

IN Diplomacy

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COVID-19 Health Diplomacy

Importance of
Multilateralism
During Pandemic

Prevent Future
Pandemics
- Protect Nature

U.S. Continues Global
Commitment
Against COVID-19

Cambodia First
To Discharge Last
COVID-19 Patient

Portuguese and Venezuelan Ambassadors First to Present Credentials via Video Conference



Featuring

High Commissioner
of India HE Jawed Ashraf

Ambassador of Russia
HE Andrey Tatarinov





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CONTENTS ISSUE 62



PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS

Page 4

3 ■ **Historic First** Presentation via Video Conference

INTERVIEW

4 ■ **HE Jawed Ashraf** Why Singapore is a Natural Partner in Many Areas

5 ■ **HE Andrey Tatarinov** RUSSIA and SINGAPORE Ties: Positive Trends & Optimistic Outlook When COVID-19 Ends

COMBATING COVID-19: HEALTH DIPLOMACY

6 ■ **Importance** of Multilateralism During Pandemic

■ **Prevent** Future Pandemics - Protect Nature

7 ■ **ASEAN-China** Economic Ministers' On Combating COVID-19 & Enhancing FTA

■ **Egyptian** Ambassador on COVID-19's Impact on Relations between Egypt and Singapore

■ **Cambodia** First To Discharge Last COVID-19 Patient

■ **UPDATE:** The United States Continues to Lead the Global Response to COVID-19

COMMUNIQUE

8 ■ **Friends** & Diplomats Welcome New Book by Ambassador Swajaya

■ **Saudi** Embassy Working with MOM Sharing 15 Tonnes of Dates

SINGAPORE SCENE

9 ■ **BMW** 4 Coupe for Christmas

■ **Shisen** Hanten by Chen Kentaro

VIRTUAL CONFERENCES

10 ■ **China, ASEAN and UN** Meetings Stress Cooperation and Multilateralism to Meet COVID-19 Challenges

■ **Singapore** FM on Diplomacy in a Post-COVID-19 World

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DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR CORPS SINGAPORE

Historic First Presentation of Credentials Via Video Conference

In what is probably a first in Singapore's diplomatic history for this ceremony President Halimah Yacob received the credentials from the heads of mission of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the Portuguese Republic via video conference on 19th May 2020

The Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs has announced the following foreign Heads of Mission have presented their credentials to President Halimah Yacob in separate ceremonies via videoconference, conducted at the Istana and premises of the Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the residence of the Ambassador of the Portuguese Republic respectively. They are the Ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela Her Excellency Jessica María López Piña and the Ambassador of the Portuguese Republic His Excellency Mário Rui dos Santos Miranda Duarte.

In a brief posting on her Facebook page, President Halimah said: "COVID-19 has necessitated us to make adjustments to the way we do things. But with technology, it is still possible to carry on with what we need to do, such as the presentation of credentials to me by foreign Ambassadors so that they can officially represent their respective countries." She was pleased to receive the credentials from the two ambassadors and also had good discussions on their priorities during their stay in Singapore and wished them a fruitful tenure here. Following are the bio summaries of the Ambassadors:



AMBASSADOR JESSICA MARÍA LÓPEZ PIÑA

served in the Office of the President from 1999 to 2003, and has experience in the development of strategic projects in the public sector, specifically in aeronautical and railway management. She was appointed as First Secretary at the Venezuelan Embassy in Brasília from 2011 to 2014, where she served as Head of the Consular Section. Ambassador López Piña was later appointed as Counsellor and Head of the Consular Section in the Venezuelan

Embassy in Washington D.C. from 2014 to 2018. Thereafter, she served as Consul General in Miami from February 2018 to January 2019. She graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Fermín Toro University in Barquisimeto, Venezuela in 2000. Ambassador López Piña is married.



