

Sixth Year of the Southern Fire: Dynamics of Insurgency and Formation of the New Imagined Violence

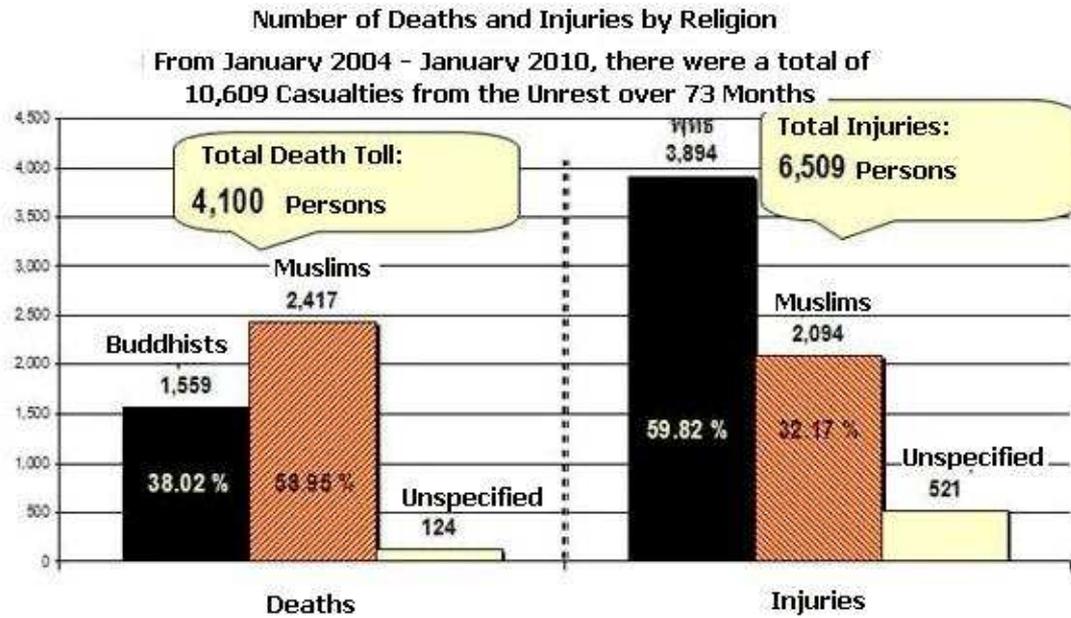
Srisompob Jitpiomsri

Deep South Watch (DSW)

Center for Conflict Studies and Cultural Diversity (CSCD),

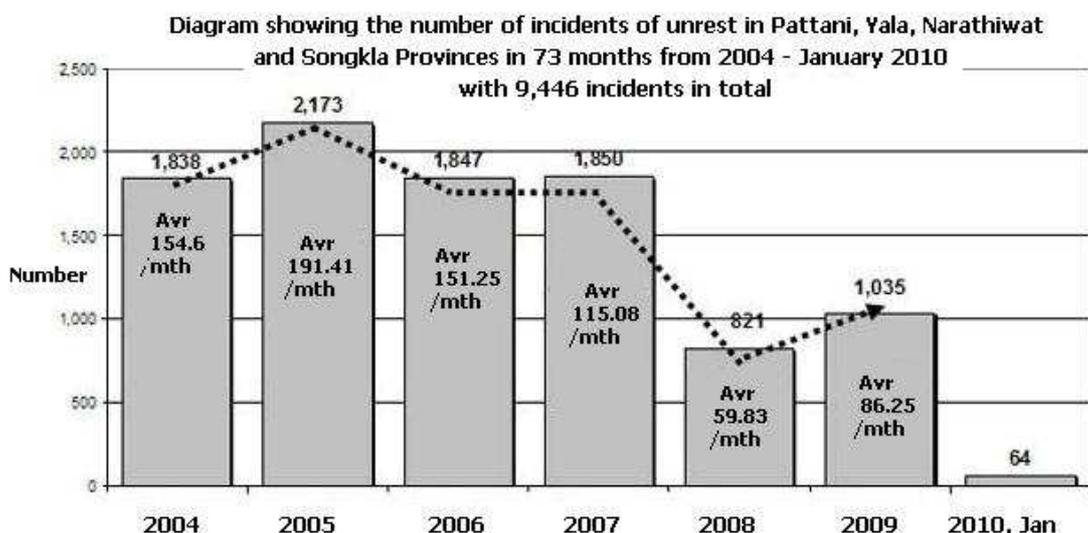
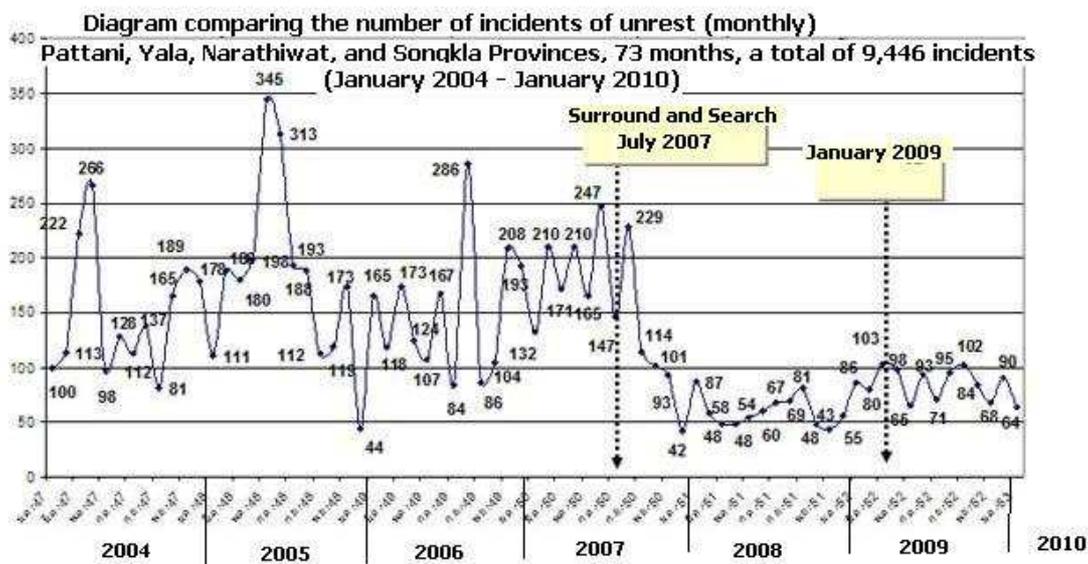
Prince of Songkla University

The incidents of unrest in the Deep South from January 2004 to January 2010 had happened for six full years. From the database of Deep South Watch, it was found that over the past 73 months, there were a total of 9,446 incidents of unrest, *resulting in approximately 4100 deaths and 6,509 injuries*. The total casualty of the unrest over the past six years, with the dead and the injured figures combined, was more than 10,609 individuals. If the family of the deceased and the injured were included as those affected by the mentioned loss, then it is estimated that the number of people who were directly affected by the loss would be approximately 53,045 persons. It is interesting to note that the victims - those who lost their lives as well as those who were injured from the violence in the southern border provinces - consisted of various backgrounds. There were Muslims as well as Buddhists. Among the dead, the Muslims outnumbered the Buddhist, while among the injured, the majority was Buddhists. Statistics showed that 58.95 percents (2,417 individuals) of the deceased were Muslims, while 38.02 percent (1,559 persons) were Buddhists. Among the injured, 59.82 percent (3,894 persons) were Buddhists, while 32.17 percent (2,094 persons) were Muslims.



1. Changes in Characteristics of Violence

When the trend over the past 6 years was considered, looking at the average monthly and yearly frequencies of violence, several strategically interesting patterns of change could be seen. Since 2004, the level of violence in the Deep South has clearly escalated. In 2004 there were 1,838 incidents, in 2005 there were 2,173 incidents, in 2006 there were 1,847 incidents, and in 2007 there were 1,850 incidents. However, after 2007, the incidents of unrest had a significantly decreasing trend. The consequence was that in 2008, there were approximately 821 incidents, but in 2009 the unrest appeared to be heightened at another level, as there were approximately 1,035 incidents of unrest in the mentioned year. It could be summarized that although the frequency of incidents was not as high as the incidents before 2008, but the direction and trend of the situation in 2009 was greater than in the previous year.



