

## THAILAND

### Malay Muslims

Activity: 1947-2020

#### General notes

- The Malay Muslims are also referred to as Pat(t)ani.

#### Movement start and end dates

- The Patani People's Movement (PPM) emerged in early 1947, hence the start date. The PPM demanded autonomy, language and cultural rights as well as the implementation of Sharia Law (Human Rights Watch 2007; Melvin 2007). In the same year, the Association of Malays of Greater Patani (GAMPAR) was formed in Malaysia to support secession and union with the Malay Federation (Sulong and Mayhiddin 2002). The Pattani United Liberation Organization (PULO) was formed in 1971. The movement is ongoing (Hewitt & Cheetham 2000: 235f; Marshall & Gurr 2003; Minahan 1996: 441ff, 2002: 1499ff; MAR; MRGI; Roth 2015: 361f; Sambanis & Schulhofer-Wohl 2019; UCDP/PRIO). [start date: 1947; end date: ongoing]

#### Dominant claim

- The Patani People's Movement (PPM) emerged in early 1947. It demanded autonomy, language and cultural rights as well as the implementation of Sharia Law (Human Rights Watch 2007; Melvin 2007; Hewitt & Cheetham 2000: 235). In the same year, the Association of Malays of Greater Patani (GAMPAR) was formed in Malaysia to support the union of Pattani territories with Malaysia (Sulong and Mayhiddin 2002). We code autonomy as the dominant claim since we are interested in the dyad between the Thai government and the self-determination movement in Thailand, while GAMPAR was a Malaysian organization with close links to the Malay Nationalist Party, the representative of early Malay nationalism under British rule (Hack 2008: 187). [1947-1959: autonomy claim]
- In 1959 the BNPP was created by the members of GAMPAR and the PPM. The BNPP was "the first organized armed group to call for Patani's independence" (Melvin 2007: 15). The National Revolution Front (Barisan Revolusi Nasional, BRN), formed in 1963, and PULO, which emerged in 1968 and came to be the largest of the separatist movements, like almost all other militant groups also advocated independence. Lamey (2013) confirms that the Pattani movement changed to one for independence. Following the first of January rule, we code independence as the dominant claim as of 1960. Independence remained the dominant claim as of 2020 (International Crisis Group 2022). [1960-2020: independence claim]
  - o Note: Hewitt & Cheetham (2000: 235) note that there are claims for both autonomy and independence in recent years without giving clear evidence as to which claim is dominant.

#### Independence claims

- See above. [start date: 1959; end date: ongoing]

## **Irredentist claims**

NA

## **Claimed territory**

- The territory claimed by the Pattani, a state called “Pattani Darussalam”, consists of the three provinces Pattani, Narathiwat, and Yala in the south of Thailand (Roth 2015: 361). We code this claim based on Roth (2015: 362) using geographic data on admin units from the Global Administrative Areas database (GADM 2019) for polygon definition.

## **Sovereignty declarations**

NA

## **Separatist armed conflict**

- MAR’s quinquennial rebellion score is 3 (“local rebellion”) from 1945-1949. While not included in UCDP/PRIO, this is consistent with qualitative evidence.
  - o A 2007 report by Human Rights Watch suggests that movement started a “petition campaign for autonomy, language and cultural rights, and implementation of Islamic law” in 1947. The report continues to suggest that the Thai government responded with repression to the protest campaign and arrested the movement’s leaders in early 1948.
  - o Consistent with this, Melvin (2007) gives clear evidence of a short spike of violence in 1948. The violence seems to have been sparked by the arrest of movement leaders also mentioned in other sources. “Sulong’s arrest was one of the factors behind an upsurge of unrest during 1948, most notably the 26–28 April Dusun Nyur rebellion in Narathiwat on. Another religious leader, Haji Abdul Rahman, led hundreds of men against the police, resulting in the deaths of some 400 Malay Muslims; thousands more fled to Malaysia. The uprising in 1948 is widely regarded as the onset of the modern violent struggle in the South” (p. 15).
  - o More details are included in the University of Central Arkansas conflict database: “Government police and Muslims clashed near Kampung Resab in February 1948, resulting in the deaths of eight government policemen. Some 400 Muslims and 30 Thai government policemen were killed during violent clashes in Kampung Dusun Nyor in Narathiwatin province on April 26-27, 1948. Some 5,000 Muslim refugees fled to Malaya. The government declared a state-of-emergency in September 1948.”
  - o Based on those sources, the criteria for a LVIOLSD coding in 1948 are met.
- According to the UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia, tensions remained high after the 1948 popular uprising and the first insurgent organizations started to form in the 1960s, including groups such as BNPP (in 1986 renamed BIPP; Barisan Islam Pembebasan Patani, Islamic Liberation Front of Patani), BRN (Barisan Revolusi Nasional, National Revolutionary Front), and PULO (Pertubuhan Perpaduan Pembebasan Patani, Patani United Liberation Organisation). Some of those rebel groups remain active today. According to UCDP/PRIO, those groups launched small-scale attacks starting in the 1970s, often in collaboration with communist guerillas or criminal gangs. The strongest rebel group was PULO. However, according to UCDP/PRIO, the 25 deaths threshold was not met in any year until 2003.
  - o This is not consistent with data from the Minorities at Risk project, whose quinquennial rebellion score is four in 1965-1969 (indicating “small-scale guerilla activity”) and six in 1970-1974 (indicating “large-scale guerilla activity”). MAR therefore points to substantial violence in the late 1960s and especially the early 1970s. According to the MAR coding notes, “Muslim resentment against the government’s assimilation policies turned from localized resistance to broad support for the Pattani United Liberation

Organization (PULO) by the early 1970s. The PULO rebellion began in the late 1960s with the most intense phase emerging in the early to mid 1970s (REB65X = 4; REB70X = 6)."

- MAR's coding decision is consistent with qualitative evidence. According to the case summary by the University of Central Arkansas: "Government troops conducted a military offensive against Muslim rebels from 1968 to 1975, resulting in the deaths of 329 Muslim rebels. Eleven Muslims were killed during a demonstration in Pattani on December 4, 1975. Some 500 individuals were killed during the conflict." The report does not provide annual casualty statistics nor does it mention deaths on the security forces side; however, the large number of deaths reported makes it likely that the LVIOLSD threshold was met.
- Some sources suggest that levels of violence continued to be high after 1975, or even that casualty rates were particularly high in the late 1970s and early 1980s (e.g., International Crisis Group 2005). Yet, we could not find evidence suggesting that the 25 deaths threshold was met. UCDP/PRIO does not code armed conflict, and the University of Central Arkansas (n.d.) does not report more than single figures of deaths in selected years (1977 and 1980). We do not code LVIOLSD.
- By the mid-1990s, the insurgency was thought to be over. According to the International Crisis Group (2005): "The Thai government managed to stem the unrest with political and economic reforms that undercut support for armed struggle, and hundreds of fighters accepted a broad amnesty. The insurgency looked to be all but over by the mid-1990s." Yet, violence picked up again soon thereafter. From 2004 onward, we code the movement with ongoing HVIOLSD in accordance with Sambanis & Schulhofer-Wohl (2019).
  - The war began on January 4th 2004, when 100 Muslim insurgents attacked the Royal Thai Army's 4th Engineering Battalion and captured 400 weapons.
  - The Muslim insurgency emerged out of the marginalization of Malay Muslims in Thailand and is "inspired and motivated by pride in the 'glorious past' of Patani and a 'history of oppression' under Thai rule".
  - The main insurgent groups are: the Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) and its offshoot, the BRN-Coordinate (BRN-C); the Gerakan Mujahadeen Islam Pattani (GMIP); Permuda, a separatist youth movement with close ties to the BRN; and New PULO, an offshoot of a rebel group, Pattani United Liberation Organization (PULO), that maintained a strong preference in the 1970s and 1980s. While media also includes the Runda Kampulan Kecil (RKK) as a rebel organization, "this is inaccurate because there is no RKK 'organization' – the RKK refers to small group guerrilla tactics that militants from groups such as the BRN-C acquired through training in Indonesia". A
  - All of the insurgent groups operate from the southern regions of Thailand, and focus on recruiting from Islamic schools in that region.
- There is evidence for LVIOLSD before 2004.
  - First, UCDP/PRIO suggests a minor war in 2003.
  - Second, the University of Central Arkansas conflict database suggests that "Some 50 government troops and police were killed by Muslim rebels in 2002." No evidence of rebel deaths is reported, but it is likely that violence was reciprocated.
  - MAR's rebellion score is 4 (small-scale guerilla activity) in 1995, 5 (intermediate guerilla activity) in 1997, and then 4 again in 2000-2003. Marshall & Gurr (2003: 61) also suggest armed conflict in 1995-1998. Wheeler (2010) corroborates that there was a spike of violence in the mid-1990s. However, with the exception of 2002-2003, we could not find evidence that the 25 deaths threshold was met. For example, Chalk (2001: 244) suggests that a total of 33 separate attacks were carried out by PULO and New PULO (an offshoot group) between August 1997 and January 1998 and that this was the most serious spike of violence since the early 1980s. Yet, this string of attacks resulted in "only" 9 deaths.
- [1947: NVIOLSD; 1948: LVIOLSD; 1949-1967: NVIOLSD; 1968-1975: LVIOLSD; 1976-2001: NVIOLSD; 2002-2003: LVIOLSD; 2004-ongoing: HVIOLSD]

