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# THE STRAITS TIMES

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## Singapore to push for action at haze meeting

### Top of agenda at Asean meet: Seeking accurate land concession maps

By LEONARD LIM

SINGAPORE will seek several concrete outcomes at an Asean haze meeting in Kuala Lumpur next week, and topping the agenda is an urgent push for Indonesia to provide official and accurate land concession maps.

These maps, combined with satellite technology, will be instrumental in holding companies or individuals who clear land illegally to account, Environment and Water Resources Minister Vivian Balakrishnan said yesterday.

"Without those maps, it's very difficult for me to point fingers... illustratively, bearing in mind of those activities occur in another sovereign land," Dr Balakrishnan, who was one of five ministers who addressed the meeting yesterday on the haze, will lead a delegation to Malaysia for the three-day meeting, which begins on Monday.

There, Singapore will also urge other participating countries - Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand - to agree on a date for launching a sub-regional haze monitoring system. It will help identify errant companies whose activities contributed to the air quality soaring to record hazardous levels last month.

The KL meeting will be the 19th time the Sub-Regional Ministerial Steering Committee on Trans-boundary Haze Pollution is coming together. The group was formed in 2000 to help Indonesia combat the annual haze, which has dogged the region for years.

As the haze is not just an environmental problem, Dr Balakrishnan said Singapore will also ask for high-level officials from all relevant agencies and ministries in the five countries to be involved in tackling the scourge. It will also urge Indonesia to renew a collaboration on fire prevention and sustainable farming practices, and to omit ratifying an Asean

Transboundary Haze Pollution Agreement as soon as possible.

Indonesia is the only Asean country yet to ratify the 2002 agreement, a point made by MPs like Mr Zay Mohamad (Chua Chu Kang GRC) yesterday.

At least 15 MPs asked about the haze, while various members of the House had tabled 30 questions for the session.

The extensive range of topics discussed over three hours included questions such as whether the Government could have done better in communicating with the public, and whether Singapore could impose criminal sanctions on errant companies.

Law Minister K. Shanmugam disclosed that the Government was looking at introducing extra-territorial laws to punish Singapore-linked firms if there was "serious and viable evidence". Mr Shanmugam, who is also Foreign Minister, however stressed that the primary responsibility for tackling the haze lies with Indonesia.

Tackling the haze through regional cooperation was a point raised by Dr Balakrishnan as well. He expressed appreciation for Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's commitment to tackling the haze, and added: "We need continued vigilance and we need decisive action by the Indonesian authorities to prevent another recurrence of the haze over the next two to three months."

But looking back, Dr Balakrishnan and Defence Minister Ng Eng Hen said the haze brought out Singaporeans' resilience. Dr Ng, who chairs an inter-ministerial committee on the haze, said Singapore needs two essential elements to withstand similar threats in future - trust between leaders and people, and care for each other. "The day we lose that trust, the day we stop caring... any crisis will be too big for us." <http://www.sph.com.sg>

SEE TOP NEWS A1, HOME B6-8

TOP OF THE NEWS A2



## SHE'S SINGAPORE'S YOUNGEST ORGAN DONOR

Hanano Oyama (top), became Singapore's youngest solid organ donor when her kidneys and heart valve were donated after the 1 1/2-year-old's death in a pool accident.

One of the recipients whose lives she saved was a child. That is "the only thing keeping me going", says her father Norimichi Oyama (above), a Japanese expatriate who has lived here for two years.

PHOTOS: SHIN MIN DAILY NEWS, COURTESY OF NORIMICHI OYAMA



## Alleged child abuse: Teacher sacked

THE childcare teacher who is alleged to have mistreated a three-year-old child has been sacked by NTUC My First School in Toa Payoh. The 31-year-old was working part-time at the school. Two other parents from the centre have also lodged police reports. TOP OF THE NEWS A1

## American researcher committed suicide, no foul play: Coroner

By FENG ZENGKUN

AMERICAN researcher Shane Todd (right) had killed himself by hanging, a coroner's inquiry into his death has found, dismissing claims by his family that he had been murdered.

Delivering his finding of suicide yesterday, State Coroner Chay Yuen Fatt said evidence from 65 witnesses, heard over a 10-day hearing in May, had proven beyond a reasonable doubt that Dr Todd had hanged himself in his apartment here last June. "There was no foul play involved," said the judge, adding that he hoped Dr Todd's family would find closure from his finding.

The decision caps a controversy that had reached the highest levels of both the United States and Singapore governments after a Financial Times (FT) report in February suggested that the Montana native was murdered.

The 31-year-old's parents had claimed in the FT report that their son was killed, possibly over military-related research he had done at the Singapore Institute of Microelectronics (IME), which could have compromised US national security. But this was rejected by the judge, who said a review of Dr Todd's work at IME did not turn up any such research.

