

Policing political discourse in Malaysia

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In Malaysia, the 3 “R”s — race, religion, and royalty — are considered politically sensitive topics, and despite constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech, the state has passed laws that restrict their discussion, both online and off. While these curbs have the potential to stifle critical discussion and maintain existing power structures, they’ve had little effect on subduing ultra-nationalist voices, resulting in an increase in hate speech and online harassment. What’s behind the taboos on the 3 Rs? How are the laws applied? And what is the effect on the health of Malaysian democracy and society? Southeast Asia political scientist Dr James Gomez and Malaysia-based social commentator Dina Zaman explore the nuances of Malaysian political discourse with presenter Ali Moore.

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Main image (L-R): Dr James Gomez and Dina Zaman.

Listing image: Young people in Malaysia. Credit: Mohd Fazlin Mohd Effendy Ooi/Flickr.