

## PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA BOOSTS HEALTH AND EDUCATION LINKS



The Prime Minister of Malaysia gave strong support to people-to-people links during his historic visit to Australia in April, the first by a Malaysian leader in 21 years.

Speaking at an Asialink ceremony in Sydney, Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, warmly praised The Asialink Conversations, as important in building regional relations.

Prime Minister Abdullah was announcing the inaugural University of Melbourne Prime Minister of Malaysia Scholar, Ms Sook-San Wong, a dengue fever researcher. He said he was proud to be the patron of the prestigious new scholarship, valued at A\$180,000. The scholarship is an initiative of The University of Melbourne and its alumni in Malaysia, and will enable a young Malaysian of outstanding promise to undertake PhD studies at Melbourne in engineering, science or medical and health sciences.

A mental health partnership, initiated by Asialink, was also formalised in the Prime Minister's presence. (See Page 5) Mr Abdullah said health and education co-operation between Australia and Malaysia was "as important as economic co-operation and the trade agreement."

In thanking Mr Abdullah, Asialink Board member and Director of Allco Equity Partners, Mr Peter Yates, (above, at right) said the University of Melbourne had established the scholarship as a mark of respect for Malaysia's support in the past.

"Successful relationships between countries, like successful business relationships, are based on mutual respect," he said.

Issue 23 Autumn 2005



## AKIRA ISOGAWA'S *PRÊT-À-PORTER*

A solo exhibition of leading Australian fashion designer, Akira Isogawa, is part of a rich and diverse program of Asialink-initiated tours of contemporary Australian art and craft/design for 2005. (More, page 7) Akira's *Prêt-à-porter*, curated by the National Gallery of Victoria, tours Southeast Asia, beginning at the Arts House, Singapore. He is pictured above with curator Katie Somerville and exhibition designer Diana Dzelajja.

## BHP BILLITON JOINS PLATINUM SPONSORS

Asialink is pleased to announce BHP Billiton has joined our corporate sponsors in the platinum category at \$50,000.

BHP Billiton will be the major sponsor for *The 2005 Asialink Conversations* in Vietnam in November. Initiated in 2002 by Asialink Patron, Baillieu Myer AC, the Conversations have become a leading "second-track" program - going beyond direct government to government diplomacy.

Corporate support of Asialink strengthens Australia's engagement with this dynamic region.

The Asialink Centre  
 Level 4, Sidney Myer Asia Centre  
 The University of Melbourne VIC 3010

**Tel** | +61 3 8344 4800  
**Fax** | +61 3 9347 1768  
**Web** | www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au



## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

*Carrillo Gantner AO*

Asialink-hosted speakers at both the Alfred Deakin Lecture Series and the Australian Davos Connection Future Summit 2005 brought audiences face to face with the enormity of change currently taking place in Asia.

Dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, Mr Kishore Mahbubani, told Deakins audiences that by 2025, three of the world's largest economies will be Asian: China India and Japan. And this will fundamentally change the dominant global economic and civilisation paradigm.

Asialink's priority is to ensure that Australians are prepared for this new world. Our national education

summit in Canberra in June will affirm the need for Asia education as a central pillar of Australian education.

Asialink has continued our tradition of working in partnership with key Australian organisations to raise the profile of Australia Asia engagement. Our partnership with the Lowy Institute for International Affairs led to major events in Melbourne, one in early April generating intense discussion of a Lowy survey of Australian attitudes to foreign policy, and later the same month, Taiwan's Cross-Strait Challenge.

This year Asialink welcomes new members to the Board. Already they have been actively engaged in representing Asialink: speaking on panels, writing for the media, addressing business audiences, and over 4000 members of the general public. New board member and former Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Philip Flood,

developed the issues paper, "Australia in the Asian region", and chaired the panel discussion at the Davos Futures Summit. Personally, I was privileged to graduate a group of 17 senior mental health professionals charged with leading reform in 15 provinces of China from an Asialink-managed training program.

We are delighted to announce BHP Billiton as a new platinum corporate member at \$50,000, the major sponsors of the 2005 Asialink Conversations to be held in Hanoi in November.

