

## **No IS In Thailand, Says Thai NSC Chief**

**Bernama**

**Nov 17, 2015**

**By Minggu Simon Lhasa**

BANGKOK, Nov 17 (Bernama) -- Thailand has no Islamic States (IS) branch based on the intelligence and information obtained by the country's security agencies.

All relevant security agencies have closely followed up on the news information which could affect Thailand's security, and they also monitored the news including reports that Malaysian terrorists planned to set up an official branch of IS in Southeast Asia, said General Thawip Netniyom, the secretary general of Thai's National Security Council (NSC).

He said there are six terrorism groups in the region, the three major ones are Abu Sayyaf, Jemaah Islamiyah and Al Qaeda.

They are not likely to have much support currently, and so the groups have tried to seek the tool to recruit members and supporters including trying to get a tie-up with IS, he said, adding that there is a movement in the region at the moment.

"We have monitored the situation and found that there are different ideas among the groups in this region (violent groups in Southeast Asia) on planning to set an official branch of IS or which groups are establishing it," he said at a press conference here today.

"We will be closely watching on the situation (on what's their next plan)," he said.

He said Thailand has always exchanged intelligence information on the terrorist groups with neighboring countries, such as members of those groups who have entered or exited Thailand.

As for the separatist groups operating in the provinces of Thai southern borders, he said there are no indications that they tried to link-up with IS, adding that Thai authorities are monitoring them at the moment.

The insurgents in the southern border of Thailand don't have the same beliefs as IS, therefore they have different objectives, he said.

Asked about solutions to the problem in the south, he said the best method to resolve the problem is to support the peace talks because the peace talk is a more sustainable solution than other methods.

Now the peace talk is in the process of "building a mutual trust" between the government side and the separatist groups, he said.

When a reporter pointed to the lack of progress in peace talks, he said negotiation is a method which has to be done gradually.

"We cannot accelerate it to what we want it to be, but it is the best way to bring back sustainable peace (to the conflict areas)," he added.

-- BERNAMA

Copyright © 2015 BERNAMA

<http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/newsindex.php?id=1190538>