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Peter Ho is IPS' new S R Nathan Fellow

Pearl Lee

Former Civil Service head Peter Ho is the Institute of Policy Studies' (IPS') third S R Nathan Fellow for the Study of Singapore.

Mr Ho, 62, now senior adviser to the Centre for Strategic Futures, will share his ideas in a series of public lectures at the National University of Singapore over the 2016/2017 academic year. His appointment was announced by IPS, a research centre at the National University of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, in a statement yesterday.

Mr Ho yesterday told The Straits Times the fellowship appointment "is a particularly poignant one because it is in the year that Mr Nathan passed away".

Mr Nathan, Singapore's longest-serving president, died on Aug 22 at the age of 92. The annual fellowship was announced in 2013 to recognise Mr Nathan's contributions to public service, and funds research into public policy and governance issues.

Fellows present their findings and ideas to the public in what are known as the IPS-Nathan Lectures, which are free and open to all.

Mr Ho said he has not decided on the topics of his lectures, or when the first one will be. Details of his lectures will be published on IPS' website and newsletter in the coming months.

The veteran civil servant spent 34 years in public service, and was permanent secretary in the ministries of defence and foreign affairs, as well as in the Prime Minister's Office, before heading the Civil Service from 2005 till 2010. He retired from the administrative service in 2010, and is now chairman of the Urban Redevelopment Authority, among other posts.

The first two S R Nathan Fellows were Banyan Tree executive chairman Ho Kwon Ping, and ambassador-at-large Bilahari Kausikan. Mr Bilahari ended his series of five lectures in May.

The IPS yesterday thanked him for contributing to public discourse on regional and international issues important to Singapore.

Mr Bilahari's lectures, as well as highlights from his post-lecture dialogues with the audience, have been compiled in a book, Dealing With An Ambiguous World, to be launched later this month.

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Mr Ho says the fellowship is particularly poignant, coming the year that Mr Nathan died.

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