*Pictured at left at an Asialink business function: Top, Chairman and Managing Director of Holden Ltd, Dennis Mooney and Managing Director GTV 9, Paul Waldren. Bottom, President, Corporate Development, BHP Billiton, Tom Harley and Dean and Director, Melbourne Business School, Professor John Seybolt.*

## The Asialink Advisory Board

Carrillo Gantner, AO  
 Denis Davies  
 Prof Glyn Davis AC  
 Tom Dery  
 Lindley Edwards  
 Philip Flood AO  
 Prof Ross Garnaut AO  
 Prof Michael Leigh

Jenny McGregor  
 Prof Peter McPhee  
 Paul Montgomery  
 Louise Myer  
 Sidney Myer  
 Michael Roux  
 Phillip Scanlan AM  
 Peter Yates

## The Asialink 500 Fund

Charles Battersby  
 Paul Brasher  
 The Hon John Button  
 Sandy Clark  
 L. Gordon Darling AC CMG  
 Francois de Meneval  
 Tom Dery  
 Lady & Lord Ebury  
 Lindsay Fox AO  
 Carrillo Gantner AO  
 Nelma Gantner  
 Charles Goode AC  
 Reginald E Gregory MBE  
 Tony Hallam  
 Dr Janet Holmes a Court AO  
 Margaret Jackson AC  
 Chris Leptos AM  
 Kevin Luscombe AM  
 Paul Montgomery

Hugh Morgan AC  
 Baillieu Myer AC  
 Louise & Martyn Myer  
 Philip Myer  
 Sidney Myer  
 Prof John Owen  
 Prof David Penington AC  
 The Pratt Foundation  
 Lady Primrose Potter AC  
 John Ralph AC  
 Prof John Rose AO  
 Kate & Stephen Shelmerdine AM  
 The Rt Hon John So JP  
 Senator Tsebin Tchen  
 Dr Simon Wallace  
 Chev Graeme Wallace KSJ  
 Peter Yates  
 Harrison Young

## Asialink Partners and Corporate Sponsors



ANZ Banking Group  
 AXA Asia Pacific Holdings Ltd  
 Foster's International  
 Freehills  
 Department of Industry, Innovation & Regional Development (Vic)  
 Insurance Australia Group Ltd  
 Macquarie Bank Ltd  
 Singapore Airlines  
 The Age  
 The Australian  
 Trinity College

## Indonesian FTA on the drawing board



Indonesia's Trade Minister, Dr Mari Pangestu, (above) told an Asialink business forum in March that Australia and Indonesia would begin a scoping study for a bilateral free trade agreement.

Dr Pangestu addressed a high-level meeting, hosted by Asialink and Freehills, as well as an Asialink public lecture at the Sidney Myer Asia Centre. The speech received wide media in Indonesia. Dr Pangestu, who received her Bachelor and Master of Economics at the Australian National University and her PhD from the University of California, said: "The purpose of the trade moves is to build a regional production centre in this part of the world, for which it is important to involve Australia and New Zealand."

## China and trade

Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, The Hon Alexander Downer, briefed an Asialink CEO gathering on China and bilateral trade, ahead of the visit to China by Prime Minister John Howard in April. The dinner was generously hosted by Asialink corporate sponsor PricewaterhouseCoopers. Attendees represented the automotive, retail, wheat, insurance, resources and service industries.



## AFTER THE TSUNAMI: WHAT NOW?

Australians working in tsunami-devastated regions returned home "with a totally different outlook, a broader cultural understanding", the head of the Australian Federal Police, Commissioner Mick Keelty, (above) told an Asialink seminar in February.

"No matter what you see on television, nothing can prepare you for what you see in real life, when the tsunami hit". He spoke of his pride as he saw his colleagues put their "shoulders to the wheel" in Thailand after the devastation. "I thank the organisers for giving us the opportunity to talk about some of the work we're doing," he said.

More than 250 people heard Commissioner Keelty, prominent Indonesian public figure, Dr Nono Makarim, Rev Tim Costello, Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs, the Hon Bruce Billson MP, and Indonesian Ambassador, HE Imron Cotan, at the "After the Tsunami" public forum, co-hosted by *The Age* and Asialink at the Melbourne Town Hall.

