

## Goon...

May 1, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Goon... – May 1, 2009

Odd advertisement on the side of a bakery truck showing a person covered in bakery items. It is not clear whether it says “goon” or “go on.”

## Sporty Red Shirts

May 2, 2009

Categories: Red Shirt Protest 2009



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Sporty Red Shirts – May 2, 2009

This Central billboard has some rather odd, and certainly unintended, Red Shirt references. The picture contains a red flag, defiant-looking youth, one wearing a red cap, and a burning city in the background.

It reads: Armed equipped readily before the tournament for the best golf tournament of the year – See more than 80 brands of golf sport equipment with 70% discount – Receive maximum 19% discount from the Central 1st card

## Seattle woman mysteriously dies in Thailand

May 6, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Seattle woman mysteriously dies in Thailand](#) – KING5 Seattle May 6, 2009

*Family and friends of a Seattle woman who died in Thailand are demanding answers.*

*...Then the local Thai newspaper, the Andaman Times, reported a Norwegian tourist dying within hours of Jill in the same bungalow. Norwegian news outlet Nettavisen reports traces of cyanide found in that woman and suggests a nearby water treatment plant as the cause...*

## More waterworld in Thailand

May 7, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

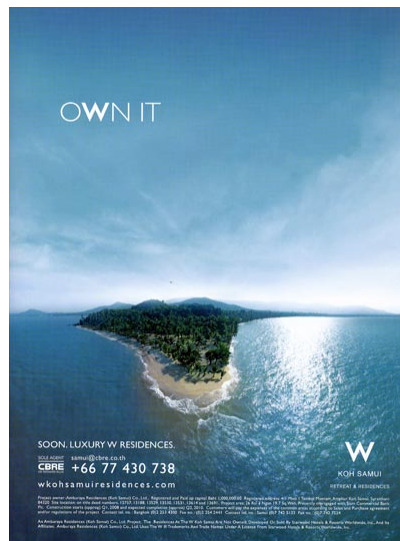
[More waterworld in Thailand](#) – *Global Post*, May 7, 2009

*...Khun Samut Jeen is a town in retreat. It's also an ominous symbol of Thailand's rising seas, which threaten to someday reach Bangkok just 15 miles north. The community, founded centuries ago, has been thoroughly probed by researchers from the capital. They've left behind wave-breaking barriers, meant to replace the miles of destroyed coastal vegetation that once helped keep the sea at bay...*

## Foreigners ‘own 90% of Phuket beach land’

May 8, 2009

Categories: Property and Development



Above: “Own it” advertisement – May 8, 2009

[Foreigners ‘own 90% of Phuket beach land’ – Report says land grab rife in tourist spots](#) – *Bangkok Post*, August 24, 2009

## “Smiles Remover”

May 8, 2009

Categories: Signs and Billboards



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

“Smiles Remover” – May 8, 2009

Unusual sounding company name and slogan... Guess what they do before checking their [website](#).



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

## Family seeks answers in Seattle artist's death in Thailand

May 8, 2009

Categories: Crime

[Family seeks answers in Seattle artist's death in Thailand](#) – *Seattle Times*, May 8, 2009

... "We have no idea how they operate," said St. Onge, who lives near Fresno, Calif. "We can't just go in there like John Wayne demanding stuff. ... You have a risk of insulting them..."

## 2Bangkok.com is 10 years old this month

May 9, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News



2Bangkok.com is 10 years old this month – May 9, 2009

Above is a cartoon by the *Manager's* Buncha featuring 2Bangkok editor Ron Morris.

The caption reads: Songkran 2009... Bangkok

## **Thai research nurse completes Scientology volunteer minister training at the Church of Scientology of New York**

May 9, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thai research nurse completes Scientology volunteer minister training at the Church of Scientology of New York](#) – Thailandnews, May 9, 2009

*A Volunteer Minister is a person who helps his fellow man on a volunteer basis by restoring purpose, truth and spiritual values to the lives of others...*

# Anti-elephant begging graffiti

May 10, 2009  
Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Anti-elephant begging graffiti](#)– May 10, 2009

## Opposition raises specter of civil war in Thailand

May 14, 2009

Categories: Red Shirt Protest 2009

[Opposition raises specter of civil war in Thailand](#) – *World Politics Review*, May 4, 2009

*Thailand calls itself the Land of Smiles, and is known for its tropical beaches, beautiful mountains, good food and friendly people. But that may soon change. While the happy-go-lucky image of Thailand may be hard for many to shake, political observers — and the government — are beginning to take the possibility of a civil war much more seriously...*

[Thai leader struggles at the center of a storm](#) – *NYT*, May 6, 2009

*Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva is attempting to stabilize a country that seems to be spinning out of control...*

[Politically incendiary TV, radio content to be banned](#) – *Bangkok Post*, May 14, 2009

## Local rally centers on plight of Hmong in Thailand

May 15, 2009

Categories: Refugees and Migrants

[Local rally centers on plight of Hmong in Thailand](#) – *La Crosse Tribune*, May 15, 2009

*Hmong refugees and their supporters rallied Friday in La Crosse to call attention to the fate of 5,000 Hmong people in Thailand who could be forcibly returned to Laos...*

## At a Hmong camp

May 17, 2009

Categories: Refugees and Migrants



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)

At a Hmong camp – May 17, 2009

HK writes: *In the mid-year 2004, Thamkrabok was a place in which Hmong resided, has now been closed by the soldiers. So, it caused some group of Hmong to remain there and 7,800 Lao Hmong refugees escaping from Laos have been living at Ban Huay Nam Kwaw, Kaek Noi sub-district, Phetchabun province. It is Thai government's duties and responsibilities to address. A group of Hmong deceived other Hmong people in Laos to immigrate to Thailand by claiming that the United States would support them as they were Hmong's lineage. Some of Hmong people claimed that they ran away from Laos because of genocide. In fact, there are no any policies to get Hmong back to the United States, but Barack Obama, the 44th president of the United States, used to launch his campaign to support these Hmong people. Formerly, Laos had a distrust of these Hmong people because they were not sure whether these Hmong people were a group of Lao people against Laos or not and thought that Thailand gave them a hand. After discussing, Laos was pleased to get these Hmong people back home. At the present, a Police Lieutenant Colonel in Khao Kor district sent back 2,600 Hmong people to Laos in 14 groups. In 2009, many Hmong people will have been sent back to Laos. Thailand is well-known as a humanitarian country. We are now taking care of more than 100,000 refugees fleeing from the border fight and 2 million illegal labors immigrating from Laos, Burma and Cambodia. Although there are a lot of poor Thai people waiting for help, it is necessary to give them a hand because they are deeply distressed.*



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)

## Rocky Hill cameras bound for Thailand

May 19, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Rocky Hill cameras bound for Thailand](#) – *Hartford Business*, May, 2009

*Thailand's army will use digital surveillance cameras made by a Rocky Hill company to fight crime, drug trafficking and terrorism in the southeast Asian...*

## Centurions

May 20, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Centurions – May, 2009

Roman-style centurions marching around the Ratchada Area to promote [Generali Insurance](#).



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

## Plea for help... Annice Smoel, now stuck in Thailand

May 21, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Plea for help... Annice Smoel, now stuck in Thailand](#) – *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 20, 2009

[Police tell of abuse from Annice Smoels in Thailand](#) – *NEWS.com.au*, May 20, 2009

[Children of woman facing jail in Thailand plead for her return](#) – *Melbourne Herald Sun*, May 20, 2009

[Thai jail mum set free](#) – *Perth Now*, May 20, 2009

[\\$3000 the price of Thai justice](#) – *The Age*, May 21, 2009

...After negotiating with a detective – “he wanted the money in an envelope” – the family paid \$3000 to have the charges dropped. Ms Smoel pleaded guilty to her charges – in order to leave Thailand – was fined \$38 and placed on a good behaviour bond...

[Bar mat mother felt ‘like Schapelle Corby’](#) – *The Age*, May 21, 2009

...Mrs Smoel said she had not received her passport until she was at Phuket airport and did not feel safe until she boarded a Thai Airways flight to Australia in Bangkok.

“Things work very strangely in Thailand and you get told something and then it goes backwards and you take two steps forward and then it goes backwards,” she said...

## **‘Spider bite’ to dead backpacker**

May 21, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[‘Spider bite’ to dead backpacker](#) – *BBC News*, May 21, 2009

*A Sussex backpacker behaved strangely and eventually collapsed and died in Thailand after reporting a spider bite, an inquest has heard...*

## Thailand ‘gets tough’ with Hmong

May 22, 2009

Categories: Refugees and Migrants

[Thailand ‘gets tough’ with Hmong](#) – BBC News, May 22, 2009

*...On a recent trip to Washington DC, the famously loose-tongued Mr Kasit said one Hmong group would be allowed to go to the US – only to back-track after the Lao government protested.*

*When asked why no international screening or monitoring of the Hmong was being allowed by Thailand, Mr Kasit would only say that such screening was unnecessary, and that he was prepared to trust the assurances of the Lao government.*

*Medecins Sans Frontieres, the UNHCR and many other agencies strongly disagree...*

## Pattaya videos from 1987-1998

May 23, 2009

Categories: Old photos and films

[Pattaya videos from 1987-1998](#) – May 23, 2009

Steve note: *Come across this while scouting the net, a guy called Thoti100 has just posted [a bunch of homemade videos](#) from Pattaya in 1987/88.*

## **Fat ‘bully’ loses to Thai bride used as servant**

May 23, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Fat ‘bully’ loses to Thai bride used as servant](#) – *The Australian*, May 23, 2009

## Thai gaming sites ordered shut down after suicide

May 24, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thai gaming sites ordered shut down after suicide](#) – *Slashdot.org*, May 24, 2009

## **Pacquiao embraced as “hero of all Asia” by Thais**

May 25, 2009

Categories: Sports

[Pacquiao embraced as “hero of all Asia” by Thais](#) – GMA News, May 25, 2009

*Thailand, site of Manny Pacquiao's success and heartaches early in his career, embraced the Filipino ring superstar like their own and showered the “hero of all Asia” with warm welcome and praise when he dropped by Monday...*

# Unlimited demand for Buddha statues

May 25, 2009

Categories: Buddhism, Local Beliefs

Unlimited demand for Buddha statues – translated by Pieter from [The Volkskrant](#), May 25, 2009

*AMSTERDAM – The Netherlands counts an estimated 250 thousand Buddhists or people who feel a strong affinity with this religion. The growth is so strong that besides from Islamizing we can now also talk of Buddhizing of the Netherlands, according to researchers Marcel Poorthuis and Theo Salemink of the Tilburg University.*

*"But strange enough nobody is worried about this. Buddhism has apparently a better image than Islam", according to Poorthuis, lecturer of interreligious dialogue.*

*Buddhism is the third largest religion of the Netherlands, after Christianity and Islam. While Islamizing by politicians like Geert Wilders is often seen as a threat and is associated with violence and collectivity, Buddhism is experienced as a solo religion that stands for non violence and pacifism. Symbol of this is the Dalai Lama who will visit the Netherlands on 4 and 5 June.*

*Poorthuis and Salemink claim in their newly published book Lotus in the low lands that Buddhism has other sides too. 'Kamikaze pilots in the second world war had Buddhist teachers. Ans also the Dalai Lama cannot avoid conflicts because of the difficult political situation of Tibet, even though the Netherlands wants to see in him a heavenly pacifist', according to Poorthuis.*

*In 1988 there were four thousand native Dutchmen who felt affinity with Buddhism, next to 12 thousand Buddhist immigrants from Asia. In 1999 that number was already increased to 169 thousand and six years later already to 250 thousand.*

*There is an enormous demand for Buddha statues and meditation courses. Famous Dutchmen like Herman Wijffels and Erica Terpstra are affiliated with Buddhism. Many Dutchmen call themselves Buddhist without knowing exactly what the religion is about.*

*Buddhism is often abused commercially. There are for example many corporate training offerings inspired by Buddhism. 'But instead to answer the question whether the credit crisis is caused by desire, is Buddhism used to optimize the production process'.*

## Student jumps from 6th floor of my school

May 25, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Student jumps from 6th floor of my school](#) – Thai blogs, May 25, 2009

Richard reports: *I just came back from the cremation of the Primary 6 student that jumped from the 6th floor of the school building last Thursday. He was a student at my school. The press speculated that he jumped because his father had scolded him for playing video games and had banned him from playing again. Very tragic. Thirteen of his school friends ordained as novice monks this morning...*

# No, you can't own it

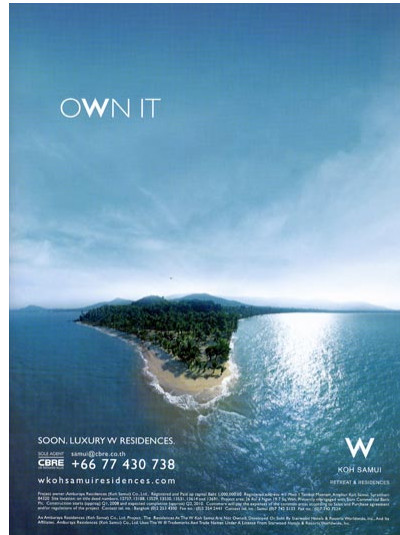
May 25, 2009

Categories: Property and Development

[Land purchase through Thai spouse forbidden: Land Dept](#) – *Phuket Gazette*, May 27, 2009  
[via ThaiVisa.com](#)

Yesterday: [International Real Estate For Sale In... Thailand](#) – *New York Times*, May 26, 2009

*The real estate market in Thailand's beach resorts is fed mostly by foreign buyers, who make up more than 90 percent of the market share, according to Frank Khan, the director of Knight Frank Thailand's residential department...*



"Own it" – May 8, 2009

Can you really own property on Koh Samui? Interestingly, when one logs on to their [website](#), country of residence must be specified. U.S. residents are told the offer is not available to them, but for U.K. residents no such message pops up.

## **Bangkok beckons with grime, grit, and many opportunities**

May 26, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Bangkok beckons with grime, grit, and many opportunities](#) – *Watertown Daily Times*, May, 2009

## Food vendors: A Thai tradition with a twist of innovation

May 26, 2009

Categories: Food and Drink

[Food vendors: A Thai tradition with a twist of innovation](#) – *New York Times* May 26, 2009

*...Foreign visitors sometimes perceive street vending as a sign of developing-world poverty. But Thais view peddling as a chance to be one's own boss and earn handsomely. Ms. Sarintira knows a curry seller whose annual profits exceed \$52,000, an upper-middle-class income in Thailand. At the big-box retailers and convenience store chains now spreading fast here, clerks typically earn just \$3,000 to \$4,000 a year.*

*A few street entrepreneurs have become millionaires. A video shows how Panrop Kamlah cooked up riches with the noodle cart he began 17 years ago. Not satisfied with his initial nightly earnings of \$175, he started making his own noodle dough at home, then opened a second stall. After creating his own logo, relatives and friends asked to join, so he offered carts on franchise. Business exploded when he appeared on national television. Today he has a noodle factory and an empire of some 1,500 branded carts...*

## **Did West Seattle woman die of food poisoning in Thailand?**

May 26, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Did West Seattle woman die of food poisoning in Thailand?](#) – *Seattle Times*, May, 2009

## **Name your poison: ‘Snake wine’ seized**

May 26, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Name your poison: ‘Snake wine’ seized](#) – CNN, May, 2009

*Customs officials said the snakes, mixed in a glass container containing some form of alcohol, were inside an express mail package from Thailand...*

## **NIH spends \$178,000 to study why prostitutes in Thailand have high HIV risk**

May 27, 2009

Categories: HIV-AIDS

[NIH spends \\$178,000 to study why prostitutes in Thailand have high HIV risk](#) — FoxNews, May, 2009

*...Researchers plan to interview 60 sex workers — 36 women and 24 kathoey — to understand the factors that make the prostitutes susceptible to HIV, including economic pressure, sex-change operations, their heavy use of drugs and a Buddhist fatalism that keeps them feeling resigned to their fate...*

## Magazine aimed at foreign females in Thailand

May 28, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Acclimate!](#) – May, 2009

Magazine aimed at foreign females in Thailand... We will likely never forget this cover.



