Graham Ashton, general manager of the Southern Operations of the Australian Federal Police and second in command of the Indonesian-led investigation into the Bali bombing, spoke to a large audience at Griffith University’s Nathan campus on April 13. As a senior Australian Federal Police (AFP) official, he explained some of the key forensic methods and investigative techniques that led to the arrests of several prime suspects in relation to the horrifying bomb attacks on two Kuta Beach clubs in Bali in October last year.

His detailed account, supported by visual evidence, captured and sometimes shocked the Griffith audience. Beginning with the first pieces of evidence found at the sites, including the remains of what investigators concluded to be a suicide bomber in Paddy’s Bar and those of the explosive-filled Mitsubishi van outside the Sari Club, Mr Ashton proceeded to explain how the investigation – code named Operation Alliance – was rapidly able to put together a surprisingly clear picture of the explosives used and the events just before and during the attacks. Central to the arrests which later followed was the discovery of a serial number among the twisted remains of the van authorities believe was parked outside the Sari Club, packed with a huge amount of fertiliser-based explosive. An intensive search for the various past owners of the van, based on local vehicle records, led to the arrest of an Indonesian man, Amrozi, whose evidence resulted in further arrests.

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Editorial: A new paradigm for the Asia Pacific?

The Australian government’s recent decision to provide armed and police forces and other support to the Solomon Islands government is a radical departure from the kinds of “non-interference in national sovereignty” principles that have characterised much international behaviour over the last half-century or so.

The momentum for this initiative has various sources. One is perhaps the government’s increasing preoccupation with issues of Australia’s security, and the fear that ‘failed’ or ‘failing’ states on our doorstep will prove fertile sites for the proliferation of varieties of international crime, from people smuggling to terrorism. Another is the decline of whatever faith the government ever had in the United Nations to act efficiently and fairly in securing international order. A third is the generally favourable domestic political support for ventures which emphasise directness and the deployment of force and which promise enhanced local security.

Whatever the case, the Solomons initiative has the capacity to reshape fundamentally the ways in which we engage the region. The emerging new paradigm may differ decisively from that to which we have become accustomed, and which organised the ways in which we interacted with the region over many decades. In the past, we became accustomed to the nuances of patient engagement and the difficult and sometimes frustrating tasks of enhancing mutual understanding on terms which were frequently culturally foreign to us. Now it seems that strategic necessity dictates other modalities of engagement in certain circumstances which will inevitably be accompanied by contention over matters of sovereignty and national sentiment, involve considerable expense, require delicate modulation of domestic political sentiment, and have unforeseen consequences with regard to our relations with larger and more powerful players in the region. How these issues will play themselves out over the medium term will be, to say the least, interesting.

Associate Professor Mary Farquhar, Director, Griffith Asia Pacific Research Institute.

Griffith Asia Pacific Council members

Rev Professor James Haire (Chair)
President, Uniting Church in Australia

Professor Dr Anuwar Ali
Vice Chancellor, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Mr Bill Dunn
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Professor Beverley Sparks
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Mr Jusuf Wanandi
Centre for Strategic and International Studies
Jakarta

Mrs Honor Lawler
Manager, Griffith Asia Pacific Research Institute
Griffith University

Inside the Bali bombing investigation

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In addition to the extensive forensic evidence gathered from the crime scenes and analysed by investigators, a large number of witnesses also were checked along with “literally hundreds of videos and thousands of photographs” in the search for possible clues. Mr Ashton paid particular attention in his lecture to the “excellent” cooperation the AFP received from the Indonesian authorities during Operation Alliance, and also praised the professional and efficient manner in which Australian and Indonesian team members and a number of international experts were able to combine their resources and expertise during the investigation and the disaster victim identification process.

Graham Ashton presenting his lecture at Griffith University
Griffith Asia Pacific

DFAT study promotes globalisation gains

The difficult and often perplexing topic of globalisation was given the “big picture” treatment at a workshop jointly sponsored by the Griffith Asia Pacific Research Institute (GAPRI) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) on July 13. Speaking to staff and students from local high schools and the University at Griffith’s Gold Coast campus, ANZ Chief Economist Saul Eslake and DFAT’s Economic Analysis Unit (EAU) Director Brendan Berne provided an ambitious and sometimes controversial account of globalisation’s economic dimensions as they launched the new EAU publication, “Globalisation: Keeping The Gains”.

