

See you in Manila, AMIC 32nd Annual Conference!



Photos source: <https://www.tourism.gov.ph/sights/national-capital-region>

AMIC 32nd Annual Conference will be held in Manila from 05-07 November 2026. The overall theme is *Public Trust, Public Voice: The Role of Communication in Public Governance*.

The essence of communication and public governance is continuously being redefined and challenged, especially in the 21st century. The redefinition of these two interrelated concepts can be attributed to several factors, including new communication technologies, digital transformation, globalization and

interdependence, and multilateralism. The Manila conference will endeavor to address these concerns.

Communication-related concepts continue to influence governance policies, standards, and practices. These concepts include transparency and accountability, access to information (right to information), information integrity, information as a public good, open access/open data, public sphere, and public engagement.

The Global Digital Compact (2024) also recognizes the importance of responsible digital governance.

According to AMIC secretary-general Ramon R. Tuazon, the conference objectives include examining lessons learned, best practices, and role models in the practice of journalism and communication in public governance. It will also showcase strategic and innovative communication in governance initiatives, especially those which amplify the voices of vulnerable groups and sectors. The conference will also examine current and emerging issues and challenges that touches on the role of communication and journalism in good governance.

The conference will feature plenary and parallel sessions and master classes. There will be distinct parallel sessions for students as well as sessions in Chinese, Hindi, and Filipino.

The call for abstracts has been issued. For inquiries on abstract submission guidelines, please email info@amic.asia

AMIC members and friends with new publications will be invited to launch their latest outputs during the event.

Technology companies will be invited to exhibit their latest innovations. The conference will also provide a venue for the signing of formal agreements between Asian higher education institutions to pursue collaborative undertakings.

One of the highlights of the conference is the conferment of the 2026 AMIC Asia Communication Award. It was established in 2006 to recognize outstanding achievements of communication scholars and practitioners. Starting this year, AMIC will also confer the AMIC Asia Communication Award for Young Leaders, to recognize young people's important contributions to Asian communication. Nomination forms for both awards are available at <https://amic.asia>. You may also email info@amic.asia for details.

It's not all serious business at AMIC Manila 2026! In addition to the conference sessions, there will be a variety of cultural programs, media visits, and local sightseeing events. Attendees can also look forward to a fun-filled Karaoke night, where they can showcase their singing talents and enjoy a bit of friendly competition.

The lyrics of the popular song "Manila" are likely to resonate with conference participants, reflecting a sense of nostalgia, community, and excitement:

*Manila, Manila
I keep coming back to Manila
Simply no place like Manila
Manila, I'm coming home*

Photo source:
<https://www.tourism.gov.ph/sights/national-capital-region>

Dr. Karlyga Myssayeva Delivers 2025 AMIC Asia Communication Award Lecture



Dr. Karlyga Myssayeva, 2025 AMIC Asia Communication Awardee, presented her AMIC Asia Communication Award Lecture last January 27. The online lecture was titled, *Uncovering Journalism Education in Central Asia*, based on a previous study titled, *Comparative Analysis of Journalism Education in Central Asia*, which was conducted by the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (KazNU) in collaboration with AMIC.

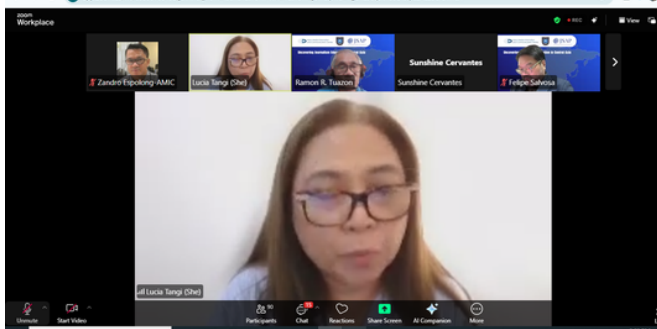
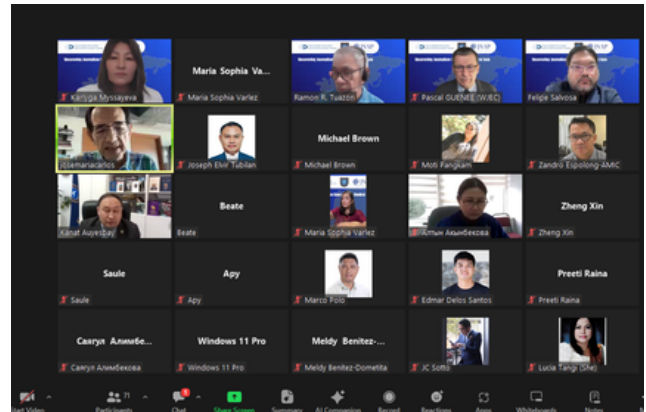
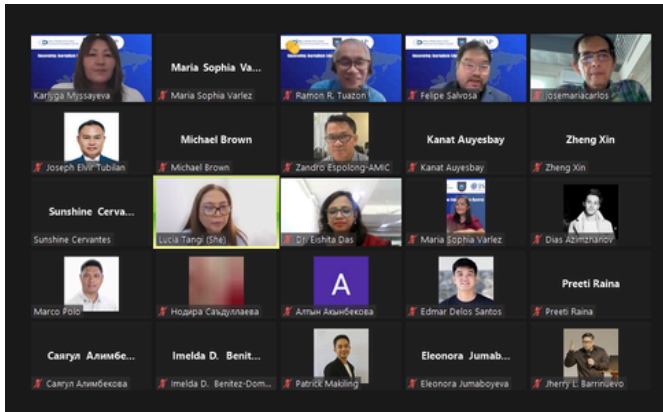
The study covered Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, but also made references to Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

Over 100 individuals attended the online forum, co-hosted by KazNU and the Journalism Studies Association of the Philippines (JSAP).

Welcome messages were given by Prof. Jose Maria G. Carlos, Chair, AMIC Board of Management; Dr. Kanat Auesbay, Dean, Faculty of Journalism of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University; and Dr. Pascal Guenee, Chair, World Journalism Education Council Steering Committee.

In her presentation, Dr. Myssayeva traced the history and evolution of journalism education in the region, highlighting the establishment of the Faculty of Journalism at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University in 1934 as the oldest journalism program. She also addressed the current state of journalism education, discussing aspects such as curriculum structure and content, competencies, government engagement, and the profiles of journalism educators. She concluded her presentation by outlining specific challenges and opportunities facing journalism schools in the region.

According to Dr. Myssayeva, the major challenges include the modernization of curricula to meet global standards, digital transformation and technological gaps, the need for a balance between theory and practice, issues of academic freedom



The results of the Post-Event Evaluation Survey indicated favorable feedback, with 88 percent rating the forum as relevant or very relevant, 91 percent stating that the lecture provided new and useful insights, and 88 percent affirming that the lecturer was knowledgeable about the subject matter.

within the media environment, faculty development and research capacity, collaboration between industry and academia, and the processes of internationalization and multilingualism.

The forum was moderated by Prof. Felipe F. Salvosa II, President of the Journalism Studies Association of the Philippines, while Dr. Lucia Tangi, Chair of the association, delivered the closing message.

She identified opportunities for regional curriculum workshops in partnership with AMIC and UNESCO; enhanced regional collaboration through faculty exchanges and joint research initiatives; the establishment of a Central Asian Research Network focused on media and society; Faculty Development Programs; and the sharing of open-access resources, including digital repositories for teaching materials and research publications.

Survey on AMIC Accreditation of Media, Communication, and Journalism Schools in Asia



AMIC has created a Technical Working Group (TWG) that is currently developing draft accreditation systems and procedures aimed at upgrading the standards of communication education in Asia.

This initiative seeks to promote excellence and relevance in communication programs across the region. The AMIC accreditation project is designed to assess communication and allied programs against rigorous standards, ensuring that they meet the evolving needs of the sector and society. By recognizing and rewarding outstanding programs, AMIC aims to foster a culture of excellence, innovation, and continuous improvement in communication education.

The AMIC Accreditation System TWG includes Dr. Jude William R. Genilo, Pro Vice Chancellor, University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh as Chairperson, with Norman A. Agatep, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Grupo Agatep, Dr. Jose Reuben Q. Alagaran, II, Dean of the College of Communication, Polytechnic University of the Philippines, and Dr. Leslie M. Medina of L'Arche Canada as members. The AMIC Secretariat provides technical assistance.

The accreditation system aims to develop a relevant framework, aligning accreditation criteria, systems, and procedures with the Asian context, thereby helping to ensure that communication education programs are tailored to Asia's distinct needs, challenges, and cultural nuances.

Furthermore, the accreditation system seeks to help academic programs strike a balance between academic rigor and professional practice, so that communication education programs are able to integrate theoretical foundations with industry relevance and practical applications.