## Columbia Sportswear busts Thai counterfeiters

May 28, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Columbia Sportswear busts Thai counterfeiters](#) – OregonLive, May 28, 2009

*...First, a mob surrounded the Thai cops and Teng Sok Chheng, the alleged counterfeiting ringleader, demanding her release in a gritty town bordering Cambodia. “We decided to move from the hot spot immediately,” wrote an unnamed investigator working for Columbia, the apparel and footwear company based near Beaverton.*

*Then during the four-hour drive to Bangkok on May 21, Thai soldiers stopped the officers, investigators and their suspect, demanding her freedom. “The soldiers eventually released us,” the investigator wrote, “after the police pressed the issue that the soldiers had no authority to detain us.”*

*To Columbia managers in Oregon, the soldiers’ conduct — and repeated phone calls during the drive from influential police and military officials — illustrates how corruption often abets international product piracy...*

## Court: Thai soldiers not guilty in Muslims' deaths

May 29, 2009

Categories: The Thai Deep South

[Court: Thai soldiers not guilty in Muslims' deaths](#) – Thailandnews.net, May 29, 2009

... "The court stressed the need to transport the victims to the army base in a rush because the incident happened near a royal palace. The court also said a lot of nails that had been sprayed on the road also delayed the trucks. But the court did not mention how the victims were piled up on top of each other," she said. In 2006, in an effort at reconciliation, the military agreed to drop charges against 58 protesters for illegal gathering, illegal possession of arms and causing a public disturbance. The government also paid financial compensation to the families of the dead and injured...

## **Thailand offers best value for money in Asia Pacific region**

May 29, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thailand offers best value for money in Asia Pacific region](#) – *Travel Daily News*, May 29, 2009

## Thailand's cyber cops turn up heat on Megatouch counterfeiters

May 29, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thailand's cyber cops turn up heat on Megatouch counterfeiters](#) – *Vending Times*, May, 2009

*Merit's distributor in Thailand, Galaxy Edu-Hitech Co., assisted police in both raids. Merit's director of government relations, Bob Fay...*

## Thai city cheers a family legacy, and its own history

May 29, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

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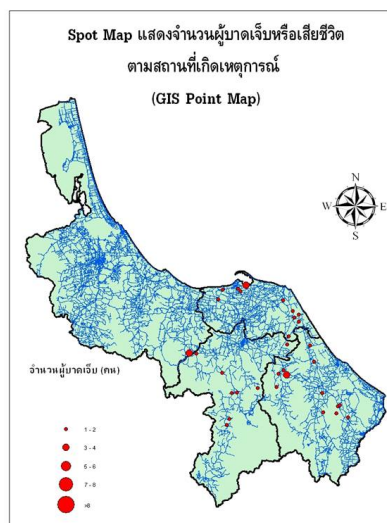
[Thai city cheers a family legacy, and its own history](#) – Reuters May 29, 2009

... "Northern people value good manners, being gracious, being calm and unhurried. The family have helped preserve that culture. They still set an example..."

## Southern Violence Statistics – May 2009

May 30, 2009

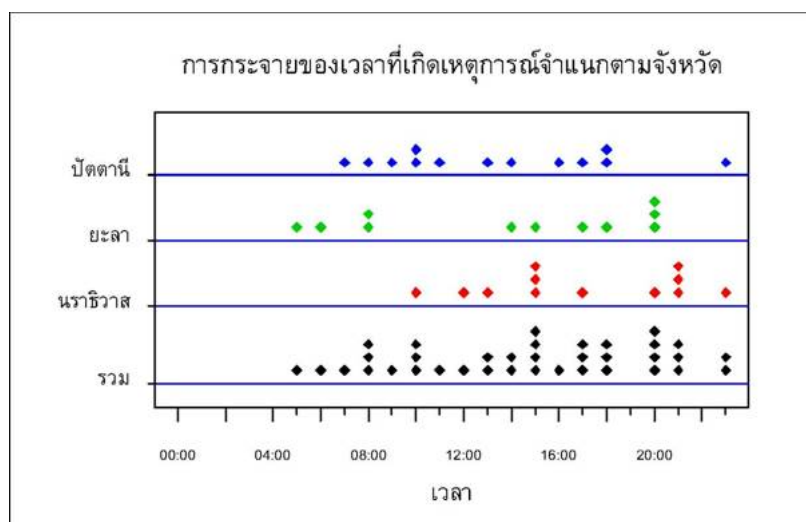
Categories: Deep South Violence Statistics



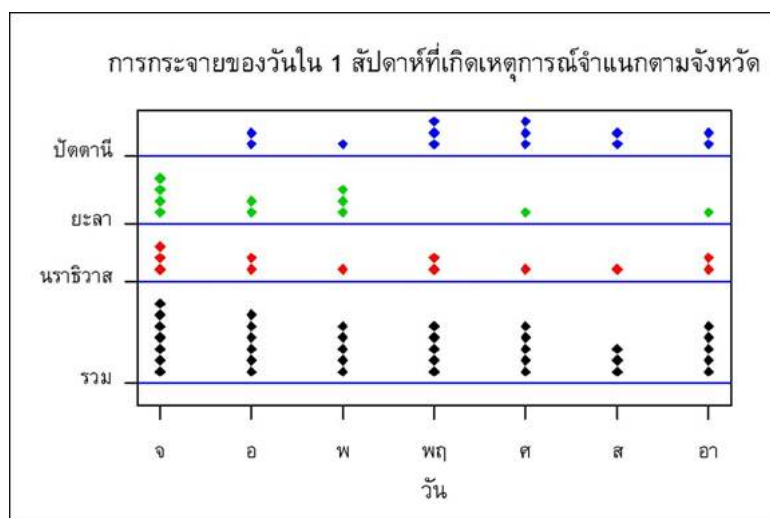
Map of four provinces in the deep south (Songkhla, Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat) showing numbers of the dead and injured by location.

### Southern Violence Statistics – May 2009

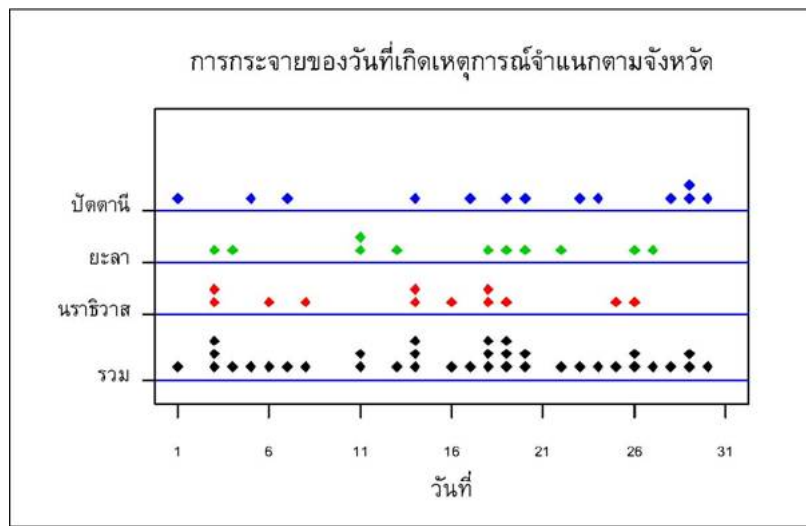
[Index of violence statistics for the Thai Deep South](#)



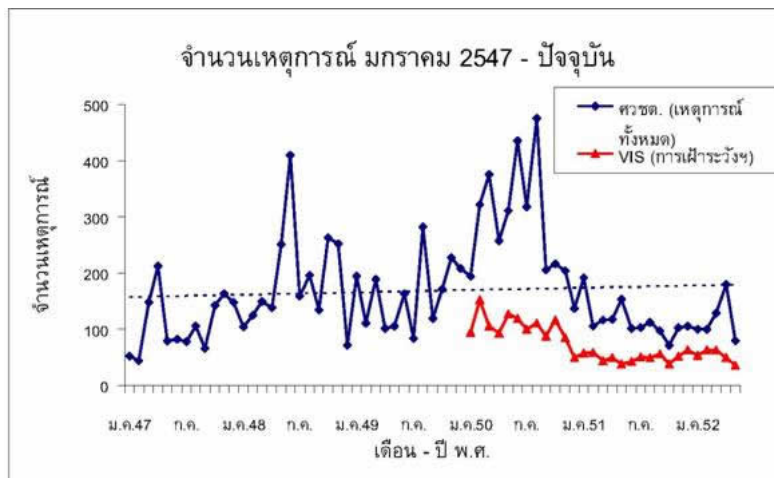
This chart shows violent incidents classified by the hour of the day (x-axis) and the province (y-axis). Songkhla=light blue, Pattani=blue, Yala=green, Narathiwat=red, total events=black



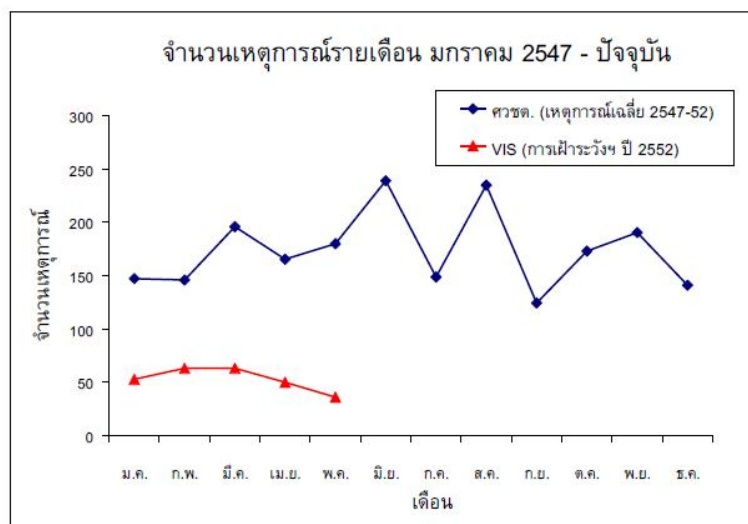
This chart shows violent incidents classified by day of the week (x-axis) and the province (y-axis). The days of the week start with Monday on the left. Songkhla=light blue, Pattani=blue, Yala=green, Narathiwat=red, total events=black



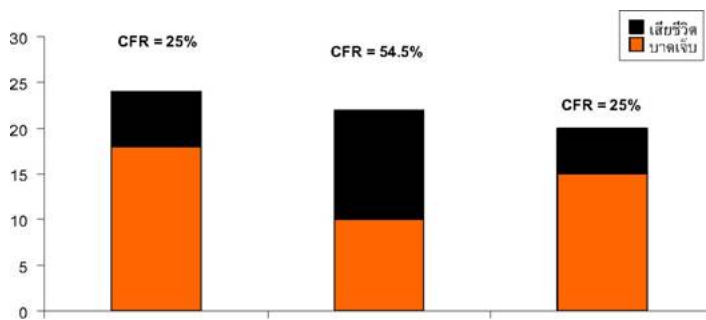
This chart shows violent incidents classified by day of the month (x-axis) and the province (y-axis). Songkhla=light blue, Pattani=blue, Yala=green, Narathiwat=red, total events=black



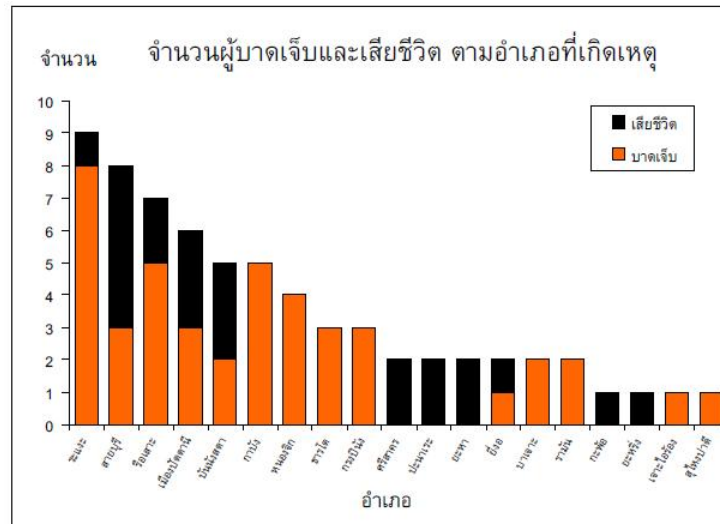
Numbers of violent incidents since January 2004. Across the bottom are the years (2547 is 2004, 2548 is 2005, 2549 is 2006, 2550 is 2007, 2551 is 2008, 2552 is 2009). The blue line shows the number of all violent incidents that took place as reported by the Deep South Coordination Center (counting all incidents both injury and non-injury). The red line shows data according to the Violence-related Injury Surveillance (a form that hospitals, doctors and clinics are supposed to fill out to report violent incidents).



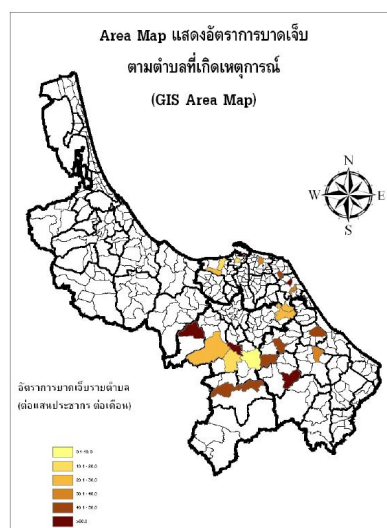
The blue line shows the average monthly level of violent incidents from 2004 up to the present. The red line shows the information provided to the Violence-related Injury Surveillance in the present year. The y-axis shows the numbers of events from 0-300. The x-axis shows the months of the year from January to December (left to right).



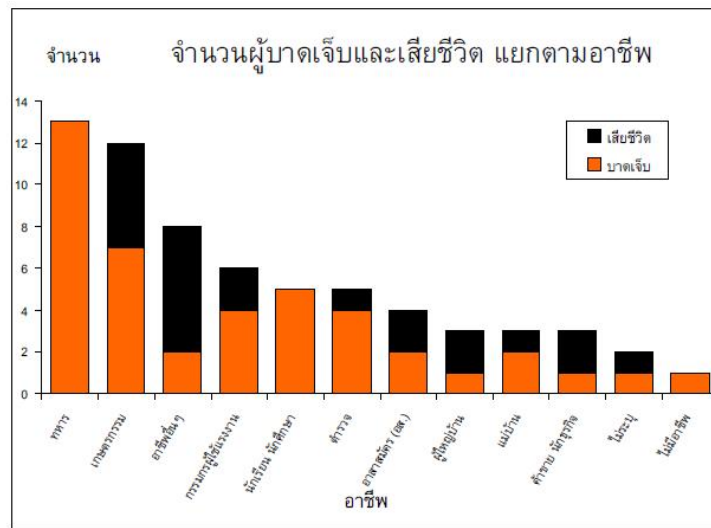
The numbers of injured and dead reported from each province where the events occurred (Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat and Songkhla). Black= dead, orange=injured. The CFR (Case Fatality Rate) of each province is above each bar.



The toll of dead and injured (y-axis), classified by the districts where the incidents took place (x-axis). Black= dead, orange=injured.



Map of four provinces in the deep south (Songkhla, Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat) showing the number of violent events by tambon (village). Starting at light yellow, the levels are 1-10, 10-20, 20-30, 30-40, 40-50, and greater than 60.



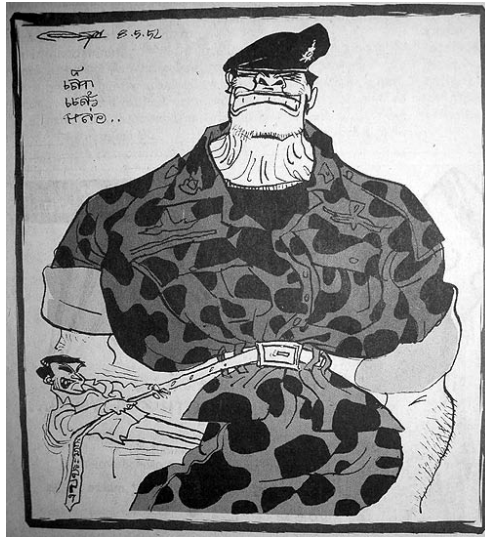
The numbers of dead and injured, classified by the victims' profession. Black= dead, orange=injured. From left to right: army officers, agriculturists, others, laborers, students and college students, police officers, volunteer defense guards, village headmen, housewives, businessmen, unknown (no data), unemployed

Source: Deep South Violence-related Injury Surveillance statistics

## Thai Media Project – May, 2009

May 30, 2009

Categories: Thai Media Project



Cutting the military budget – by Arun, *Krungtepturakit*, May 11, 2009

It reads " Small will be handsome "

On the belt it reads: Budget



*Nation Weekend*, May 29, 2009

The cover reads: 25.5.52 to new politics

*Matchon Weekly*, May 29, 2009

The cover reads: Kaeingo Jang – Kaeingo is so good



(Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)

Arson attacks in the south – May 27 2009

Dr. Has reports: At around 4 am. , militants staged arson and bombing attacks in the city district of Yala province and in area close to the city district. The torching attacks occurred at the Srisamai warehouse in the old market, the Apirak furniture shop in the Muangmai market, the warehouse in Soi 24, the plan 4 area in the market (owner not known), and the advertising board of the ISUZU car company. The estimated damage is not revealed. All incidents took place in the municipality of Yala. Furthermore, the arson attack occurred at the Yong Huad Warehouse, 3 km. away from the city district which is the biggest construction supply warehouse in the South. The bombing attack took place at the Ban Nieng junction, 10 km. away from the city district and the damage has not been evaluated.



(Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)



(Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)

Above: Smoke at the Yong Huad Warehouse in the Thasab, 3 k.m. away from the Yala's city district.



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**Red Shirts – *Daily News*, May 28, 2009**

The caption reads: Acknowledgement – Police Lieutenant General Somkit Boonthanorm, the Region 5 Police Commander, calls for the meeting of the commanding officers from the 8 Northern provinces. The Chiang Mai Patriot 51 group asks the police to recognize the regulations on gathering and urges the police to follow the law with respect to people's rights.

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Horned cicadas – *Khaosod*, May 28, 2009

The caption reads: Amazing horns – The great numbers of cicadas that have grown horns are caught by villagers in Udon Thani and other provinces. The creatures are said to bring charms and lucks to those who are able to catch them. Cicadas with horns are uncommon

Punch to Punch – *Thairath*; May 25, 2009

Left: Chaowarat Charnverakul: Chartchai has not made mistakes, but it is Bhumjaithai Party's policy to selecting a person as a deputy agriculture and cooperatives minister to replace Chartchai. It is because Chartchai has never attended a Bhumjaithai Party meeting so he does not know the Bhumjaithai Party's policy at all.

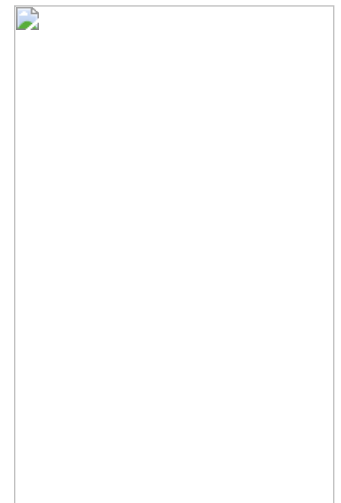
Right: Chartchai Pukayaporn: I was sorry that I ignored Bhumjaithai Party's activities because I took too much responsibility as a deputy agriculture and cooperatives minister and this made me forget to pay attention to the party's activity. This caused the party leader to have a misunderstanding with me. I know from this experience that I need to arrange my time well to keep things in balance.



Medium – *Nation Weekend*, May 15, 2009

Above: It reads: Scanning Karma – Mark under a black magic spell

Right: Cover of a popular book telling the story of Kridsana Suyamongkol. The author tells her experiences as a medium able to divine the past lives of others.



The South on fire – *Komchadluek*, May 28, 2009

It reads: Torching-bombing 8 spots in the city – Sabotage wreaks chaos in Yala – Arson damage valued 100 million, but no death toll reported  
The militants stage series of attacks in Yala before dawn, torching 4 warehouses and a mobile signal transmitting booth. The damage is valued at hundred millions. The bomb detonated in front of the hotel/banks/in front of motor showroom. No toll reported. Authorities: militant attacks aimed at wrecking chaos during the town celebration of the city pillar.



Nation Weekend, May 15, 2009 – It reads: Party leader.. my brothers!



Matichon Weekend, May 15, 2009 – It reads:  
Red in style of Aoy

#### Punch to Punch – Thairath, May 18, 2009

Left: Sanor Thienthong: Abhisit Wejchacheewa could be prime minister so that he will work together with the Pheu Thai Party. And I will set up the opposition party, because I do not need Thai politics to be the same as Cambodian politics .

Right: Chamni Sakdisid: His recommendation proposed appears as if he needs the Government and the Pheu Thai Party to arrive at an agreement on politics. In fact, this is not the cause of the political conflict, but it was developed well before the coup d'etat .



Story from an RKK member – translated and summarized from *Issara News Centre*; May 27, 2009

People who continuously keep a watch on the southern unrest must have heard about the word RKK. However, no one knows exactly what RKK is. According to the government, RKK is likely to be a small group of young fighters who are capable of using weapons and committing crimes. Some say that RKK is an abbreviation of a small troop from Indonesia.

A thesis by Pol. Maj. Samret Sirai, Deputy Fourth Army Region Commander, about the BRN-Coordination and the unrest in Thailand's three southern border provinces and four districts in Songkhla states that the word RKK is quite confusing. It has been used in several meanings. Neither Indonesian people nor terrorists ever heard about the word RKK.

Pol. Maj. Samret claimed in his thesis that a close relationship between the BRN-Coordinate and the Ajeh movement in Indonesia encourages a movement in Thailand to form a small force called the Runda Kumpulan Kecil – RKK.

A booklet about Thailand's southern unrest by Political Sciences teacher of Chulalongkorn University Surachat Bamrungsuk gives information about RKK training for commando members. The course, for a group of six people, takes 28 days. Members will be trained about everything from history to how to make a bomb and fight. According to the study, RKK is a training course for commando members to commit various kinds of attacks.

The Issara News Centre talks to a former RKK member, who was well trained. He now turns his back to the movement and will unveil about its details.

The 34-year-old former RKK member says that in his language, RKK is called Tajueri, which refers to a fighter who has been trained physically and mentally. They do not call themselves RKK and do not know where the word comes from.

'Tajueri' is more skillful than 'Permudo', or youths who have been regularly trained. However, Tajueri is ranked lower than commando, or high-ranking military officers. There are about 3,000 commandos in each province. If a commando is killed, a Tajueri will be promoted. The number will remain 3,000. It is said that a commando is able to fight with ten officials with bare hands and a Tajueri can fight with five officials.

He said that before 2003, Ayahs, or village leaders, were mobilizing local people. Ayahs are separated into four groups and responsible for different tasks.

He was not among the first group of people who had been chosen. In 2003, he noticed that something was different. One of his neighbors went out of the village every week. He did not reply his answer of where they had been.

Five months later, the same old neighbor invited him to see Ayahs in a nearby village. He saw seven to eight people there. The oldest man, aged around 40 years old, was the one telling him about Pattani history. After that, he felt uplifted and then he became a member.

At first, he was trained to be a Permudo. The training took around three months. He was trained very hard physically and also had to join lectures. All members had to pay one baht daily.

After receiving the Permudo training, members would receive the Tajueri one, or the one the government calls RKK. During the training, all trainees had to pay 100 baht per month to the movement. Names of all trainers and trainees were fake. The course took 15 days.

A Tajueri group contained six members who were responsible for different tasks. However, their duties would change all the time as ordered by Ayahs.

After finishing the course, all Tajueris would go back home and waited for orders from Ayahs. His first task was to keep weapons for the movement. An attack he was involved in would be perfectly planned.

He said that if he did not decide to be one of members and worked for them with all his might, he would be quite uncomfortable. Many years with the movement, he had to keep his mouth shut and be careful all the time. He could not express any opinion. All he could say is 'I have no idea'.

Now, he already quit the movement as the government applies a proactive strategy. Some leading members are arrested and some were so pressured that they hid themselves in the forest. An official told him to withdraw and he would not be charged. He took the offer and turns back to be an ordinary person again.

#### The desolate road – The PAD party – translated and summarized from *Komchadluek*; Column: The editorial; May 27, 2009

Forming a political party by the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) core leaders is an example of political party development which starts with a gathering of people having the same opinion on politics.

However, it is different from setting up other political parties because The PAD rally used to be an important group which had caused a change of politics.

It is possible that the PAD party may be attacked verbally. This is because, PAD core leaders had announced on stage that many times that no matter what happens, they would not form a political party. This is a reason why they have a pure image in fighting previous unfair governments.

Although it seems that many people agree with Somsak Kosaisuk's speech, no one knows whether they agree with him or not. It is a good thing when there is a political party formed because the people have more of a choice to select a political party. Previously, many political parties tried to stop the old political system, but most politicians think of the personal interest more than the common interest. There have been no parties that could reach the goal of being representative of the people.

Although it is difficult to succeed in bringing a new political system to the country, Sondhi Limthongkul and other PAD core leaders can at least try to prove that they can do it.

#### The PAD party – A new political system – translated and summarized from *Thaipost*; Column: The editorial; May 27, 2009

There is a difference of an opinion on forming the PAD party. Some people agree with the idea and some people disagree with it as they care very much about the whether PAD core leaders are able to bring a new political system into the country as they announced.

Recently, one of PAD core leaders, Somkiat Pongpaiboon, gave a reason why the PAD needs to set up a political party. the reason is because the PAD would block the old political system used to govern the country by some of political parties, block these parties from their plans to discredit or damage the country, collaborate with the good political parties and redress the social balance.

The PAD also does not need to have a flight with the Democrat Party, but needs to confront some bad politicians. Although those reasons are good, many people still wonder how the PAD core leaders can make their dream come true .

Therefore, they had better answer these questions: How do they fight for a new political system? How do they escape from using the quota system to form a government after performing as politicians working for "the people"? And how does the PAD party relate to ASTV?

Although no one disputes that a new political system is good for everyone in the country, no one knows whether they can make the dream come true or not since the PAD party will be one of many political parties that already have the duty to govern the country and to work for the people.

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**When the PAD forms a new party, it needs to acknowledge a check on the party's work** – translated and summarized from *Thaipost*; May 26, 2009

The PAD members voted their core leaders to form a new party without focusing on a party name. Many people pay attention to the new party policies although there are no any policies defined clearly at this time. But this is not a problem because the policies will be announced after a new party is completely set up. The important thing is that PAD core leaders should have strong confidence in their standpoints—especially an idea of new politics—which is not now completely formed because their opinions on this idea are still not identical.

That a group could perform as an agent to check on the PAD party's work is Somsak Kosiasuk's standpoint. It is not a good thing at all. What do you think of the Red Shirts' vow that the Pheu Thai Party would have been checked by the Red Shirts if it had been elected as a new government?

Thus, PAD core leaders had better choose only one way so that there will be no problems.

Once, the PAD rally used to mention that D-station was opened for supporting the Thaksin system. If PAD core leaders ignore a check on their party's work, this action will be the same as the Red Shirts' action involving D-station. So, the new party's work should be exposed to society's verdict so that "new politics" will occur as per Thai people expect.

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**The PAD and the establishment of PAD party** – translated and summarized from *Daily News*; Column: the Editorial; May 25, 2009

Regarding the party establishment for the People's Alliance for Democracy or PAD and its success as a political party in the future, we have to look back to the establishment of the PAD as political movement group in the past.

The PAD's fight is aimed at opposing the revision of the 2007 Constitution, opposing the Pheu Thai Party-led government or a Thaksin shadow government. The PAD's movement calling for the coup expresses a lacking of confidence in the political party system. It once seized the government house and the Suvarnabhumi Airport to fight outside of politics.

Thailand politics with a parliamentary system is known for having negotiation power that belongs to the party with major votes in the house of representative.

Parties, hence, seek ways to gain members and to form the government. As for the PAD party, we have to see whether it is going to gain such power, and if not, how will the PAD fight.

We comment that the PAD, as a party, should come up with a new approach of how they will fight or how they will make the nation better.

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**PAD party** – translated and summarized from *ASTV Manager Daily*; Author; Chaianan Samutavanich; May 25, 2009

It is said that the People's Alliance for Democracy plans to form a political party. It is hoped that a party, formed by the PAD, will have something different from existing parties.

Here is the nature of current political parties;

1. Formed by only one person and is a personal party. At present there is only the Democrat Party which was formed by a group of people.
2. Gets financial support from one person, or a small group of people.
3. Supported by a group of house representatives, not by the public.
4. Has no strategy to conduct a political study of the public and has no relationship with the public
5. Has no political machinery or development process for leaders

If the PAD really forms a party, it will be different from others. The party had political movements. Members gathered to run activities together before becoming a party. Therefore, it is a party formed by a group of people with the same political attitude. It has many qualities which brings it an advantage. The party could have a strong base.

The establishment of the party will lead to a change in Thailand's politics. The party will apply new ideas. It is a party which focuses more on principles, not political conveniences. The PAD party will have good relationship with the public.



**Punch to Punch** – *Thairath*, May 11, 2009

Left: Jakrapob Penkair: From now on, we have to work on various strategies to meet the government that was selected improperly. Weapons may be used to fight for a new election.

Right: Abhisit Wejchacheewa: Someone gave an opinion saying that a severe situation will happen, but most people can see nothing useful will come about if it happens.

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**Soldiers must swallow their blood – Weapons budget cut to win people's heart** – translated and summarized from *Thai Post*; Column: Editorial; May 25, 2009

It is not surprising that the budget for government units has been cut as the Finance Ministry is facing financial problems from the economic recession. As well as other units, the Defence Ministry's budget was cut, especially those for weapons purchase.

The budget allocation for the military reflects that the government focuses on maintaining internal security, creating peace and unity among people and revolutionise politics. In addition, the budget for southern unrest operations has also been cut by more than half.

It means that the budget for weapons purchase, for all forces, has been cut. Budget has been allocated only for paying installments for weapons which is quite a big budget.

The Defence Ministry has a lot of projects in its hands, for instance, buying fighter jets, acquiring armoured tanks from Ukraine, buying more guns for southern operations, and many more.

Army leaders have to accept the current economic situation and try to manage its image among the public. If the majority is not satisfied with their actions, they will have no back-up in the future.

Therefore, they allowed the Finance Ministry to cut their budget without moaning like usual. The military has to maintain its position as a beloved unit.



Viriya Chavakul – May 13, 2009

Covers of the major news weeklies this week show Viriya Chavakul (or sometimes "Weeraya") who was allegedly linked to the Sondhi shooting.

Left: *Nation Weekend*, May 8, 2009 – Who is the assassin?

Right: *Matichon Weekend*, May 8, 2009 – Weeraya – Big and spirited



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**PAD party sparks new idea for new politics** – translated and summarized from *Naew Na*; Column: Pa Praden Ron; May 25, 2009

At the Rangsit University's auditorium on May 24, representatives from the People Alliance for Democracy (PAD) from across the country met up to have a vote on the idea to form a political party.

The meeting lasts two days, from May 24 to 25 and it seems that there is high possibility for the PAD to form a new party of yellow people.

It the yellow party is really formed, the question is who is going to be the head of the party. There are two choices – Sondhi Limthongkul and Chalong Srimuang. Pol. Maj. Chalong Srimuang points out that to form a political party is necessary as the PAD had been fighting until it was able to get rid of Thaksin and get a new government, but the current government still manages the country with old political ideas. He says that the parliament can be dissolved any time at the moment. The majority of the PAD wants a new party. The issue about the head could be concluded in seven days. To form the PAD party is necessary as the public is now tired of mobs and turmoil which greatly hurt the country. In addition, people are also wondering about the financial support for the new party move. Sondhi prepares to have yellow-shirt members donate 100 baht each per month. By this, the party will have no need to ask for any financial aid from businessmen and owe them in the future. Another question is the party's political policy. It must give a clear answer to the public about what exactly "new politics" is and if it is really possible to bring the country to this goal. The emerging of the PAD seems like a good sign in Thailand's politics and could be a new choice for those who want a change. But we will have to wait and see whether the new party will be well received. Time will tell.

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**Benefit and negotiation** – translated and summarized from *Daily News*; Column: Editorial; May 24, 2009

The government has been working less than six months, but it has a lot of things to do. It has to solve many crises, from politics to the economy. It seems that the public understands the government well. Although some situations which affected the country's security occurred, people still have good feelings toward the government. Meanwhile, politicians in coalition parties, or even in the Democrats, start to ask for changes for better positions and benefits of their fellows and themselves. An effort to ask for a position and benefits is completely against the concept politicians should have. There are always problems in the political world as politicians always want to take an advantage for themselves. This problem leads to slow development. People cannot rely on the government. They start to ask for new politics. Under the current political situation, people cannot escape from same old problems, even if they are tired of them. However, currently, we have a committee for political reformation and constitution amendment studying the problem. It is hoped that the committee will come up with new measures to get rid of and prevent these problems.

