

Thailand: Intervention of Armed Forces

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Global Research, May 20, 2014
altthainews.blogspot.com

Region: [Asia](#)

Theme: [Global Economy](#), [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

The Royal Thai Army (RTA) has announced that it is taking over responsibility for national security from the current regime's so-called "Centre for the Administration of Peace and Order" (CAPO). The move came after nearly six months of terrorism carried out by pro-regime militants the regime itself has failed categorically to either condemn or counter with its sweeping, self-granted security powers. As recently as last Thursday, [an M79 grenade attack on anti-regime protesters left 3 dead](#) and many more maimed, including an elderly woman who lost her eye.

Additionally, stockpiles of weapons have been stumbled across by police, who in fact are loyal to the current regime. This indicates that so many weapons have been brought into Bangkok or readied elsewhere by the regime to carry out a concerted terrorist campaign, that their own police are stumbling over them by accident while on routine calls.

Regime's Premeditated Campaign of Deadly Violence

The RTA's move comes after over [70 armed attacks on anti-regime protesters](#) since demonstrations began in October of 2013 that have left 24 dead, and many more injured, some seriously with amputations, missing eyes, and other permanent disfigurements. Deaths also include women and children. The attacks are part of a concerted campaign by the regime to cling to power. In TIME Magazine's January 2014 article, "[Bangkok Shutdown: Yingluck Supporters Prepare to Fight for Democracy](#)," it states (emphasis added):

As Thailand's anti-government protests enter their fourth day, observers say prospects for violent confrontation are increasing, with reports of government supporters stockpiling weapons in case of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra's ouster.

According to the Bangkok Post, radical members of the Red Shirts — diehard champions of Yingluck and her notorious brother Thaksin Shinawatra — are readying a cache of arms in case the 46-year-old premier is forced from office by either military or judicial intervention.

The paper quoted a Red Shirt source as saying "There are strong anti-coup and anti-court sentiments among the red-shirt mavericks who are familiar and experienced with weapon use."

The threats cited by TIME were carried out in earnest. The day after TIME published its article, the attacks began. The first [was a grenade attack on peaceful marches lead by protest leader Suthep Thuangsuban](#), which killed one and injured 39. Suthep Thuangsuban

was only 30 meters away from the blast, indicating it was a likely assassination attempt. When protesters stormed the building they believed the attacks came from, a stockpile of weapons, as described by TIME was found. The location was in close proximity to a rally site which had been attacked almost nightly by gunfire.

The regime's "red shirt" street front would continue both threats and acts of violence over the next several months including:

- [Threatening to kidnap and/or kill](#) Thai Royal Army Commander-in-Chief Gen Prayuth Chan-ocha's twin daughters.
- The [brazen broad-daylight assassination](#) of NGO worker, activist, and protest leader Sutin Taratin.
- A grisly attack in the eastern province of Trat that left scores maimed [and a five-year old girl dead](#) and a similar attack carried out in Bangkok that left many maimed along with [a woman and two children killed](#).
- [Multiple M79 grenade attacks](#) on the office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission in northern Bangkok in conjunction with [a blockade carried out by the regime's "red shirts."](#) The blockade was aimed at obstructing criminal proceeding against then prime minister, Yingluck Shinawatra. Regime supporters would be arrested for possession of AK47s, M79 grenade launchers, and RGD-5 hand grenades, the latter two [with lot numbers matching those used in previous attacks](#) across the city.
- The accidental discovery by police of a white Mazda parked outside the resort of regime MP Sitthichai Kittithanesuan, [containing AK47s in the backseat](#). The car was owned by an "adviser" to a regime minister.
- An M79 grenade attack and gunfire on Bangkok's Democracy Monument on May 15 [that killed 3 and left dozens more injured](#).

The regime has promised violence, carried it out, and has been caught with the implements of its deadly terrorist campaign in the hands of its own supporters and politicians. Calls for "revolution" against the "elite" are regularly howled upon the stages of the regime's increasingly diminutive rallies. After one grisly attack that left a child dead in Trat province, the regime's "red shirt" leaders [would openly and abhorrently praise the attack](#).

Not only has the regime failed categorically to condemn the violence, it is clear its "Centre for the Administration of Peace and Order" serves as a means to lopsidedly apply the colors of law against its political opponents while turning a blind eye, or worse yet, facilitating deadly violence that targets anti-regime protesters. Its intentional unwillingness to reign in violence it itself is helping facilitate and the state of increasing political instability left by the hobble regime leaves little choice but for the military to intervene, if only to root out and disarm terrorists staging across the country.

