

Round-up of Saturday's violence in Bangkok

Sunday 11 April 2010, by [Bangkok Pundit](#) (Date first published: 11 April 2010).

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AP:

A crackdown on anti-government protesters in Thailand's capital Saturday left at least 15 people dead and more than 650 injured, with no progress toward ending a monthlong standoff with demonstrators demanding new elections.

It was the worst violence in Bangkok since more than four dozen people were killed in an antimilitary protest in 1992. Bullet casings, rocks and pools of blood littered the streets where pitched battles raged for hours.

Army troops later retreated and asked protesters to do the same, resulting in an unofficial truce.

Four soldiers and 11 civilians, including a Japanese cameraman, were killed, according to the government's Erawan emergency center.

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Saturday's violence and failure to dislodge the protesters are likely to make it harder to end the political deadlock. Previously, both sides had exercised considerable restraint.

Abhisit "failed miserably," said Michael Nelson, a German scholar of Southeast Asian studies working in Bangkok.

Tanet Charoengmuang, a political scientist at Chiang Mai University sympathetic to the Red Shirt's cause, said he expects the fighting will resume because the protesters are unafraid and the government refused to listen to them.

Abhisit went on national television shortly before midnight to pay condolences to the families of victims and indirectly assert that he would not bow to the protesters' demands.

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P.S.

From Bangkok Pundit.

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