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Six factors that affects the Southern unrest situation and the possible solution of the "Hukompakah" approach – translated and summarized from *Issara News Center*; Column: Southern news; Author: Somsak Hoonngam; May 23, 2009

Yala Deputy governor Kridsada Boonrad states his belief in the approach to bring peace to the unrest called "the Hukompakah" approach. This refers to the community under the rules and regulations implemented by the local villagers themselves. According to the Yala deputy governor, many incidents that are believed to solely involve militant operations in the unrest are caused by conflicts in villages themselves and this is the problem to be dealt with to promote the peace. Earlier, the Yala administrative organization's study on the unrest situation reveals that 6 factors are involved in the current violent situation. The 6 factors are:

1. The separatism attempt
2. The personal revenge at state-authorities
3. Drug-dealing cases
4. Corruption in the local government
5. The local election and general election
6. Personal conflicts

The Yala administration organization launched a project to solve deep-rooted violent problems in the communities. It focused on the use of the "Hukompakah" rules which are Islamic principles of the Islamic communities in the past. Following the rules, the community members are to set rules for the community itself. During the past 9 month period, 180 villages from the total 349 villages in 8 districts of Yala joined the pilot project. 80% of the project turns out to be a success in solving local villagers' conflicts. The project cuts rates of community fights which are, sometimes, taken as militant operations.

Examples of the "Hukompakah" rules in communities are the use of religious practices of community members, methods to deal with drug problems in communities, security measures and peace maintenance in villages, negotiations between rivals, and environmental protection rules for communities. According to Kridsada, the approach reinforces peace in communities and generates peace in the unrest areas.

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**Do not play political game without concern for the nation** – translated and summarized from *Kom Chad Luek*; Column: the Editorial; May 22, 2009

The Pheu Thai Opposition party continues to oppose the government's plan to pass the new decree on economic revival to inject 400 billion baht money into the business sector. This is the attempt to oppose Pheu Thai's political opponents without care for the country's economic situation.

The opposition party should regard mostly the negative result to the country's economy that is derived from its attempt to drag out its opposition to the economic revival policy. The opposition party's attempt does no good to the party itself especially if the party returns to lead the country in the future.

We comment that the political competition nowadays is without moral concern. It is, therefore, necessary for government to move on political and educational reform to guarantee the nation's future and not to risk national collapse.

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**Government admits southern situation worrying before OIC conference – Suthep says insurgents want to get money from foreigners** – translated and summarized from *Issara News Centre*; Author: Ahmad Ramansiriwong; May 22, 2009

Government officials from the Minister of Security to local high-ranking authorities admitted that the reason the southern situation becoming violent again is that the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC)'s meeting is coming. During the conference, the southern unrest issue is expected to be seriously discussed.

Deputy Minister for security Suthep Thaugsuban gave an interview on May 21. He admitted that some separatists receive financial support from other countries. They must create a more violent situation so that they can tell other countries what happened.

Mr. Suthep said that there are around 5,000 separatists in the South. The government is responsible for taking care of over one million local residents. It has to educate local people about the situation. It must not aim at killing separatists, but has to try to coax them to side with the government. During the past times, killing never helped solve any problem. He added that the reason the situation becomes intense is that they want to show that they are powerful. The government must continue keep solving the problem.

The Deputy Security Minister said that he would visit the South next week to discuss with organizations concerned about development plans for 2010.

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**5,000 insurgents want to separate the land** – translated and summarized from *Thai Rath*; May 21, 2009

On May 21, at the Government House, Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Thaugsuban talked about progress in the move to ease the unrest in the three southern border provinces. He admitted that there really is a group of around 4,000-5,000 separatists in the southern provinces. Therefore, the government will have to take care of the quality of life of over 1,000,000 people in the South. It will not focus on killing separatists or insurgents. What it must do is to coax these people into siding with the government.

Suthep said that it was true that separatists were trying to create a situation to get more financial support before the meeting of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC). He said the group received financial support from other countries.

Meanwhile, he did not think that the government's measure to tackle the problem in the past five months was a failure. He would visit the three southernmost provinces next week to join a meeting of the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre.

He added that the current government would focus on raising the quality of life of local residents. It aimed to make people generate 120,000 baht in income per family per year. It would also improve education and the justice system.

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**Ideal party** – translated and summarized from *Krungthep Thurakit*; Column: Kae Roy Karn Muang; Author: Rak Montree; May 19, 2009

It has been said that the People Alliance for Democracy (PAD) plans to set up a political party soon. To form a political party is a right supported by the Constitution to allow people with the same political ideals to jointly develop politics under the democratic system or an ideal one.

In the 1946 Constitution, it was stated that a group of people were allowed to freely set up a political party. Before the constitution came into effect, there were three parties at the time. Parties during the first period were idealistic parties. They were Kao Na, Sahaphum and Naew Rattathananun.

After that, a new idealistic party – Palang Mai – was formed. The party was formed after the 14 October 1973 events . In 1975, the Democrat Party, led by M.R. Seni Pramote, was able to form a government. Later, the Palang Dharma party, a new idealistic party, was formed. Pol. Maj. Chamlong Srimuang was the head. Pol. Maj. Chamlong tried to make the party an idealistic one. He tried to promote a relationship between executives and members of the party. Members were allowed to run the party and helped choose a candidate for elections. However, the party later gained less popularity because Thai people started to be dominated by the capitalism. The Palang Dharma could not get itself out of this cycle. It allowed Thaksin Shinawatra to completely own the party. Nevertheless, the party has created a standard of transparency in the Thai political world and also openly revealed assets of its house representatives. If the PAD cannot get into this mode , it will be far from successfully forming such an idealistic party.

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**Opposition, don't focus only on destroying the government** – translated and summarized from *Naew Na*; May 18, 2009

It is seen that the Pheu Thai party, known as a puppet party of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, aims only at destroying and bringing down the government as soon as possible, in stead of doing the right thing for an opposition party – creatively keeping a close watch on the government's management. Its image as an opposition which could do anything for Thaksin becomes noticeable day by day. Its moves are completely in line with red-shirt people, especially an effort to amend the Constitution to cancel all charges against Thaksin Shinawatra and get him back his 76-billion-baht assets. The attempt to bring down the current government is part of a strategy to get rid of any obstacles to the process of cleaning Thaksin's guilty. The political standpoint of the current government Democrat is completely different to the Thaksin regime. Therefore, the red-shirt group tries to do everything to dethrone it. It applied violent strategies to create turmoil. The Pheu Thai party still continues to hurt the country by trying to obstruct the government's move to ease economic crises. It filed a petition to the Constitution Court, claiming that the decree for 400-billion-baht loan is against the Constitution. This action was aimed to obstruct the government from managing the country smoothly. It also made the economic problem prolonged.

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**Thaksin's lifestyle** – translated and summarized from *Komchadluek*; Column: The editorial; May 18, 2009

As the police and the prosecutors were considering a new criminal case concerning Thaksin Shinawatra, he and his representatives rigorously denied all accusations such as the accusation of insulting the principal national institution by his speaking and acting. He still denies all accusations although there are many evidences of him making a mistake—especially using a speech to incite the Red Shirts recorded on video during their rally. One thing he does all the time is to ask for his property that was seized be returned to him and also claim for forgiveness. We are seeing that he becomes a power person who can do everything without punishment. The government should do everything under the law and let the judicial process to address his cases. No matter what Thaksin does, it is because he would have a chance of survival and would not be in jail for a long time due to his criminal case. Besides, he also did something wrong by selling a satellite to Singapore though it is a national assets. Everything will be better if the government has an opportunity to work continuously .

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**Yellow-shirt party** – translated and summarized from *Krungthep Thurakit*; Column: Kae Roy Karn Muang; Author; Pracha Burapavithree; May 15, 2009

A big meeting of the People Alliance for Democracy is about to be held. There is news about its movements to form a political party. Pol. Maj. Chamlong Srimuang gave a comment on the issue for the first time. He proposed the 'Palang Dharma' model as another choice for a yellow-shirt political party. The former head of the Palang Dharma party said that there should be both a political party and the PAD. His opinion is in line with those of Piphob Thongchai, Somkiat Pongpaiboon and Somsak Kosaisuk. It is said that Chamlong and Piphob insist to operate the PAD as an organization for the public. Somkiat, Somsak and Suriyasai will have to continue pushing for the new PAD party. Nevertheless, Praphan Kunmee said that all PAD members should join to form Thailand's first public political party. He said if the party is not formed today, there is no chance that the public will have its own political party. Praphan said that the head of the yellow-shirt party must be a mass leader like Sondhi Limthongkul. It is wondering why he has to move this fast. He is not new in politics. He was a member of the Palang Dharma party and then formed the Nam Thai party in 1995. However, the party was dissolved in only one season. Praphan never stops moving in the political world. Another PAD leader who has been chasing his dream about a public party is Somkiat Pongpaiboon. About ten years ago, Somkiat worked with Suriyasai Katsila to promote the 'green' party in Thailand. He also talked with senior members of the Communist Part of Thailand to design a public party for Thailand. Therefore, Somkiat is the one who has been dreaming about a public party until now. Details about Praphan's party and Somkiat's party are different. It is said that if Sondhi decides to get involved in politics, he may have to adopt the structure of the Chinese communist party. We have to see the result at the end of the month.

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**Stop talking about unity for Thaksin** – translated and summarized from *Naew Na*; Column: Editorial; May 14, 2009

Politicians of Pheu Thai and Pracharat parties are trying to confuse the public by linking Thaksin Shinawatra's corruption cases to the amendment of the constitution to grant amnesty to the criminal. They claim that they are trying to bring unity back to Thai people. Thaksin is now an escaped prisoner. He has been sentenced to two years in jail for corruption in the Ratchada land purchase case. His 76-billion-baht assets have also been seized. In addition, he has been charged for mobilizing the red-shirt mob to bring down the government during the past Songkran festival. Instead of instructing the former Prime Minister to come back and receive punishments, opposition politicians are trying to push for an amendment to the constitution to help escaped prisoner Thaksin Shinawatra. This kind of action is completely against the legal system. Previous internal conflicts are not problem of the country and its people. They are caused by only a group of people and are used as negotiation tools to help someone. If the constitution is amended, the country will not be in peace. Lots of people will stand up and oppose. This will lead to disunity.

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**Return of D-Station – It's time for NTC to get out of neutral gear** – translated and summarized from *Thai Post*; Column: Editorial; May 14, 2009

A statement by the United Front of Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD), saying that it will recover the D-Station channel to provide information and news for red-shirt members and Thaksin supporters, is like a wake-up call for the Abhisit government. It must be admitted that the D-Station affects the stability of the government, as well as unity among Thai people. The red-shirt movement to restore the station must be closely monitored to see what the government and organizations concerned to do to cope with the situation. In the past, the D-Station broke the law and created disunity among Thai people. Minister to the Prime Minister Office Sathit Wongnongtoei discloses that there are many ways for the D-Station channel to legally recover if all organizations strictly follow the law. Last time, the Public Relations Department, the National Telecommunication Commission (NTC) and the ICT Ministry accepted no responsibility. Instead of ignoring problems, the government should try to solve media problems to prevent powerful people from conscientiously using media as a political tool. This is a responsibility of the NTC that is in charge of controlling all media. This time, it is not appropriate if the NTC stays in neutral gear. To allow the D-Station to broadcast any program about the criminal Thaksin Shinawatra not only breaks the law, but also bring turmoil to the country.

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**New party – 'PAD' – Palang Dharma model is one model** – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; May 13, 2009

After its 193-day fight, the People Alliance for Democracy announced that it would turn to symbolic movements. Political concerts are now continuously organized to create new ideas and maintain the mass base. However, this strategy does not give them enough power. It is not surprising if leaders of the PAD review their past lessons and see that street gathering and mobilizations could create pressure among powerful people, but it is not the right answer for the new politics, which is their major target. After halting the fight, leaders have had time to think about a right solution to the problem. A rumor has it that the PAD sees that to form a party is the last answer. They sent out a representative to register for political parties – Prachathivat and Thien Hang Tham parties.

However, the idea has not crystallized yet. As key figure of the group, Pol. Maj. Chamlong Srimuang opposed it. He had experiences from the Palang Dharma party. But, lately, the idea was lit again during the fourth political concert in Samui, Sarat Thani. This time, it was accepted by PAD leaders, including Pol. Maj. Chamlong. Of course, the PAD got both flowers and bricks from such an idea. Supporters of the Democrat party disagree with it as they do not want to support to go to other parties other than the Democrats. Even some members of the PAD like Chaiwat Sinsuwong do not agree with it. The PAD still has time to coax the public into approving its idea to seek new power through the parliamentary system. Anyhow, there are still many obstacles to their new move.

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#### **Please stop hurting Thailand – Politicians must be dedicated** – translated and summarized from *Thai Post*; May 11, 2009

Amidst the economic crises, everyone agrees that the current political conflict is a major factor which decides whether the country will survive. Therefore, there is a movement by a group of people who call themselves the "silent power." They do not take sides. They urge people to stop hurting Thailand. Along with the action, we cannot deny that people question about who is the one who hurts Thailand. Yellow-shirt supporters will say that former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra is a criminal who hurts Thailand. Red-shirt advocates will say that the military and aristocrats pushed the country into crisis. Those who do not take sides would see that all those violent movements and gatherings created turmoil. Today, we do not know who hurts Thailand or gets involved in it, but experience shows that politicians play an important role in hurting or developing Thailand. As long as politicians are not dedicating themselves to the majority, Thailand will still face the constitution amendment demands for the good of politicians. They will do everything for their own benefit. Before blaming the others for hurting Thailand, politicians will have to consider if they do their best.

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#### **Temperature check on the political warfare of the PAD vs DAAD** – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; May 12, 2009

The fight between the yellow People's Alliance for Democracy and the red Democratic Alliance against Dictatorship continues. The PAD hosted the stage talk on May 9, 2009 in Songkhla and announced that the group opposes the constitutional revision of the 2007 charter and amnesty for the banned politicians which are the former members of the defunct Thai Rak Thai political party. The PAD insists that the one who hurts the country is Thaksin Shinawatra. The group will gather on May 24-25, 2009 to consider the establishment of PAD's political party. Meanwhile, the DAAD gathered on May 10, 2009 announcing the group's movement in bringing the truth to the public on the falsification of the Democrat-led government during the Dark Songkran event, especially the attack to the PM car that has distorted the reds' image. The reds insist that they are not the people who hurt the country, but the aristocrats and the coup did it. This is the truth that the political war does continue and the civil war is, therefore, hard to prevent.

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#### **Danger of oligarchy** – translated and summarized from *Naew Na*; Author; Editorial; May 9, 2009

Since 1998, a problem which has been occurring in Thailand's political affairs. This is caused by oligarchy, or a capitalism which aims to take advantage of the country. Powerful businessmen try to form a political party to gain power and manage the country. Capitalism leads to a big political separatism movement which still hurts the country even now. Almost all political parties were not formed by a group of civilians like in the West, but mainly by powerful businessmen. Investors who enter the political path want to use government power for their own benefit. An obvious example was the 1997 Constitution which was truly created for businessmen. The establishment of the Thai Rak Thai party on July 14, 1998 was an evolution of this oligarchy. When political businessmen get control of everything, they will have power to do whatever they want for the benefit of themselves and followers. Therefore, between 2001 and 2006, we could see that several acts were unfairly issued and no organizations could stop them. The 2007 Constitution contains provisions that prevents investors from seeking their own benefits. The amendment of the constitution must be made with consideration of the previous outcome since we cannot get rid of the existing oligarchy. A political fight depends on money. Money will be used to buy votes and candidates. This is a worrisome problem and should be considered during the amendment of the constitution.

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#### **The red's strategy** – translated and summarized from *Krungthep Thurakit*; Author; Pracha Burapavithee; May 9, 2009

Even though it is not as strong as the 'stop hurting Thailand' trend, the new red-shirt mob is still interesting. There are several things to notice about the movement. Firstly, the new movement separates its political activities into two parts.

1. The red mob led by the United Front of Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD)
2. The red mob led by the 'The Truth Today' TV program.