Saul Eslake emphasised the social and economic benefits that the removal of barriers to foreign investment and trade can bring. He also blamed the protectionist policies of many developed countries, in the agricultural sector in particular, for denying less affluent economies the full benefit of global trade. Brendan Berne echoed Mr Eslake’s opinions on globalisation and trade, arguing that globalisation essentially equalled more international trade which, in his view, was directly responsible for “the number of people living in poverty throughout the world [falling] by about 200 million” over the last two decades.

North Korean nukes creating “crisis”, says US analyst

Ralph Cossa, President of the Pacific Forum at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Hawaii, provided Griffith staff and students with a frank, no-nonsense account of the North Korea nuclear issue on June 25. Speaking at a well-attended seminar held on the Nathan campus, Mr Cossa described the current situation as “brinkmanship” on the part of the North Korean government and emphasised both the need for a multi-lateral approach to the problem and the importance of China’s participation in any future resolution.

Mr Cossa is a political-military affairs and national security strategy specialist in the Asia-Pacific and Near East-South Asia regions with 25 years of experience, including time as an intelligence analyst with the US military. The Honolulu-based strategist based his analysis of North Korea’s nuclear ambitions on personal experience in dealing with many of the issue’s key regional players, adding insights into the Bush administration’s foreign policy agenda.

In Mr Cossa’s view, the North Korean government has opted for nuclear weapons out of security concerns with the US, which heightened considerably after President Bush’s “axis of evil” speech. While strongly criticising both the content and timing of the Bush speech, in addition to the US president’s use of the issue to try and impress “Joe Six Pack” voters, Mr Cossa said that the US was right to treat the threat of North Korea going nuclear as a multi-lateral issue. North Korea’s neighbours clearly are very unhappy about the current situation and, according to Mr Cossa, this includes the People’s Republic of China which he describes as having “more influence” over the North Koreans than any other government. “North Korean strategy is [holding a gun to his head] ‘stop or I’ll shoot’”, says Mr Cossa. But unlike other states, in particular South Korea and Japan, the Chinese are telling the North Koreans, privately, “go ahead”, because they believe that the North Koreans “are not crazy and are only playing brinkmanship.”

In terms of diffusing the North Asia region’s growing tensions over Pyongyang’s plans, the only viable approach, in Mr Cossa’s opinion, is first to recognize that the North Koreans are pursuing nuclear capability out of fears of a US attack and then work on persuading them that their security concerns will worsen, rather than improve, if they continue to develop nuclear weapons. “The US has broken off negotiations with North Korea but is still ready to talk about having negotiations.... North Korea believes nuclear weapons will give them security. The US plan is to convince them, through the South Koreans, that the reverse is true.”
Griffith professor at 8th Asia Pacific Education and Culture Conference, Adelaide

Last November Professor Wayne Hudson attended the 8th Asia-Pacific Conference on Education and Culture. The theme of the conference was “Values and Human Rights”. The conference was organised by the University of Asia and the Pacific in Manila and was hosted by the University of Adelaide and the South Australian Office of Multicultural Affairs.

Professor Hudson participated in the session discussing the extent to which harmony can be achieved through using education to build cultural bridges towards cultures other than one’s own by means of courses on languages, social sciences, humanities and the arts.

Professor Hudson spoke on cultural diversity and the social sciences curriculum. The conference was very rewarding and valuable in strengthening Australia-Asia links, and has already led to further collaborations with Griffith University.

Samsung Electronics Global Scholarship Program

Samsung Electronics in Korea established its Global Scholarship Program in 2000 in order to cultivate university graduates in foreign countries with potential to become key Samsung employees. The recipients of the Scholarship undertake an MBA at Korea University, Seoul, Korea, one of the three top universities in Korea.

Professor O. Yul Kwon of the School of International Business and Asian Studies was commissioned by Samsung Electronics to coordinate the selection process for candidates from Australia. A Samsung delegation and Professor Kwon conducted interviews with the short-listed students on May 16 at Griffith University. The successful applicant was Ms Lauren Patmore, a graduate of the School of International Business and Asian Studies and a former intern to Korea.

