

SMU law undergrads launch Constitution primer



A group of Singapore Management University students has published an easy-to-read guide book to help Singaporeans better understand the Constitution.

Titled "The Singapore Constitution: A Brief Introduction", the primer aims to correct some common misconceptions about the constitution such as the perception that the President only plays a ceremonial role.

Its editor, Deirdre Grace Morgan.

"In the primer we had a section on the elected president so we divided his powers on the type of powers he can exercise on his own or in accordance to the advice of the Cabinet. So people will be able to draw a direct comparison and get a better idea of what he can actually do with his power under the Constitution."

The 23-year-old student added that the book is timely as there seems to be a rising interest in the electoral process and how the government works in general.

"People do take a more keen interest in politics and the landscape is also more contested so there is more discourse going around. We just hope that it will be informed and people can discuss with clear understanding with what the system is like."

Written in simple English for a secondary school-level audience, the 48-page booklet took two years to produce.

It was launched this morning by Speaker of Parliament Halimah Yacob - who penned the book's foreword.

She says it's especially important to increase the population's understanding of the Constitution as it secures people's basic liberties.

The booklet is available for free online at www.smuapolitical.com

1,000 copies have also been distributed to schools and public libraries.