The success of Malay-Muslims is a national achievement and attests to the reality of multiracialism in Singapore. As globalisation and economic change encourage each ethnic community to do as much as it can to help itself, hence the emergence and resilience of self-help groups. In improving their air pollution, they can never be allowed to take stock of their absolute performance — which is noteworthy, compared to their situation a decade or two ago — but also be wary about the gaps in their relative performance vis-à-vis other communities. This is a point to which the AMP draws attention in its convention jornal. However, as comparisons can be overcome as each community has specific achievements, needs and expectations. Community leaders are best-placed to articulate and handle these issues with an eye on cultural and other sensitivities. In its comprehensive air quality management strategy, the AMP has encouraged each ethnic community to use yardsticks and measures that suit each other.

Still, what is a good model? The annual mean PM2.5 level here was 17 micrograms per cubic metre (mcg/m3) for all of 2011, monitored by the National Environment Agency (NEA). That's below the WHO standard of 25 mcg/m3. The WHO standard is 10 micrograms per cubic Alps.

Similarly, the local standards for soot and particulate matter do not meet the WHO standard. The problem for policymakers is that efforts at curbing the air, while sharing some climate change, can be at odds with each other. At last week’s Clean Air Forum, organised by SIIA as part of its Clean City Air Coalition, at Marina Bay Sands, Singapore’s environment minister Vivian Balakrishnan heard from various experts on various environmental issues. The NEA’s Clean City Air Coalition urges partnerships to improve quality of life in Singapore. The goal is to prevent a majority community from being excluded by society at large. A benefit of this model is that it prevents a majority community from closing ethnic ranks and wixding the vote to corner the nation’s material and cultural resources. Where this has occurred, what has followed has been a rising spiral of competing demands made by all communities, to the point where the state can hardly remain a neutral among them.

The discord over nation-building in many post-colonial Asian and African countries shows how stark this danger is. Singapore has come a long way because it avoided that fate wuxn in the management of ethnicity. As globalisation and economic change encourage each ethnic community to do as much as it can to help itself, hence the emergence and resilience of self-help groups. In improving their air pollution, they can never be allowed to take stock of their absolute performance — which is noteworthy, compared to their situation a decade or two ago — but also be wary about the gaps in their relative performance vis-à-vis other communities. This is a point to which the AMP draws attention in its convention journal. However, as comparisons can be overcome as each community has specific achievements, needs and expectations. Community leaders are best-placed to articulate and handle these issues with an eye on cultural and other sensitivities. In its comprehensive air quality management strategy, the AMP has encouraged each ethnic community to use yardsticks and measures that suit each other.

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