

Abstract

The objectives of this research were to study the way of living under the uncertain and violent situation of lay Buddhists in the three southernmost provinces of Thailand and to propose a way how to ameliorate the situation for the good of the people.

Samples of interviews consisted of gathering facts from 7 Buddhist monks and 12 lay Buddhists in Khokpho District Pattani Province. These data were collected through in-depth interviews and descriptive interpretive analysis was used for analyzing data.

The uncertain and violent situation to lay Buddhists in Khokpho District Pattani province brings about a decrease income of lay Buddhists because of their inability to earn a living and reduces contact in the relationship between Thai Buddhists and Thai Muslims because of mutual suspiciousness and misconceptions.

The findings indicated that the effects of uncertain and violent situation must be analyzed in 4 aspects as follows:

1. Religious rites: Lay Buddhists cannot provide for practicing their religious activities such as alms giving, chanting, and participation in Buddhist Holyday ceremonies. The timetable of religious activities is changed, and as a result, the number of participants of activities is decreased.

2. Religious persons: Number of lay Buddhists who want to be ordained as monks and novices is gradually decreasing and the number of lay Buddhists is receding as well.

3. Religious constructions: Even though Religious buildings are not being destroyed, there is no money being donated to renovate them because of a decrease of donations.

4. Religious teachings: Studying and practicing Buddha's teachings are of interest to a lesser number of lay Buddhists because of their general fears. Although in

some areas there are a great numbers of lay Buddhists who are learning and following the teachings.

Concerning the way of living, the government needs to support and train lay Buddhists by adding new occupations so they earn money and to give them security and support regarding religious activities. The Thai Sangha, lay Buddhists and government must support all religious activities and encourage participation of all.