

## CHAPTER IV

### THE INSURGENT GROUPS RESPOND TO CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND

Since the unrest situation has long been emerging in Southern Provinces, the government efforts to conduct any suitable policies to Muslim People. Meanwhile, the insurgent groups are also responding in several ways, not only use arm forces but also the insurgent groups come up into negotiation process and participated with political solution. The situations have been changing during former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra in 2001. Under his policies has adopted that most of the Muslim people has unsatisfied and increasing of violence. If considering to the situation in previous era, the insurgent groups had directly fight against with the government target such as police station, military base but nowadays, the victims are also including civilians and public areas.

Moreover, the government officer such as, the police and the military have been doing human right violation to the Muslim. This is one factor of the insurgent groups that come up to fight against with central government. In addition, another reasonable that the insurgent groups have to oppose with the government because they are realized to history of Pattani Kingdom, injustice, inequality between the Muslim people who live in Southern Thailand and the people in another regions.

In Southern Thailand, there are many groups which fight against for their ideology, some groups used the violence because they thought the violence that the only way to overcome with the government. This ideology which called "Radical Insurgency". Meanwhile, there are the group that opposite the idea with radical insurgent which called "Moderate Insurgent" what is the goals of this group?

Moderate insurgent is mostly considering to the peace way. They thought that the violence could not be helpful to conquer the enemy but if the Muslim people want to fight against with central government, the peace talk is the best way to adopt into the Muslim community.

#### **A. The new young generation with their fighting ways**

The ways of the government administration in the previous was focused on the security force to repress the insurgent. It understood, in that era which there was exactly the target to attack because insurgent groups has clearly based and the military forces were easily suppressed, it could be reduced the violence that created by insurgent groups.

Meanwhile, the government idea which is "politics leading the military" which ever used when government of Thailand has opposed with Communist Party of Thailand. This government idea has reusing in Southern Thailand to resolution with the insurgent groups. The central government has established the "Civilian-Police-Military Command" that this CPMC has responsibility as strategy maker in order to repress the insurgent group.

Furthermore, in 1981, the government of Thailand was established the Sothern Border Provinces Administrative Center (SBPAC) has to restoration and development in Southern Thailand. The government administrative has success to help the Muslim people, listen to difference opinion and resolution of injustice, enhance the Islamic \into the Muslim lifestyle and give the chance to the Muslim people in order to define the strategies within Southern Thailand.

After the year 1981s, the unrest situations have been decreased because of the government policy on "Politics leading the military". Another policies adopted by

This government such as support the local self determination, etc.

religion and culture and economic development in Southern Thailand. After Thai government has adopted the "Politics leading the military" that result, Muslim people has rights and well-being development, the political has more openly democratic. The political fighter has the new generation into both negative and positive impact.

The previously, the emerge of open university in central of Thailand "Ramkamheang University" has created the new opportunities to study for the young Muslims in Southern Thailand. The alumni of the Muslim of this university has established "PNYS" which consist of Malay student from Pattani, Narathiwat, Yala and Satun. They were learning by Islamic Revolution in several states such as Iran Revolution, Mujahidin movement in Afghanistan and the failed of older insurgent group in Southern Thailand. Those experience cases which they were looking for the new ways of political process in order to replace the arm force.

The new idea to gather the political group who has the similar ideology, the establishment of the Muslim Attorney Center became the main movement to maintain the justice in Southern Provinces. This is the new way of political idea to set the peaceful means.

Professor Dr. Srisompop Jitpiromsri, the vice dean of Political and Social Sciences in Prince of Songkhla University. She said that the emerge of new intelligent people of Muslim was causing of organize the Islamic School administrative in the era of the Marshal Sarit Thanara. Several the Islamic scholar and Muslim people sent their lineage to study Islamic in Middle East. She was identify in during 1970-1971, the Islamic school has agreed by the government to be the Islamic Private School under responsibility of the Thai government. The results, most of the Muslim people who graduated from abroad that came back to be Islamic teacher in these schools

Meanwhile, another intelligent groups who has graduated of non-Islamic study that they were an academic studies in several schools and some people was established the group in order to helpful for Islam communities. Those groups have also realized to educational development in order to help the community. The last intelligent group was joining into political process. Srisompop was argued that the new idea of those groups has applied the Islamic principles into the modern world.

