

Profiles

Cherian George, Singapore (Facilitator)



Cherian George is an Associate Professor at the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University, where he serves as the Head of Journalism and Publishing. Among his initiatives is a three-month sabbatical programme for Asia-based journalists, the Asia Journalism Fellowship, launched by Temasek Foundation and NTU in 2009. Before joining academia, he was a journalist at *The Straits Times*, Singapore. He continues to practise journalism as the publisher of *What's Up*, a monthly current affairs newspaper for schoolchildren. Dr George's main areas of research are media and politics, comparative media systems and professional norms in journalism. He is the author *Contentious Journalism and the Internet: Towards Democratic Discourse in Malaysia and Singapore* (Singapore University Press and University of Washington Press, 2006). Dr George received his Ph.D. in Communication from Stanford University. He is a graduate of the Journalism School, Columbia University, and Cambridge University, where he read Social and Political Sciences.

Anies Baswedan (Speaker)



Anies Baswedan is the President of Paramadina University in Jakarta, Indonesia. He is also the Research Director of The Indonesian Institute Center for Public Policy Analysis based Jakarta. He holds a Doctorate in Philosophy from Northern Illinois University, an MA in Public Policy from University of Maryland School of Public Policy, College Park, and a degree in Business Management from Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. He has received several distinguished awards and scholarships, including the Fulbright Scholarship, the 2004 Gerald Maryanov Fellow from Northern Illinois University, Indonesian Cultural Foundation Scholarship in New York and William P. Cole III Fellowship from the University of Maryland. He was also awarded the JAL Scholarship to attend Summer Session of Asian Studies at Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan when he was a student at Gadjah Mada University. The US magazine *Foreign Policy* named him as one of the top 100 public intellectuals in the world in May 2008 and the World Economic Forum included him in the 2009 Young Global Leaders.

Abdullah Khan, Pakistan



Abdullah Khan is currently working in Copenhagen as Assistant Imam of the Rabtatul Alamia Al-islamia Denmark. Prior to this, he was Research and Project Coordinator at the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) in Islamabad where he organised workshops for teachers of madaris. He also conducted surveys and interviews of the leadership of the 60 leading madaris in Pakistan. Based on these surveys, IPS Islamabad published the book *Deeni Madaris - Tabdili Kay Rujhanat* (Religious Institutes in Pakistan and Changing Trends) in 2008. Abdullah Khan has worked as project coordinator with IPS, Norwegian Church Aid and Christian Study Center Pakistan to prepare syllabi for basic human rights education in madaris and Christian seminaries, gaining extensive experience in relating with and training the religious leadership in Pakistan in interfaith settings. He also lectures on various Islamic topics on Radio App Ki Awaz or Your Voice, an Urdu and English radio channel based in Copenhagen. He participated in the 7th ASEF Journalists' Colloquium *Keeping Faith: Reporting on Religion*, organised on 21-22 September 2009 in Seoul, South Korea, in conjunction with the 5th ASEM Interfaith Dialogue.

Ary Hermawan, Indonesia



Ary Hermawan is a journalist at *The Jakarta Post*, which he joined in 2005. He worked previously at Antara National News Agency. He is a graduate of Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University in Jakarta. In 2009, he was awarded the Asia Journalism Fellowship, a three-month course on journalism in the digital age at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, during which he conducted a research on the city-state's response towards online radicalisation/extremism. He has also participated in the course for journalists on reporting Muslim-West relations organised by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the International Center for Journalists (ICFJ) and Search for Common Ground. He was also a participant of the conference "Reporting across Cultures: Freedom of Expression in the Digital Age" in 2010, which was held in Alexandria, Egypt.

Elif Kayi, France



Born in 1979 in Dole, Eastern France, to a French mother and Turkish father, Elif Kayi studied economics and foreign languages at the universities of Lyon and Paris and has an MA in European Studies from the University of Hamburg. She started working as a freelance journalist in 2006 in Berlin and specialised in covering issues related to migration, religion, Islam and Turkey, as well as anti-Semitism and racism. Since May 2007, she has also worked as correspondent for the European network Euro|topics. In 2009, she won the European Award for Young Journalists with the article *Have pity, stop going on about Turkey*. Elif Kayi is also a member of the Euro-Mediterranean Academy for Journalists network.

