

# **Military coup in Thailand: The army are firmly part of the anti-democratic faction**

Friday 23 May 2014, by [UNGPAKORN Giles Ji](#) (Date first published: 22 April 2014).

## ***Q & A about the coup***

### **Did the army “have no choice” but to intervene to stop the warring factions?**

This is one hell of a stupid question, since the military staged the 2006 coup and appointed the unelected officials who helped with the various judicial coups in the first place. When Sutep's mob started to cause havoc using armed gangs to take over government buildings and wreck the elections, the army stood by and did nothing, knowing that their time would come to intervene again. So the army are firmly part of the anti-democratic faction and Prayut has killed pro-democracy demonstrators back in 2010 to prove it.

### **Will the army now organise democratic political reforms before the next elections?**

LOL!!!! The military is the main obstacle to democracy, freedom and transparency in Thailand. Will they reform themselves away, cut their own budget, retire all the bloated generals, stop meddling in politics and relinquish control of their media holdings? The hell they will!! They'll be looking to the Burmese model where they stack parliament with their men and neuter any future elected government.

### **Was this coup and the previous one in 2006 organised by the king?**

Pumipom has always been weak and cowardly, a creature to be willingly used by the military who elevated his status to God-King in the first place. Today he can hardly walk or talk, but maybe some idiots think the army asked his permission to stage the coup. If he dribbled out of the left side of his mouth it would be “no” and the right side it would be “yes”. Now back to the real world....

### **Is the crisis about royal succession?**

This is the one that all the conspiracy and elitist theory junkies LOVE. Basically it relegates millions of ordinary Thais to the role of passive serfdom in a feudal Game of Thrones. The fact of the matter is that the monarchy is weak and a tool of the military and other elites. No one who is serious doubts that the odious prince of darkness is set to be the next king. He is even weaker than his dad and totally uninterested in politics unless it has a skirt on it. He will be ready to serve anyone so long as he can have lots of money, lots of palaces and lots of women. And the idea that the rather portly unmarried princess might be the choice of some elites is laughable. Firstly it would burst the balloon about the sacred kingship traditions and secondly what about the heir?

### **What is the crisis about?**

The long running Thai crisis is a result of a clash between the conservative way of operating in a parliamentary democracy and a more modern one. It is equally related to attempts by Taksin and his party to modernise Thai society so that the economy could become more competitive on a global level, especially after the 1996 Asian economic crisis. In the first general election since the 1996

crisis, Taksin's party put forward a raft of modernising and pro-poor policies, including the first ever universal health care scheme. Because the Democrat Party had previously told the unemployed to "go back to their villages and depend on their families, while spending state finances in securing the savings for the rich in failed banks, Taksin was able to say that his government would benefit everyone, not just the rich. Taksin's TRT won the elections and his parties have won every election since. The government was unique in being both popular and dynamic, with real policies, which were used to win the election and were then implemented afterwards. This is something that the conservative elite could never accept. Taksin's government committed human rights abuses, but none of the elites and middle classes care about this.

### **Was Taksin corrupt?**

Probably. Are the rest of the elites, Democrat Party politicians and military men corrupt? Do bears shit in the woods?

### **Who are the guilty people?**

Those who have joined the anti-government protests and supported military and judicial coups are the guilty people. They include the top conservative elites and officials, the military, the Democrat Party, the middle class academics and the NGO leaders. The National Human Rights Commission, the Election Commission and the Counter Corruption Commission and the courts are also guilty.

### **Will the Redshirts fight back?**

Either Pua Thai mobilise their millions of supporters and the Redshirts to tear down the old order, or they make peace with their conservative elite rivals. Given that Taksin, Yingluck and Pua Thai are basically "big business politicians", they naturally choose the latter option every time. This is not to avoid civil war, but to avoid revolution from below. They want to use the Redshirts as voting fodder, but not risk mobilising a mass movement. The UDD leadership of the Redshirts is tied to Pua Thai. After the 2011 election Pua Thai and Taksin made an uneasy peace with the military and this was reinforced in late 2013 when the Pua Thai government tried unsuccessfully to push through a disgraceful amnesty bill covering the military and Democrat Party leaders who murdered red shirts in 2010. Naturally, it also covered Taksin, but not lèse majesté political prisoners. This blew up in Yingluck's face and gave an excuse to Sutep and his mobs.

To organise a real fight-back, grass roots Redshirts and other democracy activists need self-leadership independent of the UDD, real organisation, and most importantly, the confidence to organise like this. They need to link with the progressive sections of the working class. This is a long term project which needs to be started now and all those who believe in freedom, equality and democracy should actively encourage such a development.

### **Giles Ji Ungpakorn**

---