

# Writeup on Viswa Sadasivan



**VISWA SADASIVAN** is regarded as one of Singapore's influential thinkers; an opinion leader and advocate of its evolving socio-political space.

With over 35 years of media experience - as practitioner and policy maker - Viswa is best known to Singapore society as the anchor of then-Singapore Broadcasting Corporation's breakthrough news and current affairs programmes such as *Talking Point*, *Feedback* and *Today in Parliament*. As Senior Controller, he planned and directed coverage of the nation's Parliamentary reports and General Elections. Viswa has interviewed Asia's top business and political

leaders, including Singapore's first Prime Minister - the late Lee Kuan Yew, the first Prime Minister of Malaysia - the late Tunku Abdul Rahman, and Malaysia's longest serving premier Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad. He also interviewed former US President - Barack Obama. Viswa moderated a two-hour "live" debate between the four candidates in the 2011 Presidential Election in Singapore.

A former Nominated Member of Parliament (Singapore), Viswa has a strong appreciation for public policy and ground sentiment. A firebrand and an astute communicator, he champions economic, political and civic education and reform through collaboration, advocacy and mediation. He has served on various public-sector boards and several major national committees on economic and social policy. Over the years, he has raised critical arguments that have been rigorously debated.

Viswa is an accomplished and sought-after moderator and a seasoned chair of panel discussions and regional forums on the economy, business, governance, leadership, strategy and innovation. He cuts through the clutter of abstracts with insight, incision and fresh perspectives on changing ground realities. Viswa has been invited to be a discussion leader at the St Gallen Symposium in Switzerland for the past few years. He chaired sessions at UNESCO's inaugural Global Conference on Persons with Disabilities, in Paris in 2015.

A respected and accomplished entrepreneur, Viswa is the founder and Chief Executive Officer of Strategic Moves, a respected corporate strategy and communications consulting practice with a keen interest in policy issues. Over the last two decades, Viswa has trained more than 20,000 senior leaders from the regional operations of Fortune 500 companies to government and quasi-government agencies in Singapore on crisis leadership, corporate strategy and public engagement.

Some of his more public projects include consulting for national carrier Singapore Airlines in the aftermath of the SilkAir M185 crash in 1997. He also advised Singapore's Ministry of Transport in 2002 and coached its senior officials to

effectively manage international and local public opinion following the crash of the Singapore Airlines flight SQ006 in Taipei.

Viswa was appointed Strategic Advisor by Las Vegas Sands Corp and helped it win a fiercely contested 15-month bid to have the licence to build and operate Singapore's first Integrated Resort. Marina Bay Sands was built at a cost of over SGD 6 billion. More recently, he was engaged for 15 months by Singapore's JTC Corporation to develop a compelling fresh narrative, through a ground-up process. It is to serve as a compass for the organisation's journey beyond the first 50 years.

Viswa is the founder and Chief Editor of IQ [Inconvenient Questions], a video-based socio-political online site that aimed to be the conduit for honest engagement between stakeholders and the government. IQ helped raise the bar for quality and depth of online discourse through reasoned analysis. It tackled current hot-button issues from freedom of speech to race relations. IQ hosted a total of 22 studio-based debates with an audience and expert panellists. The lively, no-holds barred discussions were moderated by Viswa. He also hosted Singapore's ground-breaking spontaneous debate between representatives of all political parties contesting in the 2015 General Election. It was webcast "live". Viswa hosted a similar "live" debate leading up to the 2020 General Election. Since May 2021, IQ has gone international. Called IQ International or IQi, the monthly 1.5-hour discussion is currently carried on Clubhouse (an audio-only mobile application) based in the USA. The "live" discussions are on a critical topics of global interest such as the civil strife in Myanmar, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the future of Hong Kong. The speakers are experts with ground experience. Audience members are from all over the world. Viswa is the moderator of the discussions.

An accomplished mediator, Viswa served on the board of the Singapore International Mediation Centre, which is a leading centre in the world for resolving transnational commercial disputes. He has been actively involved in promoting mediation in Asia as an effective dispute resolution mechanism. Viswa is a principal mediator with the Singapore Mediation Centre and has been on its panel for over two decades.

Trained as an elite Guardsman, Viswa has served in the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) for 40 years as a National Serviceman. He rose to the rank of Colonel, and his last position was Deputy Director, Joint Operations, SAF.

Viswa holds a Master in Public Administration (MPA) degree at then-Kennedy School of Government and Administration, Harvard University. He topped his class in Negotiation and Conflict Resolution.