

Thai-language newspapers – January 2, 2005

January 2, 2005

Categories: Thai Media Project

Matichon

– January 2, 2005

* There are lot of countries that help with relief and protection for the tsunami which is a record at 80,000 million baht. Especially Japan which gives 500 million dollars. Meanwhile, Ache people believe that the heavy rain after the earthquake helps them wash and clean away their nightmare.

* On January 1, Sihanuhok, the former king of Cambodia, reveals on his website that he feels deep grief about the many victims who lose lives and assets from the tsunami. He also devote 600,000 baht. He revealed that one fortune teller warned him to survive the big disaster by doing a ritual to get rid of bad luck that make his country not to face the disaster.

* On

January 2, 2005, Mr. Sompit Hannarong, the district officer of Langoo, Satoon Province was informed from the villagers that there is water bubbling up in a deserted field. People panic and are afraid that it is an effect from the tsunami because it never happened before.

* Mr. Somsak Ismanyee, the vice president of the Nature and Environment Preservation Club says that the tsunami shows that we could not trust the disaster under the sea. The club is now worried about the [motorway project to the south that splits the Thai gulf](#), the Mahachai–Lham Phakbia which not only effects the economy and fishermen, but it can also be a disaster in the middle of the sea if a tsunami happened.

Thairath

– January 2, 2005

* Wat Nikornwararam or Wat Yanyao in Takuapa, Pangnga is where dead bodies of tsunami victims are being kept. Ten monks (out of 20 in the temple) are afraid of the ghost of victims so they move to other places. The remaining monks work very hard praying and performing rites for the dead bodies everyday.

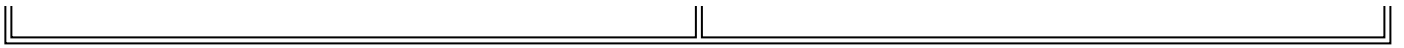
* The eight constitutional judges that ruled P.M. Thaksin did not intend to hide his assets, face lots of condemnation. Mr. Jumpon Na Songkhla, the judiciary of Constitutional Court, said they got anonymous letters with the rude words and recently he got a New Year greeting card with the toilet paper including feces.

* At

2:00am on January 2 at the Yothin Hotel near Sapankwai interjection, police found the dead body of a 35-year-old died in bed. Her throat is sore and her eyes looked frightened. After investigation, the police said she may have been killed or her heart failed.

* **Bloody news** –

This New Year, cruel accidents claim up to 290 dead bodies with 5,000 injured. On January 1, 2005, the province with the most dead are Lampoon and then Trang and then Chiangmai. The leading cause is riding a motorcycle without helmet and the second reason is drunk driving.



Thaksin's 'bitter medicine'

January 2, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

Thaksin's 'bitter medicine'

– translated and summarized from [*Thairath*](#),

January 2, 2005

There are many critics of Premier Thaksin who gave him several doses of bitter medicine in 2004:

- 1) Ajarn Theerayut Boonmee – regular bitter doses – with the most better taste of all
- 2) Banyat Banthathan – regular better dose with punches from the Democrat Party
- 3) Dr. Ammar Siamwala – regular doses – bitter to the last drop
- 4) Dr. Sumet Tantiwetchakul – bitter dose from the Heavens
- 5) Anand Panyarachun – the bitter dose which Premier Thaksin has to take without hesitation
- 6) Chamlong Srimuang – a bitter dose from a close friend
- 7) Dr. Prawet Wasee – bittersweet medicine
- 8) Dr. Kasem Watthanachai – bitter dose from another close friend mixed with a bitter dose from the Heavens

2B newsfeed: Tsunami in Thailand – January 1-3, 2005

January 3, 2005

Categories: 2004 Tsunami

Times are Bangkok time – GMT+7. A thread about the situation is on the [forum](#).

Newest news is at the top of the page. The oldest news is at the bottom.

2B newsfeed: [About the 2B newsfeed](#) – [January 3](#) – [January 2](#) – [January 1](#) – [December 31](#) – [December 30](#) – [December 29](#) – [December 28](#) – [December 27](#) – [December 26](#)



January 3

What's in the newspapers

While the foreign press has innocent photos of elephants dragging palm fronds around, *Dailynews* (left above) has an elephant carrying a corpse with its tusks. On the left side are the [amazing series of photos](#) we linked to on December 28.

Khao Sod has a story about the identities of the people photographed running from the waves.

The photo essay of Phuket after tsunami: *Manager Daily* – [good photos of erosion and coral damage](#)

Translations from Thai-language newspapers: *Manager Daily* and *ThaiRath* – January 3, 2005

Wisarut reports on news items in the local press:

The latest bodycount at 8:00am of January 3, 2005:

Dead: 5,046 (2,287 Thai, 2,459 foreigners, 300 unclassified)

Injured: 8,457

Missing: 3,810 (after cutting redundant entries out of the list)

However, the Swedish government told the Thai Ambassador in Stockholm that there are at least 3500 Swedes missing in Thailand even though the Thai government said they just recovered 60 dead Swedes.

Search dogs have recovered at least 10 buried corpses at Bang Muang village of Phangnga.

Two elephants from Ayutthaya are coming to clear debris where the machines cannot go as well as to recover the buried corpses at Bang Niang (Khuekkhak district of Phangnga). Another four elephants from Ayutthaya will follow soon.

There are 40 starving deer along with floating corpses at Phra Thong and nearby islands (at least 30 floating corpses at Tachai Island and Ball Island).

Ten monks of 20 at Wat Yanyao (Wat Nikornwararam) have to leave the temple to live at other temples since they cannot stand the stinking and rotting corpses piling up in the temple area. Even other monks who still live in Wat Yanyao have to sleep outside the temple area. They have lots of work to chant for funerals and perform cremation ceremonies.

Minister Suwit said there will be an anonymous cemetery for unidentified corpses at Khao Lak.

Soldiers, sailors and rescue officer said they can recover only about 1 in 3 of the more than 4000 floating, buried and rotting corpses at Phi Phi Island while the vultures are flying around Phi Phi and Phangnga.

French rescue officers have come to recover corpses at Sofitel in Khao Lak and the nearby area. So far the French rescue officers have recovered 30 corpses including 10 dead French.

Now the land subsidence has spread from Satun to Trang and the Nopphitam district of Nakhon Srithammarat.

The Ministry of Public Health is asking for donations of rubber gloves, giant boots, mosquito repellent, no. 95 masks, and black garbage bags.

Even though Patong Beach has been quickly recovered and restored, Premier Thaksin has asked officers to catch those the mafia who run rampant to extract extortion from poor local enterprises along Patong Beach.

Channel 7 has reported that underground water has seeped into paddy fields in the La Ngoo district of Satun due to the tsunami while there are 2-3 dolphins swimming inside the abandoned tin mines since they have brought to the mainland by the tsunami.

BMA Governor Aphirak has had a 1-minute silence for those who perished.

January 2

The disaster: [Eyewitness account from Phangnga](#) – January 1, 2004

Translations from Thai-language newspapers: *Manager Daily* – January 2, 2005

Wisarat reports on news items in *Manager Daily*:

There are at 800 victims of the tsunami with psychological depression and 300 of 800 the depressed victims have severe depression and are suicidal so more psychologists are in demands ([link](#)).

Updated bodycount data: Jan 2, 2005 at noon

Death: 4,985 (2,252 Thai, 2,457 Foreigners, 276 Unidentified)

Injured: 10,350 (6,031 Thailanders, 2,248 Foreigners, 2,071 Unidentified)

Missing: 6,424 ([link](#))

It is quite a miracle that only 5% of coral (both shallow water and deep sea) is damaged. No digging for artesian wells is allowed for the time being while and traveling into the capes around the provinces along Andaman Sea is strictly prohibited for safety reasons.

Khon Poo (Phongsit Khamphree), the song-for-life composer, is following Ad Carabao by coming up with his own song for the victims of the tsunami. The song was just premiered ([link](#)).

A copy of the song is [here](#).

What is being reported on Thai-language TV – January 2, 2005

Wisarat reports on what is on Thai-language TV: *Channel 11 has reported that there are several cases where the Tambon Administration Organizations refuse to release donated food, clothes, and other necessities to those who suffer from the tsunami calamity so that they can sell those donated items at high prices. Furthermore, vote canvassers are blocking donations so as to prevent both rival political parties from reaping votes even though the donations come from other places. They also bully both local people who suffer from calamities and rescue officers who come to help clear the debris.*

Dr Khunying Pornthip and her co-workers are asking for more dentists around the country to help them identify rotten corpses at Wat Yan Yao (Phangnga) from dental records as well as DNA from dental nerves in the extracted teeth. The dentists from Prince Songkla University are already stretched to the limit so more dentists from Chulalongkorn University, Khon Kaen University, Chang Mai University, Mahidol University are in demand.

When Khun Ying Photjamarn (the wife of the Prime Minister) came to see Dr. Khunying Pornthip at Wat Yarn Yao, she was stunned by the amount of forensic work Khunying Pornthip and coworkers have to handle. Initially, Khunying Photjamarn wanted to remove the surgical mask, but she had to put the mask back on a few seconds later due to the smell from corpses piled up like bundles of firewood. So Khunying Photjamarn is going to ask Premier Thaksin to provide more dry ice, plastic body bags, refrigerated containers so set up the makeshift morgues along with the white boards and chemical pens for recording the identified corpse as well as digital cameras, memory sticks, laptops, CD-ROMs, CD burners, etc.

