Title	Attitudes towards Violent Extremism amongst Muslim Communities in Malaysia
Project Code	DCP-2017-009/2
Date	01/02/2018 - 31/10/2020
Head of Project	Wan Kamal Bin Mujani
E-mail	inawan@ukm.edu.my

Introduction

During the past three years, the Malaysian police have arrested more than 250 people for terrorist-related offenses. In 2016 alone, there were 115 arrests, a 40 percent increase from the 82 arrests in 2015. In 2014, there were 59 arrests and just four in 2013. Police also thwarted 14 attempted attacks during this period. One, however, escaped the dragnet in July 2016, when a hand grenade was tossed into a nightclub outside Kuala Lumpur, injuring eight people. Although police initially dismissed it as a terror incident, they later confirmed the bombing was the first ISIS-linked attack in the country. Malaysian police, however, consider the threat posed by autonomous actors to be more dangerous than that by ISIS as an organized group. This point is illustrated by several attempts by individuals in 2016 to carry out the mandate of ISIS in Malaysia, including a teenager who used a knife to take a woman hostage in a supermarket. It is unclear, however, just how many of these actors were inspired by ISIS and how many were directly ordered by the group. Hence, it is timely to gauge the Muslim's attitude towards violent extremism so as to understand their level of susceptibility to extremist ideas and actions. Therefore, this project seeks to understand the Muslim's attitudes towards extremism and possible drivers for supporting extremist ideas and actions. It will map out Muslim communities' responses to such issues and permit analysis on common threads and underlying factors that may contribute to them. This project will also investigate shared interests and factors that can be harnessed to promote moderation and tolerance among the Muslim communities. Findings from this project will be channeled to leaders, policy makers and reform-oriented members of political organizations from across the spectrum and the wider public via various dissemination events.

Publication: