

## Thailand: US Sides With Increasingly Violent, Desperate Regime

US State Department condemns protests against sham election, but ignores assassination and thuggery aimed at opposition.

By [Tony Cartalucci](#)

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The US State Department openly sided with Thaksin Shinawatra and his proxy regime, and backed their planned [one-party sham elections](#) being carried out in a climate of political intimidation, terrorism, assassinations, and [a draconian “emergency decree”](#) in a statement released after protests disrupted polls across the country Sunday.

The [US State Department’s statement](#) read:

The United States is deeply troubled by efforts to block polls and otherwise prevent voting in Thailand, and by the most recent acts of political violence. While we do not take sides in the political dispute and strongly support freedom of expression and the right to peaceful protest, preventing citizens from voting violates their universal rights and is inconsistent with democratic values.

We reiterate our call for all sides to refrain from violence, exercise restraint, and commit to sincere dialogue to resolve political differences peacefully and democratically.

Video: The brazen assassination of [anti-Thaksin protest leader Suthin Taratin](#) in broad daylight last Sunday appears to be ok with the United States and all part of “democratic values” it promotes globally.

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The United States does not, however, seem deeply troubled by the [broad daylight assassination](#) that took place the same day of a core protest leader, or the savagery of the regime’s “red shirts” who [had threatened to employ armed violence](#) against any who opposed up coming sham elections – and then promptly did so the very next day.

Additionally, the US fails to feel deeply troubled over how “democratic values” have been blatantly abused to dress up an overt dictatorship run, by the ruling party’s own admission, by accused mass murderer, convicted criminal and fugitive Thaksin Shinawatra. Thaksin Shinawatra was neither on the ballot in 2011, nor even in the country, yet openly runs the

party through his nepotist appointed sister, Yingluck Shinawatra. Both [Forbes](#) and the [New York Times](#) published direct quotes from the ruling party's leadership inside of Thailand, and from Thaksin Shinawatra himself, declaring that he was ruling the country remotely.

# Out of his country, but not out of power

**BANGKOK**

## Exiled former premier helps run Thailand using Skype and social media

BY THOMAS FULLER

Millions of people across the globe have cut the tethers to their offices and enjoy working from wherever they want. But the political party governing Thailand has taken the idea of telecommuting into an altogether different realm.

For the past year and a half, by the party's own admission, the most important political decisions in this country of 65 million people have been made from abroad, by a former prime minister who has not set foot in the country since 2008.

Thaksin Shinawatra circles the globe in his private jet, chatting with ministers over his dozen cellphones, texting over various social media platforms and reading documents e-mailed to him from bureaucrats, party officials say.

It might be described as rule by Skype. Or governance by instant messenger.

Mr. Thaksin was removed from power in a military coup six and a half years ago and remains in exile because of a conviction for abuse of power, a highly politicized case initiated by the

coup makers. But that has not stopped him from helping run Thailand — by remote control.

Officially, his sister, Yingluck Shinawatra, is prime minister (he nominated her for the job in 2011). But from his homes in Dubai and London, from the gold mines he owns in Africa and during regular visits to nearby Asian countries, Mr. Thaksin, 63, has harnessed the Internet and mobile technology to create one of the most unusual and innovative ways of governing a country.

"We can contact him at all hours," said Charupong Ruangsuwan, the interior minister and secretary general of Mr. Thaksin's Pheu Thai Party. "The world has changed. It's a boundless world. It's not like a hundred years ago when you had to use a telegraph."

To illustrate the point during an interview, Mr. Charupong took out his iPhone and scrolled through the list of Mr. Thaksin's phone numbers (Mr. Thaksin gives different numbers to different people, often depending on seniority).

"If we've got any problem, we give him a call," Mr. Charupong said.

The day-to-day governance of the country is carried out by Ms. Yingluck, who is genial, photogenic and 18 years younger than Mr. Thaksin. She cuts the ribbons and makes the speeches.