Her Majesty Queen Sirikit also asks cadet students from Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy, Naval Academy, Air Force Academy and Police Academy to help the locals rebuild their houses.

There are already 11 holes from the land subsidence in Satun.

During the tsunami, the hot springs in Ranong dried up.

The local people of Phi Phi Island are complaining that the bureaucrats refuse to release the donated items by claiming that they did not bring the records to the Provincial Office. Many have suspected that those bureaucrats are going to keep the donated stuff for themselves

and then they will sell on the black markets.

[Satellite Photo](#)
[of Khao Lak – Before and After Tsunami](#)

[Insurance](#)

[firms digging in heels](#) – *The Nation*,

January 2, 2005

... "Simply put, do not consider themselves liable to pay compensation, saying the damage was caused by flooding, not by an earthquake " ...

January 1

Translations from Thai-language newspapers: *Matichon*

– December 31, 2004

* HM The King cancels his New Year greeting card of 2005. He works very hard to help victims in the south and is so happy that Thai people unite to help each other. Meanwhile, Prime Minister sets up [Mr. Samit](#) to set up a disaster warning system. It is sad that 90 dead body were stuck in a mine pit. The Department of Underground Resources warn people in three provinces (Satun, Trang and Krabi) may face the problem of the land sinking or caving in.

* Mr. Sujin Hwangli, the president of the Disaster Insurance Association gave an interview on December 30. He said victims may get around 10,000 million baht for the disaster compensation. For the damaged car, if they can prove that the damage was caused from the tsunami, the owners can get compensation immediately.

* Foreigners admire Thai people's sympathy—"little money, but big heart"—that helps victims who suffer from the tsunami disaster. The AFP reporter collected photos of the "Thai sympathy impression" to show around the world. This shows that although Thai people also lose lives and assets, they help and take care of lots of foreign tourists victims.

Translations from Thai-language newspapers: *Thairath*

– December 31, 2004

* The lottery draw on December 30 was very popular with many people trying to be lucky. The government got 525 million baht profit. Lots of people buy the number of New Era 548 and some people buy the date of the tsunami event which is 026.

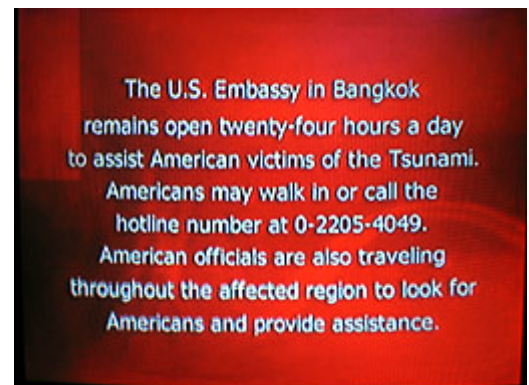
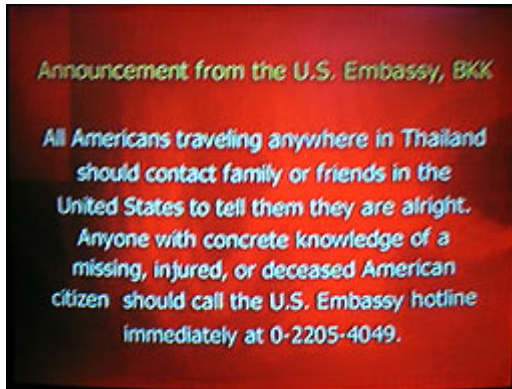
* Mrs. Orapin Milintasutra, a 38-year-old victim, disappeared from Takuapa, Phangnga. Her relatives will give 100,000 baht if someone finds her dead body. This makes people very interested.

[Interesting](#)

[comparison](#) of newspaper headlines about relief: *Is relief "pouring" in? "Trickling" in? Bound up in "red tape"? Is it a "tidal wave" of assistance? Is it "building"? Do survivors "fight for aid amid corpses"? Do "delays hinder relief"? Is this aid "ramping up"? Is it arriving "slowly"? "Expanding"? "Moving ahead"?*

NOAA AND THE INDIAN OCEAN TSUNAMI

The Pacific Ocean area got an update on the Sumatran quake minutes after it happened: Dec. 29, 2004 — NOAA scientists at the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii went to work within minutes of getting a seismic signal that an earthquake occurred off the west coast of Northern Sumatra, Indonesia. NOAA issued a bulletin indicating no threat of a tsunami to Hawaii, the West Coast of North America or to other coasts in the Pacific Basin—the area served by the existing tsunami warning system established by the Pacific rim countries and operated by NOAA in Hawaii...



Above: UBC cable

TV is running an announcement from the US Embassy for nationals to report they are ok.



Above:

The Nation's January 1 edition leads with an unusual comment as the front page headline.

No risk of tsunami from new quake – January 1, 2005

A series of descending quotes in the article:
the AP says USGS says NOAA says...

6.5

[Magnitude Aftershock Hits Indonesia](#) – AP, January 1, 2005

A 6.5-magnitude aftershock to last weekend's killer earthquake hit off the coast of Sumatra on Saturday, sending frightened residents running into the streets. No injuries were reported...

[Saturday,](#)

[January 01, 2005 at 06:25:44 UTC – Magnitude 6.5 OFF W COAST OF NORTHERN SUMATRA](#)

2B newsfeed: [About the](#)

[2B newsfeed](#) – [January 3](#) – [January](#)

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2B newsfeed: Tsunami in Thailand – After January 3, 2005

January 3, 2005

Categories: 2004 Tsunami

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Post-January 3, 2005

[Thailand](#)
[accused of touting for tourists](#) – *The Times*,
December 27, 2005

...What the Deputy Prime Minister did not see were notices in Thai around the memorial area protesting that Mr Thaksin had reneged on pledges to have Phi Phi rebuilt within a year. "We never got the money or help you promised," the notices said...

[Phi](#)
[Phi businesses fear 'hidden agenda' – Islanders threaten to ignore rebuilding ban](#) – *Bangkok Post*, December
20, 2005

Tourism operators and local residents on tsunami-ravaged Phi Phi island allege government agencies have a "hidden agenda" in restoring the island's tourism business. They question the government's decision to suspend the town zoning plan and rehabilitation scheme, jointly drafted by locals and the Interior Ministry's Civil Works Department, and allow the Designated Area for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Dasta), to take over the task...

The agency is in charge of several controversial projects, including Koh Chang tourism development and the Chiang Mai Night Safari... He said villagers had heard the government planned to construct five-star resorts on the 279-rai of land between Tonsai and Lodalam beaches, and this had triggered widespread fear the land would be expropriated...

[Thailand](#)
[Tsunami Anniversary Memorial Set to Flop](#) –
About.com, December 19, 2005



(Photo: Anders)

More astonishing photos of the tsunami

– April 19, 2005

Roger Brooke runs "a small site for a small island"–KohJumOnline.com.

He writes: *A couple days ago a man from Sweden named Anders sent me a batch of pictures he took of the tsunami when he was on holiday at Koh Jum. In fact, he was at the top of Mt Pu (the highest point on Koh Jum) and the [pix](#) [he took of the waves slamming into Koh Jum are remarkable to say the least.](#)*]

[Tsunami](#)

[volunteer finds Thailand short of cash](#) – NC

Times, May 5, 2005

...The question the Thai people asked me most often was, "Where are the monies that so many countries promised us to help rebuild our area?" As we all know, lots of those monies will never get to the people who lost everything. History has proved that to be true, again and again...

[Wealthy](#)

[grab disputed land in Thailand](#) – AP, May 2,

2005

... "If the tsunami didn't take you away, I will," the 36-year-old Yuphin recalled hearing from a stranger she thinks was sent by a land development company as he warned her and other villagers to move off the site in Ban Nam Khem, which is still a landscape of rubble, wrecked houses and beached boats.

...The villagers and activists say the developer, Far East Trading and Construction Co., is taking advantage of the tsunami's destruction to oust them and build hotels for sun-worshipping Westerners and Asians.

In a dispute common in Thailand, businessmen counter that villagers illegally encroached on their land.

At Ban Nam Khem, in the worst-hit area of the coast north of Phuket island, company lawyer Niwat Kaewluan said Far East Trading plans to build a resort on land he contends is illegally occupied by villagers. The company bought the land from a mining firm, Hok Chong Seng Co., a few years after it stopped work in the area, Niwat said. It's unclear when the purchase was made, but Far East Trading began forcing some villagers off the land in 2002...

Intimidation has been incessant. Recently, five men fired gunshots into the air to scare away Thais and foreign volunteers who came to help residents rebuild their houses, the villagers said...

[Thai](#)

[environmentalism squares off against development](#)

– AFP, April 12, 2005

...Since the tsunami, the government has mulled a "buffer zone" along Thai coastlines barring any new construction within a certain distance, in some places up to 50 metres (55 yards), from the high-tide line, conservationists said.

...Wichit Na-Ranong, president of the Tourism Council of Thailand, said the tourism industry would fight tooth and nail against such a zone, arguing it would hamstring much-needed development along the coast.

... "I will not allow this to happen, no matter how far back you set the limit," Wichit told reporters in Phuket, where he owns a luxury resort...