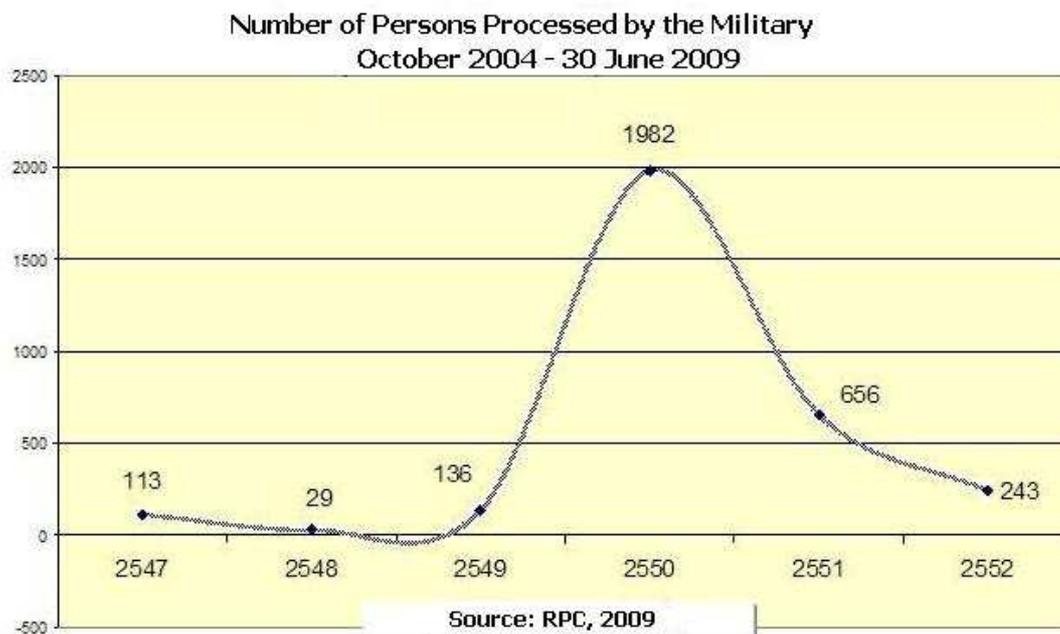
An issue that should also be considered in the analysis of violence of the situation in the south is that the indicator of violence might not only include the frequency or the number of incidents of violence. When the impact of violence in term of loss or Casualty Rate was considered, it could be seen that there were a number of differences in deaths and injuries over the past 6 years. The violence could be divided into 3 phases. **Phase One**, from 2004 to 2007, was the time when the direction of the changes in the situation led towards a higher number of deaths and injuries and the severity of the incidents appeared to be in a form of wave, fluctuating with alternating high and low, month after month. The most violent month was October 2004, with a total of approximately 316 deaths and injuries, and June 2007, with a total of approximately 304 deaths and injuries. Furthermore, the

most violent incidents happened in the months with more than 200 deaths and injuries from late-2006 to mid-2007 or from November 2006 to June 2007.

Phase Two, after July and August 2007, the situation started to change due to tactical adjustments by the state. This was due to the fact that during 2006 to early 2007, the wave of unrest had highly escalated. The violence at the time was of high frequency and intensity, particularly after the 2006 coup d'état, causing the military to rally the personnel to surround areas according to the Southern Territory Protection Plan in order to arrest insurgent leaders. Furthermore, when Gen. Anupong Paochinda became the Commander of the Royal Thai Army, in late 2007 there was a new increase in the number of military and other state manpower in the Deep South according to the manpower framework of the Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC), up to approximately 60,000 personnel. The military-based approach emphasized state actions, particularly by the military, to control and maintain peace, as evident by having 1 Region Army controlling 1 Province. Furthermore, local forces had been raised by establishing more than 30 companies of local paramilitary (*taharn phran*) force. Meanwhile, the Royal Thai Government, led by the Ministry of the Interior, increased the number of Territorial Volunteer force by approximately 2,000 additional individuals and the People's Force was also established by increasing the number of assistant village chief for peacekeeping from 1 person per village to 5 persons per village, while the police later established the Southern Border Patrol Police Operations Center (SBPPOC).

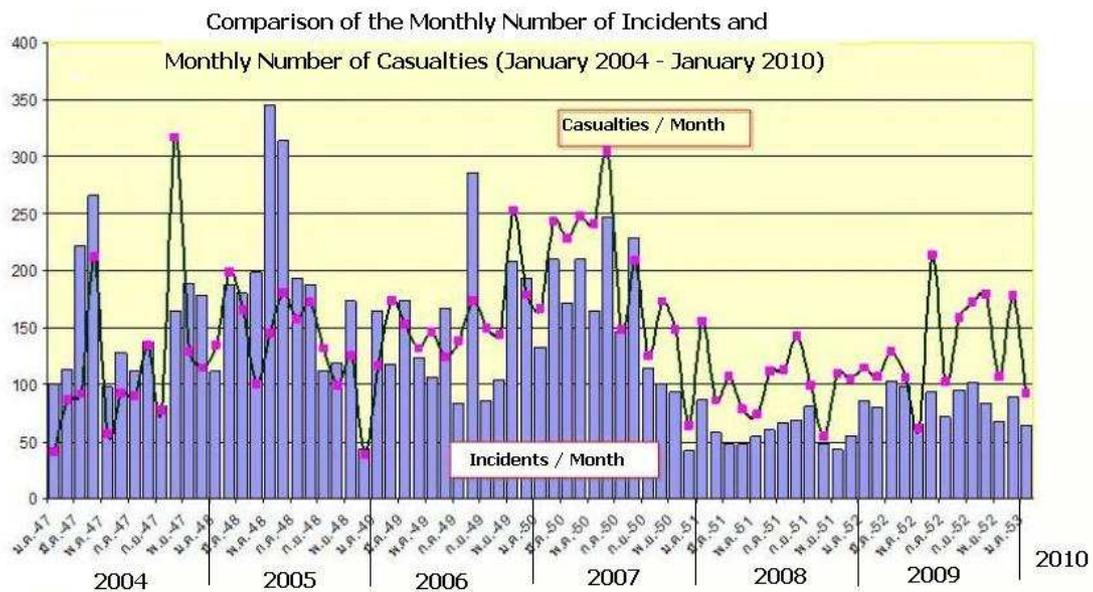
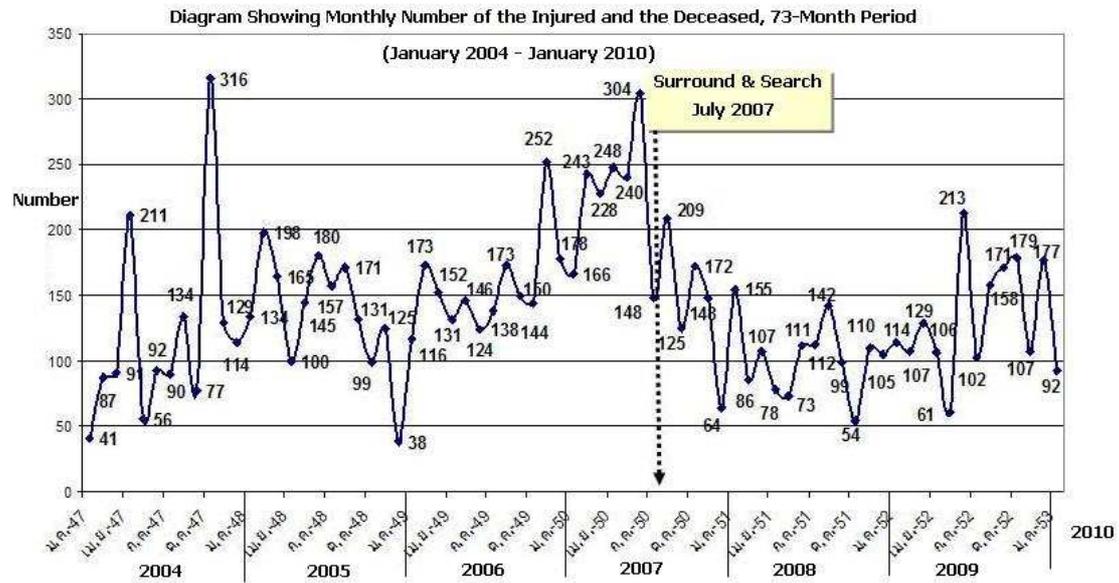
It must be admitted that the Southern Territory Protection Plan and other operations resulted in the destruction of the structure of the insurgency movement. The state used verified intelligence to surround and search target areas in order to detain suspects for interrogation and arrest those who had evidence of wrong-doing. The number of persons detained from operations, particularly those conducted by the military, from 2004 to June 2009 was 3,159 individuals in total. When the statistics were considered on a yearly basis, it could be seen that 2007 was the year with the highest number of arrest as there were as many as 1,982 persons detained in this year, making the following year, 2008, the year that started to see a decrease in the number of incidents of unrest. This is particularly true for August 2007. The data on the arrests and the significant reduction in the level of violence were consistent with one another, reflecting the fact that the large

wave of military surround-and-search operations resulted in the decrease in incidents of unrest and a large number of people being arrested in that year. Meanwhile, despite the majority of detainees being released, the large number of arrests and detentions resulted in human rights violations being committed in this process, particularly using the power to arrest and detain by Martial Laws and the Decree on Public Administration in Emergency Situation.