Ms. Yingluck has on occasion sought to play down her brother's role. Soon after taking office, when Mr. Thaksin joined the weekly cabinet meeting via Skype, reporters asked who was really the head of the government. Ms. Yingluck insisted that she was in charge and said that Mr. Thaksin had joined the discussion to offer "moral support."

But if there is one thing that allies and enemies of Mr. Thaksin agree on, it is that he is the one making the big decisions.

"He's the one who formulates the Pheu Thai policies," said Noppadon Pattama, a senior party official who also serves as Mr. Thaksin's personal lawyer. "Almost all the policies put forward during the last election came from him."

Sondhi Limthongkul, a leader of the "yellow shirt" movement that has taken to the streets many times to



JUMANA EL HELLOO/REUTERS

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Image: [The New York Times openly admits](#) that Thailand is currently run by unelected convicted criminal/fugitive Thaksin Shinawatra. Clearly any proxy government or elections in which it participates in are illegitimate by both Thai and international standards. [Thaksin's foreign ties](#) are what have afforded him impunity regarding an otherwise cartoonish, 3rd world dictatorship.

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There is no question that an accused mass murderer and convicted criminal hiding abroad from a 2 year jail sentence, multiple arrest warrants, and a long list of pending court cases, is illegally running Thailand by proxy. Being unelected, Thaksin Shinawatra is by all accounts a dictator, and his "government" a regime, [however cleverly they try to dress it up](#).

Blocking polls that seek to give this criminal regime a new mandate, in this context, not only seems reasonable, but absolutely necessary to break Thaksin Shinawatra's grip on power. Protesters have been in the streets for months now, and are in week 3 of their "[Occupy Bangkok](#)" campaign.

The US State Department and legions of Western journalists have also failed to condemn other regime-sanctioned thuggery that has been ongoing throughout the recent political crisis. The regime's "red shirts," in addition to using armed violence against protesters, have now turned their threats and intimidation toward farmers who had recently begun blocking roads after being cheated for nearly half a year from promised rice subsidies that have evaporated in the midst of [a corrupt and bankrupted vote-buying scam](#).



Image: Rice farmers in Phitsanulok province were threatened by regime “red shirts” to end their protest. Often cited [by the Western media in their “class divide” narrative](#), it is now clear the nation’s farmers were simply used to get Thaksin Shinawtra back into power, and that the violence and intimidation usually reserved for his political opponents is now being turned on them in the wake of being cheated by his vote-buying rice subsidy scam. Rice farmers have already turned in their rice, but have not been paid for it for almost half a year. (Photo by Chinnawat Singha)

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In Bangkok Post’s article, [“Farmers end protest in Phitsanulok,”](#) it states:

In an emotional address to protesters, Mr Chatree said both local red-shirts and community leaders tried to pressure him to end the protest, on orders from high-level officials.

The red-shirts threatened to hurt his family if he continued to lead the rally seeking money for unpaid farmers including for himself, he said.

The Bangkok Post would also report:

Several tearful farmers shouted angrily that they had no money to buy food or to send their children to school because the government has failed to pay them for rice sold under its subsidy scheme. They said the situation had also forced them to borrow money from loan sharks.

Rice farmers on Tuesday agreed to end their rally at the Indochina intersection in Muang district after a two-day protest demanding the caretaker government pay them for crops pledged under the government’s subsidy scheme.

Several tearful farmers shouted angrily that they had no money to buy food or to send their children to school because the government has failed to pay them for rice sold under its subsidy scheme. They said the situation had also forced them to borrow money from loan sharks.

If not for [the US' deep investment in Thaksin Shinawatra and his political machine](#), it would be otherwise inexplicable as to why the West so adamantly supports such unjust, violent, and festering despotism. That rice farmers were promised subsidies for their votes in 2011, cheated, left unpaid, and now intimidated from voicing their concerns, especially on the eve of elections, is a feature of dictatorship, not democracy.

While the US has no problems condemning elections it claims are “shams” or for “show,” such as in [Saddam's Iraq](#), or [Kim Jong Ill's North Korea](#), it clearly does so not based on “democratic values,” but on the targeted regime's utility in advancing [the corporate-financier interests](#) that dominate the West.

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