[In Thailand, a 'land grab' – The Christian Science Monitor](#), April 8, 2005

...In February, the purported owner came and told the villagers to clear out or face the consequences. Instead, after he left, defiant villagers chased away his team of surveyors and went back to rebuilding.

"I know they say this land belongs to someone, but we've lived here a long time already," says Somchai, gesturing at his dirt yard. "Look at those coconut trees. We planted those. This is my land."...

In Baan Naam Khem, a fishing port that was almost wiped out by the tsunami, the battle lines are drawn more sharply. Fifty households on the western beachfront left destitute by the giant waves are locked in a bitter standoff with a developer linked to a prominent Thai politician.

The dispute has turned nasty. The developer reportedly sent armed men to stop former residents from returning to sift through the ashes of their homes and threatened those who resisted.

Even before the tsunami, the developer had sought to evict the families, insisting that it had the law on its side.

Residents say it was a trick sprung by a village headman who was in cahoots with the developer. Three years ago, the headman collected the names and addresses of everyone in the community and said he was petitioning the government for land titles.

Instead, he gave the list to the developer who then launched legal action against the residents.

...Other communities have managed to see off the developers.

Baan Waa, a fishing village of 72 households, was told that their land was needed for a new hospital for Khao Lak that the German government had agreed to build. The villagers dug in their heels and appealed to a visiting group of senators, including Senator Chirmsak, for help. A call to the German Embassy revealed that the scheme was a fiction...

[Phi Phi businesses forge ahead with post-tsunami repairs](#)

– TNA, April 7, 2005

... According to Mr. Boonma Saelim, the owner of a local tour company, most of the restoration and clearance work is being carried out by foreigners, while the government has done relatively little.

Many local businesses, he says, have simply decided to go ahead with restoration work without waiting for the issuance of official planning regulations...

Sea gypsies

lose their instinct – Waves turn their lives upside down

– Bangkok Post, April 3, 2005

...Hong Klathalay, the 37-year-old tribe leader at Ban Thung Wa, has claimed that help from the district and provincial authorities for the tribe had been cut off because they had refused to be relocated. Now they only rely on donations to survive.

He said the 281 Moken survivors at this village had no means of earning a living as they were too scared to go fishing.

They had also lost all their valuables including their houses and fishing boats...

The tribe leader alleged that the district had expropriated 10 rai of the tribe's 26 rai land after the Moken survivors refused to adopt the relocation plan.

"District and provincial authorities are upset, so they give no assistance to us," he said...

Earlier: [A tale of two newspapers: Sea gypsy protest](#)

Andaman:

Sad story of the century – March 29, 2005

Asiper passes along the following info: *The network of*

Andaman writers kindly asks you to support tsunami victims

by buying the book "Andaman: Sad story of the century."

It is a memorandum of the grief and sorrowful story of the

tsunami victims in six southern provinces and the wounds that

have not healed yet.

All revenue will go directly to the restore fund for Andaman through an education fund for orphans. No

deductions for expenses made. The book is only 100 baht. Please

contact : 02-270-0928-9 or Khun Por/Mild

Publishing in the

main foyer W 19 (at the Queen Sirikit Convention Center

until April 6).



Phuket

bans tsunami spirit ceremonies – TNA,

March 30, 2005

Since massive tsunami waves slammed into Thailand's Andaman coastline on 26 December, residents of the southern resort island of Phuket have been conducting ceremonies to pray for the souls of the departed.

But today Phuket Governor Udomsak Assawarangkura indicated that the ceremonies would be banned, saying that they were having a negative impact on the island's tourism image, and that they were a reminder of outmoded ideas related to the belief in ghosts...

Workers tell their tsunami stories – March 19, 2005

Special report by Asiper: This is from a conference on March 10 about the impact of the tsunami on workers.

Right: Plenary of the conference. Victims tell their stories: a widow who lost her husband who was a grocery store owner on Phiphi island, a food seller at Rachayai Beach in Phuket, a construction worker at Korkhao island, Pangnga, a local fisherman from Trang. Also two NGOs: Empower (works with service-women workers) and Thai Action for Democracy in Burma (works with migrant workers).



(Photo: Thai Labour Museum Foundation)

Below: The widow from Phiphi, Krabi, Mrs. Amporn Thanapitak, who has three children and lost her husband from Tsunami.

She said on December 26, 2004 she was in her shop when her husband called her to see the wave coming. She saw the level of water as high as the roof and immediately the wave threw into a drainage sewer and wood scraps pinned her there for two hours. She tried to kill herself by holding her breath, but she did not die and she thought of her daughter. Somebody lifted her body from the drainage sewer. She found that she was only wearing pants. Everything was very quiet until she heard one guy shout and told her to hurry to go to the mountain. There were lots of people but nobody helped her because they wanted to run away from the tidal wave.



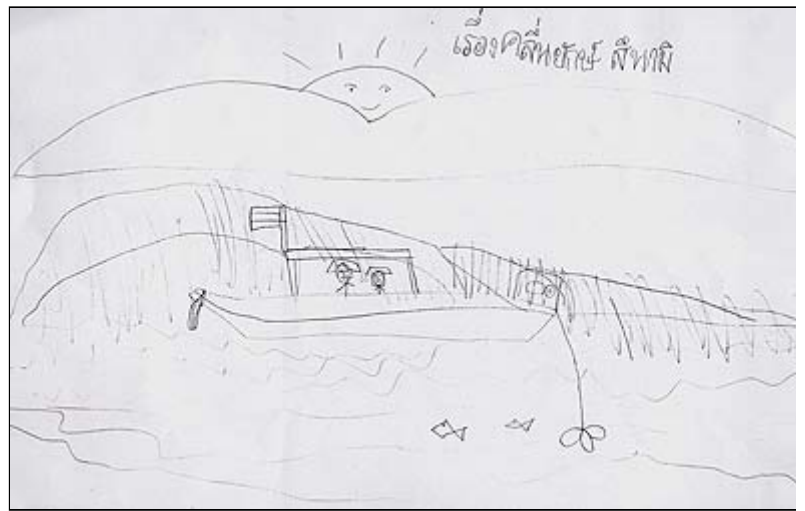
(Photo: Thai Labour Museum Foundation)

Two foreign guys grabbed her to help her up the mountain and gave her medicine, food and a blanket. She could not move. She had to use the bathroom lying down. She wanted to die, but she kept remembering her children. She asked people to find her husband and finally found her daughter who was also looking for her father. Finally someone carried her down the mountain. She was in bad condition with a pale face. A foreigner saw her and told people to help her first and four foreigners took her to the hospital. At present she receives 2500 baht for each of her children per month to study and this support will continue until they are in university.

She still has no other income. She can survive nowadays because of donated money while she was treated at the hospital and from some money (usually 100-200 baht) given by kind persons.

Right and below: Drawings by a girl name Nong Praw or Thanapa Thanapitak. In the conference she draw

a picture she named "The big wave" (below) and "The big wave Tsunami" (right) to convey her experiences.



[Thailand secretly kills search for missing tsunami victims to boost tourism](#)

– Cyber Diver News Network, March 20, 2005

Thai authorities are calling off their operation to identify the bodies of tsunami victims because they claim it is hampering attempts to lure tourists...

[Tsunami restores Maya Bay's beauty](#) – The Nation, March 2, 2005

... "To me, to see the beauty of Maya restored by nature is a hopeful message for my life to move on."

In 1999, Nattawuth forcefully helped a group of local and Bangkok environmentalists to oppose the filming of the 20th Century Fox project "The Beach", starring Leonardo DiCaprio, on the shores of Maya Bay. The group lost its battle and Fox later that year bulldozed the beach, removed native plants and replaced them with some 100 coconut trees.

... "But now 80-90 per cent of Maya's beauty has been returned to its previous condition," says a jovial park ranger at Haad Nopparat Tara National Park, whose Phi Phi and Maya Bay are the jewels in the crown of an iconic tropical paradise.

"Look at the sand dunes on the beach, they came back after the tsunami," he said...

[Bangkok shifted by Asian quake](#) – BBC, February 23, 2005

The Thai capital Bangkok has reportedly moved nine centimetres (3.5 inches) to the south-west since the huge Indian Ocean earthquake in December...

More tsunami news
– February 15, 2005

Tsunami maps

GWR writes: *A couple of standouts ([1](#), [2](#))*

from the tsunami map collection on the web's [best site for maps](#).

Scams and urban legends

Don Entz points out: *The scam artists are taking [full advantage of the tsunami](#) to bilk people out of their money, so beware. Also: [Tsunami mermaid urban legend](#)*

Another tsunami urban legend
– February 8, 2005

Don Entz point out: [Elephant legend](#)

Crack – January 27, 2005

We cannot tell you which building this is from, but here is an example (right) of the extensive cracking that occurred in a 30+ story building in Bangkok that was caused by the December 26, 2004 earthquake off the coast of Indonesia (that also caused the tsunamis).



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

A tale of two newspapers: Sea
gypsy protest – January 25, 2005

The Post seems to be unaware of the controversy that erupted in the Thai-language press last week and prints the governor's statement without further comment. Also note: *The Nation* uses the spelling 'Morgan' while the *Post* uses the less common 'Moken.'

[From Matichon, January 21, 2005](#): *200 Morgan people protest to ask for the return of their land because Kuek Kak Tambon Administrative organization drove them off their land after the tsunami disaster and wants to build the private hospital and OTOP center there.*

[Moken](#)

[sea people get better deal](#) – Bangkok Post, January 24, 2005

Living conditions of the 184 sea-dwelling Moken people on

Surin island will be improved, the province says.