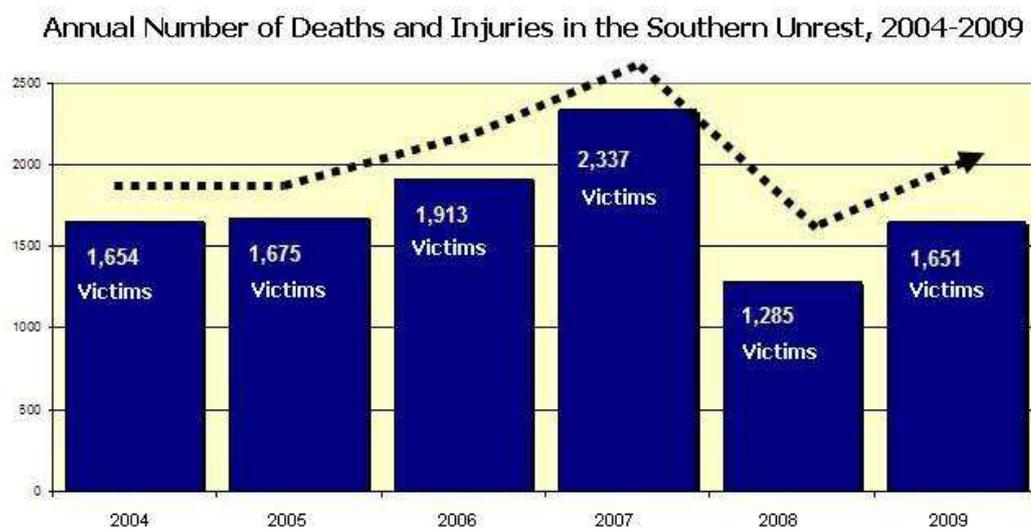
Furthermore, another consequence was that apparently, the reduction in the frequency of incidents of unrest and the reduction in the frequency of deaths and injuries from the incidents of unrest were not as consistent with one another as initially expected. While reduction in the frequency of incidents of unrest reduced significantly, deaths and injuries from incidents during the time fluctuated without any clear direction. The interpretation of this phenomenon was that although the number of incidents decreased, it appeared that each attack caused higher deaths and injuries, i.e. the *incident casualty rate appeared to be constant*. We could see from the number of incidents which differed significantly by month, while the number of deaths and injuries became higher from late 2007 onwards. For example, in October 2007 there were a total of 101 incidents with 172 persons dead or injured, while in August 2008 there were a total of 69 incidents but there were 142 persons dead or injured, and in June 2009 there were 92 incidents but there were as many as 213 deaths and injuries, according to a report of Deep South Watch which indicated that what would be happening was *"qualitative violence"* (see the report

"Half a Decade of the Southern Fire: Confusion in Finding a Solution with Reasons",
in Thai)



Another issue that should be further monitored was the incidents in **Phase Three**, from 2009 to present. In the overall picture, annual casualties statistics indicated that the "real" violence and loss became continuously higher from 2004 to 2007 (in Phase One), then decreased in 2008 (Phase Two), but in Phase Three which began in 2009, the statistics of deaths and injuries were on the rise again. In 2004, there were 1,654 casualties in total, in 2005 there were 1,654 casualties in total, in 2006 there were 1,913 casualties in total, in 2007 there were 2,337 casualties in total, in 2008 there were 1,285 casualties in total, but in 2009 there were 1,651

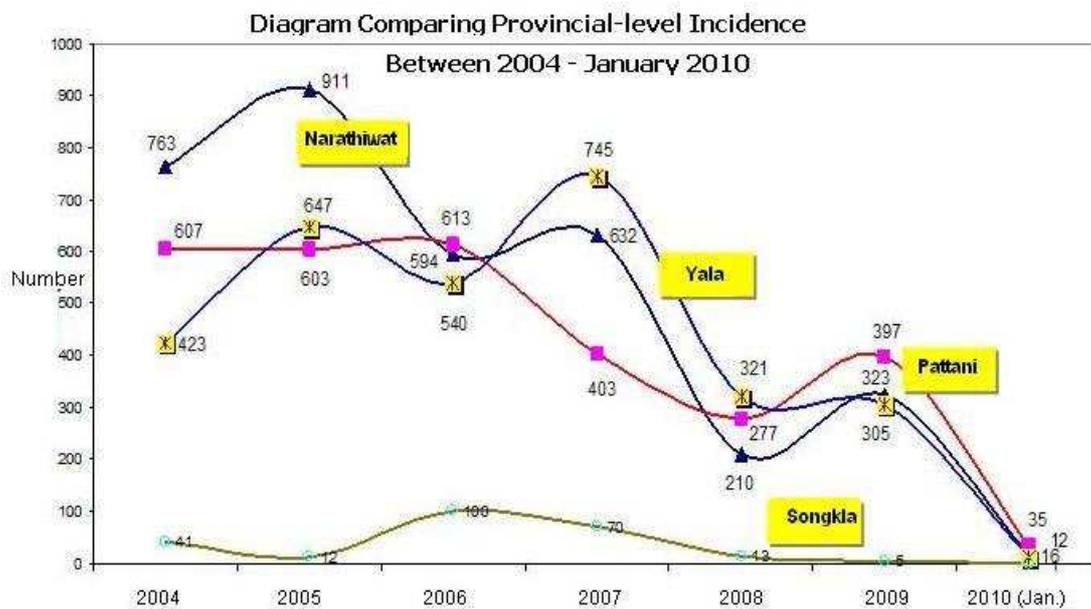
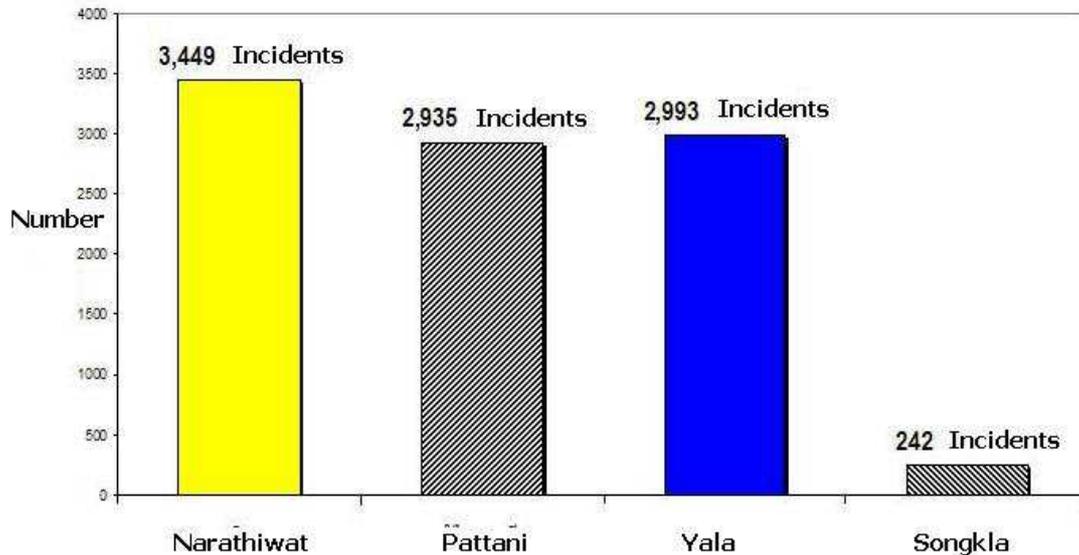
casualties in total. The interesting thing was that the casualty statistics in 2009 appeared to be at the same level or nearly the same level as previously. The trend of violence in 2009 appeared to be at the pre-2007 level, creating suspicion that the violence and unrest might be on the rise again. If these trend and direction continued, assuming that the hypothesis was real, it might be possible that the tendency in unrest would be a *U-Shape Trend*, although this possibility would depend on adjustments in term of policy, strategy, tactics and operations of the state in solving the problem of Southern unrest in the next phase.



2. Dynamics of the Area of Violence

As for the area of violence, statistics over six years showed that Narathiwat Province had the highest number of incidents, followed by Yala Province and Pattani Province. Statistics of incidents of unrest from 2004-2009, by province, showed that there were 3,499 incidents in Narathiwat, 2,993 incidents in Yala, and 2,935 incidents in Pattani. An interesting change dynamic in the area of violence was from 2004-2005, when Narathiwat was the area with the highest level of violence, then in 2007-2008, Yala became the area with the highest level of violence. It was notable that the frequency of incidence decreased in all provinces in 2007. However, in 2009, Pattani became the area with the highest violence, up until January of this year Pattani still had the most incidents of violence. The change in tactics of the security sector and the specific situation in each area were important factors leading to the mentioned changes.