AMBASSADOR MÁRIO RUI DOS SANTOS MIRANDA DUARTE

served in Lisbon at the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Director of the IT Department before his accreditation to Singapore. Ambassador Duarte served at previous overseas postings as Deputy Permanent Representative at the Portuguese Mission to the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, as Consul in Providence, Rhode Island, USA, and at the Delegation of Portugal to the North Atlantic

Treaty Organisation (NATO) in Brussels, Belgium. Ambassador Duarte also held the position of Chief of Staff of the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and served twice as an adviser at the office of the Portuguese Prime Minister. At the Portuguese MFA, he has served as Director of the Department for Multilateral Affairs as well as for Institutional Relations with the European Union. He was also a member of the National Elections Commission in Portugal. Ambassador Duarte has a Degree in History from Universidade Lusitana in Portugal. He is married to Mrs Ana Cristina Tavares de Faria Miranda Duarte and has two children.

Why Diplomacy Matters

Singapore is home to 70 resident foreign High Commissions and Embassies, 43 Consular Posts and 11 International Organisations.

They act as a conduit between Singapore and their respective countries. Diplomatic missions are headed by influential newsmakers who open doors for business, trade, investment, education, the arts and culture. IN Diplomacy has a mission to communicate and be a bridge between the diplomatic community and Singaporeans.



INTERVIEW **HE Jawed Ashraf**

Why Singapore is a Natural Partner in Many Areas



High Commissioner Jawed Ashraf shares his insights and perspectives during his tenure here with IN Diplomacy's Editor-in-Chief Nomita Dhar before he leaves for his next posting in Paris

India was seen at a scale which is unprecedented. I've been reporting on India for 27 years and I haven't seen its profile raised so much on this scale. For you what were the highpoints achieved in these three and a half years?

As far as the High Commission is concerned, yes, there were a number of things that we did which were our initiatives. You've seen we've had mega events such as the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas - the ASEAN India diaspora event; the two memorable visits here of Prime Minister Modi. And then, of course, we have this absolutely massive The Next Phase Business and Innovation Summit in 2019.

We have also done some absolutely new pioneering work in areas such as technology, innovation, FinTech and startups. These are areas which were really our own initiative, for example, the International launch of Indian payment products like the Rupay and BHIM QR. It was something which happened in Singapore, because we pushed for it.

We're also working on a number of other initiatives, including connecting the payment infrastructure in Singapore with the payment infrastructure in India and connecting MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) through a digital hub.

Also, as we have done in India with the India Stack, how do you work with Singapore to make it into a global stack. This is again one of our initiatives, which is an ongoing process.

We've done well also in other new initiatives such as in defence and in helping more Singaporean companies invest in India; likewise, helping Indian companies invest here. For that, we've had constant round of events, to create those

bridges to build those connections to build a better understanding of processes, and to create networks of people who can collaborate and work with each other, government with business as well as business with business. And, and we've tried to keep this process going.

I think one of the joys here has been to work in the realm of art and culture. And I think we've successfully worked with an extraordinary pool of local talent, local events, organisations, and institutions to help create an Indian cultural and art calendar that can rival some of the major cities of India. And this has really been something that's been a source of great joy.

On COVID-19 Challenges...

As to Singapore's responses to all the above challenges I'd like to say a few things: One, that I think everyone who's ever lived here or have been here through these difficult times have felt reassured and confident about the way the Singapore government was handling the pandemic. The measures of restrictions were always incremental and appropriate to the situation at a particular point of time.

Second, they (Singapore) have maintained the supply lines, and all supplies were available throughout the outbreak.

Third, they have been proactive, aggressive and transparent. Transparency in terms of information sharing in terms of press briefings in terms of clarifying issues, putting out even individual cases contact

tracing issues, all in the public domain gives people a sense of confidence.

We had a moment of concern in Singapore when Singaporeans and PRs were returning from abroad. In the middle of March to the end of March, we saw a spike and then from April. From 28th March 2020 onwards, we began to see this infection grow in dormitories.

I think that in the dormitories the authorities here have done extremely well. Not only have they worked very proactively and aggressively in testing the workers, contact tracing and treatment, isolating those who have symptoms from those who were healthy. They ensured the dorms were decongested by making temporary arrangements for both those who were healthy workers and employed in essential services and those who have symptoms, but did not require hospitalization.

In addition to that, they were providing free medical care at each dormitory. The workers were assured of their salaries by lawyers. They got three meals a day, and the meals were catered to taste - I mean, the Indians needed Indian food they were getting Indian food.