Regime Has Not Been Ousted – No Coup

It should be noted that the Royal Thai Army's move has in no way forced the current regime from power. The "caretaker government" is still in office. The RTA's stated intention is stemming violence the regime has categorically failed to condemn or confront. The regime in fact has prepared a campaign of widespread terrorism for the day it finally is dismissed from power – after an anticipated series of court cases targeting overt corruption, nepotism,

abuse of power, and other acts of criminality are concluded. Initial court cases have already led [to the dismissal of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra](#) – the nepotist-appointed stand-in for her brother Thaksin Shinawatra.

Thaksin Shinawatra is at the center of Thailand's current political crisis. A convicted criminal, fugitive, accused mass murderer, and billionaire, Shinawatra still openly runs both his political party "Peua Thai" (PTP), as well as the current regime from abroad – primarily in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Despite Shinawatra hiding abroad, he openly contested elections in 2011, with his party's campaign slogan literally "Thaksin Thinks, Peua Thai Does." The slogan is full acknowledgement that a convicted criminal hiding abroad from a 2 year jail sentence, multiple arrest warrants, and a growing list of pending legal cases is running both the campaign and the subsequent government by proxy.

In no other country would such an arrangement be perceived as "legal." In Thailand, it is likewise illegal. Shinawatra's immense wealth and unwarranted influence has allowed him to circumvent even the most basic precepts of rule of law to advance his agenda and maintain his grip on Thai politics. Recent protests and the failure of his proxy regime to implement lofty campaign promises made in 2011 have left him with a dwindling support base. With his impunity weakened, court cases are now proceeding.

Called by the regime a "judicial coup," court cases in fact involve overt criminality, including the removal of the prime minister for making a series of appointments in 2011 upon taking office to make way for her brother-in-law to become national chief of police. The application of the law in the face of overt nepotism and abuse of power is surely not a "judicial coup."

The political longevity of Thaksin Shinawatra and his proxy regime is owed predominately to the support of special interests on Wall Street and in the City of London. In the past decade, Shinawatra has served these interests well, including:

- In the late 1990's, [Thaksin Shinawatra was an adviser to notorious private equity firm, the Carlyle Group](#). He pledged to his foreign contacts that upon taking office, he would still serve as a "matchmaker" between the US equity fund and Thai businesses. It would represent the first of many compromising conflicts of interest that would undermine Thailand's sovereign under his rule.
- In 2001 Shinawatra privatized Thailand's resources and infrastructure [including the nation's oil conglomerate PTT](#) while raising the amount of shares foreigners could hold. This led to big-oil giants such as Chevron and Hess siphoning out billions in revenue from Thailand's natural gas and oil supplies.
- In 2003, Shinawatra would [commit Thai troops to the US invasion of Iraq](#), despite widespread protests from both the Thai military and the public. Thaksin would also [allow the CIA to use Thailand for its abhorrent rendition program](#).
- Also in 2004, Shinawatra attempted to ramrod through a [US-Thailand Free-Trade Agreement](#) (FTA) without parliamentary approval, backed by the [US-ASEAN Business Council](#) who just before the 2011 elections that saw Thaksin Shinawatra's sister Yingluck Shinawatra brought into power, hosted the leaders of [Shinawatra's "red shirt" "United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship" \(UDD\)](#) in Washington DC.

- Since the 2006 coup that toppled his regime, Shinawatra has been represented by US corporate-financier elite via their lobbying firms including, [Kenneth Adelman](#) of the [Edelman PR firm](#) ([Freedom House](#), [International Crisis Group](#), [PNAC](#)), James Baker of [Baker Botts](#) ([CFR](#), Carlyle Group), [Robert Blackwill](#) ([CFR](#)) of [Barbour Griffith & Rogers](#) ([BGR](#)), [Kobre & Kim](#), [Bell Pottinger](#) ([and here](#)) and currently [Robert Amsterdam](#) of [Amsterdam & Partners](#) ([Chatham House](#)).

These special interests will continue supporting Thaksin Shinawatra and his embattled regime, regardless of the violence and criminality it is sowing across Thailand as it clings precariously to power. However, this support is countered by growing dissidence within Thailand across all segments of the population. The Western media's repeated [mantra of "class war"](#) fails to acknowledge that union workers, farmers, and middle class make up the vast majority of the growing protests not only in Bangkok but in provinces in all directions beyond.

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