The new UDD is moving to recover the D-Station channel, while the 'The Truth Today' group remains calm as they realize that they will not get any money by taking back the channel. They then focus instead on revealing the government's and the military's measures to dissolve the mob during the Songkran festival. The Truth Today group is also trying to recover its image. This is because their image is that their image is that of anarchists. They are attempting to counter this by presenting evidence that a third party was the one who set fire to busses and caused trouble. The second thing to notice is the news saying that the red mob is preparing an "underground war." The Internal Security Operations Command Region 2 recently heard that red shirt guards are receiving training in guerrilla style fighting in Serng-sang, Nakhon Ratchasima province. The trainer was a former "southern Esaan" member, who is close to some red-shirt leaders in the lower northeastern region. It is said that a group of ten people will be trained at a time. The first group has already finished its training and is heading to Bangkok. The news is not confirmed as the coordinator, whose name begins with 'S', has no credit because he is a pompous person. However, this sort of rumor cannot be ignored as the left-wing people really exist. The red-shirt people are not stopping. They are waiting for a big new movement when it is the right time.

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#### **Four car bomb cases in DSI hands and sensitive issues during OIC's discussion** – translated and summarized from *Issara News Centre*; May 6, 2009

On May 4, Police Commissioner Pol. Gen. Patcharawat Wongsuwan and director-general of the Central Institute of Forensic Science Dr. Pornpip Rojanasunan met with Deputy Minister for Security Suthep Thaugsuban to discuss about the increasing security-related crimes. Three measures will be used to ease the problem – police, forensic science and the Department of Special Investigation (DSI). It is in line with DSI's policy. The department told the Issara News Centre that it has two plans this year. The first one is to help the government cope with drug problems and the second one is to play more roles in easing the southern unrest. It will focus on news, providing investigation information and sending staff to solve special cases.

If we look back, we will see that the DSI gets involved in the southern unrest for several years. However, I will only examine some special cases.

It recently agreed to take responsibility to four more car bomb cases;

1. A car bomb in front of the Marina Hotel, Amphoe Sungai Kolok, Narathiwat province on February 17, 2005
2. A car bomb in front of the C.S. Pattani Hotel on March 15, 2008
3. A car bomb in front of the Sukirin District Office in Narathiwat province on November 4, 2008
4. A car bomb in front of the Park View Hotel, Amphoe Muang, Yala province on December 20, 2008

It is noticed that all four bomb cases have similar points. The DSI talked to an explosive expert and found that those who did these could be the same group of people.

A team of DSI staff visited the South on May 30. They had a meeting with the police, the military and news agents to investigate the cases. When they dig deeper, it is found that the cases involved several local powerful people.

Another issue which will affect the situation in the southern border provinces is the coming conference of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference between May 23 and 25 in Syria. The conference will surely discuss about Thailand's southern situation.

However, the Director-General of the DSI Pol. Col. Tawee Sodsong said that the major point of insurgency movements is 'unfairness'.

The major point which helps increase the number of insurgency members is special laws applied in the South, for instance, martial law and the state of emergency. However, he believes that Muslim people acknowledge the truth. If we provide them with true information, they will listen, especially during the OIC conference. If Thai representatives really know the information, they may allow others at the conference to understand the situation in Thailand.

DSI studies show that what insurgents want is the special administrative zone. They try to tell the OIC about the unfairness in Thailand.

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**Newin a happy man** – translated and summarized from *Naew Na*; Column: Kae Roy Karn Muang; Author; Reporter No. 10; May 11, 2009

Those who are close to Newin Chidchob of the Phum Jai Thai party see that the current government could stay until the end of its term if it can solve economic crises.

Even though Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva once said that if the situation gets better in the next six to eight months, he may dissolve the parliament, he may not really do it.

Those who are satisfied with the future situation should be all of the Democrat Party, the government leaders and the Newin's blue-shirt party as this is the win-win solution for them all.

The government will be able to rule the country for a long time, even if it has to solve some urgent problems sometimes. The Phum Jai Thai party has been treated nicely by leaders in the Democrat Party as a first-class political partner.

About the political amnesty, some coalition government parties like Chart Thai Pattana wants to proceed with the amnesty law. However, the Democrats do not seem to accept the proposal.

Meanwhile, leaders of the blue party express clearly that they do not want the law.

An internal source in the Phum Jai Thai party says that Newin does not want the law as he is happy now.

This is because Newin does not want to draw attention. He is now behind the scenes and he has lots of power as if he was a man in the front.

Several sources say that high-ranking authorities and investors are visiting Newin occasionally. It shows that Newin could be a very happy person, could be happier than Barack Obama.

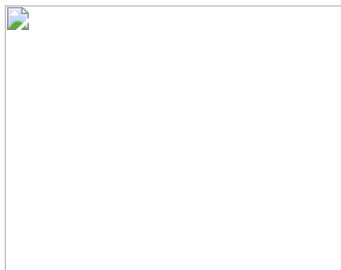
However, current political movements like the gathering of the red-shirt people or a plan to form a political party by yellow-shirt members do not allow the government to relax.

This time, all key figures in the government must see the situation through or they will lose the opportunity. They must be very careful about the move to get rid of Thaksin and the United Front of Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD)'s power.

Anyhow, the government seems to be prepared. It seems that the Democrat and the Phum Jai Thai parties are at an advantage. If there is a new election, they still have a chance to get back the power.

Moreover, Newin Chidchob, the head of the Phum Jai Thai party, has a chance to upgrade himself from being a manager of a shadow government to be a shadow Prime Minister, who has as much power as the real Prime Minister.

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**Still out of conscience "Reds" – The move to hurt the country** – translated and summarized from *Naew Na*; Column: Break through the hot issue; author: Political news team; May 11, 2009

After the serious chaotic events during the Songkran Festival celebration led by the red clad people, the group of pro-Thaksinites today seems not to stop their ill attempt to hurt the country.

Part of their lies are that the attack on Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva's life was done by other gangs to discredit the Red Shirts. The reds today still do everything to overthrow the Democrat-led government power of Abhisit and the reds' will is to serve the only one man power– the fugitive Premier Thaksin Shinawatra.

It should worry the public that the Democrats admit that the red's movement against the Democrat-led government includes guerilla training in some Northeastern provinces to operate in the central area again and the movement is similar to the communists in Thailand in the past.

This, therefore, shows that the red are still without conscience. The reds' operation should be under close watch. It seems they still attempt to commit sabotage or even assassinate a key political figure.

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**A revelation of falsification of causes of violent incidents in the Deep South – Involved with criminals and the local mafia** – translated and summarized from *Issara News Center*; Column: Southern News; Author: Abdulloh Wangni, Pakorn Puengnet; May 8, 2009

The murder case of Ban Buedo village headman Somjit Tuwaelor at the Banburdo village in Pattani's Yaring district is one case that proves to the public how local mafias or illegal gangs are involved in the violence that is claimed to be the work of militants. The police seized all the wrongdoers who later confessed that the murder was involved with personal conflicts between the dead and a local mafia gang.

The Yala governor once gave information on numbers of the cases being falsified by local mafias to put blame for militant gangs. However, the violent cases in the unrest not caused by local mafias, illegal gangs or militants cannot be overlooked. The murder case of 45-year-old Somjit Tuwaelor, village headman of the Moo 1, Ban Buedo village in the Tambon Nongrad in the Yaring district in Pattani inside his own car on the Banworsa-Banbaeraw Road on May 5, 1999 was one of the cases where a non-militant murderer was seized shortly after the act occurred.

The case suggests the theory that personal conflicts are involved in many violent cases in the southern unrest provinces. This includes conflicts among local mafias, illegal smugglers and drug dealers. Of many violent cases, blame is put on the militant operations and separatism. In some aspects, the degree of violence related to the Southern unrest situation is, to some extent, exaggerating and some groups take advantages of the situation to make their own profits (illegal activities). The Southern border provinces are, therefore, are critical dangerous zones where murders are pinned on the insurgency.

In the case murder case of the Ban Buedo village headman, the police fortunately seized the wrongdoer gang immediately. The gang's car had an accident as they were escaping the scene after they opened fire using war weapons on Sonjit. The police deserve praises for their scrutinizing investigation and keeping the cartridges left at the scene to examine. The result reveals that the cartridges of the gun were the same type that were used in the murder case.

One of the four gunmen, Sugri Yusoh, confessed that the murder case of the village headman was part of a local mafia conflict. The gunmen took gun weapons which are M16 and the AK and the 11MM from a house close to the murder spot.

Pattani Police Chief Police Major General Kareerin Inkhaew states that the case proves that some criminal cases in the Southern border provinces are partially falsified cases of militant operations. The operation and the weapons used are aimed at suppressing the truth to hide the mastermind from being investigated.

According to the authorities, many cases of the murderers are similar in action and plan and are suspected cases of falsified militant operations. Deputy Yala governor Kridsada Boonrat once revealed to the Issara news team that many crimes that occurred in the province were recorded as militant operations, but were later found (after in depth investigation) to be involved with personal conflicts.

"We try to classify the cases and find that many cases are personal conflicts. There is only 20-30% of the crimes that are caused by the militant operations. The rest are caused by personal conflicts or mafia influences" the Deputy Yala governor added.

The information given by the governmental agency reveals that among many crimes such as arsons and brutal murder–particularly the case that led to a protest of the victims' cousins at the town hall in early of the year 2007–that eventually the evidence proves that the case is related to personal conflict.

The information corresponds to what Assistant to National Police Chief and former National Police's Yala Front Headquarter Commander Police Lieutenant General Adul Sangsingkaew stated to the Issara press. He said that the Yala headquarter police's statistical record collected up to the late of the year 2008 shows that of 49,608 crimes occurred in the unrest since early of the year 2004 up to present, 6,103 cases, or equal to 12% of all cases, are cases that affects national security .

"The record clearly shows that many cases are falsified as militant operations. We do not conclude that every case is insurgency or national security related. We check the operational scheme and perform forensic tests with the weapons used. We acknowledge which cases are militant operations and which should be personal conflict crimes," Police Lieutenant General Adul states.

This is not to imply that the Southern violence in the unrest is merely a falsification, but that it is clear that the national security authorities are burdened with the task to stop all kinds of violent cases.

During the four-month period of the year 2009, it is obvious that violent cases occur in a pattern–gang operators use war weapons and pick up trucks. The similar methods frequently took place in recent years before. Both crime operation plans of the militants and of illegal-mafia gangs put high pressure on state authorities,

especially in cases where pickups are used.

Villagers always believed that the state authorities are involved as pickups on main roads easily pass the checkpoints of soldiers and police. Many successfully escapes after violent incidents in vehicles continue to cause locals to suspect authorities are involved. We hereby agree that every kind of violent action cannot be ignored by the national security team or else, the South becomes a real critically dangerous land.

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**The silent power is awake** – translated and summarized from *Naew Na*; Column: Pa Praden Ron; May 5, 2009

The country has been facing several crises, from internal conflict to economic recession. The silent power which is represented from over 20 organizations, now comes out to campaign against any movements or activities which will affect Thailand. They urge all parties to stop using violence in hope that the country will be in peace and move forward again.

On May 4, from the early morning, members of the Stop Hurting Thailand, Stop Using Violence network, established by over 20 organizations, gathered at Lumpini Park to show their unity. They wanted to let all political parties know that it is time for the country to move forward, to not separate into groups and not use violent measures to solve problems will only hurt the country.

Lots of senators, former house representatives and high-ranking authorities took part in the gathering. Thousands of people wore white shirts with Thailand's flag and a sentence saying "stop hurting Thailand, stop using violence." They paraded from Lumpini Park to Silom Road.

What is interesting is that some politicians of the Pheu Thai party participated in the parade. Pessimistically, they were trying to create a good image, but optimistically, it shows that leaders of the red-shirt mob and Pheu Thai politicians become conscious and want unity.

Meanwhile, the government ran an activity to create unity among Thai people to celebrate the Coronation Day on May 5.

However, despite the "stop hurting Thailand, stop using violence" campaign and the government's policy to create unity, some red-shirt members are still moving to achieve their goal – getting rid of all charges against Thaksin Shinawatra and getting back his 76-billion-baht assets.

But now that the silent power, which is the majority, is standing up against all conflicts which could hurt Thailand, people who try to create turmoil in the country will be their enemies.

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**Sondhi's shooting case should be acted on with urgency – To find “the instigator”** – translated and summarized from *Naewna*; Column: The editorial; May 5, 2009

Sondhi's shooting case has been focused on by many people because they want to know whether the instigator will be arrested or not. On the 3rd of May, the PAD's core leader Sondhi Limthongkul revealed that his shooting case around Bangkumprom intersection was prepared well and one of assassins was a soldier ranking as Master Sergeant First Class who used M79 bullets. The instigator would have to be a high ranking person because they dared to attack him aggressively while the Emergency Decree was in effect. Sondhi also indicated that they attacked him to threaten the other PAD's core leaders, PM Abhisit Wejchacheewa and some other high ranking persons. It is believed that Sondhi's assassins may be the same people involved in the severe political situations such as shooting at the PAD rally which caused people to be injured and killed. Maybe this case involves the attempted assassination of a privy councilor. However, Sondhi's shooting case has caused damage to the country's reputation because Sondhi is a public figure. After spreading his shooting case, Thailand's image was discredited. Many people around the world can see the cruelty. Thus, the government should act on this case immediately and seriously and find the instigator to punish them.

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**Punch to Punch** – *Thairath*, May 4, 2009

Left: Chumpol Silpa-arha – A standpoint of Chart Thai Pattana Party on the constitutional amendment is to treat the innocent fairly. If the innocent are treated fairly, the government and all parties can work continuously.

Right: Suthep Thuagsuban – Please do not think that he puts pressure on the government. Please think that he only gives his opinion and standpoint. Everybody has the freedom to think. Don't block his opinion although it is different from ours.



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**Who is the victim?** – translated and summarized from *Krungthep Thurakit*; Column: Kae Roy Karn Muang; Author; Reporter No. 10; May 4, 2009

Thailand's politics is now very interesting. Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva is making an important decision about the political game.

He is asking for collaboration from all parties to end internal conflicts and tell people that if the problems are ended in six to eight months, he will return decision power to the public. This is a very interesting decision.

Amidst the current situation, whoever volunteers to take charge will be in a big trouble like 'Obamark' for sure.

Following the political turmoil and conflicts, the one volunteering to take charge of the situation will be suspected of working for someone or hiding something.

Some still believe that Thaksin's recklessness will make him continue to fight by using red-shirt people. Some others see that Thaksin is now worthless.

What is interesting are the 'new powers' like the blue, the green and even the yellow parties, which prepare to make moves. Sondhi Limphongkul recently held a press conference on the assassination attempt on him and the People Alliance for Democracy's next move to become a 100% political party in the near future.

What is interesting is the movement by "new power parties" like the blue, the green or even the yellow. They are preparing to make a move after held a press conference on the assassination and the People Alliance for Democracy's next move to become a 100% political market in the near future.

The public must wait and see which party will win the battle and by what strategy.

However, before that time comes, Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva must be in big trouble. He has to deal with a lot of problematic issues, as well as the economic recession. Politicians never ask for the public's opinions about solutions to those problems. And the one who will be the victim of their conflicts and actions is the public.

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**The disclosed plan of the “Blue Shirt” rallying 300,000 people to join the Coronation Day ceremony** – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; May 1, 2009

The gathering of the “Blue shirt” to participate the Coronation Day ceremony at Sanam Luang on May 5, 2009 is part of the Interior Ministry's plan, set before the Dark Songkran in April 2009 occurred.

It is the conceptual work of the Bhumjaithai Party led by Interior Minister and Bhumjaithai Party leader Chawarat Charnveerakul. The Bhumjaithai Party is known by the public for its attempt to seek a political stance on the color game conflicts between the red and the yellow shirts.

The Blue Shirt image turns opposite from the reconciliatory concept of the group as it played an important role in being the “unofficial” force against the reds during the Asean summit meeting in Pattaya.

We have to admit that, so far, the Blue Shirt's attempt is a political ploy of a political group. The Blues aim at presenting to the public that the group has loyalty to protect the national institutes concerning its role on the Coronation Day.

On one hand, the group wants to promote national harmony and its loyalty after the national political breakup. However, it is the group's political aim to oppose the Red Shirt counterpart, with their gathering on May 5, 2009.

Despite Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva's expressed opposed opinion fearing the political impact of such a public rally, the Blue Shirts' goal is to break the previous record of 200,000 participants and reach a 300,000 record. Middleman like Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Tuaksuban was sent to discuss with the "Blue" team on properness and progress of this planned public gathering.