They got care packages which included thermometers. And importantly with a pandemic like this it is not just a health crisis there are also social, psychological and emotional consequences. Singapore has gone into the level of providing free SIM cards (from M1), providing free Wi-Fi and an access to some multiple hundreds of news and entertainment channels so the workers can stay connected with their families and friends and occupy their time watching TV programmes if they wanted to.

To boost morale they've got messages from public figures in the sports and entertainment worlds including those from: Rajinikanth, Kamal Haasan, Shankar Mahadevan and Sachin Tendulkar. I think Singapore Minister for Communications and Information and Minister for Cyber Security, Mr S. Iswaran, played a role in that; other Singapore Ministers that played a proactive role in helping the migrant workers included Minister of Manpower and Second Minister for Home Affairs, Ms Josephine Teo, Minister of State in the Ministry of National Development, Mr Zaqq Mohammed and Minister of Home Affairs and Law, Mr K. Shanmugam. I saw all of them playing a very proactive role.

Above are excerpts. For the full interview visit www.indiplomacy.com or click [here](#)

INTERVIEW **HE Andrey Tatarinov**

RUSSIA and SINGAPORE Ties: Positive Trends and Optimistic Outlook When COVID-19 Ends

H.E. Andrey Tatarinov the Ambassador of the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Singapore was interviewed by Editor-in-Chief Nomita Dhar on the current 'extraordinary' situation with COVID-19 and highlights of Russia and Singapore bilateral ties during his five-year term here

On the subject of medical and health diplomacy, what are the areas of collaboration between Russia and Singapore?

Russia has sent humanitarian aid to many countries. Italy was one of the first as it was hit by the pandemic badly and it was followed by several CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) member states. We've also provided humanitarian assistance to Laos and Cambodia, which included personal protective gear, and medicine. We also have a framework for collaboration with ASEAN.

Four years ago, in Sochi, a comprehensive plan of action to promote cooperation between ASEAN and Russia was adopted at the commemorative Russia-ASEAN summit. A major part of this document included a section titled "Help in Pandemic Preparedness and Response". The objective was to work together to enhance our preparedness and capacity in responding to communicable and emerging infectious diseases, including pandemics, other potential public health and biological threats. Preparedness, prevention, control measures and capacity building would include among others, the strengthening of areas on surveillance, laboratory networking, human resource capacities and information sharing. This was confirmed in our statement in the Russia-ASEAN Strategic Partnership, adopted in Singapore in 2018. And following this arrangement last year, we have tabled similar initiatives for the next East Asia Summit too. Last year, the first group of ASEAN experts underwent training in Vladivostok. We are prepared to receive more experts from the ASEAN countries to work together. We have done this because we understand that such infectious diseases will be with us for a long time.

There have been other initiatives too. During their co-chairmanship in ADMM-Plus Expert's Working Group on Military Medicine (2014-

2016), Russia and Thailand initiated the establishment of the ASEAN Center of Military Medicine (ACMM) in Bangkok to enhance coordination and cooperation among the Military Medical Services of the ASEAN Member States and Plus Countries. Today, the ACMM facilities, if necessary, can also be used to fight COVID-19. So we have a deep engagement with many countries in the field of public health and combating infectious diseases.



The Russian Defense Ministry and Gamalei National Research Center for Epidemiology and Microbiology have begun clinical trials of a vaccine against the novel coronavirus on 16th June 2020. The trials are expected to take about one and a half months. (Photo © Yegor Aleyev / TASS)



"Russian diplomacy today is different. For example, it gives more opportunities to young people in terms of honing their skills from a younger age... (They) have more opportunities in terms of showing their initiatives, being 'loud' - not keeping ideas to themselves. My younger colleagues may come to me at any time to voice what they think we have to do in this or that area. Now we appreciate the initiative from the young people, and we trust them more. It's no longer that only seniors have a right to speak aloud."

Above are excerpts. For the full interview visit www.indiplomacy.com or click [here](#)

You have a very successful long marriage and your wife has been with you throughout these postings. In your opinion how easy has it been for her to be a diplomat's wife?