Phangnga governor

Anuwat Maytheewibulwut said he visited the island last week

to gauge the effects of the tsunami and prepare for provincial

efforts to improve medical services, ensure Moken children are

educated and to train adults as national park staff a

to produce handicrafts for tourists...

More tsunami video – January 21, 2005

At 11pm on January 20, the Channel 7 show *Reung Jing Pan Jor* (True Story from TV) premiered one of the most

amazing videos we have ever seen. A man named Tuwit on Koh Lah Cha shot a five minute video from a hillside of the tsunami hitting the entire beach. The video is notable for showing the complete ebb and flow of the event over time as opposed to a close-up shot of a wave. The sheer height of the water as it surges onto the half kilometer beach and the rapid movement as it sucks items out to sea is awe inspiring.

They also showed another video taken at Ban Namkem in Phangnga of many kids playing in an enclosed bay when suddenly a huge volume of water surges into the cove. All the kids run in terror. Afterwards they take videos of each other as they sit on the shore dazed and scraped up.



Finally they showed footage of scuba divers recovering purses and other items from deep underwater and also footage of large sections of coral tipped upside down.

[What chance Thai tourism's post-tsunami grand plan?](#) –

Reuters, January 20, 2005

Talk of "new beginnings" is all the rage in Thai tourism circles at the moment, but for all the good intentions, efforts to smarten up resort areas and rid them of sleaze and grime look likely to fail.

In a country where regulation is frequently invoked but seldom realised, the mish-mash of tacky souvenir shops, neon-lit go-go bars and beach-front shop-houses will rise inexorably from the tsunami rubble, analysts fear...

Five years ago, Khao Lak's unspoilt white sand beaches stretched as far as the eye could see along southern Thailand's Andaman Sea coast. In that short time, much of the pristine wilderness, which was meant to enjoy national park protection, disappeared in a free-for-all scramble of hotel complexes, beach bars and market stalls vying for every last tourist dollar, pound or baht...

"It's important to realise that when you stay in a Marriott, Sofitel, Hyatt or Hilton here, you are not in a property owned by Marriott, Sofitel, Hyatt or Hilton," Colson said. "These are hotel management companies, not hotel-owning companies." "The people who really decide whether a new hotel is going to comply with rules and regulations are those who own the land and buildings. They are very wealthy and, in many cases, see it as a duty to buy their way round regulations," he said...

More tsunami urban legends

– January 19, 2005

Don Entz points out:

[False:](#)

Photographs show unusual deep-sea creatures washed up by the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.

[False:](#)

Photograph shows a satellite view of the Indian Ocean tsunami.

[Undetermined:](#)

Children orphaned by the Indian Ocean tsunami are being offered for sale via SMS messages.

More on the bogus tsunami photos – January 20, 2005

Mogens Engelund has [examples](#)

[on his site](#) of the World Tourist Organization using the bogus tsunami photos on their website.
He also has an article about this (in Danish), [False tsunami photos travelled around the world, and into TV as well](#) which includes some examples of the photos being used in newspapers.

[Criticism of Thai media accusations](#) – The

Irrawaddy, January 12, 2005

The coordinator of a Thai NGO on Wednesday spoke out against sensationalist Thai media reports that Burmese gangs were looting areas of southern Thailand affected by the tsunami...

On January 8 the mass circulation Thai newspaper Khao Sot carried a story headlined Maung Thieves (maung is a Thai pejorative term for Burmese) which claimed that at least a thousand Burmese looters on pickups were stripping Khao Lak bare. Strangely, the paper claimed that the “Burmese” looters had tricked local people into thinking they were southern Thais by learning to speak fluent Southern Thai dialect (apparently in anticipation of the tsunami).

The Khao Sot report was repeated on at least two television stations and remarked on by at least one high profile TV pundit. NGOs fear that the media reports may lead to more discrimination against Burmese tsunami survivors in Thailand...

[Newspapers](#)

[rush to print fake tsunami photos](#) – January

13, 2005

...PTI put the photos on the net and they were promptly run by several television channels and newspapers, including the Times of India, the Calgary Herald in Canada and Tz, a German paper, who ran the image under the caption, “Tsunami in Sri Lanka.” Channel Nine’s Sky News, Australia also grabbed the images...

[Tsunami](#)

[scam letter](#) – January 12, 2005

Tsunami news – January 11, 2005

Wisarat provides another roundup from the Thai-language press and forums: *HTMS Naresuan has picked up five floating corpses 90 knots south of Similan Islands with the assistance from French helicopters. Helicopters from HTMS Chakkri Naruebet have flown to recon around Ban Nam Khem fishermen village and Laem Pakarang.*

Navy officers are constructing 73 temporary shelters at Kau Khau Khao (Takua Pa district of Phangnga) to be done on January 21 as well as the 175 new permanent houses, 60 new permanent house at Lanta Island (Lanta district of Krabi) and 20 new houses in Sireh village for those Moka (Chao Leh) tribe at Ratchada Port of Phuket.

Some people said the land of Satun is very unstable and ready to erode at any seconds since underground is the sea. There is a dead giant turtle at Phangnga Naval base (60 kg, 84 cm long and 75 cm wide) (from

[Manager](#)

[Daily](#): Jan 9, 2005).

When Phee Pui (Pornthip Nakhirankanok) donated 20 million baht for tsunami victims, almost Thai netters had praise. However, when Khun Paradorn donated only about 10,000 baht, the public anger erupted (from [mThai](#)).

When some jealous doctors made very bad comments to warn Dr. Khunying Pornthip and this really frustrated her, Thai netters came to calm

Khunying Pornthip down so she can continue her forensic works while flaming and cursing those jealous doctors (from mThai: [1](#) and [2](#)). Public

sympathy toward Dr Khunying Pornthip after the attacks from the jealous doctors is [here](#).

Many Thai netters have reported about corrupt officers who keep the donated items for themselves while giving rotten food and ragged clothes to tsunami victims.

Burmese dissenters have reported that there are about 400-600 dead from the tsunami in Burma, but the junta has told a big lie to the world that there are very few deaths. Even Thai correspondents from Siam Turakij told the readers that there are at least 200 crematorium piers along the Burmese coast and the junta does not care about the dead because they are minorities (also see [NCGUB](#)).

** [Manager](#)*

[Online: Satellite Photos of Patong Beach – comparing before and after tsunami.](#)

The Nation always makes a sharp critique of Premier Thaksin-look at [this](#)

[satirical cartoon.](#)

More non-tsunami related links:

** [Public paranoia](#)*

[about the Malaysian government](#)

** [Thaksin's](#)*

[paranoid toward Democrat who got number 4](#)

** [Reference](#)*

[to the 100 years anniversary of China Railway.](#)

[Comment: Does the](#)

[Andaman tourist industry deserve a quick revival?](#)

– January 8, 2005

[Reports](#)

[that 800 Thais could commit suicide dismissed](#)

– TNA, January 8, 2005

A senior government psychiatrist has dismissed foreign news reports that suggest that 800 Thais affected by last month's massive tsunami waves were at risk of killing themselves because of stress and depression, called "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder".

"The report is too pessimistic and comes from a western point of view which cannot be applied to the Thai society," said the Department of Mental Health Spokesman, Dr. Taveesilp Wisamuyothin. The Thai society has mechanisms that help relieve stress, despair and depression, including warm family relationships and religious beliefs, he said...

[Is anyone to blame](#)

[for lack of warning?](#) – Bangkok Post,

January 7, 2005

...The most important factor that would inhibit any kind of warning was the general perception that tsunamis would never affect Thailand; they never had before and there had never been one in the Indian Ocean...

Despite what the Bangkok Post says we know of at least one tsunami that killed 500 people in Nakhon Si Thammarat in 1965. Do readers know of any other?

News about the Andaman coast

– January 5, 2005

Last week we asked about the fate of some of the minor islands in the Andaman Sea. Wisarut has found some details from the local Thai-language press:

*Khun Nitipoom (a columnist of Foreign Affairs in Thairath) reported that those who live on **Panyee Islands** (most are Muslim) were from the tsunami by Allah's mercy so the custodians of Masjid in Panyee Island would pray to bless Allah to protect the island. The Masjid custodians have invited Khun Nitipoom to participate with them since he have written articles that show sympathy toward Muslims*

James Bond's Rock (Khao Tapoo) in Ao Phang

Nga National Park is also sparred Phuket island shielded Ao Phang Nga National Park.

*Those who live on **Phi***

***Phi** told the press that those hotel investors violated many rules of the islands such as bringing pork to the island (most local people are Muslim) and building hotels and restaurants on Gubor (Muslim cemeteries). Those who run hotels in Phi Phi forgot to pray to the spirits of Phi Phi island so they are deserved to be punished.*

After Premier Thaksin has come to see Khunying Pornthip on January 4, she was overwhelmed and nearly fainted due to being tired and getting the chance to tell what happened in the forensic lab at Wat Yanyao. Premier Thaksin has pledged with Khunying Pornthip that he will help her and her coworkers to bring the dead back home as soon as possible. Khunying Pornthip also invited Khun Sorayut to see what happen inside the forensic lab at Wat Yanyao. She told Khun Sorayut that the oozing liquid from the bodies have erased barcodes to identify them. So they have to reidentify the corpses again. Probably she needs metal dog tags from the armed forces to tag the corpses.

