

## THAILAND UPDATE

### **Thailand's Southern Insurgents Reaching Recruits in Schools** (New York Times 6/22/2009)

- The International Crisis Group has written a study describing the recruitment of Malay Muslims through a network of Islamic schools. The study came from 16 months of interviews with religious teachers and students.

- Themed with ideas of Malay nationalism and oppression of Malay Muslims by Buddhist Thai rulers, insurgents have used methods of oath-taking, indoctrination and military training to recruit. The recruiters begin in the classroom and slowly convince Muslims to take part in extra-curricular activities as a way to investigate the history of oppression, mistreatment and the idea of jihad in the Muslim Malay community.

- There have been an estimated 1,800 to 3,000 new fighters as a result of this recruitment. Schools are generally unknowledgeable about the recruitment as underground communication has developed. The revelations of the study are helping to form reason for the motivation of the insurgency that began five years ago.

### **PM Abhisit Stays Optimistic About Thailand's Economy** (AFP 6/22/2009)

- Despite the deep recession of Thailand's economy, Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva has remained positive, saying a 400 Billion Baht stimulus could "get growth back into positive territory by the end of the year (and) begin the process of recovery by next year."

- The money, approved Tuesday (6/23/2009) by the Thai Senate, will give the government assets for funding projects like irrigation, transportation, communication facilities, schools, health care centers and others. The Prime Minister's hope is that the stimulus would create 1.5 million to 2 million jobs. Thailand has been hit hard by a 7.1% recession in the second quarter of 2009 to go along with its political problems, but the Prime Minister believes that a stimulus of this magnitude is reason for optimism, saying, "Whatever turbulence my administration has been through, we have never been distracted, we have never lost sight of the top most priority, which is to make sure that recovery will be underway as soon as possible."

### **PM Abhisit Believes Political Tension Can Be Resolved** (Thomson Reuters 6/22/2009)

- Prime Minister Abhisit is optimistic that Thailand can move past its political problems. "I don't think the rift is insurmountable. The majority of Thais have a common aspiration. They want the country to be prosperous," Abhisit told Reuters.

- Abhisit believes that although social and political tension has gotten a lot of international coverage, the economy is the real focus of Thailand and could ultimately be the remedy for the rift. "The biggest challenge is to take the country through this economic crisis and to emerge out of this. If we address those issues I think the majority of Thais would be satisfied."

### **Thailand and Bahrain Will Invest Together in Agriculture** (Thomson Reuters 6/22/2009)

- Charoen Pokphand Foods of Thailand has agreed with the Islamic bank Al Salam to a deal that will increase investment in Charoen's agricultural sector. The two companies agreed to focus on livestock, staple food and fish farms. An integrated food firm will also be created for food distribution and packaging services.

### **Darunee Charnchoengsilpakul's Trial Compliant to International Law** (Information Dept., MFA 6/26/2009)

- Ms. Charnchoengsilpakul's trial has been in accordance with the fair process of law. The right to a fair trial, due opportunity to contest the charges, and assistance from her lawyer have been accorded to the defendant throughout the proceeding.

- The judge has the discretion in deciding to hold a closed trial if the trial is deemed to involve sensitive matters for the interest of public order, good moral or national security. This is legal under Section 177 of the Criminal Procedure Code. It is also in accordance with international law, Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

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