Eulalia Tort Bodro, Spain



Eulalia Tort is a journalist specialising in religions and interfaith dialogue. She works for the Catalan TV as editor for the programme *Signes dels Temps* and has her own programme at *Radio Estel*. She also works for a publishing house Herder Editorial. She is a contributing writer for *Dialogal* magazine on interfaith dialogue and a columnist for the monthly magazine called *Valors*. She is a graduate of Universitat Ramon Llull in Barcelona, where she majored in Communication and Journalism, and Humanities.

Hariati Azizan, Malaysia



Hariati Azizan worked as a trained teacher for two years before joining the media. Her areas of specialisation include education, social issues and women's rights. In 2004, she won the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO)-Australia Press Award with her article *Due for a Makeover* and had a three-week fellowship with the education desk of *The Age*, Melbourne, Australia. The article, which was the first in a series on the state of primary education in Malaysia, looked at the state of national schools in the country, specifically the issues and problems they face. In 2008, she participated in the Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA) Journalism Fellowship Programme on "Covering Burma", which was aimed at raising regional journalists' understanding of Myanmar's political and social situation. Hariati is also interested in arts and culture, and participated in various youth community arts projects with local arts group "Five Arts Centre", which deals with identity issues.

Karnjariya Sukrung, Thailand



Karnjariya Sukrung is a freelance feature writer/reporter for *In Spirit* in the Outlook section of *The Bangkok Post*. She was previously a full-time journalist with *The Bangkok Post* for about 10 years. She is also a radio host, workshop facilitator and lecturer on journalism at universities in Thailand. After becoming a freelance journalist, she expanded her expertise in media and communications to help religious groups promote their activities. She co-organised a 14-day event of dharma talks and retreat when Buddhist master Thich Nhat Hanh from Plum Village (France) visited Thailand in 2007. She also gives consultations on social marketing and communications for socially-engaged Buddhism organisations and civil groups who work towards alternative education, good livelihood, and peaceful society. She is the initiator and coordinator of "Happy Media", a self-organised community of media and communications professionals who are interested in spirituality and self development.

Katarina Šimurkova, Slovakia



Katarina Šimurkova is a foreign desk journalist and editor at *Hospodarske Noviny* (The Economist Daily), where she has been working since 2006, covering current affairs, politics and foreign affairs. Among the prominent personalities she has interviewed are Mr Miroslav Lajcak, former High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina and actual Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovakia; his predecessor Mr Jan Kubis; and former Slovak Eurocommissar Mr Jan Figel. She covered parliamentary elections in Ukraine, Russia, Serbia and Kosovo and wrote articles about the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. Last year, Katarina participated in the International Visitor Leadership Program in the United States of America. It gave her the opportunity to meet with US congressmen, officials from the US State Department or UN. She holds a degree in political science and international relations.

Laura Schuurmans, The Netherlands



Jakarta-based freelance writer & research analyst Laura Schuurmans specialises in conflicts in South Asia and the growing gap between the West and the Muslim World. She has travelled to South Asia on several occasions for field research and has given presentations at various international conferences. She is currently in her final stages of research on the Kashmir dispute. Her main objective is to solve conflicts through peaceful means by building confidence and bridging gaps. Born and raised in the Netherlands, she moved to Indonesia 14 years ago where her family has enjoyed long historic and family ties. Being a child of two different cultures, she has in-depth understanding of both cultures and strives to balance the best between the East and West. She has published articles in *The Jakarta Globe*, *The Jakarta Post* and *The Pakistan Observer*. She also contributes with her publications to the Institute of Regional Studies in Pakistan.

Martin Horalek, Czech Republic



Martin Horalek is the Spokesperson for The Christian Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party (KDU-CSL), and the General Editor of the magazine *Nový Hlas*. From 2002 to 2007, he worked as a Foreign Editor and Press Officer in the Press Office of the Czech Bishops' Conference. Martin holds a degree in Theology from the Palacky University of Olomouc, the second oldest university in the Czech Republic. He was awarded the Merril Scholarship and spent a year studying at the Moravian College in the US.

