

Press Release

ASIA BUSINESS COUNCIL ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF “ASIA’S CHALLENGE 2020” ESSAY PRIZE

HONG KONG, 19 October 2010—Young writers from India and Singapore have won the “Asia’s Challenge 2020” essay prize organized by the Asia Business Council in partnership with TIME and the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore. The main purpose of the essay prize is to generate fresh ideas for tackling key challenges to Asia’s continued competitiveness and development, as well as encourage young professionals to make an impact on public policy and business in Asia.

The winning essay by Sarabjit Singh of India talked about the challenge of economic inequality in Asia and the need for inclusive development. The runners-up, Gemlyn George, Rohit Pathak, and Su Hsing Loh, wrote about deficiencies in Asia’s healthcare system, governance in Asia, and Asia’s decoupling from the West respectively. Writers who are Asian nationals under the age of 32 were asked to submit essays of 3,000 words or less that answered the questions: “What is the most important challenge facing Asia over the next decade? Why? What should be done about it?”

Essays submitted focused on a range of topics of concern to young writers and thinkers in Asia. Common themes included inequality, overpopulation, environmental pollution and energy security, regional economic integration, and labor markets, among others. The essays were judged according to creativity, innovation, rigor of research and writing, as well as achievability of idea. The judging panel included: Zoher Abdoolcarim (Asia Editor, TIME, Hong Kong), Michael Elliott (Deputy Managing Editor, TIME, United States), Nobuyuki Idei (CEO, Quantum Leaps Corp., Japan), Kishore Mahbubani (Dean, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore), Lubna Olayan (Deputy Chairman and CEO, Olayan Financing Co., Saudi Arabia), and Astrid Tuminez (Assistant Dean and Director, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore).

Kishore Mahbubani said, “As dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, where our mission is to help educate the next generation of Asian and global leaders, I am heartened to see

the range of serious and innovative thinking highlighted in the essays submitted. The quality of thought and insight among the essayists gives me confidence that a rising Asia will be able to address creatively and effectively the challenges ahead.”

Zoher Abdoolcarim said, “The high standard and wide scope of the essays show that young Asians are not taking their region’s many successes for granted, but that they are thinking seriously about the challenges Asia faces and about the viable ways to tackle them. If these thoughtful and committed young Asians are Asia’s future, then we can all be truly confident about the region.”

The prize winners will be invited to Singapore for an award ceremony on 6 December 2010. The winning essays will be posted on TIME.com.

For more information, please contact:

Janet Pau, +852-2899-2782, JanetP@AsiaBusinessCouncil.org