Headline: Budget contest throws up variety of ideas

Young writers think out of the box for the Ministry of Finance’s competition on the Budget

DESPISTE Singapore’s fairy revenues, youth essays on the Budget highlight realistic possibilities.

Waving centres for the 2008 Budget Essays Competition, the Ministry of Finance’s (MOF) second, received as many as 233 submissions for its junior and senior categories addressing the theme - Infini- mities Possibilities, Finite Resources.

Wong Yong Sheng from Raffles Institution, on the first prize of $1,200; Benjamin Mak Jia Ming of Raffles Institution was the second prize of $400; and third prize of $300 went to Li Ji of Raffles Girls’ School.

In the senior category (ages 18 to 25), Jasmeen Tang of the Singapore Management University took the first prize of $2,500; Kwan Soo of the National University of Singapore won the second prize of $1,500; and Ko Zhiting of the University of London won the third prize of $500 cash.

The competition, organized with partners, the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKY-SP) and The Straits Times, also included a video contest with the theme: Who the Budget is for. The competition received 14 entries from local and international schools.

Budget contest throws variety of ideas

Junior Category (13 to 17)

First prize winner, Wong Kian Sheng (Raffles Institution), on democracy

"The devil is seen in as many as a rath- less screw;" The Government’s current approach to poverty (the word) is merely adding bolts, when the devil, he has a head.

Therapeutic acts like a bandage that needs to be constantly applied. Although, the Government is prudent when doing so, the problem is worst, and may not be able to have this mentality by itself. Therefore, I suggest three go- vernment-funded schemes:

1. Debt and Savings Scheme, where official income statements are issued to employees with a lower income. The government subsidizes part of the employee’s savings. This will work to improve the debtor’s savings and improve their financial stability and lives apply.

2. Funding the benefits, this scheme can make energy-saving devices cheaper for those who cannot afford electricity bills costs.

3. 1% Minimum Medal Contribution Scheme, allowing that people who are economically disadvantaged to pay not 1 cent but to receive some income. For those who cannot afford electricity bills, some employers can receive a charge as electricity bills.

While medical care is important, one’s family’s immediate financial needs are more vital.

Second prize winner, Benjamin Mak Jia Ming (Raffles Institution), on alternative energy

IN ACCELERATING renewable energy development, I advocate an approach framed by strengthened incentives and taxes which the Government facilitates the shift to an eco-economy, without sacrific- ing major funding for other critical areas.

Our economic objectives are to in- crease the prevalence of use of alternative energy, to sustain the energy efficiency and to reduce our energy vulnerability to external energy volatilities, and to un- dermine Singapore’s competitive advantages in a world where environmental obliga- tions are increasingly quantitative.

Singapore, having no natural resources, is severely vulnerable to external geo- politica changes in the Middle East for instance. Ther- fore, I do believe we need to move towards becom- ing an eco-city. Singapore is driving her local policy’s conduct principle of making the private sector and providing a sta- ble and competitive environment for the eco- private sector to thrive. Singapore’s policy is directed primarily to pro- moting long-term economic growth and by reducing the amount of private cars. Thus, Singaporeans can enjoy the benefit of this sustainable economy.

Senior Category (18 to 25)

First prize winner, Joanne Tang (Singapore Management University), on technological development

THE Government should invest in and promote the use of workflow software (WS) and Business Process Applications (BPA).

WS enables work to be disaggregated and outsourced to lower-cost countries. For example, the Virtual Private Network (VPN) provides a secure network and can be safeguarded on any computer. Once configured, it enables the computer to receive files from other computers. Thus, a project can be dissected into various parts, and worked on by different people across continents, before being pieced together to form a final project. Productivity is en- hanced as the entire project is worked on by different teams, around the clock.

The new law can also enable “home sharing” as well. Using WS, individuals can work from home, thus achieving greater work-life balance.

BPA are Web-based applications. For a small firm, businesses can store their infor- mation with their service providers and run the companies from there. Using BPA, businesses need not pay to get an expensive computer to store online, thus eliminating the need for office rental and administrative staff.

BPA and WS show that the costs of business need not always increase rental costs. This is certainly good news for land-scarce Singapore.

Second prize winner, Ko Zhiting (National University of Singapore), on "Entropology"

I propose that the Government pre- pares a one-stop centre that facilities discharge in the "Entropology.

This centre would bring together people with an interest in finding out more about entrepreneurship. It would feature innovation seminars delivered by success- ful entrepreneurs.

We cannot afford to lose any potential entreprenuers into action. The centre should also host workshops that would im- part the essential entrepreneurial skills such as basic financial accounting, busi- ness plan writing, innovative thinking, ba- sic logistics, and supply chain management, marketing and strategy management, and basic business law.

I am proposing that the Government creates a centre where there is an imme- diate environment that would enable students to work on projects and other em- ployment opportunities. At the same time, this centre would take - up a public insti- tution to disburse loans to meri- tarian students.

Second prize winner, Benjamin Mak Jia Ming (Raffles Institution), on alternative energy

IN ACCELERATING renewable energy development, I advocate an approach framed by strengthened incentives and taxes which the Government facilitates the shift to an eco-economy, without sacrific- ing major funding for other critical areas.

Our economic objectives are to in- crease the prevalence of use of alternative energy, to sustain the energy efficiency and to reduce our energy vulnerability to external energy volatilities, and to un- dermine Singapore’s competitive advantages in a world where environmental obliga- tions are increasingly quantitative.

Singapore, having no natural resources, is severely vulnerable to external geo- politica changes in the Middle East for instance. Ther- fore, I do believe we need to move towards becom- ing an eco-city. Singapore is driving her local policy’s conduct principle of making the private sector and providing a sta- ble and competitive environment for the eco- private sector to thrive. Singapore’s policy is directed primarily to pro- moting long-term economic growth and by reducing the amount of private cars. Thus, Singaporeans can enjoy the benefit of this sustainable economy.

Third prize winner, Ko Zhiting (National University of Singapore), on "Entropology"

I propose that the Government pre- pares a one-stop centre that facilities discharge in the "Entropology.

This centre would bring together people with an interest in finding out more about entrepreneurship. It would feature innovation seminars delivered by success- ful entrepreneurs.

We cannot afford to lose any potential entreprenuers into action. The centre should also host workshops that would im- part the essential entrepreneurial skills such as basic financial accounting, busi- ness plan writing, innovative thinking, ba- sic logistics, and supply chain management, marketing and strategy management, and basic business law.

I am proposing that the Government creates a centre where there is an imme- diate environment that would enable students to work on projects and other em- ployment opportunities. At the same time, this centre would take - up a public insti- tution to disburse loans to meri- tarian students.

Third prize winner, Ko Zhiting (National University of Singapore), on "Entropology"

I propose that the Government pre- pares a one-stop centre that facilities discharge in the "Entropology.

This centre would bring together people with an interest in finding out more about entrepreneurship. It would feature innovation seminars delivered by success- ful entrepreneurs.

We cannot afford to lose any potential entreprenuers into action. The centre should also host workshops that would im- part the essential entrepreneurial skills such as basic financial accounting, busi- ness plan writing, innovative thinking, ba- basic logistics, and supply chain management, marketing and strategy management, and basic business law.

I am proposing that the Government creates a centre where there is an imme- diate environment that would enable students to work on projects and other em- ployment opportunities. At the same time, this centre would take - up a public insti- tution to disburse loans to meri- tarian students.

Mounting a budget that is in part of the theme of limitless innovation, and in part of the theme of limitless innovation, and in part of the theme of limitless innovation, and in part of the theme of limitless innovation.