*The Age* Editor, Andrew Jaspan, told the gathering: "I've been struck - having both lived in Indonesia as a child, moved away, and come back to Australia - by how relations between the two countries have developed."

The World Vision Australia Chief, Rev Costello, said the world was on the cusp of an amazing opportunity if it could harness the charity and goodwill that flowed so generously after the Boxing Day tsunami.

The Indonesian Ambassador, Mr Imron Cotan, thanked Australia for its prompt response to the tsunami. "President Yudhoyono spoke from his heart when he told Prime Minister John Howard: 'You were first on the phone. You were the first to have aircraft on the ground... Indonesia will never forget.'"

Dr Makarim gave an emotional speech, thanking Australians for their care and support. "Please stay for the long haul," he said. "Not just this crisis. Walk with us." Dr Makarim is chair of Aksara, a non profit foundation promoting civil society development in Indonesia.

"Please stay for the long haul, not just this crisis. Walk with us."

Nono Anwar Makarim  
Chair of Indonesia's Aksara Foundation

## LEADING THE ASIA DEBATE

Business and public events continue to shape an agenda for action

ABC Radio Australia broadcasts of Asialink seminars this autumn took discussion of the major issues affecting business and policy makers to an international audience. Asialink was also host to special presentations as part of the Alfred Deakin Innovation Lecture Series and the Davos Future Summit 2005.

Executive Director of the Lowy Institute, Allan Gyngell, outlined the major findings of a new Lowy survey of Australian attitudes to foreign policy, to 200 people at an Asialink event. The US Consul General, David Hopper, and the Secretary, Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development, Ms Fran Thorn, responded to the survey, focusing on the U.S. and China, while ABC presenter, Geraldine Doogue, deftly moderated the lively debate.

At the Davos summit, Asialink Board member and former Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Philip Flood AO, delivered the Asia session, focussing on China, India and Indonesia. Mr Flood is a former Ambassador to Indonesia. The session was described later, during a feedback panel of young leaders, as "the stand-out".

The rich program of public events in the Sidney Myer Asia Centre included the Red Cross-Asialink lecture, "Towards a Stable Solomons", a discussion of bilateral trade agreements with eminent ANU Professor of Economics Ross Garnaut, and an insightful discussion of Taiwan's "Cross-Strait Challenge" by Dr Malcolm Cook, with Professor Bruce Jacobs and Dr Paul Monk.



Dr Elsina Wainwright at the Asialink-Red Cross forum.

“Taiwan and China were once like two scorpions in a jar. Now Taiwan is leaving the jar.”

Dr Malcolm Cook  
Lowy Institute, Asialink forum

"A Night of Stories about Sri Lanka" was a concept brought to Asialink by author Sophie Cunningham to help raise money for tsunami-affected regions. Two visual artists, Nico Kelly and Belinda Newick, completing Asialink residencies in Sri Lanka at the time of the tsunami, spoke of their experiences in the disaster zone.

The Sydney Film Festival's artistic director, Lynden Barber, and film critic for The Age, Philippa Hawker, headlined an Asialink-hosted discussion of Hong Kong cinema, "The Evolution of a Chinese Hollywood" in Sydney in April.



At Asialink seminars and lectures, top, from left: Lowy Institute Executive Director, Allan Gyngell, and US Consul-General, David Hopper; Professor Ross Garnaut; Dewi Anggraeni, Australia correspondent for Indonesia's Tempo. Bottom row: ABC presenter, Geraldine Doogue; Journalist/author, Cameron Forbes, Dr Tomoko Akami, and former POW, David Manning, at Japan: 60 years on.

## Health initiatives build regional relations

Asialink has been at the centre of a series of mental health initiatives across Asia



**IN MALAYSIA**, a major health collaboration between Asia-Australia Mental Health and Malaysia's Health Ministry is building stronger bilateral relations. The agreement on mental health reform was signed in the presence of the Prime Minister of Malaysia during his visit to Australia in April.

Pictured, at the signing, (above, from left) are: Datuk Dr Ismail Merican, the Director General of Health, Malaysia; Professor Helen Herrman, The University of Melbourne; Malaysian Health Minister, Dato Chua Soi Lek; and Jenny McGregor, Executive Director of Asialink.



