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人文社會科學院



Seminar

Democracy and the market economy: Examples of Hong Kong and Singapore



Dr Chee Soon Juan

Leader of the opposition Singapore Democratic Party (SDP)

Date: **6 November 2014 (Thursday)**

Time: **5:15 pm – 6:45 pm**

Venue: **LT-10, AC 1, City University of Hong Kong**

Abstract

Singapore's senior statesman believes that economies function best without the uncertainties and vagaries of democracy. In this vein, Singapore and Hong Kong are prime examples of market economies with open trading systems that seem to thrive in spite of – or is it because of as some argue – the absence of the democratic process. Indeed, Singapore and Hong Kong have been held up as models worthy of emulation by many emerging economies both within Asia and further afield. But such a view is myopic at best. It disregards the dangers that non-open and undemocratic systems engender, which is the vital participation of the masses in regenerating and re-vitalising an economy. This is especially so in the case of Singapore. Dr Chee Soon Juan, Secretary-General of the Singapore Democratic Party, will speak on the role that democracy plays in the market-economy and how its absence will impact future progress.

Short Bio

Chee Soon Juan is a vocal opponent of the ruling People's Action Party, which has held power since 1959. He was sacked as a lecturer by the National University of Singapore when he joined the SDP and took part in an election in 1992. He has been arrested and jailed more than a dozen times for his political activities, primarily for repeatedly challenging Singapore's laws that require protest organisers to obtain a police permit before staging political demonstrations or making public speeches on political issues. He was sued for defamation on multiple occasions for opinions he expressed about members of the People's Action Party. After refusing to pay monetary damages for these suits, Chee was declared bankrupt in 2006, and banned from traveling and standing in parliamentary elections. His bankruptcy has been annulled in 2012, paving the way for him to contest the 2016 general elections.

Chee is the author of several books as well as contributed chapters in other books. He was Research Associate at Monash Asia Institute (1997), Human Rights Fellow at University of Chicago (2001), the Reagan-Fascell Fellow at the National Endowment for Democracy (2004), and a visiting fellow of the Sydney Democracy Network (2014). He is the recipient of Defender of Democracy Award (2003) given by the Parliamentarians for Global Action and the Prize for Freedom (2011) given by Liberal International. He was also awarded the Hellman/Hammett Writers Grant by Human Rights Watch (2003).

All are welcome.
Language: English

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