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# MALAYSIA FORUM NYU 2014: SEKARANG

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4/19 – 4/20 Weekend



### Venue address:

NYU Global Center for Academic & Spiritual Life (Friday event)  
Room 269  
238 Thompson Street,  
New York, NY10003

NYU Kimmel Center for University Life (Saturday, Sunday events)  
Room 914  
60 Washington Square South,  
New York, NY10012

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### MF can be found at:

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Website: <http://malaysiaforum.org/nmf>  
Twitter: [@msiaforum](https://twitter.com/msiaforum)  
Facebook: <http://facebook.com/MalaysiaForum>



## Who are we?

Malaysia Forum (MF) is a global organization of Malaysians that aims to extend the boundaries of civil and non-partisan discussion. Our goal is to have these conversations in the spirit of striving towards maturity in thought and growth as individuals and a society.

There are many MF communities around the world, including Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, the US Northeast, Midwest and West Coast, London, Paris and Sydney. Each year, MF organizes a global conference to bring together Malaysians from all over the world to discuss pertinent Malaysian issues and exchange ideas as a platform for further action. Besides the annual conference, each MF community also runs their own set of events, discussions and forums throughout the year.

Malaysia Forum communities share the following values:

### 1. Semangatgotongroyong

There are no appointed or elected leaders in MF – everyone involved with MF is a leader. MF events are generally organised by groups of people working together, with rotating responsibilities depending on the unique talents that each person brings to the group. Everyone who is willing to dedicate time and energy to MF should have a say in its workings and direction. We hope that this encourages participants to get involved out of a genuine desire to learn and to share with others interested in Malaysian issues.

### 2. It's about the people, not the event.

You may have heard of Malaysia Forum through an event. While events are an important part of what we do, we try not to focus on getting the most famous speakers or the largest crowds (of course, when we do get speakers, we try to make sure they are great!). Our goal is always to help Malaysians and other interested parties engage each other in civil conversation. We believe that a small potluck where people listen to and learn from each other is better than a huge event with a famous speaker where only his opinion is heard.

### 3. Safe space for discussions

Our events should be 'safe spaces' for all people and all opinions. We try to ensure that everyone can have their voice heard in a welcoming environment. In accordance with this, we conduct most of our meetings under the Chatham House Rule, which states that 'When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.' Everyone is free to talk about their personal involvement with MF as well as what they have done or said during meetings, but s/he may not reveal such information about others without

their permission. This rule applies to our mailing lists as well and has, to our knowledge, always been respected.

#### 4. Neutrality

MF is a politically and ideologically neutral organization. In order to remain a safe space for open discussion, we do not take stands or issue statements; nor are we affiliated with any government or political party. This does not mean that individuals cannot take stands or issue statements in their own name. Indeed, groups of participants have written opinion pieces inspired by MF events and some participants are columnists or journalists with local and international media. Several members have also become active in partisan politics. Subsequent to this, they have reduced their direct involvement in MF and have respectfully refrained from using the organization as a campaign platform.

## MF 2014: Sekarang

The theme for Malaysia Forum NY and KL 2014 is 'Sekarang', which means 'now' in Bahasa Malaysia. The theme was chosen in part to reflect on the post-GE 13 sentiments of the nation. Malaysia Forum team believes it is a timely juncture to ask questions pertaining how we as citizens can contribute to the development of our country today, instead of waiting for the next general elections to discuss and exercise our political freedom. We have constructed our panels across three MF audiences to approach pertinent Malaysian topics of today, and what exactly it means to be a citizen of Malaysia. Among the topics discussed are technology, entrepreneurship, democracy, education, film, ethnoreligious relations and brain drain.

Two forums will be occurring simultaneously on the weekend of our global conference: one in Kuala Lumpur and one in New York City. Both KL as well as NYC panels will be streamed live onto a publicly accessible website for anyone who is interested in watching our events remotely (<http://www.livestream.com/malaysiaforum>)

## Malaysia Forum Schedule

April 18, Friday

Venue – NYU Global Center for Academic & Spiritual Life (Room 269), 238 Thompson Street.

6.00 pm – 11.00pm Open Registration/Icebreakers

April 19, Saturday

Venue – NYU Kimmel Center for University Life (Room 914), 60 Washington Square South, NY 10012.