Photo: Dominic O'Brien

**IN CHINA**, Asialink's work with St. Vincent's Mental Health Service and The University of Melbourne has been acknowledged in a major new Victorian Government publication: *China, 2005 & Beyond*. The document sets out the Victorian Government's vision for the State's trade and investment relationship with China and outlines initiatives to further strengthen this relationship. The Asia-Australia Mental Health initiative, a joint project between Asialink, St Vincent's and the University's Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences, is highlighted in the document.

Chinese mental health experts see Victoria as providing a model for how hospitals, governments, universities and non-government organisations can work in a coordinated and cooperative way. A ground-breaking Memorandum of Understanding between the Victorian partners and Peking University led to a training program in Melbourne in April for 19 senior officials and heads of major hospitals across China. Participants (pictured above) undertook a five-day program of lectures, workshops and site visits.

**IN KOREA**, an agreement was signed in May between the City of Seoul and The City of Melbourne to further bilateral mental health initiatives between the two cities. A consortium involving St Vincent's, The University of Melbourne, and three leading mental health centres in Seoul, will promote information exchange and take a leading role in informing contemporary mental health care in East Asia.

## Business Connecting with Asia

Many of Australia's top corporations, government and public bodies have recognised that their workforces cannot afford to be culturally illiterate when it comes to Asia.

With countries like China, India and Japan driving the region's economic growth, the stakes are high for many businesses. While many transactions may be conducted in English, cultural knowledge is essential for the best outcomes. In any negotiation, there are unspoken signals and nuances that can derail the process.

Asialink's Leadership Program has entered its 10th year with an outstanding line-up of 38 participants representing leading Australian organisations, including Pricewaterhouse Coopers, Victoria and NSW police, Cadbury Schweppes, WMC Resources, GBST, IAG, and Google Inc.



Michael Maher, ABC Asia Pacific Editor and Asialink Leadership facilitator, with John Yu, Chancellor of the University of New South Wales and Asialink Council member, at the launch of the 2005 Sydney leadership program in March.

## Asian languages: luxury or necessity?

Languages study is the only core learning area in Australian schools that is widely seen as optional. Any state, and often any school, can choose any language, or whether to study languages at all.

At a time when business and government leaders have identified a growing need, language proficiency among Australians is declining. In 2002, 13.5 per cent of Year 12 students in Australia were studying a language other than English, compared to 76 per cent studying mathematics. Of those language students, less than half were enrolled in an Asian language. In the 1960s, 40 per cent of Year 12s studied a second language.

“Language skills and cultural sensitivity will be the new currency of this world order.”

General Peter Cosgrove

Head of the Australian Defence Forces at the AEF Education Summit



## Targeting school principals

Asialink's education program, the Asia Education Foundation (AEF), has partnered the peak body for school principals' professional learning to raise awareness about the importance of preparing our children to live in and engage with the Asian region. A meeting of primary and secondary principals has been called in every state and territory during May/June 2005.

The Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council has distributed to all Australian principals a special 'Asia' edition of their regular publication, *The National Agenda*, which provides a checklist of an 'Asia literate' school. The meetings are occurring in stimulating venues including breakfast in Melbourne Zoo's rainforest and dinner at the Embassy with the Thai Ambassador, HE Suchitra Hiranprueck, in Canberra.

"Have we entered the 21st century still holding 19th century mental maps?"

Jason Yat Sen Li

Corporate Lawyer at a national education conference in April

Pictured, above: Australia's 2004 Youth Representative to the United Nations, Thao Nguyen, spoke to Victorian school principals in May. "Young Australians are at an incredible disadvantage when it comes to business, cultural and intellectual engagement with their own region when most students have not studied an Asian language or much about Asia at all," she said.

A recent study by the Asian Studies Association of Australia showed that fewer than 6000 university students in Australia were studying Chinese. Nearly half of these students come from Asia and will take their multi-lingual skills home. And the outlook for Indonesian is worse. According to Anne McLaren from The University of Melbourne, only 1800 students (2.25 percent of total student enrolment) were studying Indonesian at Australian universities last year, a drop of 15 per cent since 2001.

Asialink is currently working to build State and Federal consensus on languages and studies of Asia through endorsement of a new Asia policy statement.

