



VIEWPOINT @ SAFTI MI LIBRARY

9 December 09 (Wed), 1500 – 1700 hrs

Venue : Library Briefing Room

Political and Economic Transformations In Myanmar

**Speaker: Bridget Welsh
Associate Professor of Political Science
Singapore Management University**

About the Talk:

There is a consistent misperception that nothing has changed in Myanmar/Burma, as the military government has held onto power since 1962. Many outsiders continue to use the lens of the 1990 elections to understand dynamics in the country almost twenty years later. As Myanmar is about to embark on a new set of elections next year, it is important to reflect on what are the contemporary conditions in the country. This discussion lays out current social, political and economic trends in Myanmar/Burma. Among the issues reflected are the changing nature of political institutions, the character of the political opposition, new developments in the economy, the emergence of new and important social groups, changes in ethnic identity and nationalism and transformations in civil society. The aim is to highlight the profound and significant changes that have occurred within the country in the last decade and to illustrate the need for new frameworks for understanding contemporary Myanmar.

About the Speaker:

Bridget Welsh is currently an Associate Professor in Political Science at SMU. She received her doctorate from the Department of Political Science at Columbia University, her MA from Columbia University, language training (FALCON) from Cornell University and BA from Colgate University.

Publications

She has edited Reflections: The Mahathir Years (2004), Legacy of Engagement in Southeast Asia (2008), The Goh Chok Tong Years in Singapore (2009), Democracy Takeoff: Reflections on the BJ Habibie Period (2010 forthcoming) and Transition or Transformation?: Abdullah Badawi's Tenure (2010 forthcoming). Her current individual-authored book projects include Beyond Ethnicity: Malaysian Voting Behavior, How Malaysians Think About Politics and Reformasi Elections in Malaysia. She is the Malaysia Director of the Asia Barometer Project and in collaboration with her colleagues in the project is co-editing a manuscript examining attitudes toward regime support in Southeast Asia. She is also working on ongoing projects examining Islamist parties in Malaysia and Indonesia, vigilante violence in Indonesia, and humanitarian conditions in Burma.

Registration

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Registration will close on Thursday, December 3rd, 2009 at 1700 hrs.