9.00 AM: Breakfast (Provided)

9.30 AM: [Panel] Schooling the Present: Blueprints, Roadmaps, and Execution (Speaker: Shahnaz al-Sadat, KeeranSivarajah, and Teach for Malaysia)

10.30 AM:[Panel] Malaysian Cinema & Politics of Representation (Speaker: Ming Jin Woo and Amir Muhammad)

11.45 AM: Lunch (Provided) Delicious Malaysian food!! 😊

1.00 PM: [Panel] Revisiting the Constitution (Speakers: Yvonne Tew, Saskia Schaefer, and Keith Leong)

2.00 PM: [Panel] Brain Drain: Personal Reflections (Speakers: ChokLeangOoi, Sui Seng Tee, Yao Hua Ooi, and Jaclyn Ang)

3.00 PM: Breakout Discussions

4.00 PM: Free time and Dinner (not provided)

9.00 PM: [Panel] Live stream from MF KL – Ethnoreligious Relations in Malaysia) (Speakers: TBA)

10.30 PM: [Panel] Live stream from MF KL – TBA (Speakers: TBA)

11.30 PM: End

(continued on next page)

April 20, Sunday

Venue – NYU Kimmel Center for University Life (Room 914), 60 Washington Square South, NY 10012.

1.00 PM: Reflections and discussion

2.30 PM: Group photo, Goodbyes and SelamatJalan!

## Panels & Speakers Profiles

Each session will start off with an opening statement by all speakers, followed by a discussion guided by the moderator, and finally, an open Q&A session between the speakers and participants who are watching the session live from any MF forum or online.

### MF NYU Panel 1: Schooling the Present: Blueprints, Roadmaps, and Execution

#### Panel Summary

In 2013, the National Education Blueprint was released, laying out the roadmap of how education from pre-school to secondary level will be for from 2013 - 2025. The blueprint has several lofty aspirations it aims to accomplish within the next 15 years. Our objective for today's panel is to share some of the thinking of how the blueprint will impact current stakeholders and what needs to be done to achieve those goals.

#### Speakers

Ms. Shahnaz al-Sadat

Shahnaz has more than 20 years of corporate experience where the first 10 years were in a multi-national company. She opted to stay in Malaysia for the second 10 years to pursue her nation-building objective through working in a GLC and later on in Khazanah Nasional. She was the CFO of Khazanah and later became the Executive Director, Strategic Human Capital Management. Since 2009, she has been driving the Education sector development in Khazanah where she had the opportunity to be the First Trustee of Yayasan AMIR ('YA') Trust Schools Network and Teach for Malaysia ("TFM"). Shahnaz left Khazanah in 2011 and founded her social enterprise called arise Asia. She continued her passion in education and community development where under arise, she is continuously involved in YA and TFM until to-date, particularly in bringing the transformation of public schools as demonstrated in YA Trust Schools into 10,000 schools. Shahnaz holds a LLB (Hons.), University of Nottingham, UK and a MBA, IMD, Switzerland. She is also a Certified Public Accountant

(CPA) and a Certified Internal Auditor (CIA). She was awarded Pangkat Kesatria Mangku Negara (KMN) in 2013. Shahnaz is a single mother with an 18 month old daughter.

Mr. KeeranSivarajah

KeeranSivarajah is currently a candidate for the Master's program in International Education Policy at Harvard University. He is the co-founder and former Managing Director of Teach For Malaysia, a non-profit organization that enlists Malaysia's most outstanding youth in its effort to address education inequity. As part of establishing Teach For Malaysia's operational framework, Keeran won the Malaysian government's support for the program, resulting in Teach For Malaysia's incorporation as a key human capital initiative in the federal government's national development plan. Through his leadership, the program has secured approximately US \$ 3 million in committed funding from both the government and the corporate sector, and has since recruited, trained and placed more than a hundred teachers in some of Malaysia's highest-need schools. Prior to founding Teach For Malaysia, Keeran was a management consultant at PricewaterhouseCoopers. He is an Associate Director and member of the Education Advisory Panel at the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs, and holds a Bachelor of Commerce in Finance from the University of Melbourne, Australia.