In planning the AMIC Accreditation Service, AMIC conducted the Accreditation Service Survey to produce evidence-based data. Here are some of the salient findings:

- The survey, conducted from August to October 2025, received responses from 30 participants from 11 Asian countries. The institutional demographics include 15 public and 10 private universities, with 21 institutions offering both undergraduate and graduate programs, 14 institutions offering doctoral programs. 43% of the institutions had a student population of under 300.
- 86.7% of respondents are very or somewhat familiar with accreditation. 86.7% of respondents find accreditation to be important to very important. Asked about what key benefits their institutions could expect from accreditation, the three topic choices are: (1) Enhanced reputation and credibility (86.7%); (2) Improved curriculum quality (76.7%); and (3) Better student employability (73.3%).
- The Top 5 standards or criteria for evaluating communication/media and journalism programs are: (1) Curriculum design and relevance, 90%; (2) Faculty qualifications, 86.7%; (3) Student learning outcomes, 83.3%; (4) Industry engagement, 83.3%; (5) Facilities and technology, 63.3%.
- Ranked as Top 3 choices in motivating their institutions to pursue accreditation are: (1) Recognition by industry and employers, 83.3%; (2) Benchmarking with international standards, 80%; and (3) Improving internal quality assurance, 53.3%.
- Among the main challenges anticipated in pursuing accreditation are the following: Time and administrative burden, 70%; high cost of accreditation, 66.7%; Lack of awareness about accreditation, 60%; Limited qualified faculty, 50%; and Resistance to change internally, 40%.
- 46.7% of respondents think that accreditation should cost below USD 1,000 and 63.3% of respondents think that the annual accreditation fee should be USD 300 and below. 50% believe accreditation renewal should be every 5 years and 43.3% said at least every three years.
- 73.3% of respondents find AMIC to be credible for accreditation, 20% somewhat credible.
- When asked what support their institution would need from AMIC to encourage participation, the top choices are: Mentorship or consultancy support, 73.3%; Awareness sessions and workshops, 73.3%; Networking with other accredited institutions, 70%; Guidelines and template for self-assessment, 63.3%; and Pilot programs with reduced fees, 60%.
- 80% prefer the accreditation process to be hybrid (combination of online and on-site).

Wimal Dissanayake's Communication Theory: The Asian Perspective



AMIC, in collaboration with Dr. Wimal Dissanayake, will soon publish the third edition of the pioneering book, *Communication Theory: The Asian Perspective*.

The first edition was released in 1988, followed by the second edition in 2022.

The upcoming edition will be retitled, *Wimal Dissanayake's Communication Theory: The Asian Perspective*, to honor the editor's significant contributions to the advancement of Asian communication theories through research, writing, and teaching. This new edition will feature additional articles and include a co-editor.

The anticipated third edition emphasizes that communication theory is a dynamic concept that deserves timely examination and interpretation. AMIC Secretary-General Ramon R. Tuazon said, "We need not wait another decade to analyze and articulate the theoretical frameworks surrounding the new and complex developments in the communication field, such as artificial intelligence, algorithms, and disinformation—through an Asian perspective."

The new edition also aims to incorporate more diverse Asian viewpoints by inviting leading scholars from various Asian regions, including Central Asia, Western Asia, and Oceania, to contribute articles. This approach will ensure that the upcoming edition truly reflects a broader Asian perspective and character.

Dr. Wimal Dissanayake has also announced the selection of a co-editor for his magnum opus, Dr. Fernando De La Cruz Paragas.

Dr. Paragas is a Professor of Communication Research at the University of the Philippines College of Media and Communication (UP CMC). He served as Dean of UP CMC, Convenor of the Program on Higher Education Research and Policy Reform at the UP Center for Integrative Development Studies, ex-officio President of the Philippine Association for Communication and Media Research, Inc., and Editor-in-Chief of the Scopus-listed *Plaridel Journal*.

A prolific and multi-awarded scholar, he has published more than 100 academic papers and led strategic communication projects. Dr. Paragas expressed his gratitude for his selection, describing it as a “full circle” moment.

He recalled that as an undergraduate student in the 1990s, he read *Communication Theory: An Asian Perspective (First Edition)* as required by his course. “In 2007, nearly a decade ago, I sat in our Film Center as an academic fan while Dr. Dissanayake graced us with his presence. I was awestruck to be in front of one of my most admired pioneers,” Dr. Paragas added.

Open Access Materials on Communication, Media, and Education



Photo source: <https://www.canva.com/photos/MAGZlviXClI/>

AMIC is pleased to announce the release of the 5th series of its Open Access Materials on Communication, Media, and Education. Our initial listing began in 2024, and since then, we have curated approximately 400 open-access materials covering diverse topics such as Artificial Intelligence, Freedom of the Press, Access to Information, and Disinformation Studies.

Our primary objective is to ALERT communication and media professionals, particularly educators, researchers, and students, about recent publications available on various platforms. In addition to providing new data, information, and insights, AMIC encourages debates and discussions on the issues presented in these publications. Please note that the views, findings, interpretations, recommendations, and conclusions expressed in these works belong to the authors or the institutions they represent

and do not reflect the official position of expressed in these works belong to the authors or the institutions they represent and do not reflect the official position of AMIC. However, we assure you that these selected publications are valuable readings and studies.

Our 5th series includes 37 open-access materials on such subjects as human rights, artificial intelligence, media and communication (freedom of expression and right to information), digital transformation, journalism, disinformation studies, and education. The publication titles on the list are clickable links, providing direct access to the corresponding resource.

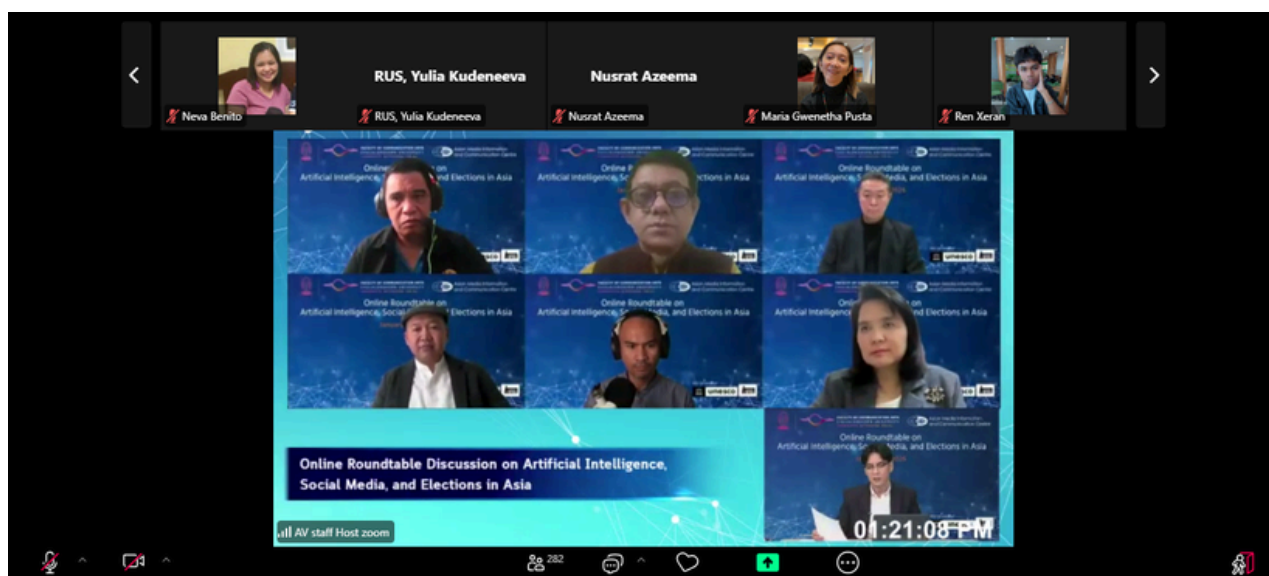
To continue receiving these resources, we invite you to join AMIC or maintain your status as an institutional or individual member.

If you are aware of other communication-related publications available in open access, especially those authored by individuals from Asia or the Global South, please share the links with the AMIC Secretariat. We would be glad to include them in our upcoming curated materials for our members, as this will help promote a more balanced cyberspace. You can reach us at secretariat.amic@gmail.com.

AMIC is committed to supporting the open access system while recognizing proprietary rights.

A Glimpse into the Near Future: How AI and Social Media Will Define Elections

By Ramon R. Tuazon



Politicians are finding innovative ways to use artificial intelligence (AI) to educate, inform, and even entertain voters as they head to polling precincts. Meanwhile, governments are working to catch up on regulations on the use of AI and social media in the midst of unrelenting technological revolution.

The year 2024 was dubbed by the United Nations (UN) as a global “super year for elections” as 72 countries, including 20 Asian countries, went to the polls. Additional national and local elections were held in 2025 and more will be held in 2026.