## Mock “Red Shirt membership application form”

May 30, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Mock “Red Shirt membership application form”](#) – translated and summarized from *Phutjatkhan*, May, 2009

## Teen's dream of playing football is sacked by OSAA rules

May 30, 2009

Categories: Sports

[Teen's dream of playing football is sacked by OSAA rules](#) – *The Oregonian*, May 30, 2009

*They call him Tut — and of course they do. His full name is Tut Tangtragulcharoen. He's a 17-year-old exchange student from Bangkok, Thailand, who has lived with a family in Portland for the last year. Said Tut: "All I knew of this country before being here was cowboy movies..."*

## Pattani Fair

May 31, 2009

Categories: The Thai Deep South



(Photo: Monkey for 2Bangkok.com)

Above: The picture shows the motorcycles parked in front of the Pattani's Muang district. Every motorcycle is required to open its seat covers for the security check as shown in the picture

Pattani fair – May, 2009

Monkey reports: *The atmosphere of the charity parade of the local governmental units, led by Pattani governor urging the public to visit the 25th Pattani Red Cross Fair; hosted on May 1 -10, 2009. The security is beefed up, especially for gateways.*



(Photo: Monkey for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Monkey for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Monkey for 2Bangkok.com)

Above: The banner reads: Come to visit the Red Cross Fair and the Pattani annual festival, hosted in front of the Town Hall – 1-10 May, 2009 – Pure heart – the Red Cross helps people



(Photo: Monkey for 2Bangkok.com)

The banner reads: Pattani promotes good health condition  
On the blue sign carried in front of the banner: Pattani 1st Defense volunteer troop



(Photo: Monkey for 2Bangkok.com)

On the blue sign carried in front of the banner: Pattani 1st Defense volunteer troop



(Photo: Monkey for 2Bangkok.com)

On the arch: Pattani’s health fitness without obesity-promoting good health condition – 116th anniversary of Thai Red Cross – 150th anniversary of World Red Cross

## Satun governor suggests tunnel in Bukit Batu

May 31, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Satun governor suggests tunnel in Bukit Batu](#) – Bernama, May 31, 2009

*A Thai governor has suggested that a tunnel be built to serve as a gateway between Malaysia and Thailand at Bukit Batu Puteh here, if a proposal to open the border there is realised...*

## Thailand tourist's lung tissue 'gone' after mysterious death

May 31, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thailand tourist's lung tissue 'gone' after mysterious death](#) – CNN, May, 2009

*... But members of St. Onge's family said they feel the pathologist's findings, though preliminary, are enough to contradict public statements made by Thai investigators that St. Onge was the victim of food poisoning.*

*"I am 99.9 percent sure she did not die of food poisoning," said Ryan Kells, St. Onge's fiancée, who was with her when she died. "She suffocated to death. I am not a doctor; but I know when someone can't breath..."*

## Superjumbo makes 1st commercial flight to Bangkok

May 31, 2009

Categories: Airports and Airlines

[Superjumbo makes 1st commercial flight to Bangkok](#) – *Forbes*, May, 2009

*An A380 jet, the world's largest passenger airliner, was to set down at Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi International Airport with nearly 500 passengers from Dubai...*

## BNE in Bangkok

May 31, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

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(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

BNE in Bangkok – May 31, 2009

More [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)

## Old photos

June 2, 2009

Categories: Old photos and films



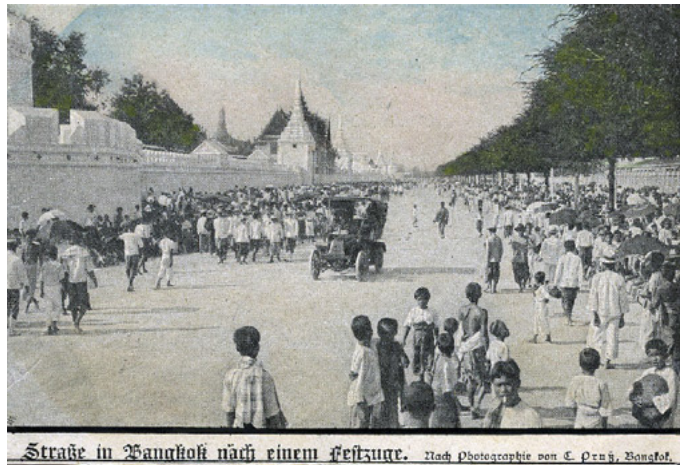
(Source: Undated postcard)

Caption: National Library, Bangkok



(Source: postcard circa 1920)

Caption: Nawarat Bridge in Chiang Mai



(Undated postcard)

Outside of the Grand Palace compound

Update: Nils explains: *The German on the left reads: Street in Bangkok after a festival procession*

## Not the King of Naga serpent

June 5, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News



“Not the King of Naga serpent” – Matichon, June 5, 2009

The caption reads: “Not the King of Naga serpent” – The body of the oarfish or “paddle” fish, which was caught in Mexico in the year 2007 (below) and the latest caught oarfish fish in Taiwan (inset). Compare to the image of the oarfish that was caught in the Mekong River by US soldiers in the year 1996. The fish was once mistaken by many Thai and Laotian residents along the Mekhong who link it to their belief in the existence of Naga as the fish’s head contains organs similar to a crest.

Tee notes: The picture of the soldiers holding the oarfish DID NOT happen on the Mekong (“oarfish that was caught in the Mekong River by US soldiers in the year 1996”), it actually happened in San Diego CA. I know because I live in San Diego and it made news when it happened. The fish was on display at the Scripps Institute of Oceanography and I have seen it, also in the gift shop they sell the same picture on postcards but the caption reads that it was found in Coronado CA by Navy Seals who train on the beaches on Coronado. The fish actually washed a shore and was found by the Seals. I also know that in the Bangkok weekend market they sell pictures and make the claim that it was caught on the Mekong...

## The Mosothai Billboards

June 6, 2009

Categories: Red Shirt Protest 2009, Signs and Billboards



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

The sign reads: Who to believe? – Consciousness + reason = immune system –  
The sustainable thinking project – [www.mosothai.com](http://www.mosothai.com)

MOSOThai by ISOC – June 6, 2009

MOSOThai is a part of a psy-ops operation from Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC). It is part of a number of initiatives pushed forward after the failed Red Shirt putsch in April as authorities seek ensure the Red Shirt movement does not gain public support.

The name comes from: Mo = Moderation and So = Society. This “movement” calls on “sustainable thinking” to follow the King’s sufficiency economic philosophy.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

It reads: How we are going to live together? – Consciousness + reason = immune system – The sustainable thinking project – [www.mosothai.com](http://www.mosothai.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

It reads: Shall we flee or struggle? – Consciousness + reason = immune system – The sustainable thinking project – [www.mosothai.com](http://www.mosothai.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Mosothai Skytrain – September 14, 2009

The letters read: The sustainable thinking project – By the Army and the Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC) – [www.mosothai.com](http://www.mosothai.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Message from the government – May, 2009

These billboards went up around Bangkok this month and were almost as quickly removed. The text is from a speech by Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva.

It reads: I would like to thank everyone as well as state authorities for their cooperation to promote peace of the nation for we are to move continuously to overcome the national economic crisis. Abhisit Vejjajiva, Prime Minister



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Father – May 29, 2009

The sign reads: Serenity, peace, harmony – Do good deeds as a present to the father – Ministry of Interior – Ministry of Transport and Communication – Ministry of Commerce



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

“The role model of the simplicity and sufficiency” – August 1, 2009

The billboard reads: Know sufficiency and therefore (you’ll) be happy – True happiness is gained from the inner peace of the mind – Royal speech of the Princess Mother (Somdej Phra Srinagarindra Boromarajajonani) – In remembrance of the Royal Grandmother (Somdej Ya) who was the role model of the simplicity and sufficiency – The Internal Security Operations Command project promoting self-sufficiency economy principle to fight economic crisis.

# Bangkok Airport Scam

June 9, 2009

Categories: Airports and Airlines, Scams

The Bangkok Airport Scam

[Warnings issued about alleged Bangkok airport scam](#) – *Thailandnews*, August 7, 2009

*...But the allegations of extortion take things to another level.*

*"We are quite concerned about this," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Vimol Kidchob said Thursday. "The government of Thailand is doing everything we can to ensure the safety of tourists..."*

[Scandal at Suvarnabhumi](#) – *Bangkok Post*, August 2, 2009

*Several recent cases of alleged extortion at the new airport are in danger of subverting the entire legal system, and scaring tourists away...*

[AoT beefs up security at Suvarnabhumi – Baggage staff coming under closer scrutiny](#) – *Bangkok Post*, July 31, 2009

[Crackdown at Suvarnabhumi from July 28](#) – *Bangkok Post*, July 22, 2009

*A major crackdown on [illegal taxis](#) and unlicensed guides will be conducted at Suvarnabhumi airport starting July 28, according to a notice put up by the Airports of Thailand Plc in the airport on Wednesday...*

[Sohpon acts to prevent airport scams](#) – *Bangkok Post*, July 22, 2009

*...Mr Sohpon said he had ordered the AoT to arrange its officials to take care of foreign tourists in case they are engaged in a legal dispute and required to be handed over to police investigators. During this process, the tourists must be escorted by airport officials and embassies of their countries must be informed. This is to prevent members of an extortion gang to intervene and offer help...*

[Tourists warned of Thailand airport scam](#) – *BBC*, July 20, 2009

*...Letters of complaint to the papers here in Thailand make it clear that passengers are regularly detained at the airport for alleged shoplifting, and then made to pay middlemen to win their freedom...*

[Danes warned against airport police in Bangkok](#) – translation via *ThaiVisa*, July 21, 2009

*Be careful if you shop in stores in the international airport in Bangkok. You risk being arrested and charged of corruption of Thai airport officials...*

[Bangkok airport scam condemned in Europe](#) – *Phuket Wan*, July 9, 2009

*Britain's Foreign Office is reported to be reviewing its travel advice for Thailand amid fresh media coverage of a Bangkok airport scam and the "harrowing ordeal" of an Irish traveller...*

[Local woman home from Thai jail after being targeted by scam](#) – *Kilkenny People*, July 10, 2009

*... "What is happening here is outrageous and needs to be exposed. It's a national scandal," said her husband, Ronan Loftus, who flew over to Thailand to help his wife escape the ordeal...*

[Irish scientist escapes Thai airport shoplifting charge in flight to freedom](#) – *Andrew-Drummond.com*, July 4, 2009

[£10,000 for eye shadow at King Power?- The Bangkok airport scam](#) – *Andrew-Drummond.com*, July 4, 2009

*Police volunteer admitted that 160 tourists were scammed including six Britons...*

*"No I don't want a laptop I've got too many of those. Jewellery will do..."*

[Airport extortion: King Power's side of the story](#) – July 8, 2009

[British couple fights Bangkok airport extortionists –](#)

[Two tourists were held by an airport gang until they paid up £8,000](#) – *The Sunday Times*,

June 28, 2009

*...The bribes were paid to an intermediary named Sunil "Tony" Rathnayaka, a Sri Lankan national in his fifties who works as a "volunteer" interpreter for Thailand's tourist police (motto: "To serve and to protect").*

*...Last week Rathnayaka admitted in a telephone interview that he had received cash and money transfers amounting to more than £7,000 from the Britons. He said the money was for police bail and for a payment to a figure he called "Little Big Man" who could withdraw the case against them. "In Thailand everyone knows it's like that," he said. "They can go to jail or they can just pay a fine and go home. It is corruption, you know?..."*

Also: [The descent of Suvarnabhumi](#) – June 9, 2009

# The Descent of Suvarnabhumi

June 9, 2009

Categories: Airports and Airlines, Analysis, Crime



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Above and below: The "taxi mafia" at Suvarnabhumi Airport

The Descent of Suvarnabhumi – June 9, 2009

Many have commented recently about the increasingly chaotic nature of the international arrivals at Suvarnabhumi Airport—and indeed at the visitors exit there are multiple touts trying to misdirect passengers away from the public taxi exit and a general air of disorganization that brings to mind the Manila Airport of the 1990s.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Outside the airport is no better. Groups of "bandit" taxi drivers (left and above) are allowed to stand just outside of the taxi meter area shouting incessantly at the top of their lungs at passengers queuing in the meter taxi line.

The legitimate taxi drivers, all older men, stand ruefully by in silence as security people mill around taking no notice of the yelling bandit taxis.

Our taxi driver commented how "very terrible" it was that the airport security force was being paid by the "mafia" to allow these unlicensed taxis to harass passengers and steal fares. He also claimed that once the bandit taxis reached their destination, they would demand 1000 baht from the passenger.

Our driver further suggested that the solution for this would be to bring Thaksin back to "rule" the country as he would not allow this to happen to honest taxi drivers.

Recently worsening violent attacks – Doubt on the statistics of the decreased violence toll

June 10, 2009  
Categories: Deep South Violence Statistics

Recently worsening violent attacks – Doubt on the statistics of the decreased violence toll – translated and summarized from *Issara News Center*; Author: Issara news team; June 10, 2009

Regarding the Southern violent attacks that were reported during the previous 20 days (May 18, 2009 to June 8, 2009), 4 teachers were killed and 5 injured. 15 security guards for school teachers were injured. The militants staged 9 blast attacks in the downtown of Yala on May 27, staging car-bombing attack in Narathiwat’s Yeengo district that killed 2 and injured 19 on June 7 and also the deadly Mosque shooting attack in Narathiwat’s Choaiong district killed 11 people on June 8. The security agency insists that the statistic record of violent situation has decreased during the previous one year period. To explain the intensified degree of violence, the joint civil police military source states that the related cause is the militant attempt at revenge on authorities.

According to the source’s review:

1) the teacher attacks occur usually during the school opening period, but this year, the loss is revealed as greater than the previous year

2) the car bomb attack in the Yeengor district and the mosque massacre in the Choaiong district is related to the seizure of militant “zone” leaders during the past 2 months.

The Army views that the peace-reinforcing project in 217 villages also greatly impacts the militant operation in the red area and, additionally, the Islamic Conference Committee’s recent meeting did not include discussion of Thailand’s southern violence as its agenda. Therefore, the militants have to increase the degree of violence to make world see that the unrest situation in the South is a “problem.”

Regardless of what the army and the national security panel claim, the question is that the government and the security agency have to explain why the policy, claimed to be “on the right track” generates such problems. This is what the army and the security units have to answer to the public. Likewise, to answer doubts about the large amounts of budget recently allocated to the army.

Panithan believes red-zone seizure cause of mosque attack – translated and summarized from *Thai Rath*; June 10, 2009

On June 9, Deputy Spokesperson to the Prime Minister’s Office Supachai Jaisamut announced that the Cabinet approved a budget of 400 million baht from the central budget for victims of southern unrest. The budget will be allocated to government units to help people affected by the southern unrest. The Cabinet has also approved special monthly payment for officials operating tasks in the southern border provinces and four districts of Songkhla. Panitan Wattanayakorn, Spokesperson for the Prime Minister’s Office, gave his comment about a mosque attack in Amphoe Joh I Rong, Narathiwat province, which killed ten people. He said that the attack was an effort to counter the government. Government’s projects in the South have turned local people into siding with it. Several leaders have been arrested. These make insurgents unhappy. However, the overall number of violent attacks declined by 40-50 percent. Malaysia is willing to help Thai government ease the unrest. It will visit Thailand’s southern provinces at the end of the year to increase the efficiency of local schools.

Statistics in April reveals high toll – Daily shooting attacks increase – Pattani reported critical high toll – translated and summarized from *Issara News Center*; Author: Issara news team; June 4, 2009

The record of violent attacks that occurred in April, 2009 is slightly higher than the record of the previous month (March). However, the death toll decreases with 29 dead. The accumulative death toll from January, 2004 up to the present reaches 3,550 already. The report reveals that there were 89 violent attacks in April, 2009. 36 violent attacks occurred in Pattani province, 9 of which were from the Yarang district, 8 of which from the Saiburi, 6 of which from the Nongchick, 2 apiece of which from the city district, the Kokpoh, the Yaring, the Mayor, the Thung Yang Daeng and the Kapo district and 1 of which from the Panare district. There were 21 violent attacks that occurred in Yala province, 8 of which were from the city district, 4 of which were from the Yaha district, 3 of which were from the Raman district, 2 apiece of which from the Bannungsata, the Krongpinang and the Tarnto district. There were 32 violent attacks in Narathiwat province, 8 of which were in the Rueso, 6 of which were from the Bacho, 5 of which were from the Rangae, 3 a piece of which were from the Janae and the Choaiong, 2 apiece of which were in the Waeng and the Sungaikolok, 1 apiece of which was in the Takbai, the Sungaipadee and the Srisakorn district. There were 60 shooting attacks, 26 of which were in Pattani, 16 of which were in Yala and 18 of which were in the Narathiwat. There were 13 bombing attacks, 2 of which were in the Pattani, 2 of which were in Yala and 9 of which in Narathiwat. There were 16 torching attacks, 8 of which were in Pattani, 1 of which in Yala and 7 of which were in Narathiwat. Regarding the violent victims, there are the total of 100, 29 of which were dead and 71 of which were injured. Pattani reports 41 on toll, 14 of which were injured officials, 13 of which were dead locals and 12 were injured locals. 1 militant died and 1 other suffered injured. Yala reports 37 on toll, 3 of which were dead officials, 13 of which were injured officials, 10 of which were dead locals and 11 of which were injured locals. Narathiwat reports 22 on toll, 8 of which were injured officials, 1 of which was dead local, 12 of which were injured locals. One militant died.