### **B. Democratic process with remedy of Southern conflict**

Dr. Wan Gadae Jea-man, he was the new intelligent people who wrote the article of democratic process with the remedy of Southern conflict. His article was published in 2003 that complained the policy of Thai government which tend into democratic system and the diversity of cultures. The reflection on continuing of national integration policy that attempt to the Muslim people sign up into political process. They were expecting that the insurgent groups were returning their movement into political arena of peaceful means. He thought that the way of Muslim leaders who rejected the separatism movement and participated into political groups, they believed that if they have opportunities in politic that could be enough of the power to bargain and maintain the Islamic identity.<sup>37</sup>

Bahrin, the former of insurgent leader in that time has reflected the ideology of their group. He was complained of the statement of former senator in Narathiwat and former the president of "PNYS" Mr. Najmudin Umar that following;

"In our community is the economics belonging into the hand of Chinese, the political is in the hand of the central people, the only way that the Muslim people's

Bahrin has concluded the statement of Mr. Najmudin Umar "Malay-Muslim has only standing on politics." If the Muslim people has the place in the parliament to bargaining not only with the Thai parties but also with the insurgent radical movement. In 1992-1997, former prime minister general Chawalit Yongjaiyut, he was appointed the Muslim minister from Southern Thailand. It was clearly the "politics leading the military" policy that has been working as well. Even though the new intelligent groups has believe in political process but other groups has still maintain their idea to use arm force better than political solution.

In 1983, the research by Dr. Surin Pitsuwan on "The condition of the politic is the causing of human right violation in Southern Thailand" that he was identified the policy of integration for Islamic School under government control. This was the cause to emerge the new intelligent.

The impact of the interfered by the Thai government that was the cause of unsatisfied to Muslim people. The state of education curriculums were adopted in Islamic school which cause to reduce the values of Islamic teaching. The increase of the new student to study abroad which those student attempted to find out the foreign funding and help to people in Southern Thailand.

The government policies have been error conducting in Southern Provinces which became the main issue. Many problems in the society that Muslim people must responsibility to solve including political, economic, religion and culture which it was similar with the seven demands which claimed by Haji Sulong that followed:

1. The appointment of a person with full powers to govern the four provinces of Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat and Satun. This person must have a power to fire, suspend or replace all local civil servants. This person must be a native of one of the four provinces and must be elected by the inhabitants of the four provinces

2. 80 percent of all civil servants in the four provinces must be Muslim.
3. The Malay language must be an official language alongside the Thai language.
4. The teaching in primary schools must be done in Malay.
5. Muslim laws must be recognized and implemented under the aegis of an Islamic court, separated from civil court where the Muslim judge is seating as an assistant.
6. All taxes and incomes collected in the four provinces must be used locally.
7. The establishment of a Muslim affairs bureau with full powers to manage Muslims affair under the authority of the governor mentioned in the first point.

They were presented on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1947 by Haji Sulong , on behalf of the Malay Muslims population of the Southern to a commission sent by Bangkok to investigate the complains of Malay Muslim about the abuse of power by local government officials. The petition made clear that its intention was not to violate the Siamese constitution but to create better conditions of living for Malay Muslim in Southern Thailand. Eventually he was arrested by the Thai government in allegation of rebel. Even though Haji Sulong was free but after that he was disappeared which nobody known and found him.

Nowadays, the way of fighting with the Thai government has been several dimensions including openly fight and conceal fight. Moreover, the new intelligent of Malay Muslim in Pattani created their movement into the political movement.