Lessons on the issues and challenges in the use of digital technology in the electoral cycle were discussed during the recent *Online Roundtable Discussion on Artificial Intelligence, Social Media, and Elections in Asia*.

Leading academics and scholars from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, and Thailand shared their analysis on the use of AI and social media in the entire electoral cycle, recalling experiences from recent elections in their respective countries.

The forum was organized by the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC) and the Faculty of Communication Arts of Bangkok-based Chulalongkorn University, in partnership with UNESCO and the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL).

A compelling reason why there is a need to examine elections and media technology is that without free elections and media freedoms, there can be NO GENUINE DEMOCRACY. As the UNESCO publication, [Elections in Digital Times: A Guide for Electoral Practitioners](#) (2022) warned "... the ubiquity of social networks and the impact of Artificial Intelligence can intentionally or unintentionally undermine electoral processes, thereby delegitimizing democracies worldwide."

Candidates Use AI "To Dance Themselves To Victory."

Recalling their observations, forum panelists noted that AI is now widely used not only to inform or educate voters but to "entertain" them as well.

Social media and AI are the platforms of choice in reaching out, especially to Generation Z voters, or those born roughly between the late 1990s and early 2010s.

According to Dr. Wijayanto, Vice Rector for Research, Innovation, Collaboration and Public Communication of the Universitas Diponegoro in Indonesia, AI and social media are being used to "build new image." He recalled how a leading candidate, who eventually won the election, used AI-generated visuals to rebrand himself as a softer, more

approachable figure, often depicting the candidate as a gemoy or cute grandpa.

He cited one specific advertisement which drew attention for featuring a leading political candidate with AI-generated images of children in the background during a milk-feeding event. Providing free milk to children to address malnutrition and stunting in Indonesia was a key component of the candidate's platform.

To Wijayanto, messages do not always have substance but candidates and political parties "rely on entertainment." He recalled how some candidates use AI "to dance themselves to victory."

Other issues mentioned by Wijayanto are the use of fake social media accounts or unofficial social media accounts to spread hate speech, and the use of so-called cyber troops.

Cyber troops refer to groups of individuals or teams that use the internet and social media to influence public opinion, manipulate information, and shape narratives for various purposes.

Dr. Muneo Kaigo, Dean of the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Tsukuba, Japan, noted that candidates hire public relations (PR) companies and social media influencers "to have genuine connection" with the public. But according to Kaigo, such connection does not automatically mean greater public knowledge of policies and programs.

Kaigo acknowledged that new digital technologies can improve access to

information and can help ensure free elections. He also cited other benefits or uses of AI and algorithm: the emergence of a 24/7 platform which can answer voters' questions, and through which candidates and political parties can monitor voters' opinions and sensitivities on important issues.

However, he warned that AI and social media platforms are also being used as platforms for misinformation, polarization, and creation of filter bubbles. According to the Japanese academic, because of the widespread use of AI, "AI candidates" or Avatars have emerged. There were also reports on the use of AI-generated deepfakes which can get significant traction in just a few days.

University of the Philippines journalism professor Dr. Danilo A. Arao focused on how new digital tools and systems are being used by the "rich and powerful" to maximize their "foothold on power."

Arao said that there is disinformation and historical denialism in social media and platforms, as he agreed with the Indonesia experience shared by Wijayanto that digital platforms are being used to "repackage" politicians. Arao also lamented that social media are riddled with disinformation, lies, and conspiracy theories. In the Philippines, they are also used to ostracize individuals in social media and real life by engaging in red tagging, i.e., individuals are labelled as communists or communist sympathizers.

John Reiner Antiquerra, Senior Program Officer for Outreach and Communication of the Bangkok-based Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL), which observed

the 2025 elections in the Philippines and other Asian countries, reported the use of false narratives, particularly by pseudo web pages or those not officially identified with political parties.

A related concern expressed by Antiquerra was the use of AI-generated homophobic campaign messages directed at minorities, as observed in Sri Lanka. Can AI and social media lead to a more informed public or voters? For Arao, no. For him, social media content appeals to "lowest common denominator" or tends to dumb down or trivialize rather than raise the quality of discourse.

For Chulalongkorn University professor emeritus Dr. Pirongrong Ramasoota, "turbulence" best describes the Thai political setting, which has become intensified by the growing digital battlefield. According to the Thai academic, there is a paradigm shift in political mobilization as social media algorithms, AI analytics and digital "fandoms" become the decisive factors in determining electoral outcomes, eclipsing the traditional influence of money politics and local patronage networks.

New or young politicians use social media extensively, bypassing traditional media. Ramasoota also noted the emergence of Do-It-Yourself (DIY) political participation (campaigning). However, according to her, conservative politicians are not used to DIY political campaigning.

Another phenomenon she observed is the emergence of "fandom" which can be traced to the phenomenal increase in the use of social media platforms TikTok and Facebook.

Fandom usually refers to a group of people (or a community of interest) who share a strong interest or enthusiasm for a particular topic. These fans engage in collaborative activities like group chats, creating fan art, attending events, and participating in online forums or social media groups.

Young people in Bangladesh, who comprise the majority of the population and dominate the use of social media platforms and AI, are major players in the current political system. Dr. S M Shameem Reza, Professor of Mass Communication and Journalism at the University of Dhaka, recalled that in 2024, Bangladesh experienced mass uprising driven by youth activism.

According to Reza, the visual element of social media is an advantage. Even so-called mainstream (legacy) media use social media posts – sharing photos and videos and live-streaming events. Interactive qualities, e.g., like and share, also make these platforms preferred. Reza warned that the use of AI can exacerbate “information asymmetry.” This means AI can widen the gap between those who have access to accurate and timely information and those who do not.

Information asymmetry can happen in several ways: AI-generated dis/misinformation; algorithmic bias; information overload; and lack of transparency, as AI decision-making processes make it hard for people to understand how decisions are made and what information is being used.

Policymaking: Catching Up with the Digital Revolution and a Balancing Act

Crafting policies (especially by government) on digital technologies can be challenging for several reasons. First, policymakers will always be engaged in catching up with new technologies as today’s policies can be easily rendered obsolete, considering the slow government policy-making process.

Second, policymakers are not familiar with the new media ecosystem which requires a different kind of regulatory framework. Third, policies are double-edged swords. They can be used to facilitate the enjoyment and exercise of media freedoms and rights but can also be used to narrow or restrict the same rights and freedoms. Fourth, the gold standard in public policymaking is for the process to be open, transparent, and participatory (multistakeholder).

Academics from the five countries represented in the online forum shared their insights on AI and social media policymaking.

According to Kaigo, “there are strict regulations but light enforcement.” The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications oversees elections and also has jurisdiction over telecommunications and broadcasting industries and local governance. He volunteered that the Public Offices Election Law is under revision.

The Japan Platform Distribution Act, also known as the Information Distribution Platform Act (IDPA) regulates online platforms in Japan.

It aims to address issues related to defamation, infringement of rights, and dissemination of harmful information online. Social Media Regulation requires platforms to take swift action against illegal or harmful content and improve transparency in content removal policies. In the Philippines, prior to the 2025 mid-term election, the Commission on Election (COMELEC) issued Resolution 11064 (dated 17 September 2024) as amended in Resolution 11064-A (dated 13 November 2024) entitled, Guidelines on the Use of Social Media Artificial Intelligence, and Internet Technology for Digital Election Campaign, and the Prohibition and Punishment of Its Misuse for Disinformation and Misinformation In Connection with the 2025 National and Local Elections and the BARMM Parliamentary Elections.

According to Wijayanto, there was no law on the use of AI during the June 2025 election in Indonesia, but new guidelines on the use of AI will hopefully be implemented in the 2029 election.

In Thailand, there is no existing specific regulation by the Election Commission of Thailand (ECT) to govern the use of AI and social media during the electoral process beyond labelling posts to show accountability. However, government agencies work closely with major technology platforms like Meta and TikTok. Ramasoota highlighted the need for greater coordination between the ECT and the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC).

The Election Commission of Bangladesh is responsible for enforcing the Code of

Conduct for Political Parties and Candidates. Some of the key provisions of the code include social media campaigning, e.g., candidates must submit their social media information and adhere to guidelines on content and advertising and prohibited activities such as the use of drones, quadcopters, or similar devices on election day and during campaigning. Disseminating hate speech, personal attacks, and provocative language are also prohibited.

Interesting views on regulatory ecosystem were discussed by some of the panelists.

Ramasoota, a commissioner of the NBTC, raised an important issue: “More regulations may mean more government involvement. Are we ready for this set-up?” According to her, “good regulations come from public participation” and that “regulation need not be top-down, especially regulations on AI.”

Ramasoota called for a “balanced” regulatory ecosystem. This call echoes [UNESCO’s Guidelines for the Governance of Digital Platforms](#) (2023) that aims to safeguard the rights to freedom of expression, including access to information, and other human rights in digital platform governance, while dealing with content that can be “permissibly restricted” under international human rights law and standards. The Guideline also introduced the regulatory ecosystem that includes self-regulation, co-regulation, and statutory regulation. The Guideline provides that governance processes should be open, transparent, multistakeholder, proportional, and evidence-based.