Khun Sorayut (a top TV host) also told of the misery of those fishermen at Ban Nam Khem. All the families in Ban Nam Khem have lost at least one member of their families due to the tsunami.

Kidnapper rings are kidnapping European children from the hospitals for ransom.

Ten days after the tsunami, the
Bangkok Post creates an informational page –
January 6, 2004

It is obvious the *Post* does not consider their website a priority (it is only updated once a day). However, it is incredible that it took them ten days to create a single informational page for those looking for information about the disaster: [Special announcement](#) – *Bangkok Post*, January 5, 2005

With many people, especially foreigners, still desperately looking for missing friends and relatives in the wake of the tsunami which struck southern Thailand on Dec 26, the Bangkok Post feels obliged to serve as a medium to facilitate search and relief efforts...

[Secret](#)

[mass grave for tourists](#) – *Times Online*,

January 5, 2005

...Local Red Cross officials told The Times that they were ordered to prepare a site for 10,000 bodies, far more than the Thai Government says were killed by the tsunami, raising doubts that a true count of victims will ever be known...

iTV interviews Colin Powell

– January 4, 2005

iTV has been showing its exclusive interview with Colin Powell and a subtitled version is just appearing at 10:00pm.

In answer to the question that "someone" said the U.S. was slow to act, Powell responded that "my good friend the Thai foreign minister" said the first call he received from another country after the disaster was from Colin Powell and at that time they both thought there were only 300 deaths.

[How](#)

[did she survive?](#) – Screenshots, January 04, 2005

Interesting roundup of how the Malaysian press explained the story of a person left drifting at sea.



[Tsunami](#)

[Warning Book](#) – January 4, 2005

How they do things in the Pacific. The Western States Seismic Policy Council has a kids' book (right) explaining the process NOAA uses to issue tsunami warnings in the Pacific.

2B newsfeed: [About](#)

[the 2B newsfeed](#) – [January 3](#)

– [January 2](#) – [January](#)

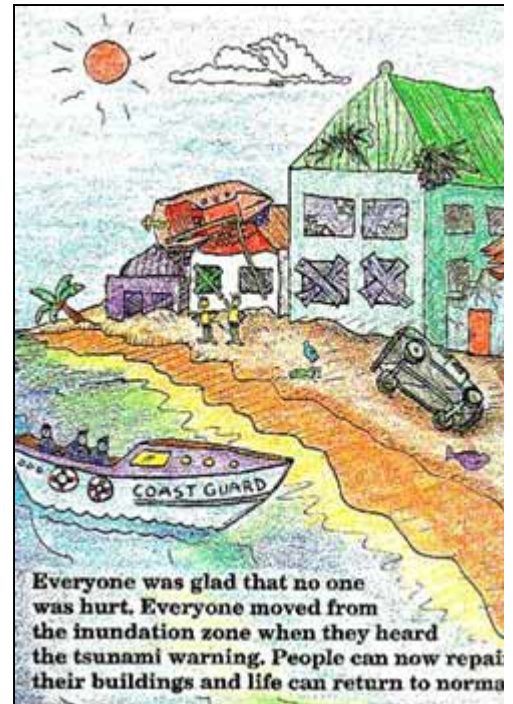
[1](#) – [December 31](#)

– [December 30](#) – [December](#)

[29](#) – [December 28](#)

– [December 27](#) – [December](#)

[26](#)



(Photo: Western States Seismic Policy Council)

Chang Noi: Chairman Maew's thoughts for 2005

January 3, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

Chang Noi: [Chairman Maew's thoughts for 2005](#) –
The Nation, January 3, 2005

As we march steadfastly towards the Second Glorious Era, I see the country as a land of promise, a nation transformed. Poverty will disappear. Poverty-relief caravans will visit everyone registered under our poverty scheme. Experts will advise them how to earn a living and pay them Bt100 a day during training...

Chairman Maew's thoughts for 2005

Published on January 03, 2005

As we march steadfastly towards the Second Glorious Era, I see the country as a land of promise, a nation transformed. Poverty will disappear. Poverty-relief caravans will visit everyone registered under our poverty scheme. Experts will advise them how to earn a living and pay them Bt100 a day during training.

Every landless family will have land. Every landholder will have land deeds. Government will dig a pond for every farmer who just pays a little fuel cost.

Village funds will be upgraded into village banks. (Some people think these funds are just "Mr Thaksin's money" which they don't have to pay back, but never mind. We are also creating lots of new ways for people to circulate their debt.)

The Small and Medium Enterprise Development Bank will dish out Bt20 billion to support new entrepreneurs. The Government Savings Bank will give Bt10,000 quick-loans within four days of application. The Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives has Bt10 billion to lend for non-farm activities and Otop schemes. The Farmers' Rehabilitation and Development Fund will buy back farmers' debts from the banks. The Special Purpose Vehicle will allow farmers to take out loans in cash and repay them in produce.

All 80,000 villages will get an SML fund of Bt200,000-Bt300,000. Villagers will not fight over getting their hands on this money but join together in harmony to work on village development projects.

And then the cash cows. We give the farmer a calf. He turns it into a cow. Two years later we buy it back. Farmers get rich (and we, ummm, get a lot of cows). This scheme sounds so good we are putting Bt8.4 billion into it.

I will go door to door round the country to make sure every child in every household has access to education. We will put Bt80 billion into six new organisations to oversee children's learning. If kids have had to drop out because of poverty, we will pay them to go back to school. School fees will come down. University fees will be payable after students have finished studying. Every child born from next July 28 onwards will get a government gift bag advising parents how to raise their child.

We will put Bt1 trillion more into healthcare. There will be special centres to look after old people, and special jobs for those who want them.

We will build a water grid to pump water all over the country to 90 million rai of farmland that currently has no irrigation. We will end water pollution. We will build more reservoirs to stop flooding and drought.

Long-distance phone calls will cost less. We will build lots more cheap urban housing. Nobody will be evicted from a slum. Officials will become the people's helpers. I have told all ministers and government officials to redefine the word "happiness" as helping disadvantaged people.

We will build 200,000 cheap homes for police officers. We will give better pay and welfare to state officials. The incomes of people in general will be higher.

Bangkok will become as easy to get around as your own backyard. We will invest Bt1 trillion to build 291 more kilometres of mass transit, giving us the third largest system in the world. The fares will become cheap so everyone can use them. The city will have more schools, fitness centres, day-care facilities and a thousand new parks.

We will improve the transport and communications links with neighbouring countries. We will attract 20 million tourists. We will develop our hospitals. We will be an aviation hub, a shipping hub, a land-transport hub, a health hub (indeed a hub hub).

The economy will grow at double-digit rates through my second term. (In fact I promised this a long time ago when the second term seemed pretty remote. Even my most faithful poodle economists are reckoning not much more than 5 per cent next year.) The new promise is that GDP will increase by half over the next five years, and in 2009 it might hit double-digit rates.

The stock market will go up. In fact it will double next year. (Yes, this is remarkable with the economy slowing down, the US dollar tanking, the South in a mess and bird flu here to stay . . .)

Corruption will be dealt with. We will use clean money to flush out dirt in this country. Any Cabinet ministers and senior officials engaging in malpractice will be sacked and punished. Drug dealers will be sent to meet the prince of hell so drugs disappear from the country.

In the next four years there'll be no Thai citizen left in poverty, no hardworking person without a home, no farmer who does not own land, no child without education, no patients left untreated, no lonely elderly and no helpless disabled.

If all this is not enough, people can just come and tell us what their problems are, and we will solve them. All these big sums of baht add up to quite a lot. But taxes will go down. The untaxed allowance will be bumped up from Bt80,000-Bt100,000. Taxes on the first Bt1 million of profits will be halved. More small businesses will not have to pay any VAT at all.

But I will have no problem paying for all of this. We have the money because I know how to make money. I know how to "turn paper into cash". (Just look at my own family's shareholdings: last year they went up from Bt18.5 billion to Bt31.5 billion.)

Indeed, a land of promise! Alas, I will still have critics, people of little faith. I look at those people with pity and mercy. I pity them because they hardly understand anything. I have mercy on them because they are my fellow human beings.

I will go door to door round the country to make sure every child in every household has access to education. We will put Bt80 billion into six new organisations to oversee children's learning. If kids have had to drop out because of poverty, we will pay them to go back to school. School fees will come down. University fees will be payable after students have finished studying.

Chang Noi

Thai-language newspapers – January 4, 2005

January 4, 2005

Categories: Thai Media Project

Matichon

– January 4, 2005

* On the way back at Tak province, a bus's tire explodes, making the bus turn over. Eleven passengers died immediately and 23 were injured. The driver ran away. From Korat and Chaingmai there were many additional buses for taking people back home. The Accident Prevention Center said 376 died in 5 days is a decrease of 29.4 percent.

* "Maew"

is confident that there is no big event on the one year anniversary of the crisis in the South. He is pleased that the officers solved the problem in the correct way. The Federation of Teachers in Yala has decided to continue to keep schools closed until the situation is better and people feel safe. They prepare to discuss with the teachers in Pattani and Narathiwat to stop teaching in all three provinces. Meanwhile, the 36 special police from Pichit province are sent to reinforce operations in the South for one year.