### **C. Moderate insurgent groups in Southern Thailand**

Bersatu ideology with their fighting strategy into Southern Thailand. Dr. Wan Gadae Jea-man, he was a president of bersatu which one of the new intelligent people and use the moderate way to fight against with Thai government. His ideology was reflecting to the goals of fight against that not to be independent state because it was impossible to be done if the super power states have not supported. After unrest the situations have been occurring. He was published his letter about the issues of Pattani and Thai government problems, he said "Nowadays, the Malay Muslim populations were important than territory, the best way of solution in Southern Thailand must be negotiate and understand between Malay Muslim and Thai government. Both sides must trust each other on peace talk".<sup>38</sup>

The understanding and the compromising in the way of Dr. Wan Gadae Jea-man was, the violence in the previous did not implement to overcome. He supported any insurgent groups to fight against with Thai government into the law and justice under accepted the fundamental history of Pattani, identity, political, economic and culture of Muslim people. Dr. Wan Gadae Jea-man was agreed with the constitution in 1997 that talked about regional governor. The regional level had own government as the special regime, proposed the election in the regional. The central government of Thailand was enhancing to decentralization within Southern Provinces. He was also said that this was the only way to persuade the radical insurgent groups to ceasefire and change the way to fight with Thai government into political solution.

To considering of Dr. Wan Gadae Jea-man, he tries to compromise between the Malay Muslim and Thai government to be more understand each other. Even

though there was a meeting between insurgent groups and the representative of Thai government but the unrest situation has been emerging until nowadays.

Since the previous, the moderate insurgent group tried to compromise with Thai government, conducted the peace process and openly the negotiation table in Malaysia. In 2013, The Barisan Revolusi Nasional Melayu Patani(BRN) has made public with five demands for a peaceful settlement to the conflict in Patani through its official channel on YouTube for 3 minutes 45 seconds on 28 February 2013 and said it will continue fighting until a goal is reached.

The first statement made by Hasan Tayyib, BRN chief negotiator talking about the establishment, objectives and goals of the BRN followed by Mr. Abdulkarim Khalib, a staff delegation of BRN since March 28 dialogue between Thailand and BRN in the Kualumpur, Malaysia capital. A second round of talks is to begin on Monday 29 of March 2013 also held in Kualumpur, Malaysian capital.

The following is Mr. Khalib five points demand:-

1. The Thai government must accept the role of the Malaysian government as "mediator" of the peace talks and not just as a "facilitator".
2. The peace talks will be attended by only the Malayus led by BRN, and the authorities of the Thai government. ("Melayu" is the self-description of the BRN, used only for Thais of Malay origin in the deep South. It is one key to negotiations.)
3. Representatives of ASEAN members, members of the Organization of the



4. The Thailand authorities must release all detained suspects without conditions, and must suspend and stop issuing additional arrest warrants for other suspects.

5. The BRN's status must be recognized as a Patani liberation movement, not an insurgency group.

Mr. Abdulkarim Khalib has also concluded that the struggle of the BRN can lead to peace and justice, to the establishment of a state, if God willing. Beside this five points demand, Hassan Tayyib has assured peace and justice in the Patani land to all of their people, whether they are Malayu, Siamese (Thai Buddhists) or the Chinese if the negotiation reach it goals.

Lt Gen Paradorn, the Thai chief negotiator said he could not say immediately whether the conditions are acceptable. He will discuss the statement on Monday at the talks with Mr Tayyib and his group. Lt Gen Paradorn due to leave for Malaysia Sunday afternoon with members of the negotiating team as follow:- deputy permanent secretary for defence Gen Nipat Thonglek, secretary general of the Southern Border Provinces Administration Centre Pol Col Thawee Sodsong, special advisor to the office of permanent secretary for defence Gen Samret Srirai, chief of the Special Branch Police Pol Lt Gen Sarithchai Anekwiang, a representative of the Internal Security Operations Command Maj Gen Nakrop Boonbuathong, Narathiwat governor Apinan Suetanuwong, director of the Deep South Watch Centre Srisompop

Chitnirongsim and Army Region 4 chief of staff Maj Gen Chasin A...