For University of the Philippines Professor Arao, self-regulation should be the preferred mechanism as government regulation may lead to “control of media system to fit official narratives.” He proposed that permissible regulatory aspects should focus on corporate/profit (commercial) concerns but not on content.

Moving Forward: Some Policy Options and Action Agenda

Panelists proposed some specific and comprehensive policy options and action agenda.

Among the common specific proposals made were ethical and responsible use of AI, including voluntary labelling of AI materials; prohibiting the use of (AI-generated) deepfake videos; saying no to all forms of disinformation/misinformation; providing no space for hate speech and discrimination against gender, culture, and ethnicity; extending support for and strengthening of independent factchecking initiatives; and promoting more robust media, information, and digital literacy programs. According to Reza, in terms of timeframe, policies can be immediate (short-term), medium-term, or long-term. Policymaking should be “multi-layered.” He referred to a process where policy decisions are not made in isolation, but rather, are influenced by multiple factors, actors, and levels of governance. Reza emphasized that policymaking should be collaborative, involving different stakeholders, including journalists, bureaucrats, politicians, non-government organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), and the academe. “We also need to involve or

mainstream local and community media which also need retooling in gender sensitivity, fact checking, deep fakes, etc.,” Reza said.

Reza also emphasized the need to review and update the Code of Conduct for Political Parties and Candidates, not only to update policies on the use of AI and social media during elections, but how to deal with disinformation. Among his recommendations are: (1) conducting independent fact-checking to debunk wrong and harmful information; (2) leveraging AI in fact-checking; (3) advocating Digital and Media and Information Literacy; and (4) pushing for more active participation of stakeholders, including media, election groups, and CSOs.

Ramasoota reminded the virtual forum participants that policies should not only focus on technical (technological) but also on the socio-psychological effects of technology. She also expressed the need for more coordination among election commissions, technology agencies, and regulatory agencies, and that policymaking should not be reactive but proactive.

Wijayanto informed the participants of the upcoming Sub-Regional (Southeast Asia) Toolkit for the Implementation of UNESCO Guidelines for Governance of Digital Platforms (2023), which is a collaborative project of the University of Diponegoro (Indonesia), AMIC, and Civic Tech Lab (Singapore). Capacity building workshops will be held in the Philippines and Indonesia for regulators and civil society organizations.

For Arao, reforming the Philippines' electoral system requires broader or systemic political reforms, including enactment of Anti-Political Dynasty Law, passage of a Party-list Reform Law, and support for a more vibrant (independent) media.

ANFREL's recommendations reinforce Arao's suggestions, as the Asian election watchdog calls on Asian governments to adopt an open data regime to ensure open disclosure of public documents and the passage of Freedom of Information/Right to Information Law. Antiquerra also reiterated the need for an open and transparent policymaking ecosystem. Antiquerra emphasized the need for media, information, and digital literacy as a continuing and long-term strategy.

Lessons Learned

A free and fair election is not only about the freedom to vote; it is also about enabling and providing individuals and groups, especially from marginalized sectors, with platforms and mechanisms to participate in debates, seek clarification on issues, and to talk back to political parties (and candidates) on their concerns, opinions, and needs. This participatory process has been enhanced by the emergence of social media and artificial intelligence which, unfortunately, has been abused by practices described in the preceding paragraphs.

Wee Kim Wee at Nanyang Tech ranks 2nd in Media Studies and 5th in Info Mgt



The Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information (WKWSCI) at Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore, continues to lead globally in quality, according to the assessment by the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings by Subject in 2026.

WKWSCI was ranked 2nd in the world for Communication and Media Studies, rising from 4th in 2025, and ranked 5th in the world for Library and Information Management.

“The QS World University Rankings assess universities based on indicators such as academic reputation, employer reputation, research impact, teaching quality, and international collaborations,” the NTU website said.



NTU described its program as spanning “both communication and information disciplines, integrating theory with practice while responding to developments in media, data, and technology. Students learn to use emerging tools such as AI critically, developing independent judgment and a clear sense of their own voice. ”

The official statement attributed to Professor Jack Qiu, Chair of WKWSCI, said:

“The rise of our Communication & Media Studies programme from fourth to

second globally is driven by the School's strong research leadership and a curriculum that balances theory with real-world application. Students benefit from hands-on training, global experiential learning, world-class facilities, and close industry partnerships, which together prepare graduates who are highly sought after across sectors. This achievement reflects sustained efforts in research, teaching, and industry engagement, with growing impact beyond the University in both society and industry. The programme continues to evolve in step with developments in AI, data, and interdisciplinary collaboration."

He also said WKWSCI's global standing "reflects the strength of our integrated approach, combining academic rigour, industry relevance, and global engagement. We aim to develop graduates who are not only theoretically

grounded but also equipped to practise and lead in an increasingly complex media and information landscape." NTU added that "beyond the classroom, students gain international exposure and industry experience, working in diverse, real-world contexts that build resilience. They are guided by faculty whose research is widely used by the global academic community and shapes key conversations in the field."

WKWSCI at Nanyang Technological University hosted AMIC for many years before its relocation to Manila in 2015.

(Source:

<https://www.ntu.edu.sg/wkwsci/news-events/news/detail/wkwsci-continues-strong-global-standing-in-gs-world-university-rankings-by-subject-2026>)

AMIC Welcomes Philippine Christian University – Manila as its latest institutional partner



Philippine Christian University – Manila is a faith-rooted academic community in the heart of Manila, shaped by the enduring core values of faith, character, and service. Established in 1946, the university was born from a hopeful vision: to rebuild the nation through education grounded in Christian principles.

Faith has guided PCU's mission as a lens through which learning, leadership, and life are understood. Today, PCU embraces its identity as a digital, borderless multiversity, offering programs that respond to contemporary needs while remaining anchored in its values. The university provides Basic Education, undergraduate degrees in Arts and Sciences, Business and Accountancy, Education, Nursing and Health Sciences, Criminal Justice, Informatics, Hospitality and Tourism Management, and Social Work, as well as graduate and professional programs.

AMIC Reps in Action: Sri Lanka

Asoka Dias Honored with State Television Award for Promoting National Integration in Sri Lanka



Asoka Dias, AMIC Representative for Sri Lanka, has been conferred the State Television Award in the category of Television Programs Promoting National Integration, in recognition of his exceptional contribution to fostering awareness and advocacy on issues of national importance.

The State Television Awards, organized by the Ministry of Buddha Sasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs in collaboration with the Department of Cultural Affairs, the Arts Council of Sri Lanka and the State Advisory Council of Television, aim to encourage both state and private broadcasters to cultivate an exemplary media culture and leverage television as a tool for social progress.

Asoka Dias, Director of MTV Channel (Pvt) Ltd and MBC Networks (Pvt) Ltd, popularly known as Sirasa Media Network, received this national honor for his impactful role as host of Pathikada, the flagship morning show on News1st, Sirasa TV. Pathikada has served as a vital platform for national discourse, offering viewers in-depth coverage and critical analysis of pressing current affairs. He also serves as a visiting lecturer in undergraduate and postgraduate programs at several universities.

Previously, Asoka Dias has been recognized for excellence in science communication (SLAAS 2022), educational programming (Sumathi Awards 2025), and environmental communication (Presidential Environmental Awards 2025).

AMIC Reps in Action: Nepal

AMIC Nepal Representative Pant elected Deputy Chair of GFMD



The Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD) elected on Nov. 20, 2025 Laxman Datt Pant, AMIC's Nepal representative and a noted media scholar as its Deputy Chair, marking a significant milestone for Asia's media sector on the global stage.

Pant got elected during the GFMD Steering Committee's first meeting of the 2025–2029 term held on November 20 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Pant will serve as Deputy Chair for the next four years. Immediately after his election, Pant chaired the Steering Committee's first official meeting in Kuala Lumpur.

Addressing GFMD members from around the world, he said he would "work alongside all diverse members reflecting grassroots and global engagement to strengthen the media community during these challenging times."

Pant brings more than two decades of experience in journalism, university teaching, media research, and advocacy for press freedom. The Founding Chair of Media Action Nepal, and a former UNESCO programme specialist, Pant previously served as elected Co-Chair of the Consultative Network of the Media Freedom Coalition, where he played a critical role in fostering cooperation among 51 member states and more than 150 civil society organizations.

Pant's election as the GFMD Deputy Chair places Nepal and the broader Asia-Pacific region at the center of global conversations on press freedom and media development.

