboration on EV71 with her counterparts in Harvard while Rema Hanna, an Associate Professor at Harvard Kennedy School, delivered a lecture on corruption in Indonesia's food subsidy programme as part of the Jeffrey Cheah Distinguished Speakers' Series and doctoral student Lena Verchery explored Buddhism in Malaysia. Applications are invited twice a year and further details are available on the JCI website: www.jci.edu.my

LOOKING AHEAD

As Myanmar gears up for elections and Malaysia takes the chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations ahead of the launch of the Asean Economic Community on December 31, 2015 is likely to be an eventful year in the region.

The Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia and Sunway University will host the 4th Southeast Asian Studies Symposium from 20 – 24 March, the first time the event has been held outside the University of Oxford in the U.K.

The symposium's themes for 2015 will include the environment, public health and education with keynote speakers including Professor Wang Gungwu, Chairman of the

East Asian Institute at the National University of Singapore and Professor Walden Bello, Professor of Sociology and Public Administration at the University of the Philippines.

The Asian Economic Panel, which convenes about 40 leading global economists three times each year to discuss issues of concern to the Asian region, will be held in conjunction with this year's symposium.

Attendees Barry Eichengreen (UC-Berkeley and University of Cambridge) and Jeffrey Sachs (Columbia University) will deliver public lectures on global economic prospects and sustainable development respectively.

More information can be found on
<http://projectsoutheastasia.com/academic-events/sea-symposium-2015>

4th Southeast Asian Studies Symposium & 32nd Asian Economic Panel Conference



20 - 24 March 2015, Sunway University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



"The Year of ASEAN: Integrating Southeast Asia"

Hosted by:



Owned and governed by the



Supported by:



Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia

No. 5, Jalan Universiti, Bandar Sunway, 47500 Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia

President: Professor Woo Wing Thye

Email: wtwoo@sunway.edu.my

Director, President's Office: Joyce Tang

Tel: +6-03 7491 8622 Ext. 8420

Email: joycet@sunway.edu.my

Senior Fellow, Governance Studies Programme: Professor James Chin

Email: jamese@sunway.edu.my

jci.edu.my

facebook.com/jci.seasia

youtube.com/user/jeffreycheahinst

SUNWAY UNIVERSITY (KPT/IPT/DFT/US/B15)
A member of the Sunway Education Group

Tel. (03) 7491 8622 Email. info@sunway.edu.my Web. sunway.edu.my

Scholarships awarded in excess of
RM **165 million**
jeffreycheahfoundation.org.my

Jeffrey Cheah
Foundation

Nurturing the Seeds of Wisdom