#### D. Radical insurgent groups in Southern Thailand

In 2004, the violence has been growing up since the insurgent groups that attack and they stole the arm weapons from military base in Narathiwat. The unrest situations have more intensified than the previous because the insurgent used the guerilla warfare to attack, the victims were not only the government side but the people also became the victim of insurgent groups.

Between 4 January 2004 and 30 November 2012, violent incidents in the southernmost provinces killed 5,473 people and injured 9,693.<sup>39</sup> How much of this violence is directly attributable to separatist militancy is a topic of debate; common criminality and extrajudicial killings by state forces account for some portion.<sup>40</sup> Motivations for participation in violence are diverse; the conflict is conducive to pursuit of myriad personal, commercial and political interests. Officials and villagers alike recognize criminal enterprises, especially drug trafficking and oil smuggling, as serious problems for the region.<sup>41</sup> There is little consensus about how much criminal violence is related to the insurgency and what role the illicit economy may play in militant funding.<sup>42</sup> Most attacks and killings take place with no claims of responsibility, but the political implication of many incidents is clear, such as when Malaysian flags were raised across the region on 31 August 2012, Malaysia's national day. Security operations beginning in mid-2007 reduced the number of militant attacks. However, those attacks have grown bolder in scope and more deadly. Monthly incidents dropped to a

<sup>39</sup> Statistics compiled by Deep South Watch. The Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC) Region 4 Forward Command Emergency Notification Centre recorded 4,884 people killed and 8,850 injured from 4 January 2004 to 30 September 2012.

<sup>40</sup> Marc Askew, "Fighting with Ghosts: Querying Thailand's 'Southern Fire'", *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 32, no. 2 (August 2010), pp. 121-23

<sup>41</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Detrat Simsri, governor, Yala Province, Yala, 10 July 2012; Anukul Awaeputeh, director, Muslim Attorney Centre, Pattani, 24 July 2012.

<sup>42</sup> Srisompob Jitpiromsri, "The Protracted Violence Amidst the Unstable Political Situation after 2011 Elections", Deep South Watch (Center for Conflict Studies and Global Dialogue), 7 October 2011.

low of 48 in October 2008, but climbed again thereafter, tending to fluctuate between 50 and 100 per month. During the first six months of 2012, violent incidents declined from an average of almost three per day in 2011 to fewer than two and half per day, but casualties increased. In the first ten months of 2012, there were 1,647 casualties, surpassing the 2011 total of 1,464.33 Viewed in this way, the conflict is escalating, but the casualty rate seems not to alarm policymakers.

Civilians have borne the brunt of the violence. From January 2004 to November 2012, civilians not employed by the state accounted for 49.8 per cent of casualties, followed by soldiers (16 per cent), insurgents (10 per cent), and sub-district chiefs (*kamnan*), village chiefs and assistant village chiefs (3.3 per cent). More Muslims than Buddhists have been killed. Muslims are less likely to be targeted, but more likely to be killed when they are. They are more often victims of assassination, whereas Buddhists are usually the targets for less discriminate bomb attacks.

#### **D.1. 31 MARCH BOMBINGS**

The single deadliest insurgent attack to date was on 31 March 2012. Just before noon, a car bomb exploded on Ruam Mit Road in Yala, a busy commercial area. A second exploded about twenty minutes later, targeting rescue workers and onlookers. These killed twelve people and injured more than 100. A short time later, a car bomb in the underground garage of the Lee Gardens Plaza Hotel in Hat Yai, the largest city and commercial hub of the lower South, killed four, including a Malaysian, and ignited a gas line that caused a fire in the hotel and adjacent shopping centre. More than 400 people sustained injuries, mostly glass cuts and smoke

inhalation. A third attack took place the same day in Mae Lan District, Pattani, where a motorcycle bomb injured a police officer.<sup>43</sup>