AMIC Reps in Action: United Arab Emirates

Bridging Academia and Industry: The Junior Reporters Program in Action



The American University of Ras Al Khaimah (AURAK), in partnership with the Ras Al Khaimah Government Media Office (RAKGMO), continues to strengthen experiential learning through the Junior Reporters Program—an industry-embedded initiative designed to bridge journalism education with real-world media production.

Launched in September 2025 as a renewable annual initiative, the program operates with a cohort of 13 Mass Communication students who work directly within a live newsroom ecosystem. Modeled on a “teaching hospital” approach to media education, the program immerses students in field reporting, broadcast production, photography, social media storytelling,



and ethical news practices alongside government media professionals.

A flagship milestone for the cohort has been their comprehensive coverage of the Ras Al Khaimah Art Festival in collaboration with Heart of RAK. Students produced recap videos, feature stories, vox pops, and digital-first content that documented cultural activations across the emirate while adhering to professional newsroom standards and real-time production deadlines.

Through structured mentoring, editorial review cycles, and reflective assessment, the Junior Reporters Program cultivates technical competence, leadership, and newsroom discipline. The initiative represents a sustainable model for academic–government collaboration in journalism education—empowering the next generation of media professionals through authentic, community-centered storytelling.

AMIC Reps in Action: Thailand

International Mother Language Day 2026 Forum at Mahidol University



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kamolrat Intaratat, AMIC Representative for Thailand, Advisor to the Pathum Thani Mon Studies Center at Wat Bang Luang, and Director of the CCDKM Research Center, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, led a delegation of scholars and cultural partners to participate in the International Mother Language Day 2026 Academic Forum on 20 February 2026 at the Institute of Language and Culture for Rural Development (RILCA), Mahidol University, Salaya.

The event was organized under UNESCO's global theme, "**Youth Voices on Multilingual Education**," emphasizing the vital role of mother tongues in strengthening identity, well-being, and social participation among young people.



The Public Forum brought together experts and organizations in education and ethnic studies to exchange knowledge and propose policy directions. Key sessions included:

- Session 1: Strategies for producing and supporting teachers to effectively serve ethnic children.
- Session 2: Language, Identity, and Way of Life: Legal frameworks and research for advancing ethnic education.

In addition to academic discussions, the Pathum Thani Mon Studies Center hosted a Partner Booth showcasing research and innovations related to language, culture, and ethnic development. The exhibition featured demonstrations of Mon intangible cultural heritage, traditional attire, accessories, and creative cross-cultural learning media. The booth attracted significant interest from academics, policymakers, youth participants, and the general public.



A major highlight of the event was the Youth Voice segment, which provided a platform for indigenous and ethnic youth from various networks to express their identities through their mother tongues, accompanied by cultural performances reflecting the dynamic power of linguistic diversity in a globalized world.



The participation of the Pathum Thani Mon Studies Center underscores its role as an academic and cultural mechanism connecting local knowledge to national and international platforms. Through communication innovation, information technology, and AI-driven approaches, CCDKM continues to promote multilingual and culturally grounded education policies, aiming to create equitable learning opportunities for ethnic children and youth in Thailand.



AMIC Reps in Action: Fiji

Launch of Pacific Media Journal



AMIC Pacific representatives Professor David Robie, the 2015 AMIC Asia Communication Awardee, and Associate Professor Shailendra Singh, continue to play a leading role in media research in the region.

Dr. Robie, the AMIC representative for Aotearoa New Zealand, and founding deputy chair of the Asia Pacific Media Network (APMN), and Dr. Singh, the Fiji representative, and head of the Journalism Programme at the University of the South Pacific, teamed up for the launch of a new academic journal, *Pacific Media*.

The journal succeeds the long-running *Pacific Journalism Review*, founded by Dr. Robie at the University of Papua New Guinea in 1994 and published for three



decades. Supported by Tuwhera Open Access at Auckland University of Technology, the new publication aims to provide greater accessibility, flexibility, and community engagement in Pacific media scholarship.

The inaugural edition was co-edited by Dr. Singh and Dr. Amit Sarwal. The series editor is Khairiah A. Rahman and Dr. Robie is managing editor.

According to Dr. Singh, the journal signals an ongoing commitment to research on Pacific media, development, and democracy at a time when the region faces unprecedented pressures. These include the impacts of artificial intelligence, misinformation and disinformation, intensifying geopolitical competition between China and Western powers, climate change, and public health challenges such as HIV and drug

epidemics. At the same time, Pacific news organizations remain financially fragile due to digital disruption and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Many of these issues were highlighted during the *Pacific Media International Conference 2024* held in Suva, the first major regional gathering of media scholars and practitioners in two decades. Hosted by the USP Journalism Programme in partnership with the Pacific Islands News Association, the United States Embassy in Suva, and APMN, the conference strengthened collaboration between academia and industry while drawing attention to structural challenges facing Pacific journalism.

The 30th anniversary edition of *Pacific Journalism Review* was also launched at the conference. It has published over 1000 articles over its 30 years.

The journal and its legacy was featured by DevPolicy, the academic blog of the Australian National University:
<https://devpolicy.org/pacific-journalism-review-at-30-a-strong-media-legacy-20240802/>

Looking ahead, Dr. Singh emphasized the need to expand research, mentoring, and partnerships to support the next generation of Pacific journalists and scholars, ensuring Pacific voices remain central to global conversations about the region. Pacific Media (and the PJR archives) is now available at Informit global database:
<https://search.informit.org/journal/pacmed>

AMIC Reps in Action: New Zealand

Pacific Media: A renewed commitment to research on Pacific media, development, and democracy

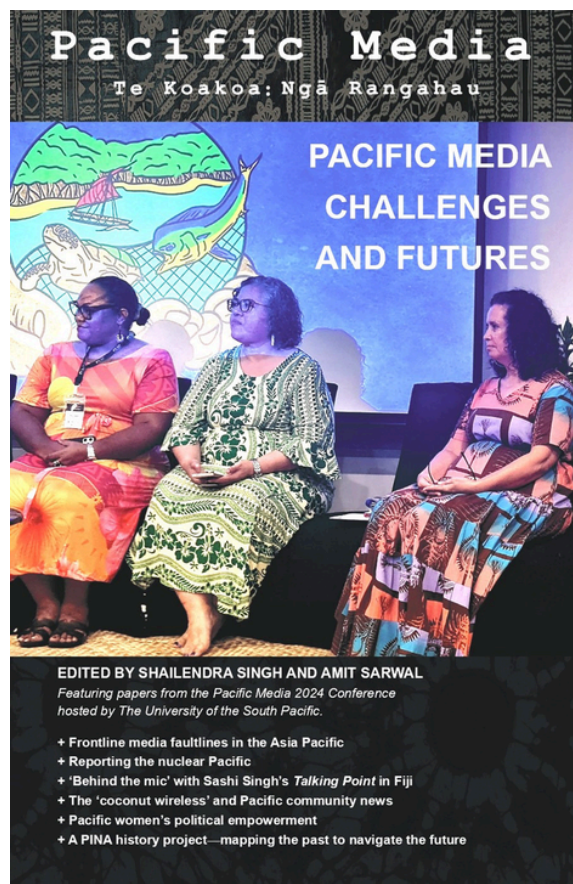
The Pacific Media journal has replaced the Pacific Journalism Review, which was founded by Professor David Robie at the University of Papua New Guinea and published for 30 years.

This new publication, supported by Tuwhera Open Access at Auckland University of Technology, was also founded by Dr. Robie and the Asia Pacific Media Network and it is hoped that it will offer greater community media access and flexibility. Dr. Robie is the AMIC country representative in New Zealand.

University of the South Pacific's Associate Professor Shailendra Singh, who edited the inaugural edition of Pacific Media journal along with co-editor Dr. Amit Sarwal, has responded to the publication with a Q and A.

What does this new publication, Pacific Media, signal?

Dr Shailendra Singh: It signals an ongoing commitment to research on



ABC's Fiji correspondent Lize Movono (from left), RNZ Pacific manager Moera Tuilaipa-Taylor and Islands Business editor Samantha Magick speaking during a women empowerment panel at the 2024 Pacific Media International conference. Picture: Del Abcede

Pacific media, development, and democracy – just when such research is most urgently needed to understand the impact of multiple forces reshaping the region.

These include artificial intelligence, misinformation and disinformation, the intensifying geopolitical contest between China and the West, the drugs and HIV epidemic, and the existential threat of climate change. With the world on track for a three-degree Celsius temperature rise, some reports describe this as a “death sentence” for Pacific reefs, food security, and livelihoods.

Yet, even as Pacific media confront one of the most complex and challenging reporting environments in history, they remain financially fragile, due to the impacts of digital disruption and COVID-19.

The 2024 Pacific Media International Conference was quite an innovative step – bringing media academics and the industry together. How has that helped the region?