## Historical context

- The Pattanis came under Thai rule in the thirteenth century. In the fifteenth century, they were converted to Islam through the Malacca port, the Thais' southern rival. Acknowledging the Thai kings as suzerains, the northern Malay (Pattani) areas maintained considerable autonomy and were ruled by local leaders. The Southern Malay areas were not conquered by the Thai kings until 1832. Pattani ports were opened to the British under a treaty between the Thai king and London.
- In 1902, Pattani was formally annexed as part of the Thai kingdom. The sultanates were reorganized into four provinces, the Pattani language was prohibited and the Pattanis were forced to adopt Thai dress and customs (Minahan 2002: 1502).
- The 1909 Anglo-Siamese Treaty demarcated the border between Thailand and Malaysia and left three provinces, of which 80% of the population is comprised of Muslim Malays, with Thailand —Narathiwat, Yala and Pattani (Abuza 2013).
- The Primary Education Act of 1921 made attendance at state schools, and thus education in the Thai language, obligatory. The Thai Custom Decree of 1938 prohibited the practicing of Islam and even the wearing of the Sarong. Islamic law and Sharia courts were abolished (Hewitt and Cheetham 2000: 235). [1938: cultural rights restriction]
- After the Second World War, the Thai authorities engaged in further attempts to centralize administration. Thai officials replaced local leaders, the Pattani were renamed "Thai Muslims" and a 25-year program of assimilation was launched (Minahan 2002: 1503). We code a cultural rights restriction, though not an autonomy restriction because Pattani autonomy had been close to nonexistent also beforehand. [1945: cultural rights restriction]

