

Table 1

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Group	Likelihood	Pros	Cons
International - Hezbollah	Very Low	Hezbollah has targeted Bangkok before, most recently in 2013 a bomb went off in their safe house. Small cell of Iranians was arrested, several got away. The Erawan IED was fairly sophisticated but well within their technical capacity. Mass casualty. Hindu/Buddhist shrine. Civilians & non-Muslims as victims.	Hezbollah is activated by Iran when they need a diversion or international pressure. Those conditions do not exist right now. Iran has every incentive to be very moderate. Hezbollah operations have for the most part targeted Israeli interests (attempt on the embassy, El Al counter, Chabad house near Khao San Rd).
International - JI	Very Low	Ji targeted Bangkok in 2003, but could not pull it off. Fairly sophisticated IED has been within their technical capacity in the past. Mass casualty. Hindu/Buddhist shrine. Civilians & non-Muslims as victims.	Ji has no organizational capacity to launch such an attack. Ji is nothing more than a group of competing splinter cells, with little in the way of operational capacity. Why Bangkok and not Jakarta, KL or somewhere where they have a deeper base of support? Why has no one - especially Al Qaeda - claimed responsibility?
International - IS	Moderate-High	The scale and pattern do suggest international involvement. IS has plenty of people in BK who live in the shadows that it could draw on, or who might have been radicalized online, which is how many of the Malaysians have been radicalized & joined IS, not via traditional Ji networks. Roughly 600 SEAsians in Iraq & Syria with IS, and have formed their own company of fighters, Katibah Nusantara. IS members in Malaysia have come very close to perpetrating attacks in KL twice in the past year. Though no known Thai nationals in the company, if they were there, they would self-identify as Malay, not Thais. Ditto for IS propaganda which would identify them as Malays. IS may have paid attention to Thailand's refoulement of Uighurs in July 2015. Fairly sophisticated IED and certainly within their technical capacity. Mass casualty. Hindu/Buddhist shrine. Civilians & non-Muslims as victims. Still photo from CCTV: arm bands possibly covering tattoos, indicating recent radicalization.	IS is not known to have operated cells in Thailand, including in the Deep South. Thailand hasn't joined the most recent international coalition in Iraq/Syria and has maintained a fairly low profile in the Middle East. IS' slick media machine would claim responsibility or propagandize the attack. Why Thailand now?
International - Uighur	Low	Thailand forcibly returned 109 Uighurs to China. It got some play in international jihadist circles, but not a ton. Some Uighurs have been trying to establish international links, such as with IS and MIT in Indonesia. 4 Uighurs were recently convicted of trying to join MIT, which pledged <i>ba'ayat</i> to IS. Uighurs do have a legitimate grievance against the junta. And there is clearly growing radicalization amongst them.	I just don't buy China's assertion that it was Uighurs; it was too convenient for Beijing, whose media was way too quick to make that assertion. I can't imagine that the global network or cell structure of Uighurs is that that large and sophisticated. I know of no attacks by Uighurs outside of China. Their grievance is really with China, and no one else. An attack like that would lose all public or international sympathy, which tends to be very sympathetic to their plight of the Uighurs.
Domestic-Red Shirts	Moderate	They would be discrediting the regime in the heart of Bangkok. And if the military government can't provide security, what else can it do? If it was them, the non-claim of responsibility makes a lot of sense. It is devastating the already fragile economy (weak exports, weak tourism, declining baht). If you wanted to hurt the junta, this would do it.	Attacks to date have been pretty small scale and amateurish. A hand grenade at the criminal court, etc. Symbolic hits at the junta. (Siam Paragon bombing? though I am not unconvinced that wasn't the junta). They've never engaged in mass casualty attacks before. And them hitting a Hindu/Buddhist religious shrine seems highly improbable to me. The junta is already losing its base of support people even people who supported its overthrow of Yingluck are angry by its economic incompetence and unworkable constitution. Only a core group of diehard monarchists support them right now. So what would red shirts stand to gain? Highly counterproductive to their cause. This just gives junta and their supporters greater cause to crack down and cling to power.
Domestic-Southern Insurgents	Moderate-High	Fairly sophisticated IED. Mass casualty. Hindu/Buddhist shrine. Civilians & non-Muslims as victims. Have increasingly been going out of area: Phuket (12/2013) Samui (4/2015). The former was intentionally not detonated. They engage in mass casualty attacks all the time. IED type is well within their capacity. Though government says that the IED type is not in their arsenal, not quite true. They do use high explosives when they can procure it. Most of their IEDs are ammonium nitrate based out of expediency: it and cooking gas containers are readily available and easy to procure/steal. There is palpable frustration with the peace process/lack of government will, esp with military hold on power extended to 2017. It could be a group of rogue southerners, operating outside the chain of command because they're frustrated at the pace, scope and accomplishments of the insurgency after 12 years. They know they have to escalate violence or else the junta will never negotiate in a serious manner. This was the case with Hat Yai bombing in March 2013 and probably Koh Samui in April 2015. Though not part of IS in any way, they have watched IS' success while their movement has plateaued. They may feel that IS has been able to succeed because they are more violent. The April 2015 attack in Samui did not get the negative economic impact that they had hoped for. There is definitely a growing group of Pattani youth who are, if nothing else, drawn to IS slick media campaign, esp as the local insurgents have none whatsoever. It was devastating the already fragile economy (weak exports, weak tourism, declining baht). If you wanted to hurt the junta, this would do it.	Don and I were I specifically asked insurgents I interviewed in February 2015 about targeting Bangkok or other tourist venues. One fairly senior BRN-C guy told me that they think about it and have debated the merits of such attacks but always considered it to be counterproductive to the cause. The security forces would be completely unleashed with broad popular support (Thais are very prejudiced against the Malay Muslims), leading to the arrest or killing of much of the network. Moreover it would lose the movement what little international support or sympathy it enjoys. interviewing insurgents back in February and we asked them specifically about hitting Bangkok or other tourist venues. One fairly senior BRN-C guy told us that they think about it and I've debated the merits of such attacks but always considered it to be counterproductive to the cause. The security forces would be completely unleashed with broad popular support (Thais are very prejudiced against the Malay Muslims), leading to the arrest or killing of much of the network. Moreover it would lose the movement what little international support or sympathy it enjoys.