Dr Shailendra Singh: It created greater awareness of the challenges facing Pacific news media and exposed some of the industry’s structural weaknesses. Importantly, it fostered a better understanding – and hopefully, greater empathy – among the public toward the difficult conditions under which Pacific journalists operate. The conference underscored the importance of ongoing research, provided direction for future studies, and demonstrated the power of regional collaboration by amplifying Pacific voices and ideas.

How does the partnership between the USP Journalism Programme and the Pacific Media publishers, Asia Pacific Media Network, contribute to journalism excellence in the region?

Dr Shailendra Singh: Research on Pacific media is as scarce as it is vital for the development of Pacific journalism. The USP Journalism Programme and the Asia Pacific Media Network are the only two entities consistently conducting dedicated research on Pacific media, democracy, and development. Historically, both have been vocal about threats to media freedom and the welfare of journalists. They have documented the impact of coups and other forms of repression, while advocating for journalist safety, ethical standards, and media independence through awareness and education.

What next?

Dr. Shailendra Singh: The next step is to consolidate and expand research, and training and development. This means deepening partnerships between academia and industry, mentoring a new generation of Pacific media researchers and journalists, and securing sustainable funding for long-term studies.

It also involves strengthening regional collaboration so that Pacific voices lead the global conversation about the region – rather than being spoken to and for. Ultimately, the goal is to ensure that Pacific media remain resilient, independent, and equipped to serve their communities in the face of profound social, technological, and environmental change.

The second edition of *Pacific Media*, edited by Khairiah A. Rahman and Dr. Rachel Khan, focused on papers from a conference in Vietnam has also now been published shortly.

Source: Asia Pacific Media Network – <http://apmn.nz>

AMIC Reps in Action: New Zealand

Academic Collaboration Initiative Launched



A new academic initiative, the AFRT Research Hub, was established in January 2026 by a group of professors from several universities across New Zealand and Mr. Yasa Mohammad Sajjad, AMIC country representative for Afghanistan. The hub operates as a trust and aims to create a collaborative platform for long-term academic research and scholarly cooperation. By bringing together researchers from

diverse institutions and disciplines, the AFRT Research Hub seeks to strengthen academic partnerships, promote knowledge exchange, and support joint research projects.

The initiative is expected to contribute to the development of innovative research networks and provide opportunities for sustained academic collaboration within New Zealand and internationally.

AMIC Reps in Action: Thailand

Microsoft, UNESCAP, STOU, and CCDKM Lead “AI for Social Impact” National Training to Empower Thailand’s Civil Society Sector



Bangkok, 21 Nov.2025

Professor Dr. Taweewat Wattanakulcharoen, Acting President of Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University (STOU), together with representatives from Microsoft Thailand, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), the Digital Economy Promotion Agency (**Digital Economy Promotion Agency – depa), and Associate Professor Dr. Kamolrat Intaratat, Faculty Member of the School of Communication Arts, Director of the CCDKM Research Center at STOU, and Advisor to the Pathum Mon Study Center

at Wat Bang Luang, jointly launched the national training forum “AI for Social Impact” at STOU.

The initiative brought together civil society leaders, nonprofit professionals, and community practitioners from across Thailand to strengthen their capabilities in Generative AI and digital transformation for sustainable social development.

The training program is part of Microsoft’s Elevate initiative, aimed at democratizing access to AI knowledge and tools. It seeks to enhance operational efficiency, improve content production, strengthen data analysis, and enable evidence-based communication strategies within the social sector.

Suparat Juramongkol, AI Skills Director of Microsoft Thailand, emphasized that responsible AI adoption is key to empowering civil society organizations. By leveraging tools such as Microsoft Copilot, participants can streamline administrative processes, reduce redundancy, enhance storytelling, and dedicate more time to meaningful community service.

Ruhimat Soerakoesoemah, Head of the Subregional Office for South-East Asia at UNESCAP, highlighted the organization’s commitment to inclusive digital transformation across the Asia-Pacific region. He noted that initiatives like AI for Social Impact directly contribute to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in quality education, innovation, and reducing inequalities.

The multi-phase training program runs from November 2025 through March 2026 in both onsite and online formats. The curriculum covers foundational knowledge of Generative AI, structured prompt engineering, hands-on application of Microsoft Copilot, AI-assisted content creation, campaign design, video scripting, and data organization for social impact projects. Participants may also access extended self-learning modules via the Smart MOOC platform, receiving certification upon completion.

As Thailand accelerates toward an AI-driven economy, this collaborative effort among academia, international organizations, government agencies, and the private sector represents a strategic step in equipping civil society with the digital intelligence needed to navigate the evolving technological landscape responsibly and sustainably.

Because in the AI era, social impact is no longer powered by passion alone – it is powered by data, innovation, and a little bit of smart prompting.

AMIC Reps in Action: Taiwan

Renewal of Public Service Media Study in Taiwan in 2026



With the turbulence of global politics raging now, how do global public media and leading public service media (PSM) deal with the hunger for authentic information and news spread within audiences? What survival kit keeps them sustainable and accountable for their mission? These key questions were posed by the upcoming Re-Visionary Interpretations of the Public Enterprise in media (RIPE) Conference organized by a leading university in humanities and social science, with sponsorship from Taiwan Public Television Service. It will be held from 20 to 23 October 2026 in Taipei, Taiwan.

Hamilton Cheng, one of the key members of the Planning Group Committee and the representative of



Taiwan affiliated with the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC), recommended this event to scholars, researchers, and media professionals in APAC. He counted on AMIC for its historical achievements on this and similar issues including the seminar on “The Impact of the Changing Media Environment on Public Service Programming in Asia” in 1995, the publication of “Public Service Broadcasting: A Best Practices Sourcebook 2005”, and “Public Service Broadcasting and Its Role in Raising Civic Consciousness: Case Studies from Asia” in 2012. Positioning this conference will extend the focus of the current PSM industry in Asia-Pacific where AMIC built its foundation several years ago.

The theme of the conference is ***“Politics and Public Service Media.”***

In preparing the theme, Hamilton did a deep analysis after reviewing the current trend from Europe to Asia-Pacific region into a sub-title, “Challenge to Policy-Making for PSM: A reluctance issue or a reborn mission-statement”. The trend indicated that for better or worse, PSM must skillfully learn to live with politics and nation-states nowadays. Dynamically, “to keep the arm’s length to the state” should be strategically managed without drawing the clear red line to prevent crossing statically.

Sponsored by the Taiwan Public Television Service Foundation (PTS), the event will be hosted by the School of Communication at National Chengchi University (NCCU) in Taipei. Its program of study is historically renowned for its brilliant research and teaching on mass media and journalism in Taiwan. It was

also the earliest contributors to AMIC by collecting the works for “The Annotated Bibliography of Mass Communication in Asia, 1945-1973” in 1974. The graduates of NCCU served many posts at the PTS including General Manager, Chief Executive Officer, Chairperson of Board, and Senior Producer.

The precious opportunity is approaching and we welcome the members of AMIC, including academic scholars and industry players, to join the debate of PSM’s future in this crucial time of changing geopolitics. For details on submission requirements, please check the announcement by the International Association of Public Media Researchers (IAPMR) at <https://iapmr.media/ripe/ripe2026-join-us-in-taipei/> (deadline is 31 March)

AMIC Reps in Action: Kazakhstan

“Farabi Hub” at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University

by Barlybaeva S.Kh., Alzhanova A.B.

Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (KazNU), Kazakhstan



On January 15, 2026, a meeting dedicated to the anniversary of the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University's (KazNU) founding in January 15, 1934 was held at the Faculty of Journalism. This event summarized the University's achievements over recent years, during which it has made significant progress and reached a higher level of research and education in the context of globalization and digitalization.

2026 has been declared the Year of Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence in Kazakhstan. Currently, KazNU is implementing more than 700

agreements with higher education institutions and leading research centers in Asia, Europe, and the Americas. KazNU is actively introducing innovative technologies into both education and research.

One of the key initiatives in this area is the **Farabi Hub**, an innovation center designed to support the transformation of scientific ideas and developments into competitive, high-tech products. The concept of the Hub is based on advanced international practices adapted to the realities of Kazakhstan. It brings together students, researchers, and entrepreneurs to create innovative solutions across various sectors



of the national economy. Its main objectives include organizing research activities, fostering an innovative culture, and strengthening the startup ecosystem. The **Farabi Hub** offers training programs and seminars aimed at developing participants’ skills and expanding their knowledge in the following areas:

1. Support for the commercialization of scientific developments;
2. Creation of an ecosystem for innovative development;
3. Support for researchers and young scientists;
4. Promotion of international cooperation;
5. Development of a culture of scientific research.

We had the opportunity to visit the Farabi Hub Center for Innovative Products and High-Tech Projects, where we learned about the science and technology park, the Kazakh–Hong Kong Center for Sustainable Development in Central Asia, the Kazakh–French Research Center for Central Asian Studies (Zoostan), the Kazakh–Singapore Center for Quantum Technologies, and the Kazakh–Chinese Joint Laboratory for Remote Sensing Technologies and Applications. We also visited the International Institute and the KazNU Robotics Center for Digital Technologies and Robotics (Huibo

Robotics), which includes a Digital and Intelligent Workshop with robotics laboratories and virtual enterprises.