Teach for Malaysia (Jo Ann & Fiona)

Jo Ann and Fiona both teach at SMK LubokBuntar in Kedah, Malaysia. They teach Form 1, 2 and 5 English and Math. This year, they are trying to boost our students' reading level by having them study simple stories and complete projects based on these stories. The process can best be described as erratic! There are days when their kids' mastery in English can make them jump 10 feet in the air. And there are days when they feel like they are pushing trucks up a hill. On that note, they take a break from their students on the weekend by feasting. Good food makes the world a better place.

Moderator: Mr. HeongWengMak

HeongWeng graduated from Indiana University Bloomington in 2013 with a degree in Economics. He is currently a market analyst and consultant at a US tech consulting firm in Manhattan, New York. He is also a contributor to a news blog, focusing on the application of gamification in the fields of enterprise and education.

## MF NYU Panel 2: Malaysian Cinema & Politics of Representation

### Panel Summary

The largely Chinese language film 'The Journey' recently topped the list of Malaysia's top grossing films of all time, beating out KL Gangster and OmbakRindu. Few contemporary moviemakers are bucking the trend of hantu / gangster movies, and even fewer make films surrounding the underrepresented. What do commentators of film think of our current film landscape? What are Malaysians like as an audience? What is it like for independent filmmakers to meditate and produce creative works in a restricted environment? The panel seeks to investigate and diagnose the various issues surrounding this art form.

### Speakers

Mr. Ming Jin Woo

Woo Ming Jin has the distinction of being the first Malaysian director to have his films screened in Cannes, Berlin and Venice film festivals. He is the one of the most acclaimed directors to emerge from Southeast Asia, winning more than 10 international awards in film festivals. His first film Monday Morning Glory (2005) screened at the Berlin and Locarno Film Festivals, while his second, Elephant and the Sea (2007), won awards in Torino Film Festival, Cinema Digital Seoul, Portugal and Spain, and has been invited to more than 50 film festivals. Woman on Fire Looks for Water (2009) premiered at the Venice International Film Festival, and has played in Pusan, Rotterdam, Los Angeles and the Pompidou Center in Paris, among many others. It has won awards in Manila, and been on numerous top ten best independent films of 2009. The Tiger Factory (2010), only the third film in Malaysian history to be selected to the Cannes Film Festival, premiered at the Director's Fortnight, and has since been shown in more than 30 festivals, winning the Special Jury Mention at the Tokyo Film Festival in 2010. His most recent short film The Girl in the Water, won Denmark's Academy Award (co-directed by JeppeRonde) for Best short film in 2012. His newest project, The Second Life of a Thief, has been awarded financial support from the Hubert Bals Fund, as well the Switzerland's Vision Sud Est, and is due to be completed in 2014. Ming Jin is also a partner in Greenlight Pictures, which produces numerous content for Malaysian television, including tv shows, branded content, commercials and movies.

Mr. Amir Muhammad

Amir Muhammad is a writer and independent filmmaker based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He was educated at the University of East Anglia. He has been writing for Malaysian print media since the age of 14, notably the New Straits Times. In 2000, he wrote and directed Malaysia's first DV feature. Some of his works have also been featured in a number of international film festivals including the Sundance Film Festival and the Berlin International Film Festival. Two of his films, ApaKhabar

Orang Kampung and The Last Communist have been banned in Malaysia. A full retrospective of his work was screened at the 2008 Pesaro Film Festival, Italy. He is a partner at Da Huang Pictures.

Moderator: Mr. Joe Liew & Mr. Wei Jie Lim

Joe Liew is currently pursuing his Phd in Comparative Literature at the University of Pennsylvania. He is interested in questions of historical memory, diasporic cultures, and film, especially in postcolonial spaces like Malaysia. He is also an aspiring filmmaker, and has made two short films so far, which have been screened at Filmmakers Anonymous and Malaysian Shorts.

Wei Jie Lim is currently a sophomore double majoring in Philosophy and Film/TV Production at NYU. In the summer of 2013, he shot a short documentary titled "Dream of the Fish God," in South Korea and was awarded Best Art Film, Best Sound Design, and Audience Choice Award at the Harvard-Ewha Student Documentary Festival. He currently resides in New York City and hopes to make more movies in the future.