Being a diplomat's wife is a very difficult job, and my wife has done a lot to support me in all my endeavours, to be hostess of many events, to promote the image of Russia and of Russian women. Diplomats' wives have to sacrifice their own careers for family life and their husbands' dreams. It is difficult to overstate the contribution of my wife, Natalia, to my success, to the success of my missions in different countries. We have been married for 38 years, and she has always shared the hardships, ups and downs of a diplomat's life. There have been many concerns, success, joy and grief. Thank you very much for touching upon this issue, I value her contribution, and I hope she will play her part in writing my memoirs too!



COMBATING COVID-19: HEALTH DIPLOMACY

Importance of Multilateralism During Pandemic

India's Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla delivered a virtual address to MIT World Peace University in Pune for the Indian perspective on tackling the COVID-19 Crisis. The Foreign Secretary now represents India as Chairman of the WHO Executive Board

In his speech to the faculty and students of the university, India's Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla said that despite India's participation and strong support for many international organisations such as the UN and ASEAN etc, "Nothing, however, has prepared the world for COVID-19, and we are still dealing with what the international community could do to address such situations."



of international organisations are working on health. WHO, UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNFPA are some of the prominent ones. International financial institutions such as the World Bank and ADB, and several bilateral financial and development agencies, have a strong interest in healthcare.

Then there is a growing number of non-state actors who point

out to a "mainstreaming" of health in the collective consciousness such as the Gates Foundation, Carter Foundation, Clinton Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, and the Wellcome Trust – to name a few. They are able to bring resources and capacities to the table that can sometimes match, or even exceed, those of states.

Most Innovative

Another category of actors that might be the most innovative. These are the state-non-state and public-private "hybrid" players. This category includes players such as GAVI (Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation), CEPI (Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness and Innovation), Global Fund for AIDS, TB, and Malaria, PEPFAR (President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief), and the Global Financing Facility. They are akin to special purpose vehicles, bringing an intense focus to particular problems and working methodically and swiftly to deliver results. India has been a participant in some of these key programmes.

Reforms

Foreign Secretary Vashar echoed India's External Minister S. Jaishankar remarks at

"He (Prime Minister Modi) also pointed out the need to strengthen and reform intergovernmental organizations like WHO, which continue to be based on the last century's models and which are driven more to balance competing individual interests, rather than advance the collective interests of all human kind."

the BRICS Ministers' of Foreign Affairs video conference on 28th April 2020 where the Minister emphasized that the current challenge underlined all the more the need for reform of multilateral systems.

The Indian Foreign Secretary also recalled Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address to the Extraordinary Virtual G20 Leaders Summit on 26 March 2020: "He (Prime Minister Modi) emphasized the need to put human beings, rather than economic targets, at the centre of our vision of global prosperity and cooperation. He also pointed out the need to strengthen and reform intergovernmental organizations like WHO, which continue to be based on the last century's models and which are driven more to balance competing individual interests, rather than advance the collective interests of all human kind."

Towards this end, India has recently been chosen as Chairman of the WHO Executive Board. It will be looking at ways to strengthen multilateral frameworks to deal with such challenges, promote new crisis-management protocols and procedures for an inter-connected global village and develop more adaptive, responsive, affordable and humane health care systems and resources that can be deployed globally.

He went on to highlight how Health Diplomacy is now thrust into the forefront because of the pandemic. "Health diplomacy is a subset of this larger machinery of multilateral diplomacy. WHO says that global health diplomacy brings "together the disciplines of public health, international affairs, management, law and economics and focuses on negotiations that shape and manage the global policy environment for health. The relationship between health, foreign policy and trade is at the cutting edge of global health diplomacy and now the term "global health governance" is now widely used," said the Foreign Secretary.

Main 'Actors'

He said, "We can see this positive correlation between health and wealth playing out on the global health stage in a number of ways. There is steep increase in the number of credible "actors" in global health governance. More meetings are happening. More ideas are generated. More funds are available. More problems are being highlighted. More solutions are being discussed and more is being done."

He outlined that an unprecedented number

For full text of the speech visit www.indiplomacy.com or click [here](#)

Prevent Future Pandemics - Protect Nature

The ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) and the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) held their first webinar on 20th May 2020, underscoring the linkages of biodiversity and health and regional efforts to integrate biodiversity conservation into the COVID-19 response. ACB Executive Director Theresa Mundita Lim said: "The decline of species can trigger the spillover of viruses that are dormant or inactive, leading to their transmission to both domestic animals and humans. This grim data should serve as a warning to all of us."