* Breaking

News – After the cabinet meeting today, the Prime Minister moved the present General Director of Meteorology to work for the Prime Minister's office . The reason is because he did not warn about the tsunami disaster and lots of people died. They also pledged to help Mr. Samit Thammasarot implement a warning system.

Thairath

– January 4, 2005

* The head village of Ban Khaolak, Mu 2 Tumbon Khaolak revealed the legend of Khaolak . It was a cruel land and many people were killed by thieves and some killed each other because of fighting over mineral wealth. At the beach there is a stone pole which is tied up with red cloth and is 100 years old. The villagers always have a ritual ceremony every year, but this

* Many

sectors have asked to postpone election day from February 6 to February 13—especially the six southern provinces that faced the tsunami. The Election Commission has confirmed that every sectors is ready for election day and is able to make a voting list in time although there are some people who have disappeared.

year (2004), people did not do so and it is believed that the disaster happened because of this.

* **Bloody news** –

At Amphur Taklee, Nakornsawan province, Mr. Nipun Pensri, 51-years-old, was shot by his wife. Later on she surrendered. She said she was upset that her husband has another woman and usually quarreled with her and recently hit her.

The largest kilometre stone in the world?

January 4, 2005

[The
largest kilometre stone in the world?](#) –
suannon @home, January 4, 2005

Things we want to know

January 5, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok

Editorial cartoon from the late 1960s? – December 3, 2006

A reader writes: *We enjoy your site very much. It is an excellent way for foreigners living in Bangkok (such as myself) to learn more about Thai popular culture, currents events, and history. I particularly enjoy the political cartoons and explanations you post on your site. I wonder if you are familiar with a cartoon drawn in the late sixties by [Prayoon Chanyavongs](#) that involves a Thai soldier trying to persuade a Thai Prime Minister (most likely Thanom) not to tear down Victory Monument. I have been trying to find it for several months, but unsuccessfully.*
Do any 2B readers know where to find this?

Pradit Tiemsanguan? – September 11, 2006

Ryan Tiemsanguan writes: *Please help me locate my father, Pradit Tiemsanguan, last known address 526/D Wachprakarn Rd., Soi Srin Korm, Mueng Chon Buri. His date of birth is 01/04/1947, Deported from U.S. in 1995, he may be back in U.S., maybe Chicago. Please advise at tiensa2259@yahoo.com. Please help me find him.*

Looking for Ronald Alfred Morris – September 24, 2005

Bob (Robert) Morris is looking for his father, Ronald Alfred Morris.

Ronald came to Thailand in 1964 to work at Avro Aircraft. He eventually married a Thai lady and had at least 6 children. The family lost contact with him in 1979. He was from Coventry, UK and would be about 83 years old today if still living. If anyone has any information on Ronald Alfred Morris, please [let us know](#).

Earlier: Do you know Roger Harpel? – December 11, 2004

Tom Harpel asks: *16 years ago, my father left Washington state for Thailand. For the first year, he sent letters back home but eventually stopped communicating.*

I wonder if in your travels you have met him? His name is Roger Harpel. He lived in Washington state and ran a software company called Cosmos until 1989. It may be a long shot but the world can be surprisingly small. I look forward to your reply.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Construction at the Grand Palace – January 5, 2005

There seems to be major construction of new structures at the back of the Audience Hall at the Grand Palace (above). Anyone know what this is?

Pygmy elephants in Thailand? – December 2, 2004

Has anyone heard about pygmy elephants in the south?

On this [page](#) about Thai elephants: *All other members of the proboscidea animal order are now extinct. Historically there were some 300 different species that belonged to this category. These included mastodons, mammoths and pygmy elephants believed to have died out in Southern Thailand in the early 1920's...*

[Satellite tracking project to help conserve Malaysia's pygmy elephants](#) – AFP, July 4, 2005

...The pygmy elephant has an appealing rounded appearance, and is thought to stand about 2.4 metres (8 feet) tall, as much as 60 centimetres (two feet) shorter than elephants found elsewhere in Asia. Their faces are smaller and squarer, their tails are longer, reaching almost to the ground, and their tusks are straighter...

Lurid stories of Thai youth

January 5, 2005

Categories: Culture and Society

Does the Thai-language media understand Thai youth? – January 4, 2004

What you do not find in the English-language press: Nearly every week, both *Matichon* and *ThaiRath* have have has extremely lurid ‘studies’ about the alleged debauchery of Thai young people. These reports are widely discussed on call in radio, shows, forums and in seminars by academics during the week. Only occasionally does the English-language press report these.

At the end of the year, *The Nation* had an article that referred to these studies: [‘Gossip’ research has solved nothing – Senator slams concentration on sex and violence](#) – *The Nation*, January 3, 2004.

Wisarut reports about these incessant studies that are the talk of the town: *I have looked at the forums and seen Gen Y’s responses toward the news about very pornographic online games spun out of the local media.*

They feel very alienated toward both the reactionary Ministry of Culture as well as the spin-doctor local media that just copy the news without making a deep investigation to check whether Ministry of Culture have told a big lie to the public as the way to capture conservative voters at the expenses of younger voters. Many feel fed up with the ‘serious media’ like Matichon that keep returning to Gen Y as a way to spin more issues and raise their copies sold without trying to find out the real story. Even worse, serious media like Matichon has distorted the news by claiming that manga (Japanese comic) like Card Capture Sakura is a child porno comic—even though this kind of comic is only a spin-off called doujin. The same can be said about the media’s confusion between porno games (H games) and online games. Too many people have become victims of these kinds of unethical journalist practices, but those journalists and columnists keep spinning this type of news and commentary without shame while they keep asking the public at large to grant them unlimited press freedom...

Lurid stories of Thai youth – January 5, 2005

Following up on yesterday’s article about the Thai-language press promoting lurid stories of Thai young people to sell newspapers, here are some references from the last four months to sensational youth stories in the Thai-language press:

[Foreigners thought students were masseuses or sell their bodies/“hi-so juniors”](#) – December 17
[The youth of Thailand are champions of whisky drinking](#)

[SMS sex](#) – September 30
[Looking for sex with the telephone](#) – September 28
[Youth on the net](#) – September 27
[‘They](#)

—
December 13
[Monitor](#)
[ads for sex services](#) – December 8
[Abortions](#)
[average 1,000 per day/kids stay on the internet all night/a](#)
[new trend for gays](#) – October 20
[A new](#)
[generation of students](#) – October 11
[The big](#)
[penis trend](#) – October 13

[have sex at school. It destroys the local culture.’](#)
– September 21
[Revelations](#)
[about youth sex](#) – September 21
[The](#)
[swinging sex problem](#) – September 19
[People](#)
[like swinging](#) – September 18
[Nowadays](#)
[students do not conserve their bodies](#) – September 18

In Praise of Purachai

January 5, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[In](#)

[Praise of Purachai](#) – *The Nation*,

January 8, 2005

Purachai was often a figure of scorn according to many expats for his audacity in enforcing laws, especially nightlife regulation. From the Thai perspective, he is yet another ‘good guy’ who is too clean to work effectively within the system: ...*Thai Rak Thai insiders have done their best to keep Purachai’s problematic working style a private matter, but accounts of how "difficult" he was persistently found their way into public forums. It’s hard to believe, still, that such shortcomings make an apparently honest man with a good agenda unsuited for Thai politics, whereas those with far uglier flaws continue to thrive. The rise and fall of Purachai seem to confirm that politics is about compromise and flexibility, whether for better or worse, and rigidity could be the biggest liability of all...*

Earlier articles:

[Purachai](#)

[calls it a day on politics ‘for family’](#) – *The*

Nation, January 6, 2005

...*Purachai was widely tipped as a successor to Thaksin in the early days of the Thai Rak Thai government. But his abrasive personality undermined his position in the party and the popularity of the party itself...*

[Purachai](#)

[as PM?](#) – *The Nation*, December 28, 2003

“Let’s draft Purachai as leader of a new party!”

This suggestion was heard in some quarters. He appears a possible choice since his political future has become uncertain. After being moved from interior to justice – where he rubbed somebody who must be reckoned at the ministry the wrong way – he was shifted to an obscure place among several Thaksin deputies at Government House, with unsung assignments.

...*There are hard-core members of the now defunct Palang Dharma Party who will back him. Political campaign funds can come from anonymous contributors who want to see Thaksin face a formidable challenge. It would be nice if the Democrat, Chat Thai and Chat Pattana parties would join hands and declare their support for Purachai as prime minister.*

Purachai’s star – *The Straights Times*, May 13, 2002

Mr Purachai’s efforts have put him high on public polls and he has received support from the much-revered constitutional monarch, King Bhumibol Adulyadej. But, says Mr Thongbai: ‘...nobody in the government is on his side.’...

Astro 'black-out' on Anwar interview

January 5, 2005

Categories: Malaysia

[Astro](#)

['black-out' on Anwar interview](#)

– Screenshots, January 5, 2005

News from our neighbors – How Malaysia's pay TV service edits material the government does not like: *In September, Astro had denied subscribers the re-runs of Anwar's interview with CNN's Lorraine Hahn in her Talk Asia programme.*

Wednesday (Dec 22) night, reports Malaysiakini, Astro 'blacked out' Al-Jazeera's 90-minute interview with former deputy prime minister Anwar Ibrahim...