Diagram Comparing 6 Years of Incidence by Province



The level of violence from insurgency and the dynamics of the situation at provincial level can be analyzed from changes in the situation in each *amphoe* (district) and *tambon* (sub-district). If the smallest unit, the *tambon* (sub-district) was to be considered, it could be seen that the 10 *tambons* with the highest level of violence were *Tambon Bannang Sata* (Amphoe Bannang Sata, Yala Province),

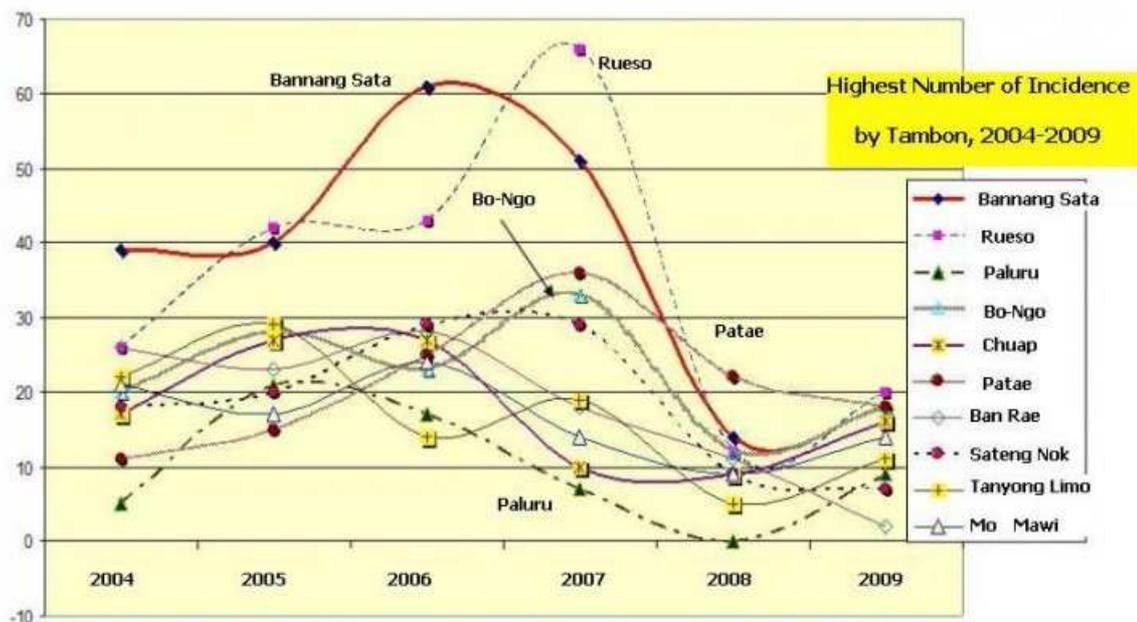
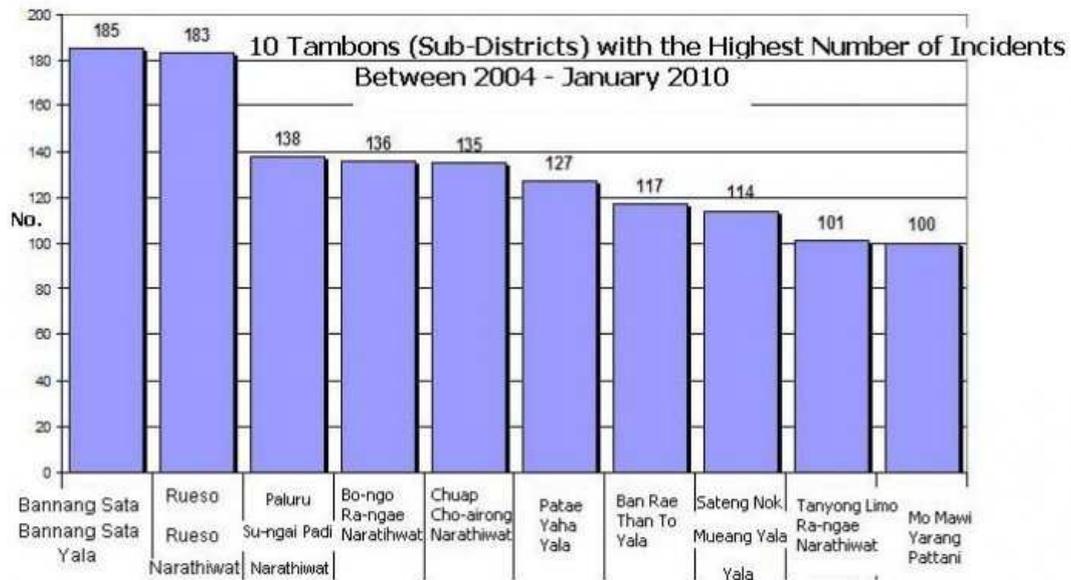
Tambon Rueso (Amphoe Rueso, Narathiwat Province), *Tambon Paluru* (Amphoe Su-ngai Padi, Narathiwat Province), *Tambon Bo-ngo* (Amphoe Ra-ngae, Narathiwat Province), *Tambon Chuap* (Amphoe Cho-airong, Narathiwat Province), *Tambon Patae* (Amphoe Yaha, Yala Province), *Tambon Ban Rae* (Amphoe Than To, Yala Province), *Tambon Sateng Nok* (Amphoe Mueang, Yala Province), *Tambon Tanyong Limo* (Amphoe Ra-ngae, Narathiwat Province), and *Tambon Mo Mawi* (Amphoe Yarang, Pattani Province).

The dynamic of change in each area was interesting. According to monthly data, ***Tambon Bannang Sata*** in Yala and ***Tambon Rueso*** in Narathiwat took alternate turns at being the first and second place in the area of unrest from 2004-2007. The mountainous forest terrain and the wide area were important geographic factors, combined with the areas being the former operating area of the underground insurgency movement, making them a strong base for the movement as the mass was there. In 2007, Tambon Rueso (Amphoe Rueso, Narathiwat Province) had as many as 66 incidents within the same year, making the highest record in the 6-year period out of all tambons; while in 2006 Tambon Bannang Sata (Amphoe Bannang Sata, Yala Province) had the highest number of incidents at 61, making the second highest record in the 6-year period. Statistics in both tambons greatly decreased since late 2007, particularly after late August-September-October due to the surround-and-search operations from the military during the mentioned period. Tambon Patae (Amphoe Yaha, Yala Province) and Tambon Paluru (Amphoe Su-ngai Padi, Narathiwat Province) also had a subsequently high level of violence in the third and fourth places. It was notable that the level of violence in the area greatly decreased after 2007, particularly in Tambon Paluru, Amphoe Su-ngai Padi, Narathiwat Province, where there was a dramatic drop in the statistics. Reports of unrest disappeared from this tambon since November 2007 and only resurfaced in April, May, and June of 2009.

Other interesting areas were ***Tambon Patae***, Amphoe Yaha, Yala Province, and ***Tambon Chuap***, Amphoe Cho-airong, Narathiwat Province. Incidents in Tambon Patae started in 2004 with statistics that were not very high, comparing to Rueso and Bannang Sata, but the level of violence greatly increased and the tambon became third to Rueso and Bannang Sata, but in 2008 all areas had decreased statistics, including in Patae. However, the fact that the reductions in Rueso and

Bannang Sata in 2008 were greater than in Patae made the latter tambon the one with the highest statistics of unrest comparing to all other tambons, which reflected that the statistics in this tambon decreased, but not as much as in other tambons. For example, while the number of incidents in Rueso decreased from 66 incidents to some 10 incidents in 2008, the number of incidents in Patae decreased from 66 to approximately 22. The success from accepting those who surrendered themselves contributed to the reduction in this tambon. While in Tambon Chuap (Amphoe Cho-airong, Narathiwat Province), the unrest greatly decreased since 2007 and remained at a relatively low level in 2008, but the unrest resurged in 2009 after the massacre of Muslims at al-Furqan Mosque in Ai-payer Village, increased the number of incidents from 10 incidents in 2007 to 16 incidents in 2009. Tambon Mo Mawi, Amphoe Yarang, Pattani Province, was an area that should be monitored most closely for Pattani Province, as it rose to be the tambon with the fourth highest number of incidents at tambon level. In overall picture, it could be seen that all areas had a rising trend in violence in 2009.