The 31 March attacks were unusual in that they targeted crowded commercial districts at mid-day and were apparently intended to cause high numbers of civilian casualties. The Hat Yai attack, though less deadly than that in Yala, garnered greater media attention because the city is outside the conflict zone of the three southernmost provinces and four south-eastern districts of Songkhla. Although Hat Yai had suffered three earlier bomb attacks since 2005, the Lee Gardens Hotel bombing encouraged speculation that the militants might be embarking on a new phase of insurgency involving mass-casualty attacks “out of area”; given that no similar incidents took place over the following eight months, however, this does not appear to be the case.<sup>44</sup> The Hat Yai car bombing does illustrate the ambiguity of violence in the context of the insurgency. Various motivations have been adduced for the incident, which was carried out by the same cell responsible for the Yala attack.<sup>45</sup>

One theory, according to well-placed sources, is that militants staged the attack to convey contempt for Thaksin Shinawatra’s effort to start a dialogue process, in which exiled separatist leaders were reportedly coerced into attending a mid-March meeting with the former prime minister in Kuala Lumpur. Some suggest that the two week span between the reported Thaksin meeting and the attack was not sufficient to plan and execute it, but others argue that it was already in the works, and its execution was advanced. Other theories circulating in the region contend the attack was a

<sup>3</sup> “Yala blasts kill 10”, *The Bangkok Post*, 31 March 2012; James Hookway, “Deadly Thai blasts follow tense weeks”, *Wall Street Journal*, 1 April 2012; Anthony Davis, “Explosive escalation of Thai insurgency”, *Asia Times Online*, 6 April 2012.

<sup>4</sup> “Bombings may be designed to maximise casualties: source”, *The Sun Daily* (online), 3 April 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Crisis Group correspondence, regional analyst, May 2012; interview of regional analyst, 25 October 2012.

freelance job undertaken at behest of a local criminal enterprise; aimed at discrediting Yingluck's administration; or simply another incident in the ongoing campaign.<sup>46</sup>

In response to these bombings, the authorities stepped up security measures in Hat Yai, Yala and other cities in the region, establishing "safety zones" in downtown areas. The Pattani Provincial Islamic Committee, joined by the Muslim Attorney Centre and other civil society organizations, issued a statement condemning the violence and calling for peaceful resolution of political problems. But the attacks did not prompt any shift in government policy. The security forces could not stop them, and their enhanced vigilance has not been sustained. The militants can apparently strike a similar blow where and when they wish to send another ambiguous but deadly message.

## **D.2. PLATOON-SIZED ATTACKS**

Most violence in the conflict has taken the form of drive by shootings and IED attacks, but insurgents have increased the frequency of larger, complex assaults on more difficult targets. They routinely seize weapons and ammunition from slain security forces, and some attacks have targeted armouries. They demonstrate growing capabilities to mount well-planned platoon-sized assaults on security-force outposts, often using multiple vehicles, explosive charges, diversionary attacks, and coordinated efforts to delay or ambush reinforcements. Previously risk-averse fighters seem increasingly willing to engage in relatively lengthy gun battles with security forces. These attacks reveal the ineffectiveness of existing security cordons in restricting militants' mobility. Nine incidents in diverse locations in the last two years illustrate a growing confidence:

1. On 19 January 2011, 30-40 insurgents attacked an army base in Rangae District, Narathiwat, firing at least twenty 40mm grenades. Four soldiers were killed, including the base commander (a captain), and six wounded. The insurgents took some 50 weapons, including assault rifles, four Uzi sub-machine guns and two M-249 light machine guns.
2. On 24 August, fifteen to twenty insurgents arrived in two pickups and assaulted an outpost manned by rangers and defence volunteers in Thepa District, Songkhla Province, killing two.<sup>47</sup>
3. On 25 August, 30-40 insurgents attacked the home of a Muslim ex-village headman in Yaha District, Yala, ambushed rangers sent as reinforcements and fought a three-hour battle, killing two and injuring four.
4. On 13 December, 40-50 insurgents carried out two attacks on military outposts in Suvaree Sub-district, Reusoh, Narathiwat. One group planted explosives on a wall of a Sub-District Administrative Organisation compound where a military unit was based in a failed attempt to breach it. Another fired grenades from an M79 into an outpost about 2km away. They also cut down a tree to block the road linking the outposts.<sup>48</sup>
5. On 6 January 2012, 30-50 insurgents stormed a government-employment project and killed two defence volunteers, wounded three

others and seized five assault rifles. A diversionary attack pinned down police at a station 800 metres away.