## Concessions and restrictions

- Realizing that the 1921 and 1938 cultural integration programme "failed to substantially promote the spread of Thai education and culture among Malay Muslims" (Man 2003: 12), the government initiated a new attempt in the 1960s to bring the Malay schools under state supervision. Following the program of "educational improvement", initiated in 1961, Bangkok closed down Pattani/Malay schools if they did not switch their language of instruction to Thai and teach the national secular curriculum (Minority Rights Group International). [1961: cultural rights restriction]
- The Southern Border Provinces Administrative Center was established in 1981 for security purposes. The Center was disbanded again in 2002. The Center gave Thailand better access to the southern borders, but did not imply increased autonomy for the Pattanis (Wheeler 2010: 208).
- The 1991 Thai constitution for the first time recognized the right of minorities to teach and use their own languages. It also increased religious rights, though with some caveats (Cunningham 2014: 226; also see Minahan 2002: 1503, though Minahan wrongly pegs the constitution to 1990). [1991: cultural rights concession]
- In 2004 Bangkok imposed martial law on the three southern provinces of Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat, which, in 2005, was changed to emergency rule (Bajoria and Zissis 2008). This is not coded in line with the codebook.
- In 2005, Thailand's prime minister Thaksin installed a National Reconciliation Commission (NRC), which proposed to make Patani-Malay (Yawi) the official language in three provinces (Pattani, Narathiwat, and Yala), the establishment of a single administration for the three provinces, and the reintroduction of the Islamic law privy. However, these proposals were rejected (Chambers et al. 2019: 5).
- The government and the rebels entered into negotiations in 2011. Yet, the talks were hindered by anti-Yingluck forces in Bangkok (Yingluck was the then-president), the lack of cooperation from the army, and the fact that only one insurgent group was negotiating with the Thai state (Chambers et al. 2019: 6). Talks continued under the military regime from 2014 onwards, but no significant agreements have been reached so far (ibid.).

### Regional autonomy

- EPR codes the Patani as regionally autonomous from 1980 until 200, due to the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre (SBPAC), which was operating during that period. However, as argued above, the SBPAC did not lead to increased autonomy for the Pattanis (Wheeler 2010: 208). This is confirmed by Melvin (2007) and Human Rights Watch (2007: 16), who see the SBPAC as a means to “improving intelligence gathering and coordination among various elements of the Thai authorities and security forces.” EPR is thus overruled and the Pattanis are not coded regionally autonomous.
- The SBPAC was reestablished in 2006, but this did not lead to a meaningful increase in self-government and rather facilitated crackdowns (Joll 2010: 260). [no autonomy]

### De facto independence

NA

### Major territorial changes

NA

### EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	Malay Muslims
<i>Scenario</i>	1:1
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	Malay Muslims
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	80001000

### Power access

- We follow EPR. [1947-1979: discriminated; 1980-2001: powerless; 2002-2020: discriminated]

### Group size

- We follow EPR. [1947-2001: 0.035; 2002-2020: 0.05]

### Regional concentration

- According to Minahan (2002: 1499), the Pattanis are concentrated in Patani Raya, where they make up 68% of the population. This amounts to 2.972 million Pattanis, which is more than half of all 3.165 million Pattanis in Southeast Asia. MAR codes the Pattanis as “concentrated in one region” with more than 75% living in that region. GeoEPR also codes the Malay Muslims as regionally concentrated. [concentrated]

## Kin

- EPR codes kin group in Cambodia (Chams and Malays), Malaysia (Malays), and Indonesia (Malay). MAR and Minahan (2002: 1499) only mention the Malay in Malaysia. [kin in neighboring country]

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## **Northern Hill Tribes**

Activity: 1997-2020

### **General notes**

- The Northern Hill tribes in Thailand refer to tribes indigenous to the hills of Thailand's northern regions, such as the Karen, Hmong, Akha, H'tin, Khamu, Lahu, Lisu, Lua, Med, and Yao (Thai Freedom House). Of these, the Karen and the Hmong make up the largest population, with the Karen accounting for half of the hill tribe population. Each of the tribes maintains their own languages, religions, customs, and lifestyles, and stand in contrast physically from ethnic Thais. While the hills of northern Thailand originally were parts of Burma, China, and Laos, the territory was annexed into Thailand in 1874. The northern hill tribes, which are ethnically indigenous to the former three countries, subsequently lost their political autonomy. Altogether, there are around 1.2 million hill tribe people living in Thailand today, but only about half are registered as Thai citizens while others have trouble applying for citizenship. Despite their differences in ethnicity, "recent political activism points to the early development of a broader sense of identity" (MAR).