With regard to the dynamics of the area-level situation over the six-year period, it could be speculated that the management of conflict and violence in the Deep South might require thorough area-specific situational analysis. It was notable that using the military approach in the control, surrounding, and arrest, although allowing the state to control the perimeter and the area of violence at a certain level since 2007, but a problem in implementation was that such action also opened more windows of opportunity for the authorities to violate the human rights of the people. When the incidents from 2009 onwards were considered for their rising trend in many areas, *we could observe that the violence would only increase at a certain level, or would it be possible that the intensity would become greater?* The future is still unclear and the situation could turn out for the better or worse, but an important event that has yet to happen is solving the basic problems by a clear political strategy, while the issue of the lack of clarity in political program might also be a factor that cause the situation to change in the long term.

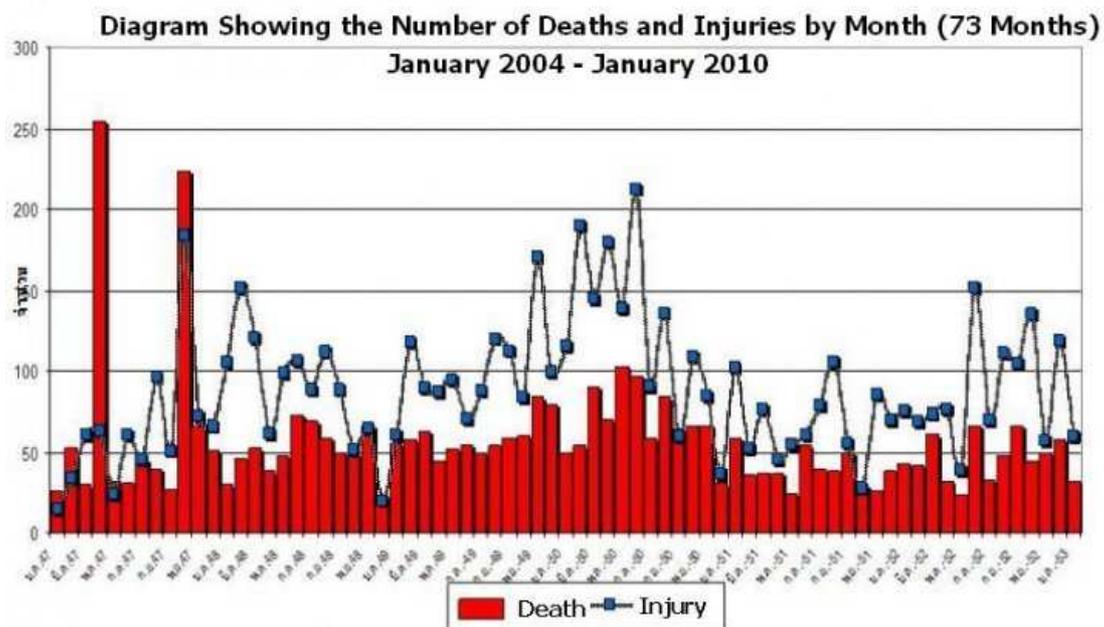


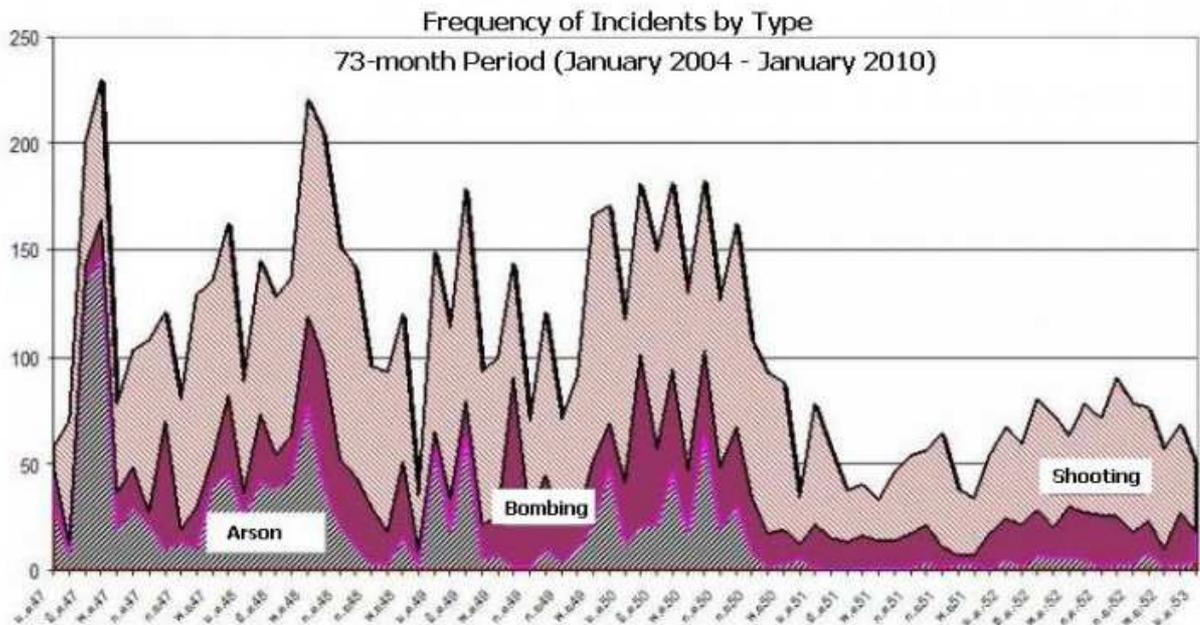
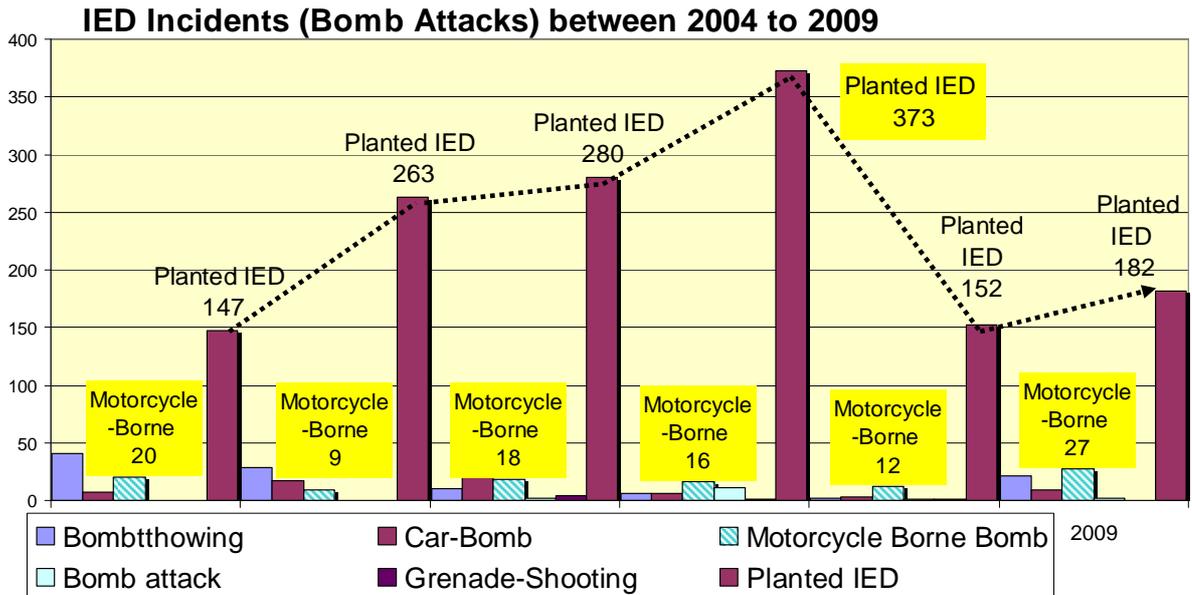
3. Dynamics of the Target of Violence

Analysis of the nature and the characteristics of violence in the Deep South over the past six years can also consider the targets or the victims of the violence. When the victims from all incidents were taken into consideration, combining the dead with the injured, there were approximately 10,609 victims in total from January 2004 to January 2010, among them 4,100 were deceased and 6,509 were injured. The incidents caused a higher proportion of the injured than the deceased, i.e. the deceased accounted for 38.65 percent while the injured accounted

for 61.35 percent. It was interesting that the deceased-to-injured ratio remained fairly constant and did not appear to have any real change from 2005 to 2009. For example, in 2005, the percentage of the deceased out of all victims was at 35.88 percent, at 37.38 percent in 2006, and at 34.34 percent in 2009, reflecting the fact that actions which reduced the frequency of violence since 2007 did not cause any change to the *pattern* of daily attacks and fatality in general.