For the full report visit www.indiplomacy.com or click [here](#)

ASEAN CENTRE for BIODIVERSITY

Welcome to the Webinar

Biodiversity and Preventing Future Pandemics

20 May 2020 | 10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M. (GMT+8)

COVID-19 situation in ASEAN
Biodiversity and zoonoses
Health and Biodiversity in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and development
Highlights of the ASEAN Scoping Study on Interlinkages of Health and Biodiversity
Updates on ASEAN response to wildlife management to curb zoonoses
A socio-economic point of view on integrating biodiversity solutions into the COVID-19 response

Livestreaming on [facebook.com/ASEANBiodiversity](https://www.facebook.com/ASEANBiodiversity)

H.E. Kang Phook
Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Brunei Darussalam

Dr. Oscar Primadi, MPH
Secretary of Health, Ministry of Health, Indonesia

Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim
Executive Director, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity

Prof. Zaki Abdul Hamid
President, Indonesian Biodiversity Society (IIBS)

Dr. Unnikrishnan Parappagumpal
Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sri Lanka

Dr. Marian S. Delos Angeles, Ph.D.
President, Philippine Biodiversity Society (PBS)

Ms. Antonette Tass
Moderator, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity



ASEAN-China Economic Ministers' On Combating COVID & Enhancing FTA

ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) and China's Minister of Commerce have issued a statement on 29th May 2020 on close cooperation in responding to the pandemic and mitigating its impact on global and regional trade and economy. It included joint efforts in restoring economic and trade confidence, as well as pursuing and securing sustainable and long-term growth of international trade and investment.

The Ministers commit to keeping the markets open and further facilitating trade and investment in order to maintain the regional and global supply chains. Priority will be given to facilitating customs clearance to ensure continued and smooth cross-border flow of food, agricultural products, commodities, medicines and medical supplies, and other essential goods and services.

For the ASEAN.org report click [here](#)



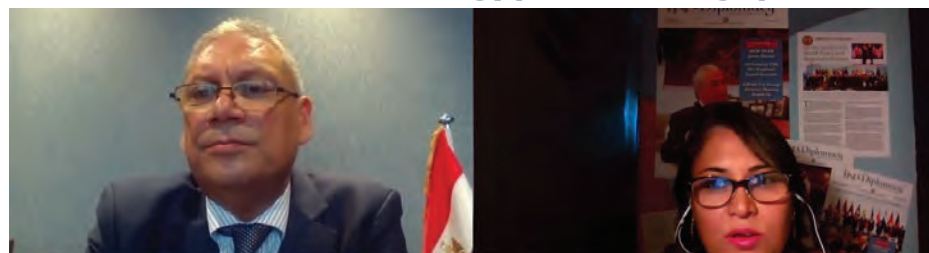
(Source: WHO)

Cambodia First To Discharge Last COVID-19 Patient

The ASEAN Secretariat provides regular updates a 'Risk Assessment for International Dissemination of COVID-19 to the ASEAN Region' document through its ASEAN Biodiaspora Virtual Centre (ABVC). The situational reports of 18th May 2020 had also listed that Cambodia's last patient who was being treated for COVID-19 has been discharged, making the country the first of the ASEAN member-states with zero COVID19 active case. Cambodia has reported no new case/s for 36 consecutive days since 12th April 2020.

For other news that include latest updates from Laos, the Philippines, Singapore, Travel Advisories, Cases and Death Statistics etc please click [here](#)

Egyptian Ambassador on COVID-19's Impact on Relations between Egypt and Singapore



On the eve of Eid, Ambassador H.E. Mohamed Ahmed Fathi Abulkheir, shared his experiences including "outstanding cooperation" from the Singapore Government.

While Egypt and Singapore has enjoyed 54 years of excellent diplomatic relations, the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic this year has taken its toll on both countries. IN Diplomacy Editor-in-chief, Ms Nomita Dhar talked to the Ambassador of Egypt in Singapore, HE Mohamed Ahmed Fathi Abulkheir to find out more.