The AEF supports languages education through three leading edge national schools programs. 120 Endeavour Languages Fellowships will be offered to Australian languages teachers for the third time, with study programs in six European and Asian countries. The Asian Languages Professional Learning Project is an innovative two-year strategy focused on intercultural language learning. And a major support project for primary schools will develop a resource to connect languages to other curriculum areas. All programs are funded by the Australian Government.

## IN CHINA

Gary Campbell, Principal of Auburn South Primary School, recently participated in an AEF study tour to China. He said: "Internationalising the school curriculum can be an abstract concept. My experiences on the China study tour provided concrete opportunities for our school to make changes in our curriculum and to develop links between students and teachers in Beijing and Melbourne."

The study group met with Australian Consul-General in Shanghai, Sam Gerovich, who provided a first hand update about contemporary China. A talk by *The Age* China correspondent, Hamish MacDonald, in Beijing challenged the group of Australian educators to re-think their perspective of China and its future. Visits to centres of culture like the Shanghai Museum sat alongside attendance at the dawn Anzac Day service in Beijing.

Information about the 2006 study tour program for school educators is available by email: [aasp@asialink.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:aasp@asialink.unimelb.edu.au)

## Australian Art in Asia

Asialink has been touring exhibitions of contemporary art and craft/design in most Asian countries for 15 years. More people see Australian culture internationally through this program than through any other program undertaken of any art form and in any place.

In 2005, seven major exhibitions will tour in venues as diverse as Ssamzie Space in Seoul, the Lalit Kala Academi in New Delhi, the National Gallery of Thailand and the National Museum of History in Taiwan.

They range from a solo exhibition of Akira Isogawa, curated by the National Gallery of Victoria, to Open Letter, curated by Gallery 4A in Sydney, a group show



Vases from the exhibition, Dinosaur Designs.

of Australian artists of Southeast Asian descent, to a continuation of *Supernatural Artificial*, the exhibition of photo-based work focused on the 'unreal' capacity of that medium, after its successful showing in Tokyo in 2004.

Continuing tours include the final venue for *Unwrapped* in Singapore in March, two venues for *Dinosaur Designs* in Taiwan and Singapore, and *I thought I knew but I was wrong: New Video Art from Australia* on in Seoul. A highlight of 2005 is *Tomorrow Land*, the showing of Callum Morton's work representing Australia in the 11th Triennale India in New Delhi in January-February, with an associated exhibition at the Government Museum & Art Gallery in Chandigarh.

## Australian stories: wide horizons

Three of Australia's most popular and acclaimed authors, Kate Grenville, Tim Winton and Peter Goldsworthy, introduced a new dimension to India's understanding of Australia during Asialink's latest literature tour taking in three Indian cities in late 2004.

The 2004 Literature Touring Program finished with a blaze of publicity for the authors and the new Indian editions of their titles *The Idea of Perfection*, *Cloudstreet* and *Three Dog Night*. The authors participated in an impressive 14 events over 10 days. Highlights included an afternoon of readings and book discussion with students and academics from Australian Studies departments of four Calcutta universities, and Tim Winton's appearance on 'Mumbai Live', a national TV program.



Official Reception at the Australian High Commission, New Delhi, with (from left) High Commissioner Penny Wensley, Cultural Program Manager Asha Das, Tim Winton and Kate Grenville.



Dancer Deon Hastie, Leigh Warren and Dancers  
Photo: Alex Makeyev

## NEON RISING Asialink Japan Dance Exchange

Australian dance artists will create an intricate tapestry of works with their Japanese counterparts as part of the Asialink Japan Dance Exchange.

Asialink, in partnership with the Dance Board of the Australia Council, has selected five outstanding Australian choreographers to develop new works in Japan. Kate Denborough, Sue Healey, Jo Lloyd, Tess de Quincey and Leigh Warren will collaborate with an exciting range of choreographers, dancers, designers, screen-based and new media practitioners from Japan and Australia to create new work.

