



Khanna: Asia Turns To Technocrats For Answers

China was largely converted to a Technocracy by 2000, and Singapore is considered the 'smartest' and connected city in the world. Khanna points out that the world, sans America, is racing toward technocratic governance. □ TN Editor

After a 2016 that will forever be remembered for [Brexit](#) and the [election of Donald Trump](#), most commentators have taken it as a foregone conclusion that 2017 will feature yet more populist electoral victories in Europe, to say nothing of the global fallout from Trump's planned trade policies. Combined with slow global economic growth and rising geopolitical tensions, it is all too easy to assume that the world is going down the same path of nationalism and protectionism that sparked the first world war and the Great Depression.

But what may be true for the West need not derail the East, where governments have generally stayed a pragmatic course. The difference is more than just politics; it is about systems. While Western democracies

are creaking, Asia's more technocratic governments are committing maximum effort to address the underlying challenges of infrastructure, education and jobs. This is good both for Asia and the world.

In the Western and particularly American narrative, a deep complacency has set in that confuses politics with governance, democracy with delivery, process with outcomes. Good governments are equally focused on inputs and outputs. Their legitimacy comes both from the process by which the government is selected and the delivery of what citizens universally proclaim they want: solid infrastructure, public safety, clean air and water, reliable transportation, ease of doing business, good schools, quality housing, dependable childcare, freedom of expression, access to jobs, and so on.

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