## NYU Panel 3: Revisiting the Constitution

### Panel Summary

"Revisiting the Constitution" examines topical and forward-looking issues confronting Malaysia's founding document, ranging from freedom of speech to the place of race and religion in society. In keeping with them theme of "Sekarang", the panel will discuss the state of Malaysia's Constitution today and its possible direction for the future. Do Malaysians truly understand the spirit and letter of the Constitution? What are the challenges towards this? Is this document still relevant to our country today? What can be done to ensure the continued Supremacy of the Constitution as encapsulated by the Rukun Negara?

### Speakers

Ms. Yvonne Tew

Yvonne Tew currently teaches at Columbia Law School. She received her Ph.D. in Law from the University of Cambridge, where she was a Gates Cambridge Scholar. Her dissertation focusing on constitutional law in Malaysia and Singapore was awarded the Distinction in Research Prize in the Arts and Humanities by St. Catharine's College, Cambridge. Yvonne received her first law degree at the University of Cambridge, where she consistently placed in the top 5% of her class each year and graduated with Double First Class Honors. She then completed her Master of Laws (LL.M.) from Harvard Law School after winning the Cambridge Benefited Place Award for top final-year graduates

from the University of Cambridge admitted to the Harvard Law School LL.M. program. After graduating from Harvard, she worked as an attaché at the Permanent Mission of Malaysia to the United Nations in New York and assisted the Vice Chancellor of the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur in editing an evidence law casebook. Yvonne has taught constitutional law at the University of Cambridge and the University of Malaya and is admitted to the bar in New York.

Ms. Saskia Schaefer

Saskia Schaefer is the 2013–2014 Postdoctoral Fellow in Modern Southeast Asian Studies at the Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Columbia University. She grew up in Germany and Singapore and studied Southeast Asian Studies, Political Science, and German Literature at Humboldt Universität zu Berlin and at USM Penang before completing her doctorate in Political Science at Freie Universität. She has taught at the Institute of Asian and African Studies at Humboldt and at the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia. Her research interests include Islam and politics in Indonesia and Malaysia, discourse and media analysis, religious and political authority, secularity and secularism, public morality, and Islamic feminism.

Mr. Keith Leong

Keith Leong is an Analyst at the KRA Group, a Southeast Asian public affairs consulting firm. He holds a BA and an MA from the University of New South Wales as well as an MPhil from the University of Cambridge. Keith has written extensively and has appeared as a commentator on several news channels. He also serves as an Associate with the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) Malaysia.

Moderator: Mr. Guan Zhen Tan

Guan Zhen Tan is currently a junior at Columbia University majoring in Political Science. As part of a double degree, he also has a BA from the Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris (Sciences Po Paris), where he studied politics and law. In the summer of 2009, he interned for a Member of Parliament, where he found his *raison d'être* and has been attached to Malaysian politics ever since. Guan Zhen speaks five languages. He grew up in Malaysia, but has also lived in Singapore, Japan and France. He currently resides in New York City.

NYU Panel 4: Brain Drain: Personal Reflections

## Panel Summary

With about 700,000 Malaysians living abroad, where a large majority are working professionals, this panel calls into question why and how they got to be where they are. Is there a collective sense of optimism or pessimism in regards to reversing the trend of brain drain? What are some of the impediments to retaining talent in the nation? What would it take to overcome these obstacles and pave way for a new generation of Malaysians willing to live, work, and socialize within the country they once grew up and lived in?

## Speakers

Mr. ChokLeangOoi

Chok has 8 years of Wall Street and Silicon Valley experience. Having managed Agile teams and built trading systems for top investment banks including Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan, Morgan Stanley, Citigroup, and Bank of America, Chok brings a wealth of experience delivering highly complex systems under very aggressive timelines. Chok also worked for Silicon Valley startup Loopt and was previously CTO of Azap Mobile and Head of Web and Mobile solutions for Selerity.

Mr. Sui Seng Tee

Sui Seng is currently a research fellow at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center investigating tumor metabolism. He received his BA in Natural Sciences and PhD in Biochemistry from the University of Cambridge before moving to Stanford University for his postdoctoral training. As a student abroad, Sui Seng maintained a keen interest in all things Malaysian, serving as the president of the Cambridge University Malaysia Society and as the treasurer of the Cambridge University Southeast Asian Forum.

