

Thai PM Prayuth Orders Stepping Up Of Security in South
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BANGKOK, March 14 (Bernama) -- Thai Prime Minister Gen. Prayuth Chan-o-cha has ordered security at the volatile southern provinces to be stepped up following coordinated attacks by militants in Narathiwat Sunday.

Government spokesman Col. Sansern Kaewkamnerd said, the Prime Minister wanted authorities to increase measures to safeguard the security of the people especially in crowded areas and car parks.

"The Prime Minister instructed the security forces to arrest suspects quickly and for medical units to take care of the people in need," he said in a statement issued today in response to militants attack in and around Narathiwat.

A group of 10 militants armed with assault rifles and grenade launchers stormed the Jok Irong District Hospital to attack the Thailand Ranger outpost nearby, injuring seven security personnel including three seriously.

The hour-long gun battle at the hospital was over when the gunmen slipped away undetected.

Several shooting incidents and bomb blasts were also reported yesterday around Narathiwat with security forces suspecting the violence was to commemorate with the establishment of the Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) on March 13, 1960.

Deputy Commander for 4th Army Mej.Gen Shinawat Maendech who inspected the affected areas in Jok Irong today said, the coordinated attacks on the district hospital yesterday was carried out by 40 to 50 militants.

The militants he said were under orders from their commanders identified as Lukman Leteefbering and Sadee Putih, who are known to be active in Jok Irong and Sungai Padi areas.

The army according to Shinawat, had dispatched more than 500 personnel to the mountainous areas of Jok Irong and Chanae in an effort to pursue the perpetrators after yesterday's daring attacks.

Meanwhile, the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand in a statement today condemned the action by the militants in using the district hospital to attack the military outpost nearby.

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