"Thankfully when the times are tough, people tend to come closer together and Egypt and Singapore have come closer together since the COVID-19 outbreak and implementation of the Circuit Breaker (CB) measures," said the Ambassador. For example, he said he seen outstanding cooperation from the Singapore side in the process of repatriating Egyptians who were stuck here.

He was also glad that the Embassy's consular section successfully managed to cope with fewer staff and working days at the office during the CB period. The Ambassador was also happy to report that even during this period he still received increased queries about imports of Egyptian fruits and vegetables from Singaporean companies as more of them have found their way into Singapore supermarkets like NTUC Fairprice. The Ambassador was also able to help coordinate between Islamic studies students in Singapore and the famous Al-Azhar University so that they can take their entrance exams online!

To view the full interview visit www.indiplomacy.com or click [here](#)



The US is still contributing in real terms and dollars playing a major role in responding to the COVID-19 Outbreak

A factsheet released by the US Embassy in Singapore in May 2020 provided an update that stated the country has given more than US\$10 billion towards fighting the global COVID-19 response. It said, "We continue to ensure that the substantial U.S. funding and scientific efforts on this front remain a central and coordinated part of the worldwide effort against COVID-19. Months into fighting this pandemic at home and abroad, the United States continues to lead a global response—building on decades of leadership in life-saving health and humanitarian assistance"

Since the start of the outbreak the U.S. Government has committed more than US\$900 million in State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) emergency health, humanitarian, economic, and development assistance specifically aimed at helping governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) fight the pandemic. This funding,

provided by Congress, will save lives by improving public health education; protecting healthcare facilities; and increasing laboratory, disease-surveillance, and rapid-response capacity in more than 120 countries.

Ventilators for Partners and Allies

Working with the private sector, the Americans have begun to fulfill President Trump's commitment to provide ventilators to its partners and allies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. The first shipment of ventilators donated by the United States, through USAID, arrived in the Republic of South Africa on May 11, 2020. The US foreign assistance funding to date for the response to the COVID-19 pandemic includes an initial \$23 million specifically to provide ventilators to some of these partners and allies.

For full factsheet with the breakdown of aid amounts and details of the aid recipients click [here](#)

COMMUNIQUE

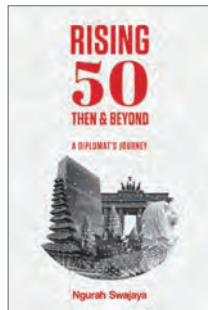


Friends and Diplomats Welcome New Book by Amb Ngurah Swajaya

A few of them also shared insights about the author himself during the virtual launch of his new book **RISING 50: Then & Beyond – A Diplomat's Journey**. They also acknowledged his contributions as well as shared views on the new roles played by diplomacy in today's world

One can spot more than a few familiar faces from Singapore's diplomatic community past and present at the virtual launch of the first book by outgoing Indonesian Ambassador in Singapore, HE Ngurah Swajaya, on 23rd June 2020. Several of the virtual attendees from a global audience who managed to share a few words with the Ambassador included the present and immediate past Deans of the Singapore Diplomatic and Consular Corps, HE Tumur Lkhagvadorj the Ambassador of Mongolia and HE James Sinclair (who was calling from his home in Peru) respectively. From Singapore there were: India's

High Commissioner, HE Jawed Ashraf and HE Zulkifli Baharudin (Singapore's non-resident ambassador for Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan) and from New York Mr Adnan Z. Amin, former director of UN Environment Programme. The publisher and editor-in-chief of *IN Diplomacy*, Ms Nomita Dhar*, was the host for the launch and was happy to note that the speakers who called in also gave many fascinating insights and information that gave some background to the events and developments covered in the book. To view the launch click [here](#) or to read more about the book click [here](#).



"His writings and observations will be valuable in understanding the transformative mindset needed by every diplomat in performing his or her duties in the constantly changing environment. I therefore commend Ngurah's willingness to share his priceless experiences in this book."

- H.E. Retno L.P.

Marsudi Minister for Foreign Affairs,
Republic of Indonesia

RISING 50:

Then & Now - A Diplomat's Journey is published by Sun Media Pte Ltd.

The ebook is available on
Amazon.com

For hard copies please email
edit@sunmediaonline.com for details.