### **Movement start and end dates**

- The northern hill tribes have mobilized both for ideological and identity-related issues (land rights, access to education, citizenship, and cultural autonomy). Due to an increase in the tourism industry in Thailand, companies have begun developments to promote tourism in tribal areas, which disrupt the northern hill tribes' traditional lifestyles. Another key grievance remains the environmental damages resulting from deforestation and the effects of these activities on indigenous agricultural lifestyles. The government has passed several acts that declare certain forests as government land, thus allowing them to seize hill tribe land (NIPT 2010). In 2007, the government passed the Community Forest Act, which "deviated substantially from the original proposal of civil society organizations and resulted in de facto nullifying of the rights of numerous forest communities..." (NIPT 2010).
- The tribes have protested against forced evictions to make way for Thai forestry officials, and want "a clear policy on granting them permanent access to forests" (Minorities at Risk). According to Minorities at Risk, the northern hill tribes are represented by several organizations, including the Tribal Assembly of Thailand, the Inter-Mountain Peoples Education and Culture, the Assembly of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of Thailand, Karen Network for Culture and Environment (KNCE), and Hmong Association for Development in Thailand (MDT). Additionally, the Network of Indigenous Peoples in Thailand (NIPT) is "an alliance of twenty-six indigenous organizations in Thailand" that "works for the promotion of indigenous peoples' rights and issues such as identity, citizenship and natural resources management" (NIPT 2010).
- Information on the founding dates of these organizations aiding the hill tribes could not be found. The start date of the movement is coded as 1997 to coincide with the start of non-zero MAR protest scores.
- The movement is coded as ongoing, since the NIPT continues to remain active in its advocacy for hill tribe land and cultural rights (Morton and Baird 2019: 27). [start date: 1997: end date: ongoing]

### **Dominant claim**

- According to Minorities at Risk, the northern hill tribes are represented by several organizations, including the Tribal Assembly of Thailand, the Inter-Mountain Peoples Education and Culture, the Assembly of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of Thailand (AITT), the Karen Network for Culture and Environment (KNCE), and the Hmong Association for Development in Thailand



(MDT). Additionally, the Network of Indigenous Peoples in Thailand (NIPT) is “an alliance of twenty-six indigenous organizations in Thailand” that “works for the promotion of indigenous peoples’ rights and issues such as identity, citizenship and natural resources management” (NIPT 2010). The hill tribes are seeking equal civil rights and status through the granting of Thai citizenship, cultural autonomy, greater economic opportunities as well as their use of forests and land (Cross Cultural Foundation). [1997-2020: autonomy claim]

### **Independence claims**

NA

### **Irredentist claims**

NA

### **Claimed territory**

- The Northern Hill Tribes have sought to improve their land rights and political autonomy in Thailand, but it is not clear to what territory these claims are tied. We therefore flag this territorial claim as ambiguous and code it based on the group’s ethnic settlement area as indicated by the GeoEPR dataset, which offers the best approximation in this case.

### **Sovereignty declarations**

NA

### **Separatist armed conflict**

- According to Minorities at Risk, the hill tribes were involved in the Thai insurgency in the mid-1950s, but this insurgency was based on ideological goals. Subsequent protests did not lead to casualties, and thus the movement is coded NVIOLSD. [NVIOLSD]

### **Historical context**

- The hills of northern Thailand originally were part of Burma, China, and Laos. The territory was annexed into Thailand in 1874. The northern hill tribes subsequently lost their political autonomy.
- The Hmong drew the most amount of attention from the central government prior to movement onset, as they were reportedly involved in anticommunist insurgencies, produced opium, and utilized swidden or shifting agriculture, which was viewed as environmentally unsound. Hmong involvement in the Communist Party of Thailand insurgency in the 1960s and 1970s led to military actions in tribal regions along with the enactment of policies designed to assimilate the northern hill tribes (Minorities at Risk Project).
- In the 1990s Thailand had increasingly assimilationist policies towards the Northern Hill Tribes (Minorities at Risk Project). The origin of these assimilationist policies is in 1982, when the “Committee for the Solution of National Security Problems involving Hill Tribes and the Cultivation of Narcotic Crops” was established to implement and coordinate policies aimed at indigenous peoples, including the Master Plans for Development of Highland Populations, Environment and Control of Narcotic Crops and the National Economic and Social Development Plans. The objectives of these policies, which are still in use today, include the integration of the indigenous peoples into Thai society, requiring the reorganization of their way of life

accordingly, the elimination of opium cultivation and consumption, the reduction of population growth and improvement of living standards (Cross Cultural Foundation).