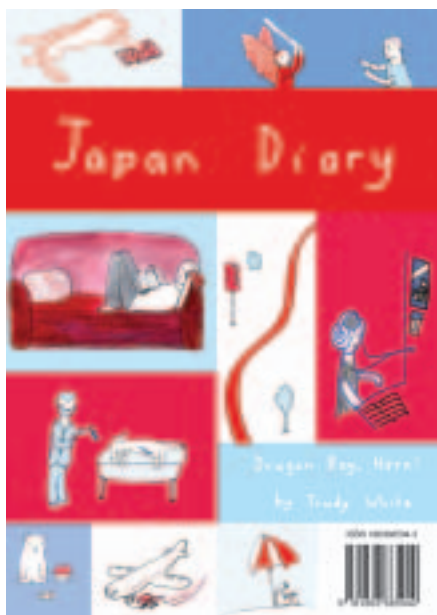
Projects range from creating a dance video to dance performance/ installations and multimedia presentations in Australia and Japan. The works will be presented in 2006, the 'Year of Cultural Exchange' between the Australian and Japanese governments.

## Corporate | Public

- Asialink will partner with *The Age* later this year to present a major event focused on North Korea. The fate of the Six-Party Talks has been a focus of attention in East Asia since Pyongyang's February 10 announcement that it was suspending participation in the talks and that it had nuclear weapons. The event will hear from UN agencies and other international experts.
- Continuing our series of public events, Harvard Professor Richard Freeman will speak on 'China, Free Trade Agreements and Globalisation', co-hosted by Asialink and the Monash Institute of Global Movements on Wednesday 22 June. The lecture, with Mr Terry Collingsworth, of the International Labor Rights Fund, will examine labor standards and political economy issues in China. See *Access Asialink* for details.
- Canberra Retreat: 35 young executives will live and breathe Australia-Asia engagement during a five-day Asialink retreat at the ANU in June. The Asialink Leadership Program prepares participants to work more effectively in Asia, inspires and informs their thinking, and challenges them to take a leading role.

## Education

- *Japan Diary* (pictured below) is the latest in the Access Asia series of curriculum support materials, developed with Australian Government funding. The teenage novella, written and illustrated by Trudy White, is two stories, printed back to back, about a young Australian who goes on exchange to Japan, and a young Japanese who comes to Australia.



Japan Diary by Trudy White



Mappamundi (detail above), the tapestry designed by leading Indian artist, Gulammohammed Sheikh, and woven by the Victorian Tapestry Workshop, will hang in the Yasuko Hiraoka Myer Room at the Sidney Myer Asia Centre.

- Other new titles, to be released mid 2005, include *The Really Big Beliefs Book*, a student-driven investigation of interfaith and intercultural understanding for middle and upper primary students, and a book on regional and global issues of relevance to middle years students. Visit [www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/aef/accessasia](http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/aef/accessasia) for more details.
- The Asia Education Foundation is convening a National Forum on Engaging Young Australians with Asia for 120 influential school educators at the National Museum in Canberra on the 20/21 June. The Forum will showcase best practice in schools and lead policy debate in this area.

## Arts

### 2005 Arts Forum: Sun Rising - Japanese Culture Today

- Asialink Arts Forum 2005 focuses on the contemporary culture and issues of Japan. Leading arts figures from Japan and Australia will head sessions on visual, performing and other art forms for the full day of Thursday 21 July at the Sidney Myer Asia Centre. Speakers include Ms Akiko Miki, Senior Curator, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, and Professor Tadashi Uchino, performing arts specialist from the University of Tokyo. For details, contact [b.fernandez@asialink.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:b.fernandez@asialink.unimelb.edu.au)

### Residencies 2006

- Applications for Asialink Artists-in-Residency places in Asia for 2006 close on Friday 2 September 2005. Information is available from July at [www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au), or contact us on (03) 8344 4800. Applications are assessed by art form advisory committees in October and November and applicants notified soon after this.



Indonesian Ambassador HE Imron Cotan at the Asialink/The Age public forum, After the Tsunami.

ACCESS Asialink

Subscribe to Asialink's free fortnightly email bulletin, **Access Asialink**, which contains the latest information on Asialink's programs as well as other Asia-focused cultural events, business seminars, conferences, scholarships, and volunteer and employment opportunities. To subscribe, email [access@asialink.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:access@asialink.unimelb.edu.au)