



Concept of the Day

“Soldiers everywhere”

I visited Singapore Army museum last month. One of so many catchy items was a big painting depicting a bird eye view of dense and high rise living apartments. Each of which was fully stuck with long rods holding “flags of laundry”. As I observed, there must be pieces of *military uniform* hanging along with others in almost every single apartment.

The **meaning** was that there are members of Singapore Armed Forces *everywhere*. The **concept** was simple: soldiers are an integral part of Singaporean citizenship, and vice versa. Yet, from the level of family, all the way up to national level, they all live the same Singaporean *way of lives* and share the same *belief, values* and *culture*.

In Thailand, when trying to get soldiers close to the people, to share and bear difficulties and hardships with them, that would be seen as something quite unusual. Some soldiers are often treated with cold- welcoming, and worse still, some faced with social skepticism or even resistances. This is my question: why are soldiers perceived by people of same motherland as if they were **aliens**?

Thai soldiers used to be, but are not **everywhere**. It is neither to say that-there must be a military barrack in every district, nor to put a soldier into every village. What I intend to say is we-soldiers are *politically* away from **where** the people are, and vice versa. That's why we're seen as aliens to the people. So let's reorient correctly and lead them to "true democracy".

Colonel Sutat Jarumanee