However, the most impressive feature was the supercomputer. The supercomputer cluster will contribute to the development of domestic digital infrastructure and help address one of KazNU’s objectives to train highly qualified specialists in information technology and artificial intelligence.

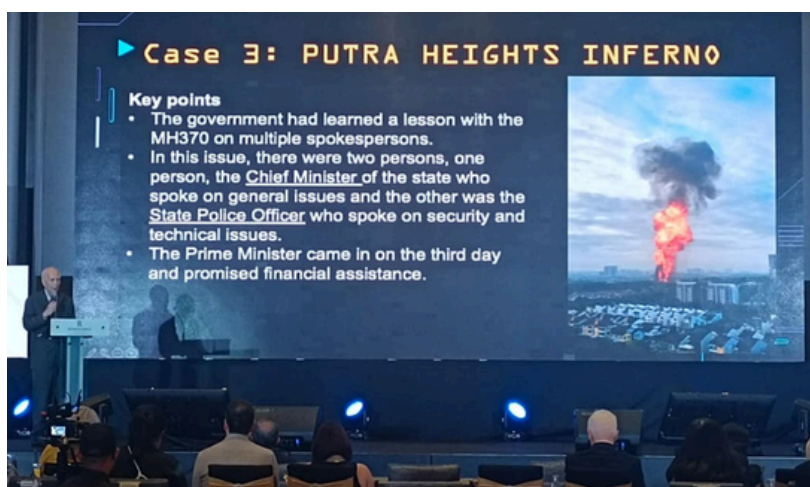
Aside from increasing the efficiency and accuracy of scientific research, the supercomputer will also significantly reduce the time required to conduct it. Its application covers various sectors in Kazakhstan, including science and education, industry, healthcare, and energy, enabling the solution of tasks that require immense computing power and high-speed data processing.

After exploring the University’s modern technologies with great interest, we took a commemorative photograph. In time, this visit of the Faculty of Journalism to the **Farabi Hub** will become part of history, a document for future generations who will study new and even more advanced innovative technologies.

AMIC Reps in Action: Malaysia

Beyond Reach & Research

by Syed Arabi Idid



KLIP Conference (Kuala Lumpur International Public Relations), July 7, 2025

For 2025, the following activities were recorded:

Academic Work

I taught four postgraduate courses besides supervising three doctoral students. In May 2025, the students in the Crisis Management Course visited The Star, a leading Malaysian media outlet, to gain insights into how crises were reported in Malaysia.

Our paper titled "Media Exposure and Trust in the Media" presented at the 19th Biennial International Conference on Media & Communication in October, received the Best Paper Award.

Research and Networking

I was made Honorary Advisor to the Malaysian Association of Communication Educators (MACE) and also to the Institute of Public Relations Malaysia (IPRM).

MACE is the Malaysian Association of Communication Educators, with over 200 academic members. The Institute of Public Relations Malaysia appointed me as Chairman of the Accreditation Board.

I was appointed by the Malaysian Press Institute (MPI) as one of five Committee members to select the country's Journalism Laureate.

We successfully conducted the fifth longitudinal study on public relations in Malaysia, a research initiative that commenced in 1997.

I am leading a research project from a grant secured from the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) that involved five lecturers and more than 80 enumerators for a nationwide survey.

I continued my public opinion polling on current affairs by conducting face-to-face interviews with 1,029 respondents nationwide, covering various current issues of interest.

Whether I am in the classroom or out in the field, my goals remain: to teach, to connect, and to research.

AMIC Member Dr. V. Vijay Kumar Receives Media Catalyst Award 2026



Dr. V. Vijay Kumar, Dean of the School of Communications at XIM University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India, and member of the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC), has been conferred the recently instituted Media Catalyst Award 2026. The award was presented by the 100-year-old renowned Loyola College (Autonomous), Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India, his alma mater, through its Department of Visual Communication, in recognition of his exemplary contributions to media practice, education, and research.

The recognition marks a significant milestone in Dr. Kumar's professional

journey, reflecting his sustained engagement with the evolving media landscape. With a career spanning more than 24 years in industry practice and academia, his work has bridged audio-visual production, media management, and critical scholarship. He has contributed to industry practice through audio-visual content development, supervision and management while advancing research on the intersections of media, technology, culture, and society, particularly within the context of digital media ecosystems and shifting audience dynamics.

The Media Catalyst Award honors alumni who have acted as agents of creative and social impact in the field of media.

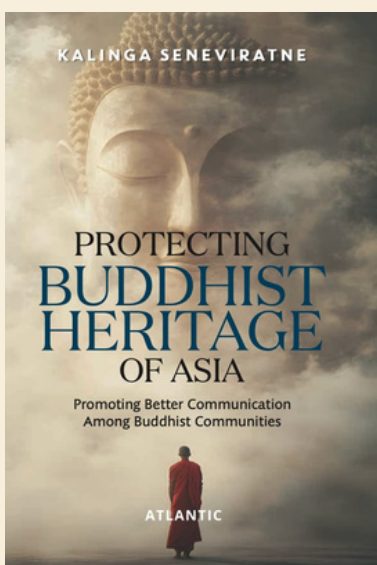
For Dr. Kumar, the recognition holds special significance as it comes from an institution that played a formative role in shaping his intellectual and professional trajectory. It also underscores the importance of integrating industry practice with academic inquiry, an approach that continues to define his leadership at XIM University.

In his reflections, Dr. Kumar dedicated the award to his students, research collaborators, and colleagues, acknowledging their role in fostering a

vibrant environment of critical thinking and creativity. He emphasized that academic work in media and communication is inherently collaborative, driven by shared curiosity and the pursuit of meaningful knowledge.

He also expressed gratitude to his industry mentors, media organizations and institutional networks that have supported him in his professional engagement.

New Book Focuses on Communication Strategy to Protect Asian Buddhism



A new book on a communication strategy to protect the Buddhist Heritage of Asia was launched recently, symbolically from the site of the Buddha's enlightenment, Bodhgaya in India.

The book titled, *Protecting Buddhist Heritage of Asia: Promoting Better Communication Among Buddhist Communities*, is a result of an 18-month study of Buddhist communities across South and Southeast Asia and their communication needs. It was undertaken by Dr Kalinga Seneviratne, former Head of Research at Asian Media Information and Communication Center (AMIC).

The project is a result of a discussion that took place at the first Asian Buddhist Media Conclave in New Delhi in 2018, where there was a discussion on how the Buddhist countries, such as Sri Lanka and Myanmar, were misreported by the international media and no Buddhist media in Asia were there to counter them..

The book comprises 16 chapters, 13 of which are country chapters that offer comprehensive backgrounds on the development of Buddhism and Buddhist institutions in countries across Asia. They also argue how Buddhism is under threat in Asia, especially from Evangelical Christians and Wahabi Islamists, who are exploiting the poverty of poor Buddhists.

The first chapter documents the spread of Buddhism across Asia and the role that the ancient Silk Routes played in such cultural exchanges. The second chapter details the diverse communication strategies that were adopted from written and printed communication, through rock edicts and modern-day cyber communications. It also discusses the Buddha's sermon 'Kalama Sutra' that is often described as the 'Buddhist Charter of Free Inquiry.'

The final chapter lists the major issues that threaten Buddhism in Asia, including Proselytism, socio-economic conditions of Buddhist communities, youth drifting away from Buddhism, the need to reform the Monastic system, the need to develop and define Buddhist media, and an introduction of media training for Buddhist communicators.

In the chapter there is an interesting discussion on how music and popular culture could be used to propagate Buddhism, especially to appeal to young people in Asia who feel Buddhism is not “cool” due to its extensive ritualistic practices. It gives some examples such as Nepali Buddhist nun Ani Choying, who has made a name for herself in World Music arena, where her concerts are a sermon cum entertainment.

There is also an interesting discussion on ‘mindful communication for sustainable development,’ which is essentially an attempt to redefine development communication using Buddhist philosophical concepts.

The book ends with a warning that if Buddhists ignore the communication needs and reforms that are necessary to save the intangible cultural heritage of Buddhism across Asia, in 100 years’ time Buddhism will be reduced like the ruins of Borobodur temple in Indonesia, which is today a historical monument, not a Buddhist shrine, because there is no local Buddhist community to support a monastery.

**Protecting Buddhist Heritage of Asia: Promoting Better Communication Among Buddhist Communities by Kalinga Seneviratne (Atlantic, 2026). The book can be purchased from Atlantic Publishers in India via the link:*

<https://atlanticbooks.com/products/protecting-buddhist-heritage-of-asia-promoting-better-communication-among-buddhist-communities>

Politics and Public Service Media



The 13th Biennial Re-Visionary Interpretations of the Public Enterprise (RIPE) in Media Conference will be held on 20-23 October 2026 in Taipei, Taiwan. The conference theme is Politics and Public Service Media.

