

SINGAPORE

*CAMPUS ASIA  
FIELD STUDY  
PHOTO JOURNAL*

SINGAPORE



# SINGAPORE DAY 1

# FEB 5TH

## Merlion Park



## Little India



## Arab Street



At Merlion Park, I could smell the saltiness from the water, and I noticed signs of sea animals like turtles and otters around the bay, which made me think about how closely the country is connected to the ocean. Standing there, it felt nice seeing such a modern city being deeply tied to nature. In contrast, when I walked through Arab Street and Little India, I honestly didn't feel like I was in Singapore anymore. The language, food, and architecture changed so quickly. The air felt different, filled with spices and conversations in different tongues, and the streets looked more colorful and lively. It made me realize how diverse Singapore really is, with different cultures so visibly present in such a small space. It was very interesting to witness the many different sides of Singapore in a single day.

## Dignity Kitchen



### What is Dignity Kitchen?

Dignity Kitchen is a social enterprise restaurant in Singapore that trains and employs people with disabilities, giving them practical job skills and independence in the food industry.

### Reflection

What made this visit especially meaningful was that we had the opportunity to speak directly with its founder, who was named Singapore Man of the Year. He shared a story about a girl he once trained who later took her own life, not because of the restaurant owners, but because of the way she was treated by others around her. He highlighted that sometimes it is everyday interactions and co-workers that can deeply affect someone's well-being. That perspective really stayed with me.

Another thing that stood out was how some mothers give up their careers to support their children with disabilities. At Dignity Kitchen, they also offer programs where mothers and children train together so they can work and go home at the same time. It showed me that inclusion is also about understanding family situations and responding to different people's needs. This also made me appreciate mothers' sacrifices for their children.



# SINGAPORE DAY 2

# FEB 6TH

## Nanyang Technological University (NTU)



During our visit to Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in Singapore, I was immediately struck by the campus architecture. One highlight was The Hive, a building made of stacked circular structures that local students jokingly call “dim sum stacks,” which made us laugh. We also visited the Chinese Heritage Centre beside Yunnan Garden, which beautifully reflects how the university blends modernity with cultural heritage. The local students guided us around campus and shared stories of their daily lives, from managing academics to how they spend their weekends. NTU also kindly prepared food for us. Personally, the grilled vegetables and spring rolls were especially delicious. Overall, the experience felt warm and welcoming.

### Lecture #1

#### Reflection

We attended Lecture #1 on economics by Professor Yeow Hwee, where I was especially interested in the housing policy. Most public housing is provided by the Housing & Development Board (HDB), and even after purchasing an apartment, residents usually hold it on a 99-year lease rather than full permanent ownership. This means the property eventually returns to the government. It shows how strongly the state manages land and urban planning.

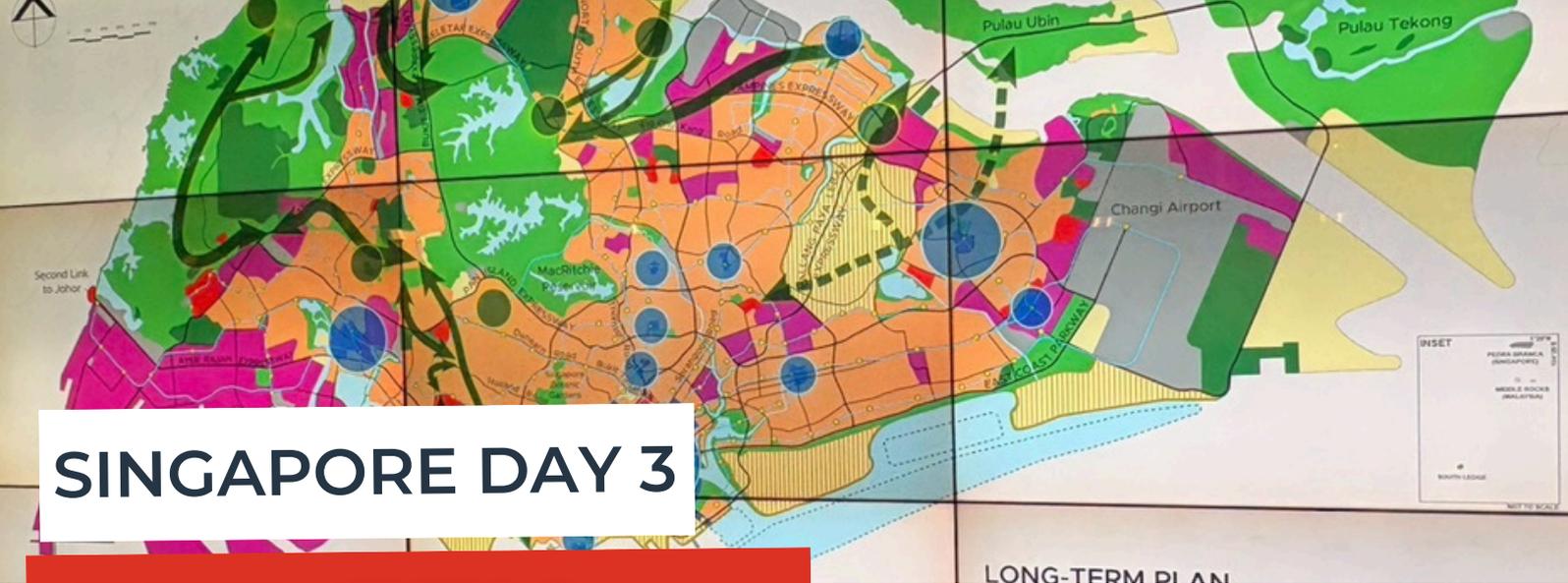
We also learned about strict car regulations like the Certificate of Entitlement (COE) system, which controls vehicle ownership. The price can exceed S\$100,000 depending on the category and market demand, making car ownership extremely expensive. The lecture also introduced concepts such as rational expectations and information frictions, helping us connect Singapore's policies with economic theory.