Asia Pacific visitors since April 2003

- Professor Pasuk Phongpaichit, Faculty of Economics, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, the 2003 Jackson Memorial Fellow at Griffith – April - May 2003
- His Excellency, Lt-General M. Harun-Ar-Rashid, High Commissioner of Bangladesh – 8 April 2003
- Dr Chris Baker, scholar of Thailand – April - May 2003
- Mr S.K. Tripathi and Mr V.S. Pandey, Department of Secondary and Higher Education, India – 16 May 2003
- His Excellency Mr Joseph K.H. Koh, High Commissioner for Singapore in Australia (and Mrs Koh) – 18 June 2003
The Luo Brothers: World Famous Brand Name

Griffith Artworks were very pleased to host Australia’s first solo public museum exhibition of works by Beijing-based artists, The Luo Brothers, from 11 April until 1 June 2003.

The Luo Brothers are a collaborative partnership of three, responsible for some of China’s most provocative and renowned contemporary art. Stylistically aligned with a ‘pop’ sensibility, charged by political fervour and informed by generations of local traditional lacquer and craft-making techniques, they also have an eye on international art history and current debates on nationalism and the “new socialist economy”. Indeed, their work directly addresses the sea-changes in Chinese governance and society since the Cultural Revolution. Federal Member for Griffith and Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Kevin Rudd MHR, delivered the keynote address at the official opening of the exhibition on May 1.

Exhibition pays homage to war photographers

QCA Gallery has scored the only Australian showing of works by war photographers who died or went missing while working in Vietnam and Indochina between 1945 and 1975.

“Requiem”, organised by world-renowned combat photographers Tim Page and Horst Faas, will be on display at the gallery at South Bank from June 6 to July 20.

Griffith Artworks director Simon Wright, who worked with Tim Page to bring the exhibition to Australia, said the exhibition would be very emotive.

“It’s very powerful stuff and the opening will be less a celebration than a commemoration,” Mr Wright said.

A total of 160 photographs and portraits of the photographers will make up the exhibition, including those by Robert Capa, Larry Burrows, Everette Dixie Reese, Sean Flynn and Dana Stone.

Australian Alan Hirons, who died within days of arriving in Cambodia, will be remembered through photographs provided by his mother.

There will also be rare images from the North Vietnamese and Liberation Front archives and 17 images from Tim Page’s Nam, which marks its 20th anniversary this year.

Tim Page said “Requiem” had achieved a lot in terms of healing as, for the first time, it included works by photographers from all sides of the conflicts in Indochina, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

The “Requiem” exhibition is on loan from George Eastman House, New York, and is toured and managed by Griffith Artworks, Griffith University.

Its exclusive Australian showing at QCA Gallery follows exhibitions in Vietnam, Tokyo, England, France, Switzerland, Germany and the United States.

Tim Page will give a series of floor talks around the Gallery, highlighting the work of his colleagues and his experiences from the time. They will be held at 3pm on Saturday, June 21, July 5 and July 19.

QCA Gallery opening hours:
Wednesday to Friday 11am-4pm and Saturday to Sunday noon-4pm. Ph: (07) 3875 3140

© The Luo Brothers
‘Welcome the World Famous Brand’ 2000

Henri Huet’s photograph of the body of an American paratrooper raised up to an evacuation helicopter in Vietnam in 1966. (AP)

Sou Vitchith’s photograph taken near Phnom Penh, Cambodia in 1975. (Gamma)
Working in East Timor

Dr Glen Palmer, School of Cognition, Language and Special Education, writes of her experience in East Timor

Although I have travelled extensively, and worked for many years in the far north of Canada, I had not previously worked in a developing country. I saw study leave as an opportunity to gain this experience. East Timor was my choice of locations – perhaps not everyone’s idea of how to spend study leave – but for me it offered the challenges and experience I was seeking.

Going there without any commitments gave me the time and opportunity to gain some understanding of the place, the people, and the massive UN presence and aid industry that has overtaken the country since the 1999 emergency. I spent the first two weeks visiting NGOs and investigating work opportunities, while also taking daily Tetum classes at the national university.

