



## INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM RESEARCH

A Centre of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

### Weekly Country Report Thailand

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#### Pattani

Armed militants entered a school on 20 December 2009 and demanded that the village defence volunteers who were on duty guarding the school vacate the premises. The militants then set fire to the teacher's houses. An eight-man Army squad, travelling by motorcycle to investigate the arson of the teachers' houses, were ambushed by gunmen on the way. Two soldiers were injured in the 10-minute exchange of gunfire. The militants managed to escape.<sup>1</sup>

A group of attackers shot and killed a three-year-old girl and seriously wounded her older sister on 22 December 2009. Police believed an unknown number of gunmen on foot fired shots into the house where the girls were playing.<sup>2</sup> Police attributed the shooting to militants, whom they said were likely targeting an older member of their family.<sup>3</sup>

A 37-year-old man was killed in a drive-by shooting by two suspected militants on a motorcycle on 22 December 2009 while he was on his way home from taking his daughter to school in Yarang district.<sup>4</sup>

Suspected militants killed a 39-year-old Muslim man in a shooting while he was standing in front of his house in Pattani province late in the evening on 26 December 2009.<sup>5</sup>

#### Narathiwat

The 4th Army was still in the process of investigating the Muslimmin Dalowitthaya group that left a note claiming responsibility for a bomb attack in Bacho district which killed three security

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<sup>1</sup> "Seven wounded in two separate attacks in Yala, Pattani," MCOT News. 21 December 2009. <http://enews.mcot.net/view.php?id=13368>.

<sup>2</sup> "Girl, three, shot dead in Thai restive south," AFP. 22 December 2009. [http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp\\_asiapacific/view/1026340/1/.html](http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp_asiapacific/view/1026340/1/.html).

<sup>3</sup> Ambika Ahuja, Surapan Boonthanom, Martin Petty, "Soldier, insurgent killed in Thai south shootout," Reuters. 23 December 2009. <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/SGE5BM0H0.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> "Father, 37, slain in Pattani," Bangkok Post. 22 December 2009. <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/163328/villager-killed-in-pattani>.

<sup>5</sup> "Five killed in latest southern Thailand violence," AFP. 27 December 2009. [http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp\\_asiapacific/view/1027152/1/.html](http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp_asiapacific/view/1027152/1/.html).

volunteers and injured two other people the previous week on 19 December 2009.<sup>6</sup> The note also asserted that government officials were behind the unrest in the region. Fourth Army commander Pichet Wisajon alleged that the assailants left the note because they knew they were losing the confidence of their supporters.<sup>7</sup>

A soldier and a suspected militant died in a shootout in Bacho district. The exchange of gunfire started after security forces consisting of police and soldiers preparing to raid a rebel hideout came under fire as they travelled along a road.<sup>8</sup>

Two soldiers and three civilians were wounded when suspected militants detonated a homemade bomb hidden in a motorcycle parked outside a grocery store near the Bannang Sata police station on 24 December 2009. The bomb, which was placed under the seat of the motorcycle, was detonated with a remote control while the two soldiers passed by on a motorcycle. It was reported that a woman came with a child on the motorcycle and left it in front of the grocery shop.<sup>9</sup> The witness accounts indicate that women and children are most likely also directly involved in the ongoing insurgency. As the insurgency continues and if the government is seen as perpetuating the violence, more people may be inclined to give their support to the insurgency. If more male family members are killed in the process, it would also be possible that there will be an increase in the numbers of women and children who participate in the insurgency.

Five soldiers were injured when militants detonated a roadside bomb, ambushing a bus transporting soldiers of Narathiwat Taskforce 35 during a routine shift change on 25 December 2009.<sup>10</sup>

## **Yala**

Militants ambushed soldiers on patrol in Bannang Sata district on 21 December 2009, detonating a roadside bomb that injured 6 of the soldiers. The insurgents also shot at the soldiers after the explosion. Both sides exchanged gunfire for about five minutes before the militants retreated.<sup>11</sup>

A group of suspected militants shot and killed two Muslim men while they were riding home by motorcycle on 27 December 2009. Another was also injured in the attack.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> “Three rangers killed by powerful bomb blast,” The Nation. 19 December 2009.

<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/home/apps/print.php?newsid=30118849>.

<sup>7</sup> Muhammad Ayub Pathan and Waedao Hara, “Army leads inquiry into insurgent group,” Bangkok Post. 21 December 2009. <http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/security/29673/army-leads-inquiry-into-insurgent-group>.

<sup>8</sup> Ambika Ahuja, Surapan Boonthanom, Martin Petty, “Soldier, insurgent killed in Thai south shootout,” Reuters. 23 December 2009. <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/SGE5BM0H0.htm>.

<sup>9</sup> “5 injured in Narathiwat bomb attack,” The Nation. 24 December 2009.

<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/option/print.php?newsid=30119097>; “Motorcycle bomb wounds 5,” Bangkok Post. 24 December 2009. <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/163518/motorcycle-bomb-wounds-5>.

<sup>10</sup> “5 soldiers injured in Narathiwat bomb attack,” The Nation. 25 December 2009.

<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/home/apps/print.php?newsid=30119165>.

<sup>11</sup> “6 soldiers injured in Yala ambush,” The Nation. 21 December 2009.

<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/home/apps/print.php?newsid=30118892>.

<sup>12</sup> “Five killed in latest southern Thailand violence,” AFP. 27 December 2009.

[http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp\\_asiapacific/view/1027152/1/html](http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp_asiapacific/view/1027152/1/html).

Two militants were killed in two simultaneous raids in Yala's Thanto and Muang's districts. The two gunmen were shot and killed in shootouts when they initiated shooting at security forces.<sup>13</sup>

### **Other Developments**

Metropolitan Police Commissioner Police Lieutenant General Santhan Chayanon advised the public to not pay any heed to rumours that bomb attacks would be launched during the Christmas and New Year holidays. Santhan said police would step up security at venues where celebrations would be held during the holidays.<sup>14</sup> Despite the increased security, the insurgents may still seek to conduct attacks during the holiday period in order to incite more fear, but the number of attacks would most likely decrease as the security forces step up their efforts.

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<sup>13</sup> "2 insurgents killed in Yala," Bangkok Post. 27 December 2009.

<http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/163703/2-insurgents-killed-in-yala>.

<sup>14</sup> "Public urged not to panic over rumours of bomb attacks during Christmas, New Year," The Nation. 23 December 2009. <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/option/print.php?newsid=30119026>.