Saudi Embassy Working with MOM Sharing 15 Tonnes of Dates

The Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Embassy in Singapore, HE Saad Saleh Al-Saleh, said the mission is working with Singapore's Ministry of Manpower (MOM) to distribute the five tonnes of dates to the foreign workers' dormitories and isolation centres. This is on top of providing another 10 tonnes to mosques, community and civic centres here.

A statement released by the Embassy on 18th May 2020 said the gift of dates comes from the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre. The donation comes in the wake of other earlier distributions by the Embassy to foreign workers in Singapore. Three hundred occupants of the Kian Teck Dormitory in Chinsim Industrial Centre received prayer mats, dates and milk on 9th May 2020 that were

distributed by Mr Zaqq Mohamad, Minister of State, Ministry of National Development and MOM.

The dates donation programme is the result of cooperation between MOM, the Islamic Religious Council (MUIS) and the NGO Alliance of Guest Workers Organisation (AGWO) and the Hope Initiative Alliance (HIA) movement.



(Above): HE Saad Saleh Al-Saleh with some of this year's bountiful shipment of dates at the embassy. (Right): Dates up close - nature's power snack



Compiled by Jenny Tan



BMW 4 Coupe for Christmas

The all-new Coupe was introduced - virtually - to the world in June. Expect the 420i and 430i with a 430i M Sport Edition with an ETA in the fourth quarter of 2020

The new 4 series shares many major parts with the current 3 series including their 2-litre turbo engines that produce 184 hp and 300 Nm of peak torque for the 420i and 258 hp and 400 Nm for the 430i. All that power is mated to an eight-speed auto. Power and speed specs are as follows:

	420i Coupe	430i Coupe
Engine	1,998cc in-line 4, turbo	1,998cc in-line 4, turbo
Power	184hp/5,000-6,500rpm	258hp/5,000-6,500rpm
Torque	300Nm/1,350-4,000rpm	400Nm/1,550-4,400rpm
0-100km/h	7.5 seconds	5.8 seconds
Top speed	240km/h	250km/h

The new car's design is bold and aggressive with the traditional kidney grilles taken over by two broad shields fronting an elongated bonnet and wider rear haunch (23 mm wider than the 3 series). Last month's digital introduction also promises a special experience awaits the driver in the handling department. We just can't wait for Christmas!



Shisen Hanten by Chen Kentaro



(Clockwise from top left): Chef Chen Kentaro, London Roast Duck, Steamed Chicken with Sesame Sauce and Chen's Mapo Doufu

The only Chinese restaurant in Singapore that has been awarded two Michelin stars for four consecutive years (2016-2019) showcases Szechwan cuisine in an elegant setting 35 floors above Orchard Road in Mandarin Hotel

If you are new to Chinese food and want to have a safe, absolute no-risk introduction, specifically cuisine from China's Szechwan region, Mandarin's **Shisen Hanten** is the top recommendation. Signature dishes to try is its **Chen's Mapo Doufu** (S\$13) and **Steamed Chicken with Sesame Sauce** (S\$13)

Other must-tries include its **London Roast Duck** and **BB Meat** and since the Circuit Breaker started Mandarin Hotel's Chatterbox and Shisen Hanten have takeaway promotions you can check out [here](#).

Virtual Conferences: China, ASEAN and UN Meetings Stress Cooperation & Multilateralism to Meet COVID-19 Challenges



Minister Balakrishnan online during China's Belt and Road International meeting on 18th June 2020 (Source: Singapore MFA)

Singapore's Foreign Minister Dr Vivian Balakrishnan has been in a flurry of high level diplomatic online meetings and conferences and probably he has attended all of them from the same space (see above).

On 18th June 2020, Singapore joined 24 other countries, the WHO and UN Development Programme in the **High-Level Videoconference on Belt and Road International Cooperation: Combating COVID-19 with Solidarity** which was chaired by China's State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. According to an MFA media statement at the meeting "Minister Balakrishnan emphasised the importance of global health cooperation against COVID-19, as well as the need for countries to keep global trade flowing and supply chains connected. Minister Balakrishnan stressed that countries should maintain cross-border linkages and facilitate continued capital and investment flows, which will help support businesses, create jobs and fuel the recovery of our economies. Minister Balakrishnan noted that the Belt and Road Initiative can provide a useful platform for countries to promote connectivity and development as they work towards economic recovery."