Towards the end of this period, I accepted a consultancy with Plan International, an NGO targeting the problems of young children in a family and community development context. I visited a number of the villages in which Plan was working, and saw first hand their holistic approach to Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD). In one village, for example, Plan was operating a preschool and helping families to provide more nutritious food for the children through projects such as giving people support and assistance in growing vegetables and raising ducks.

While my work with Plan included drawing up a protocol for their future ECCD initiatives in East Timor, my major task was developing national preschool curriculum guidelines. Plan had money from a Japanese donor to do this work, so my arrival on their doorstep in Dili one morning was very opportune for all concerned.

For two months I worked on the guidelines with the Ministry of Education, primarily with a committee of Ministry staff and local preschool teachers. Early childhood education is in a very fledgling state in East Timor and, from the outset, there was great mistrust and tension among members of the committee. The project was an opportunity to move forwards, but it also posed a considerable threat to those who remained locked into Indonesian pedagogy and wanted more of the same. Other committee members (Brazilians, and East Timorese trained in Australia), however, desperately wanted change – so much so that they threatened non-participation if the curriculum did not promote this.

As facilitator, my role became one of mediating between the two factions, helping them work together to construct a curriculum relevant to East Timor’s circumstances.

Nursing across cultures

The School of Nursing continues to host study tours for nurses interested in learning about Australian nursing culture. Such tours offer an opportunity for exchange of information about nursing curricula and for School of Nursing staff and students to learn about nursing in other cultures.

In April, the Nathan School of Nursing hosted a group of sixteen postgraduate mental health students and two academic staff members from Khon Kaen University, Thailand. Their study program, coordinated by Dr Wendy Moyle, offered students and staff an opportunity to learn about Australian mental health nursing, as well as the teaching and learning processes used in the Griffith University mental health nursing program.

Students attended mental health lectures on campus with Dr Margaret McAllister and Dr Katie Evans and delighted in interacting with Griffith University postgraduate mental health nursing students. They particularly enjoyed a tour of the Griffith University library and an opportunity to consider access to the variety of resources available. They spent three days at the Belmont Psychiatric Hospital, Brisbane, undertaking clinical mental health education, which included an overview of mental health treatment and therapeutic nursing interactions. Clinical time in the hospital wards and community offered them the opportunity for interaction with staff and consumers.

Griffith Asia Pacific
New books

“Bangladesh’s Development Agenda and Vision 2020: Rhetoric or Reality”

This new volume on Bangladesh development is based on a conference held in Dhaka, organised jointly by the University of Hull, United Kingdom, Griffith University, and Dhaka University, Bangladesh, on 14–15 April 2001. The aims of the conference were to investigate Bangladesh’s recent track record in development and to attempt to answer the following questions about the country’s future: Is Bangladesh likely to be free from poverty by 2020, its golden jubilee of independence? Is Bangladesh likely to have become a middle ranking industrialised nation by 2020? Will Bangladesh still be a democracy in 2020? What changes need to occur and what institutions need to be in place to achieve the goals of the country’s 2020 vision?

Fifteen chapters of this volume address these questions and provide closely analysed policy suggestions for future governments. It must be emphasised that all efforts have been made to present the volume as an inter-disciplinary scholarly study. The authors presented the papers first to the conference and subsequently prepared a final version in the light of the discussions at the conference and the comments of an anonymous referee. The volume has been edited by GAPRI’s Moazzem Hossain and Iyanatul Islam and AKM Nurn Nabi of the Department of Population Sciences at the University of Dhaka.

“China’s Ethnic Minorities and Globalisation”

Professor Colin Mackerras has just published a book, “China’s Ethnic Minorities and Globalisation” through Routledge Curzon (London). It covers topics since the early 1990s with discussion of the nature of globalisation, and chapters on Minorities politics, the economies of the minorities, religion and education, population, women and family, and international relations.

Congratulations to GAPRI staff

Congratulations to Mrs Honor Lawler, who has worked with GAPRI for over 5 years. She was recently awarded the University Arts Medal for the Highest Achieving Arts Graduate for 2002. She also shared in the 2002 Humanities Prize.

