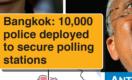
## **Controversial Thailand election goes ahead**

Thailand's embattled government is pushing ahead with a general election despite threats of continued violent protests and fears that the result will only deepen the country's bitter political divide

## GOVERNMENT

- Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra: Sister of ousted former premier *Thaksin Shinawatra*, who lives in self-imposed exile
- Yingluck, who led *Pheu Thai* party to power in 2011, called snap election in December in attempt to break political deadlock gripping Bangkok



125 miles

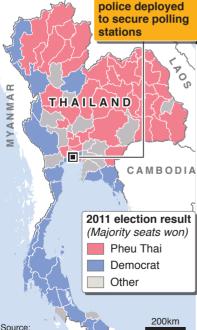


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## **ANTI-THAKSIN FORCES**

- Protesters: Led by former MP Suthep Thaugsuban (left).
  Demonstrations began in November after government attempts to pass amnesty bill which critics say could allow Thaksin to return without serving time in jail
- Suthep and *Democrat Party* main opposition led by former prime minister *Abhisit Vejjajiva* (right) say Yingluck is a puppet of Thaksin, whom they accuse of corruption
- Protesters vowing to disrupt polls as part of attempt to topple government. Democrat Party boycotting election
- Conflict broadly pits Bangkok's urban elite against mostly rural, much larger voting block made up of "red shirt" supporters of Thaksin

Pictures: Getty Images



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