Table 1: Summary of Violent Incidents in Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat Provinces, and 4 districts of Songkhla Province

Types of Incident	Pattani Province	Yala Province	Narathiwat Province	4 districts of Songkhla Province
Ambushes with gunfire	26	18	18	–
Arson attacks	8	1	7	–
Bomb attacks	4	3	10	–
Attacks injuring people	2	2	9	–
Attacks damaging assets	–	–	–	–
Incidents in which nails were strewn on highways	–	1	1	–

Table 2: Victims Injured or Killed in Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat Provinces, and 4 districts of Songkhla Province

Group	Pattani Province	Yala Province	Narathiwat Province	4 districts of Songkhla Province
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State officials injured	14	13	8	–
State officials killed	–	3	–	–
Ordinary local citizens injured	12	11	12	–
Ordinary local citizens killed	13	10	1	–
Insurgents injured	1	–	–	–
Insurgents killed	1	–	1	–

The loss of three southern border provinces comes close – translated and summarized from *Phujatkarn*; Author: Sirianya; June 11, 2009

This column is to express concern on the ongoing violent situation in the South for fear that in the near future Thailand might have to lose the southern border lands. The mosque massacre that killed 12 in Narathiwat on June 8 did happen and it has not happened in this country before. After the shooting a rumor was spread putting blame on the state authorities for the massacre. What should be mentioned here is that firstly, the bloody event that occurred has removed the previous view that the policy on violent situation is on the right track and the situation has improved. Secondly, the state authority, even now, does not know who they are fighting with.

The truth to be accepted here are

1. The government has spent more than 100,000 million baht up to now in the South. This amount could make the south prosperous economically. However, the southern economy is still not progressively developed.
2. Despite a large number of police military forces dispatched to the South, the loss of life of the people continues, likewise the violent attacks.
3. The strategy that military forces become target of the militant operations in the local areas ensures continuous losses.
4. The geographical area of the South is canvassed by militant supporters who work in villages and the militant exercises continue.
5. We are lacking the profound understanding that the militants are using a prolonged war strategy to reach their goals and at the same time, they are pushing ahead on making the issue become internationally discussed by the Islamic Conference Committee. We do not really focus on His Majesty the King's royal suggestion on developing policy with profound understanding for the locals. If one wants to understand the real "military leads politics policy", they should read the book named "Land philosophy" by Statesman Gen. Prem Tinnasulanonda to get to the concept. As for land development, I comment that if we followed it, things would be less problematic and open hope of opportunity for the great Thai-Muslim land to be well-developed with cooperation with world Islamic community.

Sound from the South: Three brave governors – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; June 17, 2009

 <http://www.matichon.co.th/news-photo/matichon/2009/06/pol03170652p1.jpg>

Winai Kharuwanapat  
Narathiwat governor

He is in charge of aiding people in distress, boosting civilians' morale and confidence, holding a talk among people, and devising a scheme with other organizations to solve problems.

When we visit his place, much safety cautions are required and we have to avoid the risk and always be careful.

"I have to admit working here is tough because governor of the three affected provinces not only have to work like other governors, but we also have to deal with the crisis here which is far tougher than in other area," he said.

Teera Mintrasak  
Yala Governor

The core strategy is to create understanding among people so that it will ease conflict, restore faith, and reduce mistrust. In order to raise their feelings of justice, it is significant to make them apprehend cultural and racial diversity, or the so-called scheme "Solving Southern Unrest by Culture".

The activities are aimed at creating unity and peace among the population. Moreover, people can file their complaints at "Peaceful Yala Centre" that was organized for a year. State officials including soldiers, policemen, and sheriff are based there to provide assistance.

Besides, the centre is also available for the accused that want to surrender themselves. Up to now, there are 275 sympathizers and eight accused insurgents presenting themselves at the office.

"I visit my people and check on projects initiated by his Majesty the King and other projects such as living quality development, village development including youth and female's right. If our children are strong it will bring peace to Yala. We have to focus on drug abuse problem by giving them education, sport, and jobs. All of these are to keep them from joining the insurgents. My security is not that important because I do it for the sake of the country," he said.

Teerathep Sriyaphan  
Pattani Governor

He places emphasis on raising the quality of life and supporting family businesses, either full time or part time. Civilians should have security and income which the state is responsible for.

Justice is the first priority. Every case should be tried equitably to find the real motive. We should create the feeling that provincial organization is the place they can rely on.

He, therefore, employs His Majesty the King's principle saying understanding, approaching, developing, and unity will lead to love among human being.

Furthermore, he resolved to fight poverty by supporting careers and offering jobs for fresh grads. Otherwise, unemployment would lead to drug abuse as well as, afterwards, unrest in the area.

"When we have to work in a dangerous area, we cannot be careless. Sometimes, we need to call for reinforcement. Although working here is tiring, I will do it for the country. To me, being a governor is the peak of my life, so I devote my life to it. If I have to sacrifice my life for the civilians' happiness, I will do," he said.

## Nominees will need to find ‘real’ Thai partners, says JFCCT

June 25, 2009

Categories: Property and Development

[PROPERTY: Nominees will need to find ‘real’ Thai partners, says JFCCT](#) – Bangkok Post, October 27, 2009

*...In the worst-case scenario, property will be seized by the Lands Department,” he said.*

*“Foreigners now are really panicked. But they need to familiarise themselves with the changes. Everybody always resists change, so the beginning could be a struggle...”*

Earlier: [Taste of the Thai life: Thailand’s property market is still hot and spicy](#) – Daily Mail, June 25, 2009

Earlier: [No witch-hunt, says Lands Department – Foreign ownership debate intensifies](#) – Bangkok Post, June 15, 2009

*...The Lands Department does not have a policy to scrutinise acquisitions in which illegal use of Thai nominees on behalf of foreigners is suspected, says director-general Anuwat Maytheewibulwut.*

*We have some regulations and processes to investigate illegality, but not that many. We must respect individual rights and assume individuals will not give fake statements to officials – Anuwat Maytheewibulwut Director-general, lands department*

*Land ownership revocation cases mostly occur when a complaint or conflict is brought to the department’s attention, he said...*

Earlier: [Land purchase through Thai spouse forbidden: Land Dept](#) – Phuket Gazette, May 27, 2009

Earlier: [International Real Estate For Sale In... Thailand](#) – New York Times, May 26, 2009

Earlier: [Tourism Increases Property Investment in Thailand](#) – BigNews.Biz, July 16, 2009

*The world class tourist industry of Thailand attracts re-locators and property investors contributing to the increase in property investment of the country...*

# Michael Jackson's death in the Thai-language press

June 29, 2009

Categories: Culture and Society

*Komchadluek*, July 1, 2009 – It reads: Michael Jackson autopsy revealed – Stomach examination indicates dosages of medicine used – Scrawny – Balding – Injection traces left on body – King of Pop's will quested – Mother to take care according to law – Father's word claiming absolute right – Clarifying music fans' doubt – Decoding medicines that killed Jack-o

Michael Jackson's death in the Thai-language press

Left: *Matichon Weekly*, July 3, 2009

It reads: Moon Walker – "Mark-kle" Jackson steps regressively "in lost"

Right: *Nation Weekend*, July 3, 2009

It reads: The final song

*Daily News*, June 29, 2009 – 6-8 weeks to know autopsy result of Michael – Unexpected death shocking the world – Heart attack – Possible drug overdose involved

*Kom Chad Luek*, June 28, 2009 – It reads: Fear for Jackson's fans to commit suicide following (his death) – Investigating doctor's overdose prescription – Autopsy to be known in 2 months – Fame raised to compare to Elvis

*Matichon*, June 28, 2009 –

Leaving a great debt of 14 billion – Jackson passed away – Heart attack – Drug overdose – His fans mourn the death!

*Matichon*, June 28, 2009 – The caption reads: Picture from the past – The picture in the past when Michael Jackson was on tour to his concert in Thailand. Thai girls dressed up in Thai dress to welcome him on November, 1996.

*Khoasod*, June 28, 2009 – The caption reads: Mournful – Michael Thang, Thai "Michael Jackson" impersonator brings flowers to mourn the death of the King of Pop at the US embassy in Bangkok, Thailand on June 26 (2009).

*Daily News* also reprinted a headline from 1993 when one of Jackson's concerts was postponed in Bangkok.

*Daily News*, August 28, 1993 –

It reads: Worn out in dancing, "Jackson" weakens – Tolerates – (Performs) crotch-grabbing dancing till the end

[The man, his music, that walk](#) – *Bangkok Post*, June 27, 2009

[Die-hard Thai fans mourn "King of Pop"](#) – *MSNBC*, June 26, 2009

[When Michael played Bangkok](#) – *Bangkok Post*, June 27, 2009

*In August of 1993, Thailand had the fastest growing economy in the world. The country and its entrepreneurs were addicted to daily jabs of extravagance, using massive foreign reserves to order the aircraft carrier Chakri Naruebet, throw hundreds of moo baan to encircle Bangkok, and convert green acres into malls.*

*All that excess and waste looked grey and ordinary when it was announced in July that the Dangerous tour with Michael Jackson was coming to town...*

Michael Jackson in Bangkok – June 26, 2009

On August 24, 1993, Michael Jackson resumed his Dangerous World Tour in Bangkok. We seem to recall photos of Jackson marching along with Thai army cadets, but we are able to local this photo.

[Michael Jackson's Dangerous Tour Dates](#) – [Michael Jackson Dangerous World Tour Collectibles](#)

Don adds: *Jackson played Muang Thong Thani on November 5, 1996. You can see his world-tour schedule [here](#). That was pre-Impact. Nothing out there but a field. I was always curious why he played on a temporary stage way out there instead of someplace like, say, the National Stadium.*

Also: [Thai fans join world in mourning 'King of Pop'](#) – *The Nation*, June 26, 2009

Also: [Jackson dies, almost takes Internet with him](#) – *CNN*, June 26, 2009

## Southern Violence Statistics – June 2009

June 30, 2009

Categories: Deep South Violence Statistics

Map of four provinces in the deep south (Songkhla, Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat) showing numbers of the dead and injured by location.

### Southern Violence Statistics – June 2009

[Index of violence statistics for the Thai Deep South](#)

This chart shows violent incidents classified by the hour of the day (x-axis) and the province (y-axis). Songkhla=light blue, Pattani=blue, Yala=green, Narathiwat=red, total events=black

This chart shows violent incidents classified by day of the week (x-axis) and the province (y-axis). The days of the week start with Monday on the left. Songkhla=light blue, Pattani=blue, Yala=green, Narathiwat=red, total events=black

This chart shows violent incidents classified by day of the month (x-axis) and the province (y-axis). Songkhla=light blue, Pattani=blue, Yala=green, Narathiwat=red, total events=black

Numbers of violent incidents since January 2004. Across the bottom are the years (2547 is 2004, 2548 is 2005, 2549 is 2006, 2550 is 2007, 2551 is 2008, 2552 is 2009). The blue line shows the number of all violent incidents that took place as reported by the Deep South Coordination Center (counting all incidents both injury and non-injury). The red line shows data according to the Violence-related Injury Surveillance (a form that hospitals, doctors and clinics are supposed to fill out to report violent incidents).

The blue line shows the average monthly level of violent incidents from 2004 up to the present. The red line shows the information provided to the Violence-related Injury Surveillance in the present year. The y-axis shows the numbers of events from 0-300. The x-axis shows the months of the year from January to December (left to right).

The numbers of injured and dead reported from each province where the events occurred (Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat and Songkhla). Black= dead, orange=injured. The CFR (Case Fatality Rate) of each province is above each bar.

The toll of dead and injured (y-axis), classified by the districts where the incidents took place (x-axis). Black= dead, orange=injured.

Map of four provinces in the deep south (Songkhla, Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat) showing the number of violent events by tambon (village). Starting at light yellow, the levels are 1-10, 10-20, 20-30, 30-40, 40-50, and greater than 60.

The numbers of dead and injured, classified by the victims' profession. Black= dead, orange=injured. From left to right: laborers, agriculturists, police officers, army officers, others, students and college students, merchants and businessmen, housewives, Education Ministry Officials, unknown, unemployed, other officials, interior officials, volunteer defense guards, lawyers, village headmen, fisheries and marine transport

Source: Deep South Violence-related Injury Surveillance statistics

## Thai Media Project – June 2009

June 30, 2009

Categories: Thai Media Project

H.U.G. – *Matichon Weekend*, June 5, 2009

The three letters in the abbreviation represents “I will take it” which is written in full in the parenthesis below where it reads “I will take it no matter what happens.” If you remove the dots in the abbreviation, the letters read “hug.”

The men are Prime Minister and Newin Chidchob. Newin’s Bhumjaithai Party plays an important role as a coalition party in forming the Democrat government—represented by the hug between Abhisit and Newin. The blood stain on their shirts refers the NGV project to rent 4,000 buses and its impact on the Democrats who attempt to represent themselves as a more upstanding party.

The NGV project was proposed by the Transport Minister from the Bhumjaithai Party. Like most transport projects it is riddled with irregularities and the costs of the individual vehicles turn out to be many multiples of the actual cost. The extra money is normally spread throughout the cadres of a party and the party financiers as part of the recouping of investment made to come to power in the first place.

The NGV project, if approved, is thought to cause problems to the Democrat-led government which has tried to present itself as a party that does not have to continually push through mega-projects to fill the coffers of its financiers. However, to the Bhumjaithai party, the project will promote its populist policies to develop transport system—and is very likely the price that tempted them into forsaking Thaksin and joining the Democrat government. The Bhumjaithai Party has erected billboards around town to explain the NGV deal and since the party is key in countering Thaksin-family influence in the Northeast, the Democrats seem to have to accept the deal in some form. Such a coalition would have been in the realm of fantasy even in last December, but the parties were pushed together in an attempt to forestall another Thaksin-dominated government.

What this means is that the stain of the Newin-based party and the NGV deal is impacting the Democrats who have had to embrace them into the coalition.

**Cancel the NGV bus rental project! – It would be a sign of “new politics”** – translated and summarized from *Thaipost*; Column: The editorial; June 3, 2009

The NGV bus rental project is one of the proposals in the cabinet meeting which is held on June 3, 2009. This project will impact on the future of the Democrat party. Many groups of people disagree with this project, except the Bhumjaithai Party because of its undisclosed reasons.

It is possible that some politicians can get benefits from purchasing the buses so the people will have no faith in the government if it approves this project.

Conversely, if the government postpones this project, it may have to dissolve the House as the government’s action makes the Bhumjaithai party dissatisfied.

However, PM Abhisit Wejchacheewa should first think of people’s benefits. Although he may administer the country only three months due to the Bhumjaithai party’s desertion, many people have seen in Aphisit a touch of “new politics.” Specifically, he can work continuously and can be insulted by Thai people if he first thinks of the personal interest. The government should show its power to cancel this project because cancellation would be good for Thai people. Even if the PM has to dissolve the House, Thai people will support him to work as a prime minister again because of his goodness.

**The hidden agenda: 60 billion is a budget for the NGV bus rental project** – translated and summarized from *Komchadluek*; Column: The editorial; June 2, 2009

The NGV bus rental project has been proposed since the Samak government, but many groups of people disagreed with this project, including the Democrat Party which was part of the opposition at the time.

Democrat party leader Abhisit Wejchacheewa gave many reasons showing that some politicians could obtain benefits from purchasing 4,000 buses and tried to cancel this project. We are seeing that Sophon Sarum , acting as Transport Minister, tries to push this project by putting it on the agenda of the cabinet meeting which will be held on June 3, 2009.

Why the politicians, who came from Newin’s group, have been trying to push this project after Samak proposed it? This may be the cause of the breaking of the good relationship between the Democrat Party and the coalition party , because the Bhumjaithai Party seems to be run by Newin Chidchob, who supported the Democrat Party to form a new government. The Bhumjaithai Party may definitely need this project to be carried out. Thus, it is possible that a good relationship between the Democrats and the Bhumjaithai party may be broken if this project is cancelled.