### Lecture #2

#### Reflection

For Lecture #2, we learned about the Imperial Japanese Army during the Japanese occupation of Malaysia and Singapore. The professor has extensive experience interviewing real-life victims, which allowed us to hear their personal, raw experiences. He spoke about the Sook Ching massacre, where an estimated 50,000–70,000 people were killed, and described the brutality of the Japanese imperial forces. We also learned about Japanese schools established for Singaporeans, where students were required to bow and sing Kimigayo daily, sometimes receiving sweets as rewards. The lecture included painful accounts of public executions, bayonet killings, and how some girls tried to make themselves appear less attractive to avoid assault. As a Japanese student, it was difficult to hear, and I felt a deep sense of regret. At the same time, I appreciated how the professor carefully emphasized that he was discussing the actions of the imperial army, not blaming the present-day Japanese people.





# SINGAPORE DAY 3

# FEB 7TH

## Singapore City Gallery

### What is the Singapore City Gallery?

The Singapore City Gallery is an interactive museum that showcases the nation's urban planning and development journey. It explains how Singapore transformed from a small trading port into a highly organized global city. The gallery highlights how careful government planning balances economic growth and sustainability. It offers insight into how limited land is efficiently managed to support population needs and future generations



### Reflection

It was a visually immersive and high-tech experience. The space was filled with interactive displays and large city models that made urban planning feel dynamic. I was especially impressed by the educational games, such as one that calculated water usage and compared it to Singapore's sustainability goals. It made environmental policy feel personal and measurable. I also saw a large city model of Singapore and was very impressed by the level of detail. It was so interesting to see a small version of the entire city from above. The gallery also traced Singapore's urban history and showcased how long-term planning shaped its city. Overall, it deepened my appreciation for intentional city design.

## The Battlebox, Fort Canning Hill



### What is The Battlebox?

The Battlebox at Fort Canning Hill is an underground bunker that was used as a British command center during World War II. It is known as the place where the British decided to surrender Singapore in 1942. Today, it has been turned into a museum, but it does not feel like a typical museum visit. The rooms are restored to look like they did during the war with figures, sound effects, and dim lighting that recreate the atmosphere at the time. Visitors can move through the corridors, and it feels immersive and slightly intense. The experience helped me better imagine the fear and pressure people must have felt during that historical moment.

### Reflection

The first immersive experience was watching a short film with audio that walked us through the days before the Japanese attack, the day it happened, and the aftermath. It helped me understand the timeline emotionally. Another powerful activity involved wearing colored glasses. As we walked through the room lit with red and blue, each lens showed a different narrative. Through the blue lens, I felt the intense pressure and desperation of the British side. Through the red lens, I initially sensed confidence and momentum, although we later learned that the Japanese forces also experienced anxiety. It reminded me how history can look completely different depending on the perspective we choose to see.

