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JINDAL SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM & COMMUNICATION

cordially invites you to the

Guest Lecture

on

Social Media and Negative Campaigning: The Rising Culture of Political Violence in Malaysia's General Elections



Speaker

Dr. James Gomez

James Gomez, PhD is Executive-Director, Asia Centre, Bangkok Thailand, a think-tank that focuses on civil society, democracy, human rights and new media in the Southeast Asian region, and former Professor of Communications and Associate Dean (International Affairs) at the School of Communication Arts, Bangkok University, Thailand. Professor Gomez has worked in Australia, China, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Sweden, Thailand, and the United Kingdom as an academic and administrator with public and private universities, research institutes, think-tanks and inter-governmental organizations for over 25 years. In 2014 Dr Gomez edited a special issue of the Asia Pacific Media Educator, SAGE publication on "Media and Elections in Asia".

Abstract

Negative campaigning, via political advertisements and news placed in the mainstream media, is a notable feature in Malaysian elections. It has been extensively used by the ruling coalition Barisan Nasional (BN), in particular by the dominant component party United Malay National Organisation (UMNO) against its political rivals. In 2013, during Malaysia's 13th general election (GE13), negative campaigning spilled over from mainstream media onto social media platforms. Unlike in the one-sided past, both the ruling and opposition coalitions equally employed negative campaigning during GE13. This paper builds on recent studies that have examined the online aspects of political advertising and news content in Malaysia's 13th general elections. In particular, it reviews the unintended consequences of election violence arising from negative campaigning by competing parties over social media. Preliminary examination shows that negative campaigning has contributed to increased polarization and holds explanatory potential for understanding the causes for politically related violence during the Malaysia's 2013 elections. There is evidence that post-GE13 online negative campaigning is well-entrenched and is likely continue into Malaysia's 14th general election with possible violent consequences.

Date: 14 March 2017 | Time: 11:00 am – 12:00 noon

Venue: T2 Global Conference room

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