Also from Screenshots: Odd donations [1](#) and [2](#)

More on the Grand Palace construction

January 5, 2005

More on the Grand Palace
construction – September 21, 2005

Right: Google Earth has an image that shows the extent of the recent expansion work at the Grand Palace.



(Source: Google Earth)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Earlier: Construction at the Grand Palace

– January 5, 2005

There seems to be major construction of new structures at the back of the Audience Hall at the Grand Palace (above). Anyone know what this is?

Thai-language newspapers – January 6, 2005

January 6, 2005

Categories: Thai Media Project

Matichon

– January 6, 2005

* Pu and Jiw deputy Prime Ministers both retire from politics. Pu for teaching and Jiw for reading books. Meanwhile, Thaksin said that while some of his team complain when their names are not on the party list, Democrat are still not ready and Mr. Apisit does not know his rank on the party list.

* Chao Pha Ying Ubonrat,

Khun Poom's mother, revealed that she is very deep in sadness in her life, but she is glad that "Nong Poom" is in the Thai people's mind and she will set up a Foundation to honor him.

The king of Sweden is thanks the Thai king for thanking the Sweden victims. The Thai bank will give 300,000 million baht from the reserve fund to revive six provinces in the south.

Thairath

– January 6, 2005

* Thaksin said clearly that Purachai Piemsomboon, Deputy Prime Minister, will not be on the list of TRT party list because he wants to go teaching and take care of his family who is in New Zealand. A reporter asked if there will be a conflict in the party list. Thaksin said Thai Rak Thai has no tsunami, but only Hanami which is rich with friends.

* On January 5 the police in Rayaong arrest a 38-year-old woman who kidnaps a four-month-old female baby at the hospital. She revealed that she wanted to raise that girl replace her baby who died in an abortion.

* The

law service center for the victims at Amphur Takuapa,

Phangnga reveals that the bad people give false information about disappeared persons in order to get money aid. Some people reported missing are defendants in court cases so they ask relatives to inform that they died so they will be released from the criminal cases.

New year gifts for police

January 6, 2005

Categories: Local Beliefs, Thai Police



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

New year gifts for police

– January 6, 2005

At this time of year local traffic police accept new year gifts from motorists. Usually is it whiskey, cookies, or envelopes with money. The neighborhood police stand in the middle of the road directing traffic during the morning and evening rush hours saluting motorists and accepting gifts. They put the gifts in piles by the side of the road (above, in front of some election posters) or on their motorcycles (left). While some people frown on this and there is no obligation to give, many cheerfully give to ensure the police will remember their neighborliness if they ever need police intervention.

Pro-Government forumers who are hired to spin debate on forums

January 6, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

Government flames?

– January 6, 2005

We had been looking for a good example of pro-Government forumers who are allegedly hired to spin debate on forums (and on call-in radio shows). Wisarut came across a possible example: *The plan for cutting subway ticket prices to 10 baht for the first 3 stations and 15 baht overall has become a controversial issue. Many feel happy with this kind of vote buying, but many also feel worried about poor service after the price reduction along with the continuing political football between BMCL and MRTA. Many who feel this are relentlessly flamed by government forumers allegedly hired by Thai Rak Thai to attack opposite viewpoints. Look and you will see lots of flames and red herrings: [Matichon](#), [BTS board 1](#),*

[2](#),

[3](#),

[Manager](#),

and [mThai](#).

Here is a [short](#)

[2B thread in English](#) on the subject (with no flames).

Still here

January 6, 2005

Categories: 2004 Tsunami



(Photo: Simon Jenkins)

Still here – January
6, 2005

Simon Jenkins sent in this panorama of bustling Bangkok. Thailand is still thriving despite the disaster in the south. Several organizations have asked us to spread the word that, even along the southern beaches, many, if not most, of the resorts are still intact and in operation.

Does the Andaman tourist industry deserve a quick revival?

January 8, 2005

Categories: 2004 Tsunami, Analysis, Tourism

Back to [2B newsfeed: Tsunami in Thailand](#)

Comment: Does the Andaman tourist industry deserve a quick revival? – January 8, 2005

Within days after the tsunami struck, 2Bangkok.com began receiving emails asking that we publicize the ‘second tsunami’—namely the loss of the tourism industry—unless everyone got the word out that most of the area was still open for business.

"Don't believe what you read in the press," others wrote, referring to press phrases like ‘total devastation’ and explaining that many resorts were open and in need of visitors.

However, we wonder if the area deserves a quick revival.

The Tourist Authority of Thailand spends huge amounts of money on Madison Avenue advertising campaigns in developed countries around the world. These campaigns are designed to give the impression that Thailand is a premium destination with the highest caliber facilities and services. It is certain that many holiday makers in the tsunami-impacted areas assumed that the authorities intended to follow basic safety precautions to protect tourists.

The reality was that those who could have warned of a disaster decided not to issue a warning when they suspected it might be warranted. This is because previous officials who dared suggest a risk to the area from natural disasters were ridiculed and drummed out of their jobs and into inactive posts—the Thai bureaucratic equivalent of being fired. How many people such warnings could have saved is uncertain, but the de-facto policy of not warning at all is saddening. Tsunamis have hit Thailand (on the Gulf of Thailand side), so these events are not unprecedented as has been claimed.

The appointment of Smith Thamsaroj (who was the official [hounded into an inactive post for his previous warning](#)) is a step in the right direction, but considering the intense worldwide media scrutiny, it was probably inevitable.

Before new campaigns are launched insisting that most of the area is still open for business and that the foreign press is exaggerating the extent of the damage, we think that the authorities need to show that there is a real commitment to basic visitor safety and, most importantly, that relevant officials can act without interference from powerful forces within the tourism industry. Until this can be shown, the frantic calls to revive the industry seem hollow.

And to the many tour companies asking us to help spread the word that the Phuket area is open for business, we are going

to wait for now...

Back to [**2B newsfeed: Tsunami in Thailand**](#)

Phishing from the Ministry of Education?

January 8, 2005

Phishing from the Ministry of Education?

– January 8, 2005

2Bangkok.com receives a huge quantity of spam and is especially interested in local spam sources. We have noticed a large volume of phishing spam originating from within the [Ministry of Education website](#).

Gradual moderation at The Nation

January 8, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

Gradual moderation at *The Nation*

– January 8, 2005

During the last few months, as it has become obvious nothing can halt Thaksin's ascent to a second term, the once belligerent *Nation* has moderated its editorial stance and the most strident editorials are gone.

EDITORIAL:

A CEO comes into his own? –

The Nation, January 07, 2005

...Overall, Thaksin appears to have succeeded, at least so far, in getting done what needed to be done in the worst of situations. At the same time, he also succeeded in convincingly portraying himself as the man of the hour, an image he hasn't always succeeded in painting. However callous it may sound, Thaksin and his Thai Rak Thai Party may well reap political dividends for the general election on February 6...

STREETWISE:

Capitalising on a crisis –

The Nation, January 07, 2005

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has never been out of the public eye throughout the past four years. Distinguishing him from his predecessors is his bottomless supply of opinions on nearly every issue...

The Nation still does a good job illuminating the factions within TRT and sometimes baiting the various personalities:

Suwat's

spot on party list rankles old guard – *The Nation*,

January 07, 2005

...This reflects newcomer Suwat's clout in Thai Rak Thai and how Thaksin rates him personally. It remains to be seen how Suriya, who everyone knows cannot see eye to eye with Suwat, will handle the latter's fast-track rise within the party rank and file.

...Adding to the intrigue, Suriya's relations with Thaksin came under greater scrutiny recently, when it was reported that the Thai Rak Thai secretary-general joined a conspicuous meeting at a London restaurant with political veteran Sanan Kachornprasart, a key architect of the newly formed Mahachon Party. Suriya was reportedly accompanied by another key Thai Rak Thai figure, Somsak Thepsuthin.

Thaksin is known always to be unhappy whenever a senior member's leverage in his party becomes too strong...

How the Bangkok International Film Festival is being run

January 9, 2005

Categories: Film and TV

[How](#)

[the Bangkok International Film Festival is being run](#)

– *Bangkok Post*, January 9, 2005

...I was increasingly taken aback that a Bangkok film festival could be so oblivious to its context...

...This year, the 180 films to be shown in the festival, which runs from Jan 13-24, will again include no Thai subtitles.

Despite the overstatement by some officials that the BKK IFF has overtaken Korea's Pusan Film Fest as the top Asian cinema event, Pusan shows every film with English and Korean subtitles. Local subs are also a standard feature—some ordained by law—for cinefests in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Germany, France, as well as other countries...

‘Do Not Enjoy’

January 9, 2005

Categories: Signs and Billboards



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

‘Do Not Enjoy’

– January 8, 2005

For some reason an advertising company has chosen these words (left) for its holder image on empty billboards around town. Or possibly is it a new advertising campaign? The Thai words at the top read *sanuk my dy*.