Michael Kelly, Ireland



Michael Kelly is Political Correspondent and Deputy Editor of The Irish Catholic, Ireland's longest-established and best-selling religion newspaper, founded in 1888. After joining the staff of The Irish Catholic in October 2005, Michael Kelly was promoted to the position of Deputy Editor in 2006 retaining the politics portfolio and taking on additional responsibility for social affairs and education.

A native of Omagh, Co Tyrone in Northern Ireland, he completed undergraduate studies at the Queen's University of Belfast (QUB) where he was awarded a BA in history and Irish politics in 2000. After graduation he completed a baccalaureate in divinity (BD) and a Postgraduate diploma in Mission Studies at the Pontifical University, St Patrick's College, Maynooth. In 2004, he was awarded a Licentiate in Sacred Theology (STL) from the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross. Particular areas of interest include inter-religious dialogue, the relationship between government and faith-based organisations, the role of religion in politics in a pluralist democracy and the development of multiculturalism. He is a member of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) and the press corps of the Irish Parliament, the Oireachtas Press Gallery.

Nguon Serath, Cambodia



Nguon Serath is Editor at *Rasmei Kampuchea*, the biggest Cambodian daily and well known for its political reporting. He is the Manager of The Club of Cambodian Journalists as well as a stringer for Japanese Newspaper, Nikkei Shinbun. He obtained a Masters degree in journalism from Ateneo de Manila University in 2009. He started his career at *Rasmei Kampuchea* as a translator of international news. He was appointed a political reporter at *Rasmei Kampuchea* upon his return from a two-month stint with Kyodo News Agency in Japan. He was promoted to Political Editor in 2006. He continues to contribute political and news analysis with a focus on the regional conflict between Cambodia and Thailand.

Ng Tze Wei, Hong Kong



For the past three years, Ng Tze Wei has been reporting from Beijing for the Hong Kong English language newspaper, South China Morning Post. She has travelled around China including regions like Tibet and Xinjiang, where the practice of religion has increasingly come under the international scrutiny. In particular, a trip to Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in November last year, during Eid ul-Adha, opened her eyes to the struggles of a region that is lagging behind in China's rocketing economic growth, and where people are convinced that they are marginalised because of their religion and ethnicity. While the focus of her reporting is law and foreign relations, religion has always been a strong interest of hers. She stresses that under the Chinese political system, religion has inevitably

become a matter of political and often diplomatic importance, and is being increasingly drawn into debate on human rights.

Ng Tze Yong, Singapore



Ng Tze Yong is a correspondent at *The Straits Times* and Special Assistant to the Editor-In-Chief at the English and Malay Newspaper Division, Singapore Press Holdings. Prior to joining *The Straits Times*, he worked for *The New Paper*. He won the title of Young Journalist of the Year 2006 and received Special Award for Excellence 2007 for his feature series on Youth of the Holy Land.

In 2001, he enrolled in Brown University majoring in Literature and History. Following the September 11 attacks which happened two weeks later, he changed course and graduated in Middle East Studies instead. He has worked on interfaith issues and is researching on the impact of new media on the newspaper industry.

Umair Dar, Spain



Umair Dar was born in Pakistan to a Kashmiri family. He was 15 years old when his family moved to Spain. He quickly learnt Spanish and found himself lending assistance to other South Asians in Spain. He currently lives in Badalona, where he works as mediator, translator and interpreter for the City Council. He is a member of Minhaj-ul-Quran International (Centro Islamico Camino de la Paz). He is also a member of an interfaith group in Catalonia, created by UNESCO of Catalonia

and the Muslim Forum of Badalona. He has a BA in engineering and is currently working towards a degree in political science and public administration at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

Taoufik Hartit, Germany



Taoufik Hartit is the President of Association Internationale Soufie Alawiyya in the Frankfurt region in Germany. He is also active in other religious organisations, such as the Core Group of the European Interfaith Youth Network of Religions for Peace, the Governing Board and the Executive Committee of Religions for Peace Europe and the Board of Trustees of the Central Archive Institute of Islam in Germany (Zentralinstitut Islam-Archiv Deutschland / Amina Abdullah Stiftung e.V.). His

involvement in the promotion of interfaith dialogue started when he was young, following in the footsteps of his parents, who are also active in interfaith relations. "Sowing hope" is his philosophy in life. Taoufik holds a degree in Business Information Technology from the Manheim University of Cooperative Education.