Congratulations also to Professor Colin Mackerras and Professor Robert Elson. Both were awarded the Centenary Medal by the Australian Government for services to the community in the fields of the Humanities and Asian Studies.

Griffith aerospace appointment

Dr Paul Bates, Head, School of Aviation, has been appointed to the International Advisory Board of Singapore’s Association of Aerospace Focused Enterprises. The Advisory Board consists of business and academic leaders in aviation from across the globe. Dr Bates is the sole Australian representative on the board.

“The Indonesian Language”

Associate Professor James Sneddon, Head of the School of Languages and Linguistics, has produced a new book tracing the development of the Indonesian language. Indonesia is the fourth most populous nation in the world, and one of the most linguistically complex. Its ethnic groups speak more than 550 languages and of these Malay, renamed Indonesian, was chosen to be the sole national and official language. Indonesian’s development into a modern world language has been described by one socio-linguist as “miraculous”. The language has been a key factor in the shaping and unification of modern Indonesia.

This book traces the origins and pre-colonial development of the language, the emergence of Classical Malay from the fourteenth century, the choice by the nationalist movement of Malay as the national language prior to independence, the planning associated with the adoption and implementation of the language, its borrowings from other languages, its use in contemporary Indonesia and its future. The book challenges many assumptions about Indonesian, particularly countering the myth that Indonesian is a simple language.

This is the first book to attempt a comprehensive coverage of the history of Indonesian and its role in modern society. It aims to be academically strong but at the same time accessible to non-specialists interested in the language. It does not assume an expert knowledge of the language on the part of the reader.

Associate Professor Sneddon is the author of “Indonesian Reference Grammar” (1996) and “Understanding Indonesian Grammar” (2000).
I was fortunate to be awarded the Jackson Memorial Fellowship for 2003, which has allowed me to spend two months working on my research and also take part in the activities of the Griffith Asia Pacific Research Institute.

I work in the Faculty of Economics at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok where my career began working in conventional economics. Over the last decade, my research interests have shifted to political economy, corruption, the illegal economy, and social movements. My current research concerns the rise and fall of large business corporations during the boom of 1985–96 and the crisis of 1997, and focuses on the roles of networks, links, and political relationships among the old firms that survived the crisis in addition to new capital groups and transnationals.

I recently launched a project on the "Structure and Dynamics of Capital in Post-Crisis Thailand" under the Thailand Research Fund's Senior Researcher Award scheme. The whole business of research funding in Thai universities is still rather new and undeveloped. Thus, the Thailand Research Fund gives these grants to senior researchers in order to help them train the next generation of researchers. My responsibilities in this regard involve a team of nine very bright young people from the disciplines of economics, political science, sociology, and international business.

In Bangkok, my workload is divided into three parts: a standard teaching load; lots of committees and appointment boards (I’m one of very few economics professors), and a "civic duty" that involves interacting with the media, activist groups and others who can have a positive influence on our society. One great advantage of being at Griffith was that the telephone did not ring so much, giving me more time to read, think, and talk to academics working in related areas. My time here also allowed me to travel to Canberra and Melbourne to give seminars and meet with colleagues.

I have been very impressed by the vibrancy of intellectual life at Griffith. All my colleagues in the Griffith Asia Pacific Research Institute seem very productive with their research and publications, and the regular staff seminars are well attended. The atmosphere is cooperative, and colleagues seem to get on well. Not all universities are like this....

One special benefit I have enjoyed at Griffith was the chance to meet several distinguished colleagues who work on Indonesian economy and politics. This has encouraged me to read their work and other material on Indonesia, and compare these findings with my own studies on Thailand. For the first time in my career, I presented a seminar comparing Thailand and Indonesia ... and I think I got away with it! The discussion was very useful, and I'm now developing the paper into an article.

Griffith has some other special attractions, particularly for someone from the urban jungle of Bangkok. Just a few minutes jog from my flat behind the Hub puts me in the bush, with a chance of spotting a possum or monitor lizard, or being heckled by a kookaburra or one of Australia’s many other gloriously noisy birds. This is a real privilege.

(Professor Pasuk, Professor of Chulalongkorn University, visited GAPRI as the 2003 Jackson Fellow from 1 April 2003 - 31 May 2003)