

Thailand - National Reconciliation and Reform: All Talk and no Action

Thursday 19 August 2010, by [DITAPICHAJ Jaran](#) (Date first published: 18 August 2010).

Three months after the Army's crackdown on May 19th, 2010 which caused 91 deaths and almost 2,000 injured, Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva has not yet come to terms with the fact that his soldiers killed people.

His government still hunts Red Shirts all over the country, during the 3rd month several people were arrested. The Emergency Decree is still in effect in 7 provinces including Bangkok, Nonthaburi, Samut Prakarn, and Pathum Thani. The attorney indicted seven leaders and 12 associates of the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD) of the terrorism and the criminal court has not released them on bail. Provincial criminal courts have sentenced some red shirts from 6 months to 2 years in jail. All the while those who seized the Prime Minister's office in 2007 have been allowed bail and those who close Suwannaphum Airport suspects have not been prosecuted. The government continues to shut the sole station that belong to the Reds, 32 community radios, 5 journals and magazines, and 36 internet media outlets.

Concerning the national reconciliation plan of the Abhisit Vejjajiva government, his five committees of political/media reform are composed of persons who are former PM Thaksin's known enemies and enemies of Red Shirts people. It is unfortunate the Truth and Reconciliation Committee began its work with public hearings of the incident instead of interviewing the victims and the Army in its initial step and to date they have had discussions and have not issued any report. The Committee for Study the amendment of the 2010 Constitution agreed almost with every articles of 2007 Constitution which is not democratic.

There is no dispute that Thailand must move beyond violence and work toward reconciliation. But reconciliation begins with the restoration of the fundamental rights and human rights of the people. What this government has done so far is giving a lip service to the principle they explain to the international media or to the diplomatic communities and does the opposites.

On the other side, I would like to assure that during the last 3 months the Thai people who love freedom and the Red Shirts are resisting the government's continued violation of human rights. The Red Shirt movement has recovered rapidly and continues to fight in the political arena. There are variety of Sunday political activities which are attracting more attention by the public. Some Red Shirts are formulating new political ideals and strategies because they believe the old way will not lead them to victory. They're determined to fight for real democracy and justice by all means possible because they have clear ideas who they are fighting against.

However, for immediate resolution, the Criminal Courts should release all UDD leaders and their associates on bail. The government must deal with the political and legal double-standards, most particularly the failure to move forward with prosecution of the Yellow Shirt leadership who presumably violated laws in 2008. Also, the government must stop censoring and blocking all opposition media. Finally, Prime Minister Abhisit should declare amnesty, dissolve the Parliament, and call for general elections on November 14.

Because of the massacre which took place three months ago and the present aristocratic government in Thailand affect not only this region but to the rest of the world. Therefore, we ask for moral and political support from international communities.

Jaran Ditapichai

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P.S.

* Jaran Ditapichai is a UDD leader, and a former National Human Right Commissioner of Thailand.