

July 3rd Election in Thailand is Extraordinary

Sunday 5 June 2011, by [DITAPICHAJ Jaran](#) (Date first published: 2 June 2011).

Please find below an appeal urging you to pay close attention to Jan 3rd General Election in Thailand. While international community has heard the struggle for democracy around the world and supportive, the news on Thai struggle did not receive as much attention as it deserves.

Friends of Thai Democracy

On this coming July 3, 2011, there will be a general election in Thailand which apparently looks ordinary as any elections in democratic countries. But for those who follow the political situation in Thailand for many years would see that this is extraordinary election. It is unique in two respects.

Firstly, it is the election after the government of Mr. Abhisit Vejjajiva of Democrat, bloody crackdown the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD) or the Red Shirt movement who staged a protest against the illegitimate government. They called for a new election, returning power to the people; which resulted in the deaths of 92 people, nearly 2,000 injured, and 400 around the country arrested. This election is a competition between the Democrat party, whose hands dripping in blood, and Pheu Thai party, an alliance of the Red Shirt movement.

Secondly, in this election--- a new phenomenon has occurred that never happened before in Thai politics. That is--- Pheu Thai Party decided to send a woman, Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra, to be the first on its party list, which is well understood that this position is Prime Minister's position. In addition, in the past couple of weeks of campaigning, all polls showed Ms. Yingluck's popularity increases every day. The Pheu Thai party and Ms. Yingluck have expanded their lead over the Democrat and Mr. Abhisit. If this holds, Thailand is likely to have a woman prime minister. This general election will create a new history for Thailand which appropriate for 21st century when women became leading politicians as happened in Germany, Philippine, Chile, Argentina, Brazil and so on.

However, the key expectation or question of Thais and concerned foreigners is--- how much will this July 3 general election help decrease the political conflicts which intensify in the past 5 years. The crisis stems from the conflict between the royalist-aristocracy, which use yellow color as symbol, and the democratic force which use red color as symbol; the conflict covers all spheres of Thai society--- political, social, and economics.

Lastly, I urge the international community to increase their interest in Thailand elections, to help and support free and fair elections, and to lend their support in demanding the ruling elite to respect the will of the people by accepting the election results, allowing the party that received the most votes to set up the government. Thus, the general election will make Thailand more democratic and will be beneficial to international economy as a whole.

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