

ST education forum to look at Singapore's role in region and rise of South-east Asia

Gabrielle Chan

What does South-east Asia's meteoric rise mean for the next generation of leaders, entrepreneurs and professionals?

Home to more than 650 million people, the 10 nations that make up Asean currently have a combined gross domestic product of US\$3.6 trillion (S\$4.9 trillion). This figure is projected to reach US\$4.5 trillion by 2030, making the region set to become the fourth-largest economy in the world.

According to Singapore's Economic Development Board, the Republic ranks first globally in economic competitiveness and political and operational stability, and is the third-largest recipient of foreign direct investment. As a well-positioned catalyst in the region, Singapore has a role to play in shaping the exchange of knowledge, capital and technology across the region.

THE STRAITS TIMES EDUCATION FORUM 2025

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Against this backdrop, The Straits Times Education Forum 2025, held in partnership with Singapore Management University (SMU), will explore how the Republic can leverage South-east Asia's growth while preparing its workforce for the future. It will also look at Singapore's ability to contribute to the region in areas such as education, waste, water and urban management.

Titled Southeast Asia And Our Shared Future, the forum will be held on March 11 at SMU's Yong Pung How School of Law from 2.15pm to 5.30pm, and will bring together experts to discuss the evolving landscape and the opportunities ahead.

Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat, who is the guest of honour at the event, will deliver the opening remarks.

This will be followed by a panel discussion moderated by SMU Provost-Designate, Professor Alan Chan.

The panellists are DBS chief executive and SMU chairman Piyush Gupta, Indonesian investor and entrepreneur Aldi Haryoprato, and online car marketplace Carro's CEO Aaron Tan.

The panel will explore how Singapore can maintain its competitive edge, the skills graduates need to thrive, and the opportunities in education, sustainability and urban development.

Other than South-east Asia, the annual ST education forum has previously tackled issues such as universities, skills versus degrees, the green economy and artificial intelligence, said ST editor Jaime Ho. The event has been held every year since 2014, except in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"This year's focus on South-east



The Straits Times Education Forum 2025 panel will explore how Singapore can maintain its competitive edge, the skills graduates need to thrive, and the opportunities in education, sustainability and urban development. ST PHOTO: GAVIN FOO

Asia and our shared future is no doubt an important one, and it is in line as well with our push on ST's 180th anniversary to affirm our commitment to the communities we serve," Mr Ho said, adding that Singapore is "well placed to develop as a springboard for the region's engagement with the rest of Asia and the world".

SMU president Lily Kong said: "South-east Asia is a region of immense dynamism, presenting both extraordinary opportunities and complex challenges."

More than their skills, graduates require "cultural intelligence, resilience, adaptability and a spirit of innovation", Professor Kong added. "Universities thus play a criti-

cal role in cultivating talent with these qualities."

The forum will be held at SMU, and registration is free. Registration is now open and will close on March 8 at 6pm.

Interested parties can register at tinyurl.com/steduforum25

gabchan@sph.com.sg