On 17th June 2020, Singapore participated in the **Special ASEAN-Russia Foreign Ministers' Meeting on Coronavirus Disease**. The meeting was co-chaired by by Indonesia Minister of Foreign Affairs Retno Marsudi in her capacity as country coordinator for ASEAN-Russia Dialogue Relations, and Russia Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov, was held via video conference. Minister Balakrishnan welcomed ASEAN-Russia cooperation to address the COVID-19 pandemic, in areas such as the exchange of information, the use of technology and vaccine development. Minister Balakrishnan also emphasised the importance of maintaining open and connected supply chains, especially for essential goods such as medical supplies and equipment, and food.

On 11th June 2020, Minister Balakrishnan hosted a commemorative Forum of Small States (FOSS) event **The UN Charter at 75: Multilateralism in a Fragmented World**. The virtual forum was joined by the President of the 74th Session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly Mr Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, UN Secretary-General (UNSG) António Guterres, Chair of The Elders and former-President of Ireland Mrs Mary Robinson, and a high-level panel of Leaders and Ministers from UN Member States.

The FOSS, founded by Singapore in 1992, is an informal platform at the UN that brings small states together to discuss issues of common interest. According to a MFA statement, Minister Balakrishnan underscored the importance of the UN and a rules-based multilateral system, global solidarity in the current geopolitical context, and small state participation at international fora.

HE Mary Robinson pre-launched the new report and recommendations by The Elders on strengthening multilateralism. This was followed by a cross-regional panel of Leaders and Ministers of Armenia, Bahrain, Chile, Costa Rica, Fiji, Germany, Georgia, Ghana, Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Maldives, Namibia, Palau, Rwanda, Sweden, and Switzerland sharing perspectives on how to strengthen multilateral institutions, including to ensure that they continue to deliver on their mandates amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and increasing economic uncertainty. The participants reaffirmed their commitment to the foundational principles of the UN, as enshrined in the UN Charter, and reaffirmed their commitment to collectively overcome the evolving challenges of the future.

The event was organised by Singapore in its capacity as Chair of the FOSS in partnership with The Elders, an independent group of global leaders working together for peace, justice, and human rights.

Singapore FM on Diplomacy in a Post-COVID-19 World

Dr Vivian Balakrishnan spoke at a Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs Town Hall meeting to engage in "critical reflection at critical points" in the development of pre-existing trends that will affect the world profoundly

"Post-COVID, we will inhabit a more dangerous, divided, and disrupted world. Why? First, long-term transnational threats – and these include climate change, terrorism, cyberattacks, nuclear proliferation – all retain their potency. And COVID-19 may not even have been the 'big one'. There have been other pandemics in human history with far higher mortality rates. We may still see another with greater potency. And bio-terrorists will have noticed how effectively contagion has brought the world to a halt.

Second, COVID-19 has exacerbated the fundamental problems with the global economy. These include the explosion of global debt; increasing inequality; the pushback against globalisation and free trade; and increasing the bifurcation of technology and supply chains.

In good times, just-in-time supply chains were considered to be the most efficient. But countries now, all over the world, will develop 'just-in-case' supply chains for the sake of resilience. And when the world opens for business again, I think we will see shorter, more fragmented supply chains. And if you think about it, this has obvious implications for hubs like Singapore. The imposition of lockdowns has sped up our shift online, and in some cases even emphasized the disparities in digital access. It's worth remembering that 'work from home' also means 'work from any country', and this means there will be greater competition for everyone, everywhere. Meanwhile, the fourth industrial revolution will continue to disrupt jobs, especially with the advent of AI and robotics.

Third, superpower rivalry has sharpened. Fourth, existing regional tensions can also ignite quickly and unexpectedly. Over the past week – and mind you, this less than three years since the crisis on the Doklam plateau – we learnt of the violent escalation along the Line of Actual Control in the Galwan Valley between India and China. There have been incidents in our own region over territorial claims and maritime rights in the South China Sea.

And so the question arises: how will Singapore survive and thrive in a post-COVID19 world?"

Above are selected extracts.
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