CNA’s maiden live streaming of GE coverage a hit

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FAR away from home, some 200 Singaporeans living overseas got to keep up with the live action of the General Election (GE) 2006 Polling Day results.

The overseas viewers, hailing mostly from the United States, Australia, China and the United Kingdom, tuned in to live streaming on Channel NewsAsia’s website — a first in GE coverage.

In Singapore, about 1.8 million viewers were glued to their TV sets late on Saturday night and early Sunday morning, as the results were announced across all MediaCorp channels. The live coverage also reached 16 million households in 20 overseas territories, including Hong Kong, India and Indonesia.

The action was brought to viewers courtesy of some 50 reporters and producers, in coordination with other units such as three television studios and personnel from MediaCorp Technologies.

Producer Tan Lek Hua said: “We converted one studio into a nerve centre coordinating live feeds in from nine different locations.

“For a project with so many live elements, lots of teamwork and expertise from different units were involved to make this a smooth operation.”

Three panellists, including TODAY editor-in-chief Mano Sabnani and the Institute of Policy Studies’ Dr Gillian Koh, were also invited on air to give real-time analysis and help viewers make sense of the news.

For Professor Eugene Tan, an assistant professor of law at the Singapore Management University, it was quite an experience — though not an easy one. He said: “Being an academic, you are more used to measured, contemplative analysis, whereas on live TV, I did not have the luxury. In that sense, I needed to be fairly well-prepared.”

And, it was also a way for him to take part in the GE by proxy — since, being a resident of the uncontested Marine Parade GRC, he did not get to vote this year.