### **Concessions and restrictions**

- Over half of the tribal population has not been able to obtain Thai citizenship. As a consequence, their legal status varies between "naturalized," "alien," and "illegal", and they lack the possibility to obtain basic social services such as education, health or systematic skill development. Many cannot vote, have jobs in the civil service, or purchase land. Their movement within the country is restricted. In 2000, the government created a new citizenship category for hill tribals and eased the evidence requirements. According to the Minority at Risk Project, this is expected “to allow a number of tribal members to obtain citizenship.” This act does not concern the autonomy of the hill tribes but is captured by the variable that measures access to state power and discrimination. This act is thus not coded.
- In 2007, the government passed the Community Forest Act, which “deviated substantially from the original proposal of civil society organizations as many provisions de facto abolish the rights of numerous forest communities” [to holding land] (NIPT 2010: 4). The effect of the act on the autonomy of the hill tribes is rather vague, thus we refrain from coding a restriction.

### **Regional autonomy**

NA

### **De facto independence**

NA

### **Major territorial changes**

NA

### **EPR2SDM**

<i>Movement</i>	Northern Hill Tribes
<i>Scenario</i>	No match/1:1
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	Hill Tribes
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	80005000

### **Power access**

- EPR codes the Hill Tribes as powerless from 2000 onwards; it does not include the group before that year but we found no evidence suggesting that their level of representation in the central government would have changed. [1997-2020: powerless]

### **Group size**

- We follow EPR. [0.01]

## Regional concentration

- EPR suggests that the Northern Hill Tribes make up approx. 1% of Thailand's population (65 million in 2010), which amounts to approx. 650,000. Other sources suggest similar (if slightly higher) numbers. The Northern Hill Tribes form an absolute majority in the Mae Hong Son province, where they make up 63% out of 248,000 people, thus 156,000. Adjacent provinces with hill tribal populations are the Tak province (25% out of 540,000, thus 135,000), the Chiang Mai province (13% out of 1,678,000, thus 218,000) and the Chiang Rai province (13% out of 1,208,000, thus 157,000). The total number of Hill Tribals in all four named provinces is 666,000 (so even more than the EPR estimate – note that group size estimates vary, but this suggests that most Northern Hill Tribals reside in these four provinces). Evidently the Hill Tribals do not form a majority across all four provinces. If the province with the highest share is added (Tak), we get a territory that hosts approx. 37-45% of all Hill Tribals, and they make up approx. 36% of the local population. Yet the GeoEPR settlement polygon suggests that the Northern Hill Tribes settle predominantly in the Mae Hong Son province, adjacent northern parts of Tak province, and adjacent western parts of Chiang Mai. MAR V also codes the Hill Tribes as “concentrated in one region” with between 75% and 100% living in that region. It is thus very difficult to tell whether there is a territory that fulfills the threshold or not. We code them as regionally concentrated. According to the World Directory of Minorities, they prefer to live at higher and cooler elevations to retain some degree of isolation and distinctiveness. We thus assume that most Tribals in Chiang Mai and Tak province live in adjacent areas in the Thanon Thong Chai Range (65-78% of the Hill Tribals live in the two provinces plus Mae Hong Son). [concentrated]

## Kin

- EPR codes kin group in China (Miao), Laos (Hmong), and Vietnam (Hmong). MAR codes the Karen in Burma (Karens constitute one of the groups forming part of the umbrella group “Northern Hill Tribes”) and the Hill Tribes in Laos as the largest kin groups. [kin in neighboring country]

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