Can we divorce politics from social media? Absolutely not! In Southeast Asia, politics and social media are intertwined like never before. Picture mass rallies at Kuala Lumpur's Independent Square, Jakarta's National Monument, or Phnom Penh's Freedom Park. They all incorporate Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram, TikTok, and more. Civil society organizations create catchy hashtags to rally support, while hate groups spread disinformation. Country leaders, politicians, and parties across the region, rely heavily on social media to campaign and connect with the public.

Social media isn't just part of the strategy—it's the lifeblood of modern political engagement in Southeast Asia.

“Social Media and Politics in Southeast Asia”. The title says it all.

Utilizing interdisciplinary approaches and rooted in extensive longitudinal research, this Element examines the dual role of social media in both facilitating progressive and regressive politics, affording grassroots activism while also enabling autocratic practices. It underscores social media’s alignment with communicative capitalism, where algorithmic marketing culture overshadows public discourse. And reveals the rise of algorithmic politics that deepens polarization and escalates disinformation.

Positioning Southeast Asia not only as an empirical site but also as a source of conceptual and theoretical interventions, the Element provides a fresh analysis that unpacks the multifaceted and co-constituting relationship between social media and politics, shaped by dynamic technological, socio-political, and user contextual arrangements.

Here’s a sneak peek into the Element:

The Introduction situates the contribution within existing debates and literature.

Mapping the Terrain delves into the socio-political and technological dynamics of social media in Southeast Asia.

Revealing the Tapestry offers a panoramic view of digital freedom and control across different nations.

Dynamics of Dissent explores how activists and citizens utilize social media for grassroots activism.

Bytes and Ballots examines the implications of social media platforms in political campaigns and elections.

It ends with Concluding Remarks.

Top of Form

Bottom of Form

Social Media and Politics in Southeast Asia offers a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the intricate relationship between social media and politics. It's essential for anyone wanting to understand the ever-changing digital and political landscapes of Southeast Asia and beyond.