Although Thai people can get benefits from this project, there is a way to see the personal interests of politicians and parties are served as well. The government should show its moral bravery and cancel this project. Possibly, PM Abhisit Wejchacheewa realizes that a disordered situation will occur if he cancels this project. However, the government should not shirk its responsibility by simply asking other sections of government to address this case for prolonging time .

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June 5, 2009, *Nation Weekend* – Let’s see the little panda

June 12, 2009, *Matichon Weekly* – We come to the right way already?

June 12, 2009, *Nation Weekend* – Victims! of the unfair

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**Not the same fortune between bear and men** – *Thai Rath*, Chai Ratchawat, June 14, 2009

Top left: Many flock to see baby bear , but never watch their own child.

Top middle: The pregnant bear is widely reported in the news, but pregnant girls secretly get abortions.

Top right: In joy when a bear’s eye sockets turn black , but in worry when men’s eye sockets turn black .

Bottom left: The zoo joyfully greets the baby bear, but men greet their “fresly” with bruises.

Bottom middle: The baby bear resides in a 60 million baht dorm, but some man’s child resides in a garbage pile

Bottom right: Baby bear promote tourism, but man’s child destroys it

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Punch to punch – *Thairath*; June 8, 2009

Left: Chaowarat Charnweerakul: Although the 4,000 bus NGV rental project belongs to Ministry of Transportation, the Cabinet does not approve or postpone this project. They should have a good reason to explain why they act like this.

Right: Abhisit Wejchacheewa: The Cabinet will consider everything carefully and would assure the public's benefit—in so many words. We will keep an eye on anyone who acts illegally or tries to create corruption. We would not let anyone create corruption during this economic recession.

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Violent problems in the south – *Krungthep Turakit*, 500 type + 1 Author: Mor, Column: Tassanavijarn, June 11, 2009  
On the side of the elephant: Violent problems in the south  
The men pushing the elephant are PM Abhisit and a figure representing the military. They are saying: petty

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**Repeated old film** – *Matichon*, Cartoon column: *Kaolao Ruammit*, Author: Tin, June 14, 2009

Top left: The caption reads: The gang of four

Top middle: Finance Minister Korn Jatikanit rips a document. The caption reads: Inheritance tax aborted

Top right:  
Bhumjaithai Party ministerial members ride on a tractor. The caption reads: Reality Show

Bottom left:  
Minister to PM Office Sathit Wongnongtoey says: Gas carrier truck. The words on the truck's gas tank reads: To bomb the south.

Bottom middle: The caption reads: Cruel freshy welcome

Bottom right:  
The caption reads: Dissolve Thaksin's party. The words next to the hammer read: Framing Bhumjaithai.

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**Left: *Matichon Weekly***  
The cover reads: 800,000 million – A-ro-ka – Nee – Pa-Ra-Mee-La-Pa?

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**True situation in the Deep South?** – *Smart News*, No. 184, June 16-30, 2009  
Left to right:  
The first man says: Mr. Suthep says it will take three years for the South to be in peace, what do you think?  
The second man says: I am not sure... (because) the chaotic situation in parliament has not been solved.

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Unclear and untrustworthy – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; Column: Editorial; June 19, 2009  
It is now nearly two weeks after people praying in a mosque in Amphoe Joh I Rong, Narathiwat, have been killed and injured. However, no progress is seen in the investigations. Several parties come out to unveil their opinions. They question whether Abhisit's new strategy to let the politics lead the military works. High-ranking officials and politicians in the cabinet all believe that the mosque attack was committed by southern insurgents. But local politicians in three southern border provinces do not believe so. They see that the attack could also be done by local officials. Lots of Thai Muslim people see that it is not possible that Thai Muslim people will kill people in the same religion in a mosque. They think that it was the government.  
To end the rumors and recover the government's image, the government should form a central committee, consisting of local people and experienced ones, to investigate the matter, instead of letting the police do so. If the mosque attack still cannot be solved, insurgents could successfully coax the mass into siding with them.

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Southern unrest – The new “war” – translated and summarized from *Naewna*; Column: Kuanjai Hai Sa-ard; Author: Tapo Paopee; June 19, 2009  
The government has to renew its thoughts and concept on tackling the unrest problem. The government's declared politics leading army policy needs some clear visions on the matter before it starts. The politics-led war refers to a “no bloodshed” war, but the Army war refers to blood in the war. The “politics leads army” policy for the unrest needs the right approach in operation as well as the right understanding on the characters of the “new war” in the unrest. I comment that 3 important issues to be reviewed clearly are  
1) The fight of the militants ; the strategy, events and aims  
2) the understanding of masses; the winning over masses in the unrest (this is important at this moment as the government still face problem on local masses supporting government )  
3) the understanding of the power in hand of authority or militants ; including the new concept of war  
The government has to understand the points clearly to move on the right track for the ongoing violence in the unrest south.

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Unexpected conspiracy theory – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; Author: Thavi Meengern; June 18, 2009  
The unrest in the three boundary provinces of southern Thailand has lasted for many years, but the violence in the area has continued unabated. Criticizing about the issue, people in the area remarked there might be other groups that obtain advantages from the upheaval apart from those insurgents. This could be an unexpected conspiracy and a source of the violence.  
Local and national politicians who are familiar to the area analyzed that the insurgents commit crimes and terrorism in a bid to raise the violence and put Thailand in

the spotlight. As a result, the United Nations would interfere the issue, and separatists would have more bargaining power. Demonstrating their power shows their potential to foreign supporters who provide them financial assistance. Meanwhile, some mentioned that civil servants in security departments is another group gaining advantages from the violence. It cannot be denied that the more severe the situation, the more budget is earmarked for the south. However, it seemed the huge budget did not actually resolve the violence and it is deemed a “gold mine” for those opportunistic officials. The last group is general criminals such as smugglers, human traffickers, and so on. These other crimes are outweighed by the separatist issue and state officials usually overlook these crimes.

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JI members arrested in the South – DSI says they are involved in 9/11 attack – translated and summarized from *Naew Na*; June 18, 2009  
High-ranking authorities jointly announced that following collaboration among four agencies, the Security Centre, the National Intelligence Agency, the Royal Thai Police and the Department of Special Investigations, a Rohinya suspect named Mahamad Ali Husen, arrested on June 15 in Kaset Sombun district, Chaiphaphum province.  
On 5:00 pm of the same day, officials from four agencies jointly arrested Mr. Mahamad Madbameh, a 39-year-old Rohinya, and Mr. Chubri Awae, aged 20 years old, with several document-making devices, in Hat Yai, Songkhla province. They were arrested for official document forgery.  
The agencies confirm that all suspects have a relationship. Mr. Mahammad Ali Husen is a step brother of Mr. Mahamad Madbameh, who is capable of forging official documents for Rohinya people.  
Evidence also shows that they have something to do with an international criminal network, which is involved in the southern unrest.  
It is disclosed that the human trafficking movement is related to influential people in the South. It is found out that Mr. Mahamad Ali Husen is a leader of an international terrorist group. He is involved in human trafficking, document forgery as well as weapon trading.  
It is also found out that Mr. Mahamad Ali Husen was the one who provide the Al-Queda with fake documents, allowing the movement’s members to undergo the 9/11 sabotage. Later, he hid in Malaysia and then Thailand. Here, he contacts influential people in the South, including people involved in the unrest.  
Former Fourth Army Region Commander Gen. Watanachai Chaimuenwong said that southern insurgents have revised all strategies. New commandos are formed, using members from Al-Queda or JI. He added that following the new strategy, the attack will be more severe. Government officials are not likely to overcome them.

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Al-Furqan incident – Abhisit-Suthep-Anupong’s reaction – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; June 17, 2009  
From March to June this year, four teachers were killed and five were injured. 15 soldiers were also wounded. Moreover, another 11 bombing attacks led to the death of two civilians and injured 19.  
The one deemed the most brutal was a massacre at the Al-Furqan mosque in Ai Payae village of Narathiwat’s Cho-airong district that left 10 Muslims dead. After the incident, the insurgents attempted to frame the government of the charge by means of word of mouth and leaflets.  
The attempted frame-up made Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Thaugsuban, as well as Army Commander-in-chief General Anupong Paojinda to defend the administration, saying state officials were not behind the attack.  
The point is that the result of those incidents is worrying because, no matter how the case comes out, it is to the advantage of insurgents.  
Meanwhile, Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva did not refute that officials were not involved clearly, but explained that no policy legalizes the use of violence.  
In the case of Al-Furqan mosque, it is relatively complicated as there are a number of likely motivations such as personal revenge, drug dealing, and smuggling.  
Therefore, the government should not rush to the conclusion and distort the truth.  
During an interview on his Sunday television talk, Mr. Abhisit answered Vatsana Nanuam, a reporter, that every case should not be hastily concluded as long as the suspect is not tried.

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Government warned not to provide citizens with firearms – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; June 16, 2009  
Nonviolence International South East Asia warns government not to provide citizens and volunteer units with firearms. According to the organization’s research report, arming the citizen and expanding the civil volunteer unit would fuel the situation, causing more conflicts in the restive south. The government’s intention would involve the issue concerning religious discrimination as only Thai Buddhists are allowed to carry firearms while Thai Muslims are not. If they do, they would be suspected of being insurgents.  
Some of respondents who are officers admitted that security in the area is currently under responsibility of those volunteer and semi-military units which were screened and trained incompetently. Consequently, instead of reducing the violence, it may spark anger and dissatisfaction in the area.  
The research report suggests improving police’s potential rather than supporting people with firearms. The problem should be solved by peaceful means and good governance. Moreover, strict law enforcement are also vital.

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Two army members holding general rank and one colonel involved in militant attacks in the south – One more teacher shot dead – Blast attack killing police – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; Page: First page, June 17, 2009  
Two militants on their motorcycles on June 16, 2009 staged attacks targeting female school teacher Rekha Issara from the Banpormeng School in Yala’s Raman district, killing her in Tambon Kayuborkoh in the district while the teacher was traveling to school. At the same time, the militants in Pattani lured police at the Saiburi district in Pattani to inspect an accident on the Maikhaen-Saiburi road in Tambon Taluban. The militants detonated a bomb that was hidden on the motorcycle killing 2 and injuring 1 police officer.  
Meanwhile, an MP of the coalition parties reveals to a source that he believes that the mosque massacre in Narathiwat was a plotted scheme and claims that many MP in the unrest province and high-rank army officials and Army Commander-in-chief General Anupong Paojinda and Defense Minister General Prawit Wongsuwan have information about the group that was involved. According to the coalition party MP, leaders of the group that staged violence for their own benefit consist of one army member holding General rank in the Narathiwat area, another army officer holding the same rank looking in Pattani and one colonel in the Yala area.

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Analyzing why the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Office plan has been shelved – obstructed by soldiers? – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; June 11, 2009  
The Abhisit Vejjajiva government announced during its campaign for election on December 29, 2007, that it would launch a tool to ease the unrest in the southern border provinces. It believed that the tool would bring peace back to the provinces again. The tool is to set up a special organization called the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Office.  
The new organization will be directly supervised by the Prime Minister. It is aimed at solving administrative problems in the area and create unity in operations. However, five months have passed and the plan has not been proposed yet.  
The reason is that the government manager, Deputy Prime Minister for security Suthep Thaugsuban, fears that the proposal will offend the ‘Big Green’. We all know that the government is backed by the military.  
The Internal Security Operations Command is now the lead actor in the three southern border provinces with around 60,000 military officers.  
After the robbery of guns in Amphoe Joh I Rong, Narathiwat province, more and more budget has been allocated to the southern provinces – from 13.45 billion baht in 2004 to 27.547 billion baht in 2009. Over 50% of the budget is under the control of the Defense Ministry and the Internal Security Operations Command. The ISOC receives around 7.5 billion baht in advance. They will come up with projects later.  
People wonder if the budget will be spent on the right stuff. It is said that high-ranking authorities get a lot of money for themselves per month. Meanwhile, the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Command got less than 10% of the 27 billion baht budget.  
Are these the reasons the military oppose the plan to form the new Southern Border Provinces Administrative Office? The Abhisit administration should restructure military organizations and revamps strategies under the approaching and understanding concept.

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Half a decade of southern unrest – fighting for the masses or fighting for the budget? – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; June 21, 2009  
The unrest in Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat and some districts in Songkhla has been going on for half a decade, from January 4, 2004. The situation is not stable, depending on chances of both sides.

Commander of the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Command (SBPAC) Pol. Lt. Gen. Peera Poompichet says that so far, administrative officers cannot thoroughly stop them. He adds that we are now fighting with criminals who have high capacity and resources to carry out their plans. According to the Royal Thai Police, from 2004 to May 2009, a total of 3,513 people were killed. 3,078 out of them were ordinary people, 223 were policemen and 222 were soldiers. A total of 6,220 people were injured. 92 teachers were killed, while 96 were injured. Five monks were killed and 15 were injured. Officials were able to seize 316 guns from insurgents. The police have been working hard for five years to get the statistics. However, there are several units trying to intervene with the operations to get this work and the budget that goes with it. On June 8, 2009, a tragedy happened again when insurgents attacked the Alfrugon at Ban Ai Payae, Tambon Chuab, Amphoe Joh I Rong, Narathiwat province. Eleven Muslim people praying in the mosque were killed and lots were injured. It is still doubtful who killed those people. Is it insurgency movement, or another group with a secret goal? The incident intensifies the unrest. Teachers, monks, old people, soldiers and policemen are victims. Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva insists that he will let the politics lead the military to end the southern unrest. He also mentions about a plan to form the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Office. Several parties wonder if those billions baht spent in the South for the past five years were worthwhile. The budget does not include the secret budget and another 20 billion baht which has just been approved. People wonder if the government is able to unveil the information on budget allocation during the past five years? It is also doubtful if it is a fight against insurgents in the South, or a fight for budget allocated to ease the southern unrest.

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Local force teamed up to fight militants in the South – The Army on alert – translated and summarized from *Naewna*; Column: political news; June 21, 2009  
The Region 4 Internal Security Operations Command Public Relation Head Colonel Parinya Chaidilok reveals that the Narathiwat task force along with police and military will closely perform security operations in every district in the province, especially in the Choraong district, following many tense violent attacks operation in the area recently. The army strategy is aimed at controlling militants operating in the area and regaining public confidence. The hunting operations are launched in the suspected militant hideouts. Helicopters are used in the air force operation against militants in mountainous areas and checkpoints are set up in communities. He adds that the local force is to be teamed up by village security force, village guard defense volunteer team, and popular training units in the local areas. Meanwhile, four Islamic Khmers were seized at the border area in the Aranyaprated district in Sakaew province. The authorities found that the four have items such as radio transmitters, Kratom leaves used to produce hard drugs, electric volt transformer machine, and mobile devices in possession. The four claimed to travel to the Southern border province and to visit cousins in Malaysia. Police are investigating the case.

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(Photo: Naewna)

Islamic Khmers: Deputy task force commander of the Burapa force Lieutenant Ekkarat Methawattananan seized four Islamic Khmer people while they were entering the Aranyaprated border in Sakhaew province with many items used in forest and Kratom leaves. The four are suspected militant supporters.

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**Revealing the ‘Taksin 2’ plan – Fugitive Thaksin aims to run a war to hunt ‘Mark’, privy councilors** – translated and summarized from *Manager Online*; June 24, 2009

On June 24, it is reported that a security unit has reported about the Taksin 2 plan to the government. The five-page plan comes with a more violent strategy and more aggressive than the Taksin 1. The Taksin 2 has seven strategies and six methods, aiming to destroy the 2007 Constitution and promote a new one. More violent measures will be applied to bring down the government. A source said that red-shirt people are responding to the strategy. They create conflicts among Thai people. They are urging the change of national day from December 5 to June 24, in order to reduce the importance of the royal institute. All media will be used to spread negative rumours about the Prime Minister and other ministers. Government’s information units will also be interfered with. From June 27, which is a big meeting day of the red-shirt people, people will be mobilized to fight against the government’s power. All violent measures will be applied through well-trained forces. Teams will be set up to hunt down aristocrats like privy councilors, and government members. The first target in the government is Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva, followed by deputy security minister Suthep Thaugsuban. Security units have already sent a report about the Taksin 2 plan to deputy security minister Suthep Thaugsuban. All authorities are working hard to prevent all problems.