The principal tool of the insurgency was still by shooting, followed by usage of explosive, while arson came in the third place. Arson attacks greatly decreased since August 2007 and remained very low ever since, while bombing attacks were at the highest level in 2007 with 373 incidents, but the number decreased to 152 incidents in 2008. It should also be noted that bomb attacks in 2009 turned out to be on the rise at 182 incidents, *particularly the number of motorcycle bombings in 2009, which the highest record in the six-year period.* In other words, the 27 incidents of motorcycle bombings in the year reflected the fact that explosive attacks might be on the rise in this year of 2010.





Furthermore, over the past six years, the characteristics of the targets or the victims of violence should also be monitored. It could be seen that by occupational background of the victims of violence over the past six years, a large portion consisted of ordinary citizens. When considering the total casualty of the deceased and the injured combined, normal citizens with no position related to the authorities were the most common victims (for deaths as well as injuries) at 4,403 persons, followed by military personnel at 1,433 persons, while the police ranked in the third

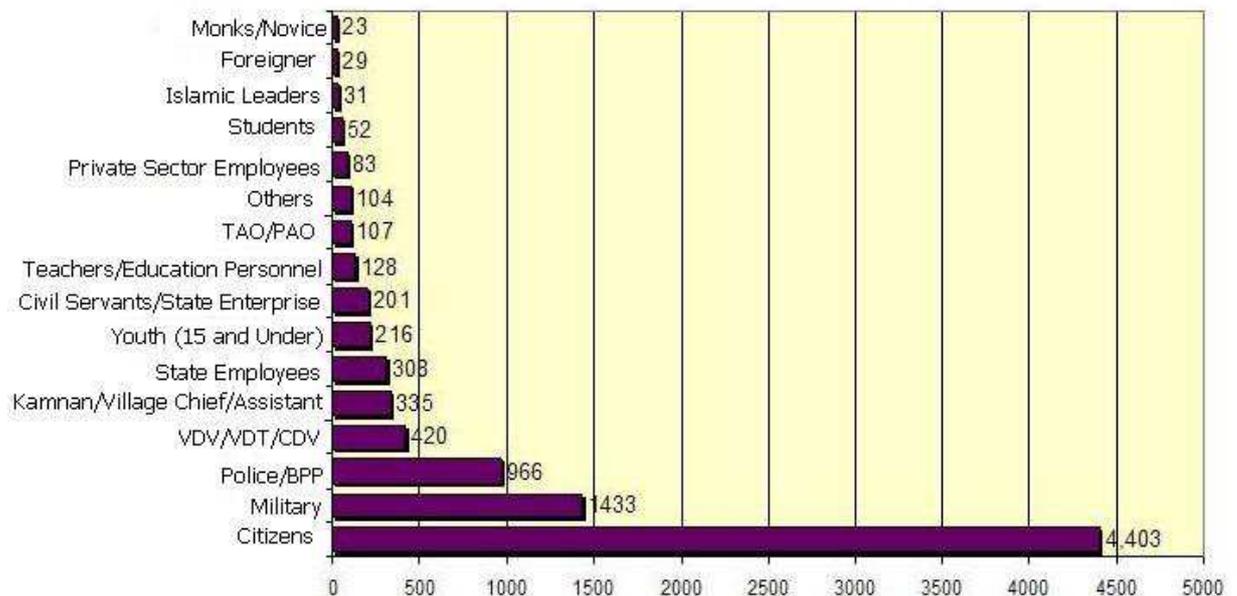
place at 966 persons, the fourth place belong to the Village Defense Team/Volunteers or VDT/VDV at approximately 420 individuals. In the fifth place were the kamnans (tambon headsman), the village chief, or the assistant village chief, at approximately 335 persons in total, while government employees ranked in the sixth place at approximately 308 individuals, while the rest were scattered among different categories. When the percentage or the proportion of all the deceased and the injured was considered, it was found that *normal citizens accounted for 50 percents of all deaths and injuries combined*, followed by the military at 16 percent, the police at 11 percent, the VDT/VDV at approximately 5 percent, the kamnan and village chiefs and assistant chiefs at approximately 5 percents, state employees at around 4 percent, while the rest belonged to other groups.

A notable observation from this data was that the statistics of casualties among the kamnans and the village chiefs was recently analyzed as *"potentially"* being the result of personal conflict or for political interest. As kamnans and village chiefs accounted for only around 5 percents of all victims, while Tambon Administrative Organization (TAO) chiefs and local politicians only accounted for 1 percent of the victims. *Thus the hypothesis on the cause of violence in the area being conflicting interest and local political conflict could not account for the remaining higher number of deaths among other victims who were normal citizens and other categories of state officials*, particularly among the police, the military, as well as the VDT/VDV who were directly involved in fighting the insurgency or terrorism which occurred in the area.

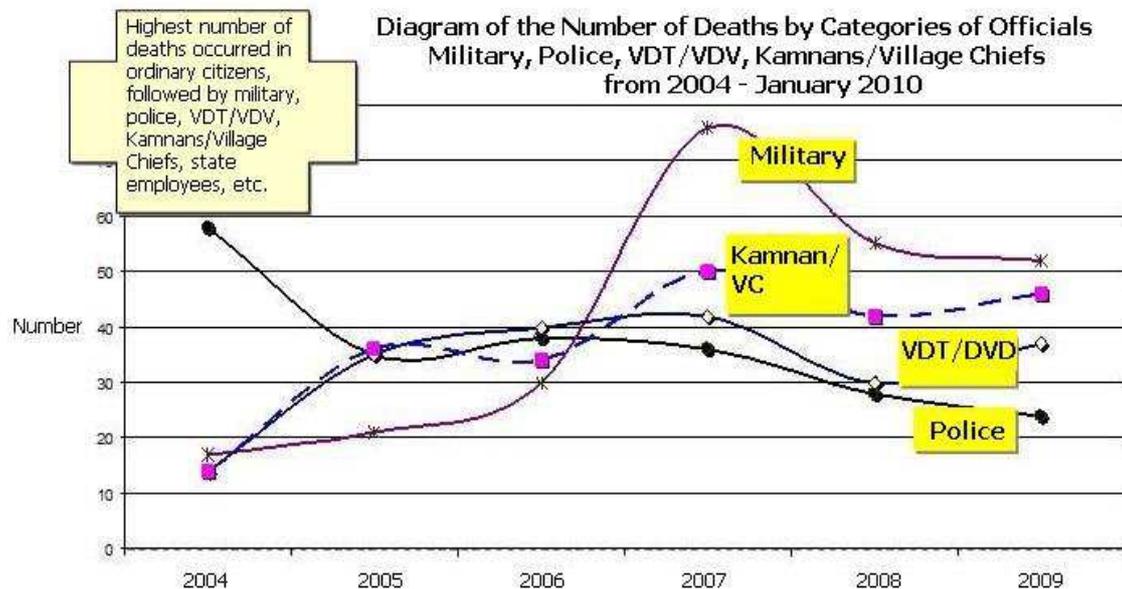
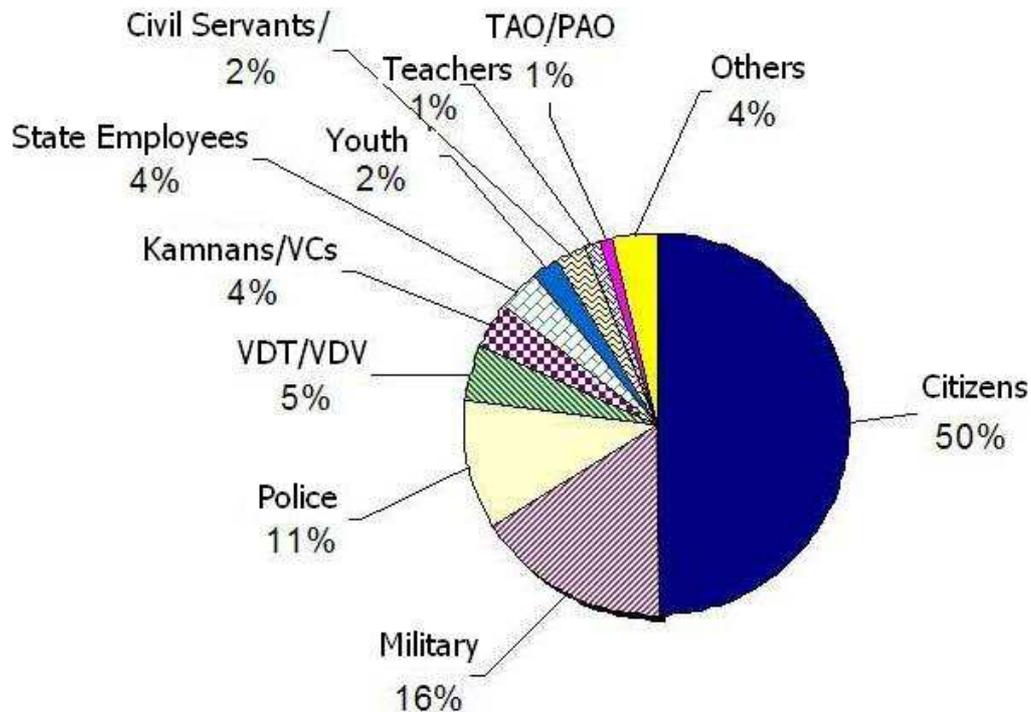
However, when annual changes or dynamics of the violence was regarded, it could be seen that recently, from 2007 to present, among the victims with occupations related the state and excluding normal citizens, members of the military were had the highest casualties, followed by kamnans and village chiefs, followed by VDT and other volunteers, and the police were in the fourth place. An interesting thing was that in the overall picture over six years, the police were far behind the military in the number of casualties, but when the annual statistics from 2004-2009 was considered, it turned out to be that the police had the highest casualties in state-related occupations during the first years of the violence, particularly in 2004-2005. However, from 2007 onwards, the military turned out to rank in the first order