6. On 9 March, 50-60 militants attacked two Marine Corps posts on the Pattani-Narathiwat highway in Bacho District, Narathiwat, wounding eleven.
7. On 9 May, about twenty militants raided an army base in Ban Kado, Reusoh District. In the 30-minute battle, two insurgents were killed and one soldier injured.<sup>49</sup>
8. On 17 July, 25-30 militants launched simultaneous attacks on a military outpost and a mostly Buddhist village in Reusoh District. They arrived on two pickup trucks and four motorcycles and fired more than 100 rounds at soldiers and volunteers. One soldier was killed and four wounded; two civilians died. Police said two assailants were killed, but the insurgents removed the bodies. Burning tyres and logs about 1.5km from the site delayed police reinforcements.<sup>50</sup>
9. On 20 October, 30-40 militants, divided into several teams, launched simultaneous attacks at five locations across Tak Bai District, Narathiwat. The largest, of ten to twelve militants, landed in small boats at the Taba Port area on the Kolok River, about 3km from the town centre, to attack Marine Police offices and patrol boats. With security forces at the port pinned down, militants staged IED attacks on three Buddhist-owned targets: a 50kg VBIED targeted the Taba Plaza Hotel, a 5kg

<sup>49</sup> Army post attacked, 2 militants killed", *The Bangkok Post*, 10 May 2012.

<sup>50</sup> Anthony Davis, "Thai separatists demonstrate tactical evolution", *Jane's Terrorism and Security Monitor*, 7

device on a motorcycle targeted a karaoke parlour, and three small devices exploded at a shop. Militants also fired on another karaoke parlour elsewhere in the town. Authorities discovered and disarmed a second VBIED outside town, apparently intended to hit reinforcements responding to the incidents. One militant was killed at the port, and three civilians were wounded in the bomb blasts.

Before dawn on 7 December, 30-40 militants raided a defence volunteer base on Kapho District, Pattani, and stole five assault rifles, body armour, a radio and more than 100 rounds of ammunition. Militants bound and gagged the five volunteers on duty, but did not harm them.<sup>51</sup>

A brutal ambush, a widely-distributed video recording of which produced reverberations in Bangkok and beyond, illustrated the heightened threat. A CCTV camera caught the attack in Mayo District, Pattani, on 28 July in which four soldiers were killed and two wounded; television news broadcast the video for several days. It showed at least sixteen militants in two pickup trucks pull beside four soldiers on two motorcycles; opening fire with assault rifles and shotguns, they killed the soldiers, then stripped them of weapons, body armour and other equipment. A third pickup truck entered the frame, while gunmen, faces uncovered, exchanged fire with two soldiers off camera. The attackers escaped in two directions, better armed, more experienced and ready to strike again. The video brought the insurgency home to many Thais, raising questions about the performance of the military and the government.<sup>52</sup> Relatively large coordinated attacks are not new in this conflict, but these recent assaults demonstrate that militants have adequate training, intelligence

<sup>51</sup> Parez Lohasan, Santhiti Khorjitmet, "Armed men storm volunteer base", *The Nation*, 8 December 2012.

<sup>52</sup> "Security hits a low in South", *ibid*, 30 July 2012. The video is at <http://2bangkok.com/video-thai-southern-separatists-shootingand-looting.html>. CCTV also captured an attack by militants in a pickup truck that killed two soldiers guarding a Buddhist monk gathering alms on 18 December 2010. That video was not broadcast. "Slaying of soldiers caught on security video", *The Bangkok Post*, 19 December 2010.



and other resources to mount more ambitious operations. Raids on military targets yield weapons, ammunition and other equipment, as well as combat experience. They are also more likely to receive approval from the militants' ostensible constituents than assassinations of Malay-Muslim "collaborators" or other civilians. Finally, successful attacks serve to discredit the state, undermining official assertions that the militants are on the defensive and lack resources.