The conference is sponsored by the Taiwan Public Television Service Foundation and hosted by the School of Communication at National Chengchi University.

The event offers an opportunity for the Global South to connect with the Developed North within the contemporary PSM (public service media) research network and community. The 2026 annual theme focuses on the politics and politicization of Public Service Media (PSM).

The conference sessions offer invaluable lessons and experiences in addressing the challenge of maintaining

PSM independence amid shifting policy and technological landscapes. It also aims to advance discussions on PSM sustainability. Among the topics to be featured are Political Dynamics, Media Capture, and PSM Autonomy; Geopolitics, Global Power Shifts, and the Evolution of PSM; Policymaking and Regulatory Regimes in a Shifting Media Environment; PSM in the Digital Age: Navigating Disinformation and Platform Power; Trust, Neutrality, and Public Legitimacy: The Political Battleground; and Emerging Agendas: Sustainability, DEI, and the Future Mandate of PSM.

Over the years, AMIC has been involved in initiatives supporting PSM. AMIC organized in 1995 the seminar, "The Impact of the Changing Media Environment on Public Service Programming in Asia". It published *Public Service Broadcasting: A Best Practices Sourcebook 2005* and *Public Service Broadcasting and Its Role in Raising Civic Consciousness: Case Studies from Asia* in 2012,

For more information about the conference, please check the International Association of Public Media Researchers (IAPMR) website at <https://iapmr.media/ripe/ripe2026-join-us-in-taipei/>



Silicon Valley Peace Conference

The Silicon Valley Peace Conference (SVPC), organized under the theme, AI's Role in Community Development and Peacebuilding in Developing Nations, will take place on September 18–19, 2026, in Palo Alto, California. Conference venue is St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto, California.

Bringing together scholars, technologists, policymakers, peacebuilders, and practitioners, the conference aims to explore AI's potential contributions to development and peace in diverse contexts. Hosted by a group of academic and civic institutions, the event will serve as a platform for sharing research findings, practical evidence and insights, exchanging ideas, and forming new collaborations on the implications of AI for humanity's benefit and empowerment. Individuals interested in attending the conference may visit the conference website www.svpconference.org.

The conference organizers welcome participants to take part in this academic gathering, which will take place in Silicon Valley, California, at the heart of global AI innovation.

The conference also offers an optional two-day tour of the San Francisco Bay Area for attendees who wish to explore the region's rich technological and cultural landscape. Through research presentations, shared best practices, and interactive sessions, participants will learn from emerging findings and research insights, exchange perspectives, and build networks to deepen their understanding of AI's impact on society. These engagements aim to strengthen collective efforts toward peaceful, equitable, and inclusive AI-enabled futures.

The conference subthemes include AI for Peacebuilding and Global Security; AI, Social Justice, and Inclusive Societies; AI and Community Empowerment; AI for Sustainable Development and Environment; AI in Education, Public Health, and Research; and AI, Ethics, Theology, and Spirituality.

AMIC Secretary General Ramon R. Tuazon is a member of the SVPC Steering Committee.



Communication, Information Integrity, and Social Justice is the theme of World Summer School



Communication, Information Integrity,
Social Justice and Democracy

21-23 October 2026 · World Summer School

AMIC is one of the entities involved with the first edition of the World Summer School, dedicated to “Communication, Information Integrity, Social Justice and Democracy.” Remote activities are scheduled for October 21-23, 2026. Registration takes place in May.

The WSS is a three-day academic online event to be held from 21 to 23 October 2026. Designed as a virtual initiative, the Summer School is aligned with the IAMCR Conference 2026 theme and will combine remote panels and roundtables, enabling broad international participation and fostering dialogue among senior scholars, early-career researchers, and master’s and doctoral students from diverse geographical, institutional, and epistemic contexts.

The proposal is grounded on the theoretical and normative framework of

the IAMCR Working Group on Communication, Justice and Democracy (CJD), addressing communication as a central arena in struggles over information integrity, democratic governance, and social justice.

The activities involved people from the WG and also from Latin American Association of Communication Researchers (ALAI) and other regional and national entities. In a global context shaped by platformization, algorithmic power, data extraction, media education, political polarization, and persistent inequalities in visibility and participation, the event seeks to examine how communication systems both reproduce and challenge power asymmetries.

The academic program will consist of thematic panels, paper sessions, and dialogical roundtables, in the format “summer school,” encouraging both empirical and theoretical contributions.

In the first hours of each day, panels will feature academics who will give presentations and discuss topics directly or indirectly related to the research conducted by master's and doctoral students.

After a two-hour break, the students will present their research projects, receiving feedback from colleagues and researchers. There will also be encouragement for cultural and social exchange, stimulating academic dialogue and integration among participants.

Proposed themes include: information disorders and democratic resilience; communication rights and social justice; platform regulation and accountability; media, extremism, and polarization;

community, alternative, and public service media; digital citizen participation and depolarization; journalism and media education, decolonial, feminist, and Global South epistemologies; and the role of media education in strengthening democratic cultures. Dedicated sessions for graduate students and early-career researchers will promote mentorship, feedback, and academic exchange. The WSS Schedule is: a) Registration for interested postgraduate students: from 1st to 29th May, following information which will be available at: www.alaic.org b) Evaluation and selection of participants: 30th May to 19th June, and c) Announcement of selected participants: 24th June

Paris Declaration on Freedom of Journalism Education



Adopted by the *World Journalism Education Council* during its plenary session, on July 8th 2019. This declaration was recognized by UNESCO's International Program for the Development of Communication at its plenary session on November 26, 2020 (IPDC).

We, members of the World Journalism Education Council:

We believe there is a strong link between the quality of journalism education and the quality of information people to which they are entitled to.

We believe that there cannot be an environment of quality information without quality journalism.

We believe that quality journalism depends greatly on proper journalism education and training.

We believe that journalism education has a fundamental role to play towards more inclusive societies and the United Nations' 2030 development agenda.

We believe that this Declaration would help colleagues to make their authorities understand the specificity of journalism education from the academic and from the resources point of view.

Furthermore, we believe that this Declaration would contribute to strengthening the WJEC as a global network of journalism educators.

Preamble:

- Reinforcing the Declaration of Principles developed at the first meeting of the World Journalism Education Congress in Singapore in 2007, which advocated for journalism education as a distinct field with its own body of knowledge and theory, closely allied with the practice of journalism and deserving respect within both the academic and professional communities;

- Noting that journalism, as an academic discipline, plays a significant role in society, including progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals;
- Acknowledging that in an age of disinformation, misinformation, and threat to press freedom, the role of independent journalism is more important than ever;
- Observing that resources allocated to journalism education are an investment in long-term institutional capacity to help guarantee strong, independent and quality journalism;
- Responding to the key role that journalism education can play in this historical period:
- Promote diversity as a key factor in journalism education: diversity among students, diversity among staff, diversity among topics taught;
- Encourage a critical spirit for journalism education research, including in experiments and innovations concerning pedagogies, journalistic practices, and media business models.

Therefore we, Members of the World Journalism Education Council, call on:

Agrees on the following principles for journalism educators and trainers, academic as well as professional:

- Maintain strong and independent governance of journalism schools and journalism departments, which should have a faculty level of power and decision-making, and have recognized academic autonomy from external actors;
- Preserve journalism education as a distinctive stream compared to other fields of mass and strategic communication;
- Mobilize the necessary funding for excellence in curricula and extracurricular outreach as required for the quality functioning of a journalism school;
- Maintain a balance between academic knowledge and the technical skills of the journalism craft;
- Recognize gender equality in and through journalism education as a cross-cutting priority;
- Journalism educators and trainers and their institutions and organizations to advocate for adherence to this Declaration;
- Leaders in higher education and training NGOs to take the principles into their practice;
- National departments of education, media industries, private businesses and donors, including international donors, to ensure sufficient funding for journalism education while respecting its independence;
- UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication to support this Declaration and bring it to the attention of UNESCO member states.

Note: AMIC is an active member of the WJEC. The inaugural conference of WJEC was hosted by Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC) during the 16th AMIC conference and the School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. AMIC Secretary-General Ramon R. Tuazon is a member of the WJEC Steering Committee.

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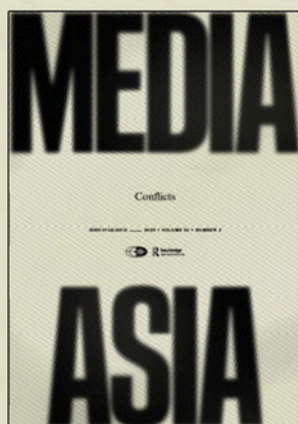
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