of the targets among those who were not regular citizens, and the kamnans and village chiefs ranked in the second order in this group. The *reduction of casualties among the police* might be due to the *reduction in the operational role of the police* from 2006, letting the *military to play the key role* in maintenance of peace in the Deep South, and the *expansion of force of the village chiefs and assistant village chiefs* in maintaining peace, as well as the village volunteer forces for self-protection also caused the VDT/VDV to become targets of attack and had higher casualties since 2007. The attempt in *tactical adaptations and working approach* of the police might also have led to the reduction of casualties among the police.

Comparison of Casualties (Jan 2004 - Jan 2010)



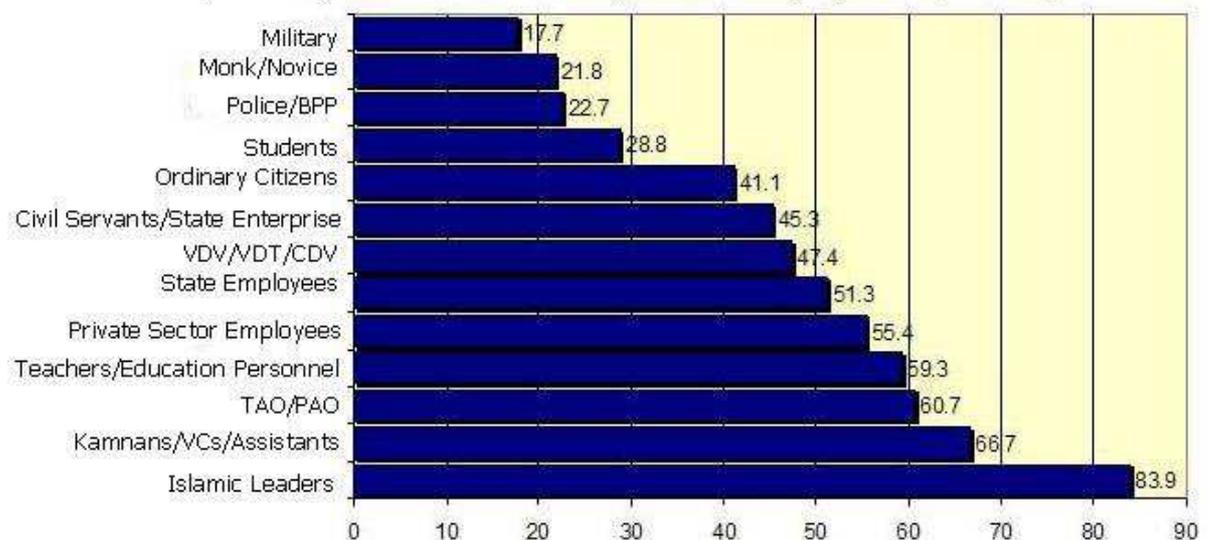
Percentage of Casualties by Occupation, 2004-2010



Aside from the issue of occupational groups, another interesting issue in analyzing the casualties would be the death-to-injury proportion of the victims among the same occupation. This means that aside from looking at the percentage of deaths and injuries among all victims, the fatality rate in each attack on people in each occupation (i.e. the chance of dying from attacks, categorized by occupation)

was also considered. In this instance, Islamic religious leaders had the highest attack fatality rate at 83.9 percent, followed by the kamnans and village headmen who had 66.7 percent fatality rate. Local leaders ranked in the third place, while another group was the local leaders i.e. Tambon Administrative Organization (TAO) or Provincial Administrative Organization (PAO) at 60.7 percent. Teachers and education personnel had an attack fatality rate of 59.3 percent. Among the occupations with the lowest fatality, it turned out to be that military personnel had the lowest attack fatality rate at 17.7 percent, while Buddhist monks and novices had an attack fatality rate of 21.8 percent, while the attack fatality rate among the police was at 22.7 percent. Thus it could be said that despite the overall low casualty, *when an attack took place, the Islamic religious leaders had the highest chance of dying from the attack*, followed by village leaders such as the kamnans, village chiefs, or village chief assistants, who came out at the second place. In the third place were the elected officials, such as the TAO or the PAO, while teachers had the fourth highest chance of dying from each attack. It could be interpreted that the local leaders and the teachers had a higher risk of dying from violence, while soldiers, police, and monks had a lower risk of dying.

Fatality Rate (% of deaths among casualties) by Occupations, 2004-2010



4. Important Strategic Issues over the Six Years

The above-mentioned analyses reflected the dynamics of violence and the situation of unrest in the Deep South to be double-sided. On one side, the violence

was volatile, confusing, and complex, thus there was a high chance further expanding and spreading. On the other side, the violence also tended to reflect a certain pattern and system with a target and a hidden system and structure. In other words, the violence and the unrest had a dynamic that could be explained and could be partly but not entirely managed if its complex components and dynamics were understood. From a compilation of the studies of approaches in management of violence and unrest over the past six years, interesting conclusions could be made as follow:

1. In the overall picture for 2009, the state achieved "tactical success" as military tactical or strategic adjustment and management of force organization was able to suppress the insurgency and maintain peace. However, the state still lacked a systematic *improvement of the format and content of the Politics-Before-Military strategy*, while a structural political change or reform to solve the problem in the long term was still unclear.

2. In term of operations, it is an accepted fact that the number of incidents of unrest tended to decline since late 2007, yet the state still could not claim that the *real* violence had reduced. When the statistics on the casualties, deaths, and injuries from the unrest were considered, the unrest *had not significantly reduced*.

3. Another point of consideration was the use of economic development policy or civil affairs activities to enhance military operations, *which had not reached the intended goal*. Consideration of socioeconomic development indicators showed that the indicators of poverty and improvement of quality of life still had not yet improved, as people normally indicated in survey research questionnaires that the main problems in their community were unemployment, drugs, unrest, and poverty.

4. Another important point was socio-psychological problem, or the feelings of the people. We normally found that there was a problem of the locals having a generally low level of understanding and satisfaction with state development projects. From the survey of satisfaction of the people towards state sector development projects, as well as activities of state agencies over the years, by the Center for the Study of Conflict and Cultural Diversity, Prince of Songkla University, it

was found that although there was a high level of need for state assistance and there was satisfaction towards short-term assistance such as the 4,500 Bahts employment project and the Graduate Volunteer program, as well as development in infrastructure and transportation, *but the people still had not seen success* in term of distribution of income and poverty reduction. State projects still lacked capacity building, development of the economic process and investment potential of the area.

5. A serious indicator of social problems is *drugs*. Illicit drugs are still widespread, reflecting the failure in socioeconomic development in the area e.g. the problem of youth unemployment, poverty, etc.

6. In 2009, the attitude and trust in the security sector, such as the military and the police, still had not improved, which was due to mistakes in human rights violations and lack of acceptance and understanding of the rights for identity of the local population, although since mid-2009, people in many area actually started to see and accept the role of the military in community development and political activities. However, this fact showed that the commitment of personnel for development work by politics leading the military *still had not achieved its objective of winning the hearts and minds of the people*. In the long term, the state should continue its work in order to create greater trust among the people in general, particularly among the Muslim Malays who are the majority in the Deep South.

7. Justice regarding the ethnic and religious identity was still a problem with very clear significance, as it could be seen that most people still regarded the cultural distance between civil servants / state officials and the locals as an important problem. On one side, *justice was the main issue that was specified as the cause of the unrest*. When minor components were considered, the issues that were commonly mentioned were issues related to cultural differences e.g. problems from the treatment of officials towards Muslims, the problem of violence that the state officials committed to the people, and the problem of various forms of injustice of state officials. These issues caused the issue of justice to be very evident and of high priority. In other words, the problem of justice in all aspects had an implication which connected to the issue of ethnic and religious bias, which was fairly consistent with the mentioned fact that the people regarded the state officials in the Deep South as being distant and estranged from the people. As these officials were not

the locals, they did not understand the culture, the language, and the religion of the majority of the people in the Deep South.