In fact, evidence from his friends and colleagues suggested that he had "great difficulty" coping with his work. This was after he had asked to be transferred to conduct research in a field he had little experience in.

"He probably took it hard upon himself when he failed to attain a certain level of proficiency in the field," said the judge.

Other evidence which reinforced the initial classification of suicide by the police included the fact that Dr Todd had visited suicide-related websites in the months before his death.

There was also proof that he was depressed, including records that showed Dr Todd had sought medical treatment for depression while he was in Singapore.

The court's findings remain at odds with his parents' belief that he was murdered - even though their own medical expert from the US had recounted his finding in court that their son had been strangled to death by an unknown assailant. The Todds, who had walked out of the inquiry on May 21 saying they were unhappy with the State prosecuting Dr Luis Montes - whom they regarded as a "last minute" witness - said in a



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### EXCUSE FOR NOT TESTIFYING

The family walked out of the proceedings before they were supposed to give evidence, and their reason for doing so was that Dr Luis Montes was called as a surprise witness, and they said they didn't know who he was and had never met him before. The family had dinner with Dr Montes two days after Dr Todd died. So you have to conclude that this was trumped up as an excuse for them not testifying.

- Foreign Minister K. Shanmugam

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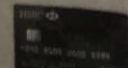
statement that they were disappointed with the court's decision but had expected it.

The US Embassy here, however, said the inquiry had been "comprehensive, fair and transparent".

Foreign Minister K. Shanmugam yesterday said the Todds' murder conspiracy theory was based on "untruths, pure fantasy and pure imagination". He added that Mr Raymond Bonner, who wrote the FT article, had not verified the facts, and said the London-based newspaper should "do the honourable thing" and correct the untruths.

But an FT spokesman, responding to queries from The Straits Times, said it stood by its reporting. <http://www.sph.com.sg>  
Additional reporting by Rachel Chang  
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SINGAPORE'S YOUNGEST SOLID ORGAN DONOR

# Toddler gives others gift of life

## Kidneys, heart valve of 1½-year-old donated after death in pool accident

By JALELAH ABU BAKER

IN LIFE, she was a charming toddler with an independent streak.

Now, after her tragic death in a swimming pool accident, Hanano Oyama has given hope to others as Singapore's youngest solid organ donor.

The 1½-year-old's parents allowed doctors to remove her kidneys and heart valve after receiving the devastating news that she was brain-dead.

Her organs were then used to help other seriously ill patients, one of whom was a child. "The only thing keeping me going is that she has saved somebody's life," said her father, Japanese national Norimichi Oyama. "That's something I'm proud of."

Mr Oyama recalled the moment he and his wife Kana, 35, a part-time administrative assistant, realised Hanano had gone missing two weeks ago during a family gathering at their Robertson Quay condominium.

The toddler was later found unconscious in the swimming pool. Doctors at KK Women's and Children's Hospital fought to save her, but she never woke up.

On Sunday, they broke the news to Mr Oyama that she was brain-dead, and asked if he would allow her organs to be donated.

Despite his grief, he did not hesitate. "It didn't take me even one second to decide," the 33-year-old consultant told The Straits Times.

Doctors removed the organs in an operation yesterday morning. The recipients' identities have

been kept confidential.

Solid organ donation involves the whole of the heart, liver or kidneys, as opposed to just tissues such as bone marrow and skin.

Mr Oyama, who has lived in Singapore for two years and also has a four-year-old son, said he had been working with a transplant coordinator from the hospi-

tal since last Wednesday.

He described his daughter as charming and independent, with a strong character. She was well-loved by teachers at her childcare centre, who kept hugging and carrying her.

Mr Oyama urged parents to be careful with toddlers near swimming pools, and donate their children's organs if they are intact.

Asked why he chose this step for his daughter, he said: "I made this decision, together with my wife, because I don't want any other parent to feel what I feel. If my daughter can save someone, then why not?"

In 2011, a three-year-old boy reportedly became Singapore's youngest solid organ donor after his parents gave consent for his kidneys and corneas to be removed.

The Health Ministry said there have been an average of one to two foreign deceased donors here every year since 2004, but this was the first case involving a child from Japan.

✉ jalmsab@sph.com.sg

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PROUD OF DAUGHTER

The only thing keeping me going is that she has saved somebody's life.

— Hanano's father Norimichi Oyama

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Mr John Kerry with his wife Teresa Heinz Kerry after the former was sworn in as US Secretary of State in February this year. PHOTO: REUTERS



Hanano Oyama (inset) was found unco parents allowed her organs to be rem

## Kerry's wife

NEW YORK - The wife of United States Secretary of State John Kerry has been hospitalised after suffering what may have been a seizure, a source close to the family said yesterday.

Mrs Teresa Heinz Kerry, 71, spent the night in Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston when she was flown late on Sunday after being rushed to a local hospital on Nantucket island, where the couple have a vacation home.

Mrs Heinz Kerry was in