

**ENERGY PERSPECTIVES
ON SINGAPORE
AND THE REGION**

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AND THE REGION**



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Foreword

This timely book, published by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, is a significant contribution to knowledge about an important sector of our economy. Energy security is one of the most important issues on the international agenda. The competition between states for access to energy resources could, potentially, be a cause for misunderstanding and conflict. In an era when oil prices are high and rising to US\$78 per barrel, and when Singapore imports 100 per cent of its energy needs, it is useful to help our citizens understand the complexities of issues relating to energy. This comprehensive book includes eleven chapters on Singapore's energy issues, four on China, one each on ASEAN, India, Japan, Middle-East, Australia and Russia. It includes a wide range of topics, including, coal, gas, oil rigs, solar power, and bio-fuels. The book also contains contributions by well-known oil companies such as ExxonMobil and Singaporean companies such as Keppel and Sembawang, which are pre-eminent in the building of jack-up oil rigs. The diversity of views and in-depth knowledge makes it a valuable and informative guide for students and others interested in energy issues.

Looking ahead, there is much work to be accomplished in the Singapore energy field. First, the Inaugural Singapore Energy Conference (SEC), held on 8–9 November 2006, sought to inform policymakers and industry leaders of the latest trends and ideas in the global energy industries. Over the years, we hope that the SEC will become a premier energy conference and position Singapore as an important thought centre on energy issues. After all, Singapore is a major oil refining and trading centre and a leading manufacturer of oil rigs in the world.

Singapore acceded to the Kyoto Protocol in 2006 and as a result, it has an international obligation to reduce its carbon emissions. As our economic activities all use energy derived from fossil fuels and result in carbon emissions,

we need to focus on energy efficiency and find various ways to conserve energy. We should also promote fuel-efficient vehicles, such as hybrid vehicles, vehicles powered by CNG and other non-polluting or low-polluting fuel systems. Singapore could also be a centre for research on fuel cell and solar energy. This book also touches on the important nexus between energy and the environment. We should aim for Singapore to become a centre of excellence, not only in energy studies, but also in environmental studies, just as we have become a leader in water technologies. In time, Singapore should consider setting up a think-tank or research centre on energy issues.

This book can be viewed as one of the first steps in that long journey. I commend ISEAS on the hard work and vision that has resulted in this informative, useful and comprehensive book.

Tommy Koh
Chairman
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September 2006

Preface

The Energy Programme of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies represents one of ISEAS' latest initiatives. The rise of oil prices in 2005 and 2006, combined with the continuing impact of 9/11 and the search for energy security by rising powers China and India, has stimulated both scholarly and lay interest in an issue that is of not only economic but strategic importance. Although the programme began in the 1980s, it was revived in June 2004 and has been well received, with thirty-five talks or seminars organized till the end of June 2006.

This book is based on a selection of the talks presented at the ISEAS Energy Forum. They range from energy conservation to oil rig manufacturing and the energy needs of India and China. While scholarly and reflective of the data and ideas presented at the forum, it is written in an accessible way so as to stimulate public awareness of key energy issues facing Singapore and the region. The writers bring to bear on the subject not just their expertise but also their ability to explain complex issues in an easily understandable manner. The Institute of Southeast Asian Studies would like to express its appreciation to the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung for its financial support.

I am particularly appreciative of Mr Mark Hong who conceived and developed the energy studies programme at ISEAS. I also appreciate his help, together with that of Mr Teo Kah Beng, in editing this book. Hopefully, this book will add to the growing knowledge on a subject which is going to be of critical importance in the twenty-first century.

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The Contributors

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