8. International trends might have catalyzed the intensity of the violence in the Deep South, thus connecting the struggle for ethnic identity and justice to the factors of religion. For example, a report of Deep South Watch in 2008 (see the report "[Confusion, 'Politics-Before-Military', Summary of the Southern Unrest 2008](#)", in [Thai](#)) indicated that September was the month with the highest level of violence, which was also the month of Ramadan. In 2009, incidents from late August to September also had a clear rising trend, indicating that the violence in the Deep South was a discourse on ethnicity, the motherland, and religion. However, an issue at present was that the importance of the mentioned symbolism had been decreased due to the discourse on the cause of violence which was conflicts of personal interests, personal vengeance, local political issues, crime, and drugs. The trend of violence during the month of Ramadan indicated that the "discourse of violence of the struggle in Pattani was the real fight of a group of individuals" for the Malay race, the Pattani motherland, and Islam, as this reflected the trend in terrorism overseas which also surged at the same period. The strategy of politics-before-military, solving the problem of identity, and peaceful approach would help solve the mentioned problem in the long run.

5. Analysis of Future Trends

From the data of the situation in the past and the present, the future of the situation in the South could be speculated according to the 4 predictive scenarios, as follow:

1. The situation could continue to decline, like a downward ladder. In this model, the situation of violence would continue to decrease for a period of approximately 5-10 years, but at present, the likelihood of this model may be low due to two factors: the situation in 2009 indicated the tendency of the situation to be on the revival, and the situation in early 2010 from January to February did not have the expected downward trend. Furthermore, the factor of political crisis in Bangkok and other areas has made the government confused on the approach to solve the problem in the South and the attention of the government has been diverted to

problems in other areas, whose severity has increased. At present, it is highly likely that the violence in the South will be connected to the political conflict and violence in the capital.

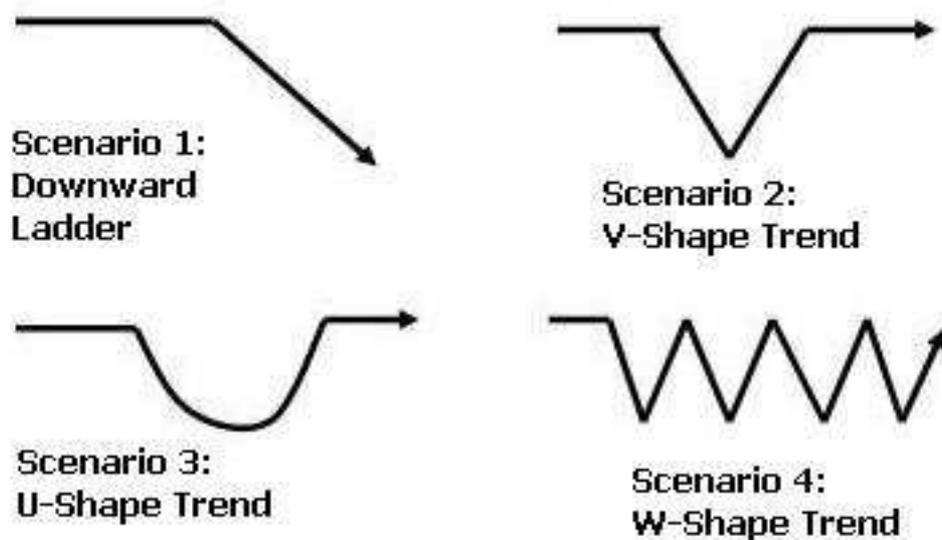
2. V-Shape Trend with a decrease in 2007-2008 and an immediate spike in 2010. Although the violence had the tendency to decrease and the decline became greater in 2009, the possibility that the violence will have an immediate rise as a V-Shape Trend may be rather small. An important factor is the suppression of violence in the South by the military, police, volunteers, and civilian force by the state sector in the area, and putting over 100 billion bahts of budget plus an additional 60 billion bahts that will be coming to the area, which makes it hard for the unrest to immediately rise the way it did in 2004, except in case that a very serious strategic / tactical error is committed with human rights violation or a severe trigger of conflict by the state, such as the al-Furqan mosque incident, causing the situation to escalate beyond control, causing domestic unrest which requires international intervention.

3. The situation of violence and unrest may decline as it did in 2008 and gradually increase as a U-Shape Trend. In this model, the situation of unrest in 2009 may gradually escalate like the letter "U". The mentioned trend is highly likely if the state only resorts to military suppression but cannot solve structural issue and basic problems on major issues such as the issue of Malay Muslim identity, the issue of justice on all sides, the issue of poverty and the lack of development of people in the Deep South, and the issue in politics and government. The mentioned problems are the pre-requisites which would allow for the continuity of conflict and violence. The agents of the insurgents and the underground movements would still rely on these things to serve as the pre-requisites in the expansion of force and the creation of the situation of violence, where tactical changes might be made in order to allow for long-term escalation of violence.

4. The situation may rise and fall alternately, like a zigzag. The Deep South will remain a violent area and unrest will remain there for a long time and may rise and fall alternately, which could be either in the form of constant violence, or as a W-Shape Trend. The tendency for this model to occur is high like in the 3rd

model, as solving the problem by military force, controlling the area by special legal measures such as Martial Laws and Decree on Public Administration in Emergency Situation can reduce violence at a certain level but there will still be occasional problems of human rights violations and the discontent of the locals. The legal measures, coupled with solving issues in development with budget commitment into the area, may help to pull people to become satisfied and control the escalation of the problem, but the lack of solution to structural and basic problems, as well as occasional mistakes by the officials, remain a risk factor and a pre-requisite for constant existence of violence, allowing the insurgents to create a pre-requisite for struggle which can allow occasional resurgence of unrest.

Southern Violence: Four Future Scenarios



Security officials of the state may choose the 4th model by using a large-sized force for suppression, *without negotiation or reformation* of politics, administration, and the society. Meanwhile, development project budget can be used to buy the hearts of some people and extend the time to let the instigators wither by themselves. However, this approach is full of risks and problems both in the short and the long terms. There are risks that the situation will become like the 2nd model, and if mistakes were made, the situation would escalate and become an international incident. Another side of the risks is in the extension of time by putting in personnel and money as the cost of security will continue to be very high and will

be *sunken costs*, thus there is a very high likelihood at the military will be politically pressured on the use of budget and the prolongation of the problem and will be accused of profiteering from the insecurity industry and create a problem of mistrust, as seen in the case of GT-200 bomb detectors and the use of a large amount of budget in the purchase of balloons, causing the military to be the target of severe social scrutiny in the future.

6. Insurgency or Perpetration of Violence?

The instigation of violence in the Deep South has created a political discourse, which is the power to gradually transform the thoughts of the Thai people and political decision-makers of present-day Thailand. Insurgency is a part of a political violence hardly been resolved to become civil wars, the usage of violence against the state. The insurgents, with its constituencies in the communities, use a tactic of armed struggle alternately with a political one. The major discourse in the struggle in the Deep South leading to the unrest involves the identity politics relating to history, ethnicity, and religion. Other problems which compound and catalyze the violence are the issue of injustice, the lack of opportunity in development, and poverty. The intricate reality is that sometimes personal conflicts, local political conflicts, crime, and drug problems are pulled in to explain the on-going violence, which is the reason why the authorities is trying to construct a *new discourse on the perpetrators of violence (PV)* instead of the term "insurgency", which is an attempt to create an *imagined violence in the new form* in order to ease the meaning of the original discourse concerning the insurgency and insurgency wars. In other words, formation of the new imagined violence set the stage for decreasing the meaning of insurgent violence in the form of identity politics, spreading all over the world. However, the discursive formation on insurgent violence has been a type of violence that appears to be real and going on for a long time, as it has become a critical part of political realities taking place in the daily life of the majority of the people in the Deep South for years. The creation of the new imagination of violence that the violence consists of personal conflict, interests, and drugs violence, may be an attempt at denying the other side of on-going realities in the area by using a new term, a new explanation and a new sentiment. However, violence is violence: it has its own life, its own meaning, and its own power in real life. Therefore, the new form of imagined violence may not be constructed merely by premeditated

narratives, but also requires discursive practices concerning the reality of violence emerging in definite social-political relations. What exactly do the violence and the dynamics of the situation represent thus far? The phenomena of Southern violence over the past six years and the things that will turn out in the near future would be critical markers on whether the existing violence is a representation of insurgency waging a symbolic war on identity politics, or just the customary actions of the perpetrators of violence, be it criminals, drug-dealers, and/or political assassins.