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# **Fight to Win**

**A conversation with Thalugaz**

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***Are you just in the Din Deng area or other places also?***

In fact, there are many groups that are fighting like ours. But on behalf of Thalugaz, we are like a group that keeps communicating and connecting with other groups including disseminating the fight news to society.

Most of the demonstrations in Thailand took place in Bangkok. because this country is a centralized state. And every coup in Thailand the army only captures Bangkok. That's the equivalent of seizing the whole country. In other provinces, there are anti-government protesters as well. but with severe arrest threats. This allowed them to show little resistance. There are separatist groups in the southern region or the three border provinces. But the state is more interested in cracking down on student protests than it really cares about armed groups.

We also have an alliance called Neo Lanna. Lanna is the name of an ethnic group whose territory was formerly colonized and annexed by Siam. There are other ethnic groups that have been occupied by Siam in the past and are trying to assimilate their culture, such as Patani, Muslims, and by saying liberation of Patani in Thailand you may be arrested by the security forces and the military. I understand that anarchism is a struggle against the state and its power. We fight hierarchy, Lanna and Patani may have been states in the past. But nowadays I think fighting for Lanna and Patani or something similar. We are not fighting to establish another state. But we fight to free the people. from the domination and oppression of the Thai state.

***I have heard of such groups in Isaan and Pattani for example, but I don't know of other regions. Why do you think the state is more focused on student protests than armed groups?***

Student protesters are talking about the monarchy on the other side. And that's something that has never happened in Thailand before. Society is increasingly questioning the monarchy, and of course, the monarchy in Thailand has political influence. We are not just fighting the government. But we're also fighting the network monarchy. The government is just their piece. They also have an army and monopoly capitalists behind them. What the students were fighting was what they were afraid of. The reduction of the monarchy. And in 2016 after Bhumibol's death there was a witch hunt who did not mourn him or wore black to show respect. It's fascist. Student protests are the main ones fighting the monarchy, and suppressing them was not difficult. They fight with open faces and names. They have leaders and that makes the state just get rid of the people who lead. The problem in the three provinces is just a problem in a small area, unlike the current anti-monarchy that has been taking place throughout Thailand, and can cause them to lose political leadership.

*These students are really brave, protesting with in the open. I remember that in the recent Hong Kong revolution some protestors also did this when they felt like they had nothing to lose. You make a good point about the network monarchy. But the government and the monarchy and the military are all connected, even if they have complicated relationships with each other. For Thalugaz, is there a particular aspect that you are fighting? Or do the police kind of represent all at once?*

What we do is not complicated. If government officials or right-wing extremists use violence against protesters or those who oppose the government/monarchy, We just responded back. I consider it self-defense. We are not a big group. When we were first born, we were just a group of people who thought “We can’t allow the state to use violence against us unilaterally.” At the time, mainstream rallies were still upheld by peaceful means. And of course, our actions were subjected to many insults from the society at that time. But we don’t care. Because I think the peaceful means they use is don’t the peaceful means I know. The funny thing is the use of flare smoke stick one was once considered a violent method. We call it a middle-class protest. They want change but they didn’t want the unrest caused by the rallies. You can see that most of the rallies in Thailand are stage. It’s more like a carnival than an angry protest.

*Yes, I have seen elsewhere protests that claim to be nonviolent but quite violent enforce this “nonviolence,” sometimes they will even hand people over to the cops if they are being disruptive. What is the situation like in DinDeng at the moment? There were a lot of clashes earlier this year.*

In Thailand, our society is slowly being oppressed by dictatorship. It’s like raising a fever. Dictators want you to look sick and have no strength to fight. But it doesn’t make it close to death until it has the last strength left to fight. This kind of system has brainwashed people not to compare what is now with other better countries. But let’s pretend that the country is already good. by comparison with inferior countries. And the above is the reason why Thai society is stuck with the word “violent” or “non-violent” because people don’t know how to fight to win. There is no clash in Din Daeng now. The government suppressed and harassed all protesters. They will even try to intervene before any political activity begins. Previously, anti-government protesters were often charged with violating the COVID-19 Emergency Decree. but on the other hand There are many events or music events. where more people than gatherings but did not get hit by any lawsuits.

*I see. And what does it mean to win? Is it a society with no police, no state, no monarchy? What does that look like in a Thai context?*

You may see the existence of the monarchy in Europe. But that they try to adapt to the times. such as reducing the budget but in Thailand it is not so. Our monarchy spends \$1 billion a year. while there are still people who are starving There is also a disparity.

This is an arch in honor of his majesty the king that can be seen in every province. It use less and costs no less than 300,000 \$, but if Thai people question this. You could be arrested under section 112. If asked what we want about monarchy, We only need reform of the monarchy. The budget must be verifiable. The king must not interfere in politics. But they didn't listen to our voices. Instead, they made us want to overthrow the monarchy. Almost all groups protested against the government. We have a common stance that is 1. This government must resign 2. Draft a new constitution 3. Reform the monarchy. But for me our manifestation as anarchist is to symbolize our opposition to state power now. that it's not fair. And our actions are in itself the answer that we are against state power. We clash with the police, burn the police cars, burn the king's image.

***Cool! Let's chat more about the anarchist leaning. Do most or all members of Thalugaz consider themselves anarchist?***

We have two names "thalugas" and "thalugaz" meaning breaking through tear gas. The first name is the name given to other groups that fight like us. But the second name is our name. We intend to add Z so that this term is not a duplicate of the term coined by the Royal Society of Thailand, is the one who formulated the words. It is indirectly anti-state. Most people do not know much about political theory. Except for me and the people who formed this group. And for me, we are first against the monopoly of state violence. But even though most of the people who fight like us don't know many political theories. But their way of fighting was concrete. It means in itself that shooting fireworks at the police is against state power. It's a symbol of resistance.

***I did not realize that there was a separate group called Thalugas. When you say that the Royal Society of Thailand coined the name Thalugas, do you mean that some academics were describing a bigger movement or group that did not have a name?***

The Thai state decreed the word "gas", but the name of my group is "gaz." In protests at Din Daeng, The media and society call the demonstrators an independent mass or Thalugas. But we have more sub-groups. And but we don't have a chain of command. Everyone just came together and responded to the state violence. Unlike other groups such as student protesters. They have a command system and hierarchical position and must listen to the person above. But not for us, you can do anything because I believe in free will.

***Very cool. Do you have any anarchist inspiration, like thinkers or groups or others? Are the groups that you collaborate or organise with?***

Peter Kropotkin and Emma Goldman, for example. From observing the movement our group or Thalugas is the most obvious group in action. There are many other political groups with anarchist ideology. But they tend to focus only on theory.

***The link between theory and praxis is very hard to maintain. Most tend to focus on one and sacrifice the other, when it's so important that they inform each other. Do you find this hard to balance also?***

It is true that people cannot balance these two things. theory and practice And in Thailand, left-wing activists tend to focus on theory. But they neglected the practice. They have a utopian idea that people in society must all think like him, but it's not. This is the real world. I didn't expect to be able to overthrow the state. I didn't expect anything like that. Once, a battle like ours was undervalued and insulted by even the same side. from people who fighting with peaceful means. But today it has changed, People are starting to accept our approach. It is justified in and of itself. Responding to state violence is possible. when the state has always monopolized violence. What we do is destroy that righteousness. The false righteousness they use to suppress those who oppose. Understanding psychology is important. When the variables of change are people. We must understand people's thoughts.