Mr. Yao Hua Ooi

Yao Hua is a Principal at AQR Capital Management, a global investment management firm based in Greenwich, Connecticut. He is a portfolio manager and researcher on macro-related strategies that include commodities, risk parity and managed futures. His research has been published in the Journal of Financial Economics and the Journal of Investment Management. He was named the 2013 Alternatives Fund Manager of the Year by Morningstar for his work on managed futures, and shared the 2013 Whitebox Prize for his work on time series momentum. Yao Hua is a Chung Ling boy from Penang who attended the Jerome Fisher Program in Management and Technology at the University of Pennsylvania, where he earned a B.S. in economics and a B.S. in

engineering, graduating summa cum laude in both. He currently resides in Manhattan with his wife and 3-year old daughter.

Ms. Jaclyn Ang

Whilst Jaclyn started off her career as an R&D engineer in the automotive industry, she now works in trying to tackle and develop the national talent issue with Talent Corporation Malaysia. Working for TalentCorp since July 2011, Jaclyn has seen her fair share of interesting moments, which range from maddeningly frustrating to profoundly rewarding, at the agency's continuous efforts to more holistically understand the human capital needs of the country, and from there on to create accordingly addressing programs. Attached to the Malaysian Diaspora Outreach unit within TalentCorp which deals in engaging with Malaysians abroad, Jaclyn works on various research topics over Diaspora matters, including a study with the World Bank on the migration of Malaysians around the globe, as well as developing programs that allow Malaysians abroad to keep connected to Malaysia and contribute in their individual capacities towards the national development agenda from wherever they are in the world.

Moderator: Mr. John Lee Ming Keong

John Lee studied economics and history at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, and currently works as an analyst for a bank in Washington, DC. As a student he worked for the Centre for Public Policy Studies in KL, and also interned for Ong Kian Ming's political consultancy outfit (before Ong went on to join the DAP). He was also a freelance writer, and had a regular column at the Malaysian Insider. He has edited three books focusing, respectively, on the status of religion in Malaysia, the Malaysian general election of 2008, and custodial deaths.

Transport to NYC From Airport

### LaGuardia

Take the Q70 and M60 to get on the E, F or M line to get off at West 4<sup>th</sup> Street or the N line to get off at 8<sup>th</sup> Street NYU.

### Newark

Take the Airtrain Newark to the Newark Airport Railroad Station, then take the NJCL towards New York Penn Station to take either the B, D, F, M, A, C or E line to West 4<sup>th</sup> Street.

### JFK

Take the AirTrain JFK: Howard Beach or Airtrain JFK: Jamaica Airport, then transfer to the A or E line, and get off at West 4<sup>th</sup> Street.

For more information:

<https://www.nyu.edu/about/visitor-information/getting-to-nyu.html>

## Eating around NYU

There is too much to eat around NYU – it is somewhat of a problem that we complain lovingly about. But here are some recommendations within a 1 to 2 block radius of Washington Square Park. On the day Guest Wifi will be provided so you can Google some good spots to eat at!

Ramen Takumi (Japanese)

Brad's (Sandwiches)

Kopi-Kopi (Indonesian/Malaysia food)

Starbucks

Le Pain Quotidien (Bakery)

Au Bon Pain (Bakery)

Rasa (Malaysian)

Cafetasia (Thai Fusion)

Chipotle

Maoz Vegetarian

'wichcraft (Sandwiches)

Fresh & Co. (Sandwiches and Salads)

Apple (Asian)

Campus Eatery

Dojo (Japanese)

Go! Go! Curry (Japanese)

Burger Joint

## Transport Around NYC

A MetroCard costs \$1 for a new card and \$2.50 per ride. You are allowed one transfer between bus-bus or subway-bus or bus-subway within a 2 hour time-frame.

### By Subway:

8 Street NYU (Lines N and R)

Union Square (Lines NQR, 456, and L)

Astor Place (Line 6)

West 4<sup>th</sup> Street (Lines ACE and BDFM)

### By Bus:

3<sup>rd</sup> Ave, stop at Astor Place (M101, M102, M103)

Broadway/Waverly place (X1, X21, X27, X28, X7, X8, X9, X10, X10B, X12)

East 8 Street/ 5<sup>th</sup> Ave (M1, M2, M3, M5, M8)

Subway Map:

<http://web.mta.info/maps/submap.html>

Manhattan Bus Map:

<http://web.mta.info/nyct/maps/manbus.pdf>