

ABSTRACT

Conflicts in the southern provinces of Pattani, Narathiwat and Yala, adjacent to the border with Malaysia, reemerged in January 2004. Since then, bombings and assassinations have been almost daily occurrences. Many civilians and officials have become victims of these surges of violence. News reports about these southern conflicts have been published and broadcasted locally and worldwide. Fueled by the issue of transnational terrorism, which is often associated with violence against group(s) with different religions or sects, most media view the southern conflicts as resulted from a religiously separatist struggle of Muslim Malays. However, the southern conflicts have more aspects than that. The conflicts' root causes can be identified not only with religion, but also with ethnicity. This article investigates the conflicts with more emphasis on ethnicity as a major cause. Its main analysis is that the conflicts have been based on the ethnic conflicts between the ethnic Malay population as a minority and Thai population as the majority. The article will therefore be shaped by the conceptual frameworks of ethnicity, globalization and transnationalism.