Royal astrologers' predictions for 2005

January 10, 2005

Categories: Thai Politics

Royal astrologers'
predictions for 2005 – translated
and summarized from [Manager](#),
January 10, 2005

The old Royal astrologers' had made predictions about the future as follows:

- * Many good rice fields and orchards have become villages forcing the farmers and orchard owners to be under the yoke of agribusiness.
- * Lazy men will die from starvation.
- * Mountains will move.
- * Land will walk.
- * Monks will not follow the Abbots.
- * Lord of demons will fight against the king.
- * Monks will loot and pillage the cities.
- * The streams and canals will be narrowed.
- * Even rice husks will be pricier than gold.
- * Chickens, hogs, dogs and men will die without getting sick first.
- * New diseases will eat human beings.
- * People with projecting suits will come to rescue the dead.
- * Failed real estate projects will eat people's money.
- * Men will drink water from artesian wells reserved for the Lord of Naga.
- * The poor will roam the cities.
- * The monks in saffron robes will have wives.
- * Couples will have too few children.
- * Wildlife will be extinct.
- * While talking, people will raise their tails like angry animals.
- * The noblemen will beg like vagabonds.
- * People will go to battlefields.
- * Corpses will be scattered around the cities.

Update: ttaae [points out on the forum](#): *I think the above predictions were a little taken out of the context. It says in the article in Manager that this was only an excerpt of predictions, yet not the whole, about the future. I guess the author of the article only chose this part of the predictions because it seems to produce a shocking effect on the readers.*

Also: [Fasten your seatbelts, please](#) – *The Nation*, January 10, 2005

Those looking for business articles in the the business section of *The Nation* were greeted by a month by month breakdown of Matichon's astrologer's report for Thailand in 2005.

Overlooking the collapsed building

January 10, 2005

Categories: Buildings

Overlooking the collapsed building

– January 10, 2005

Press trucks on the expressway overlooking the building that collapsed on Sunday. The *Bangkok Post*'s unusual front page photo on January 10 was taken from here.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Building collapse –

January 9, 2005

[Photos](#)

[and article about the collapse](#) – *Manager Online*, January 9, 2005

[Five](#)

[firefighters believed missing in Bangkok building collapse](#)

– AP, January 9, 2005

[Firemen trapped](#)

[in collapsed building](#) – TNA, January 9, 2005

Thai-language newspapers – January 11, 2005

January 11, 2005

Categories: Thai Media Project

Matichon

– January 11, 2005

* Sanoh

still feels hurt about the names on the party list. He hints to Thaksin if the dad and mother are old and are abandoned, we should call “the ungrateful son.” He revealed he asked the P.M., but the members of Wang Nam Yen are still at the end of the party list.

* [Samit Thammasaroj](#)

rankles by disclosing that Japan and USA did not warn of the risk of the tsunami that hit Thailand and nine other countries. Japan said Thailand is not a member of the tsunami warning center and USA informed by internet that a wave was possible and did not confirm although the earthquake is 9 on the Richter scale. He will head a committee to set up a Natural Danger Protection System. After getting approval for 20 million dollars for the warning system, lots of foreign companies come to sell the warning system to him.

* Jaturon

Chaisaeng, Deputy Prime Minister, and chairperson

of the meeting to consider how to solve the bird flu situation, ordered academics to draft a strategy within two weeks. The budget for this problem is 4000 million baht. It is worried that bird flu may transform to be transmitted between humans and will

be more harmful than the tsunami or SARS.

Meanwhile

the Deputy of Public Health Minister orders influenza

A vaccine to have in stock.

Thairath

– January 11, 2005

* January 10 was the first day for 400 districts to accept applications for MP candidate. The atmosphere was very vigorous and many supporters from each parties showed up such as Thai Rak Thai, Democrat, and Chatthai. Mahachon did not appear, but will apply on January 11 because it is the number of the party (11 on the ballots). Supporters may just hold signs and shout slogan, but cannot dance and have a parade with drums. This would violate the election law.

* On

January 10 at the Klongprem Central Jail, a relative

meeting day for 2004 was held. At the same time an academic degree cerebration was held for the 23 prisoners who graduated from Sukhothai Thammathiraj.

Mr. Ramba, the alias of Mr. Thanachat Wiwatanachat,

the ex-husband of Miss Thailand of 1994 runner-up

has 7 bachelor degrees with 4 from Sukhothai Thamathiraj

and 3 master degrees from private universities in America. He said that he will be independent next

* Bunyat, leader of Democrat Party, points out that Thaksin is building the image on TV that the government works hard on tsunami relief and that this will impact voter psychology. He is confident that MPs in the area do not neglect people in six provinces, but this is concealed .

year and feels anxious to stay outside of jail, but will do his best and will further his study in law.

Thai-language newspapers – January 12, 2005

January 12, 2005

Categories: Thai Media Project

Matichon

– January 12, 2005

* At the mobile cabinet meeting, Thaksin teased his competitor, the Democrat party. He said that Mr. Samit warned about tsunami in 1998 when Maj Gen Sanun Kajornprasat was Minister of Interior, Jurin Laksanavisit was Deputy of Minister of Commerce and Jaded Insawang was the Governor of Phangnga . Thaksin said they did not believe the warning and worried it would destroy the image of tourism.

* Thaksin's activities in Chiangrai are warming himself from the cold weather. For the breakfast, he showed how to make noodle and soft-boiled meatballs which were auctioned to get money for tsunami victims. The winner for auction was Mr. Anutin Chanveerakul, Deputy Minister of Commerce at the price of 50,000 baht for a bowl.

Thairath

– January 12, 2005

* **Bloody news** – Mr. Tiwa Pakbuppa, 41-year-old canvasser for Mr. Kerkoon Danvichai, ex-MP and candidate of TRT in Ayutaya zone 1, was shot by a gunman during the night of January 10. PM Thaksin commanded that the police find the murderer and those who hired him within 7 days. At the beginning the police suspect that the murder is about national politics and the victim was threaten on the phone before.

* The situation in the south still baking hot . Recently a thief shot a policeman dead in Amphur Jana, Songkhla and set off a bomb in Yala injuring 5 people–2 being police.

Unshackling the drug habit

January 12, 2005

Categories: Health

[Unshackling](#)

[the drug habit](#) – *Bangkok Post*, January

12, 2005

The sight of men chained to trees and walls at a ponoh school in Mayo district may shock strangers, but not local people.

These men have been diagnosed as mentally deranged from prolonged drug abuse, or are HIV-Aids positive...

Most patients are young Muslim men, all are shackled to prevent them escaping. Some had gone berserk and smashed everything around them.

The herbal treatments are said to cure drug addicts, the mentally ill and those in the early stage of HIV-Aids...

Thai-language newspapers – January 13, 2005

January 13, 2005

Categories: Thai Media Project

Matichon

– January 13, 2005

* On January 12, the Agency for Real Estate Affairs or AREA evaluates land prices. They find that the land in Yaowarat is higher than Silom which 650,000 baht per square yard. Silom is 500,000 and the land where near BTS gets an even higher price such as Bangyai from 5 million baht per 1600 square metres up to 20 million baht. The land near Suwannapoom Airport has increased 7%—especially the commercial areas (zoned red) at Bangng-Trad Road which is owned by the Central group.

* On January 12, at Thammasat University, there was an academic speech given Prof. Rungsun Thanapornphan, the social sciences teacher of the year 2003, on “Thaksinomics under Thaksinacracry.” He said Thaksin is a super commander who makes ministers change their behavior not to make problems. For the next four years Thaksinomics will reward populism and benefit government persons. For example, tax exemptions are given for people to get votes, but the government gets money back from temptations like the lottery and casinos.

* Yala

still in crisis. A thief shot one villager dead and a headman in Pattani was shot and injured. The 1009 special troops were sent to control in three southern provinces. Meanwhile, in Bangkok, *ustaz* still keep silent waiting for their lawyer.

Thairath

– January 13, 2005

* The criminal court acquits Dr. Sanon Chairoengchot, a 54-year-old special teacher at Pakklang University,

* **Bloody**

news – Two baht

make a young student kill one guy. Mr. Nattapong Chotdilok, the son of the owner of a minimart in Bungkump district, shot a drunken guy after quarreling

Nakornsawan province of raping his 20-year-old student.

The court said the charge was not made soon enough

(the accuser has to notify to process the case within

3 months) and that the student consented to get money and other benefits from the accused.

* Bunyat (Democrat party leader) and Anek (Mahachon

Party leader) besiege Thaksin. Bunyat said Thaksin

uses the cabinet meeting to abuse and attack other parties instead of discussing the nation's problem.

He also brings his team to stay overnight at the Kumnan's (head of district) house during the election

campaign. Meanwhile Dr. Anek said if TRT is returned

to government, it will be a new species of dictatorship

that have power to destroy the country and be more

dangerous than the tsunami. Because the wave of this new species will destroy democracy and

collapse

the Thai economy.

about him not having two baht to buy whisky. Mr. Nattapong said he protected himself because Mr. Sompong attacked him first. Mr. Sompong usually got into debt when he came to buy things at the shop.

Political parties meet with Labour

January 13, 2005

Political parties meet with Labour

– January 13, 2005

Political Parties meet with labours/Labour policy and the general election of 2005

Sunday, January 16, 2005 in the small hall of Thammasat University

Organized by Thai Labour Solidarity Working Committees, State Enterprise, Workers' Relations Confederation, Labour

organization of Thailand and American Center for International

Labour Solidarity (ACILS)

Schedule

08.00 a.m. – Registration

09.00 a.m. – Welcome speech by Mr. Sripoe Wayupak, the chairperson of Thai Labour Solidarity Working Committees, Mr. Somsak Kosaisuk, Secretary of State Enterprise Worker's Relations Confederation, and

Mr. Manas Kosol, Chairperson of Labour Organization of Thailand

09.30 a.m. – Open ceremony by Mr. William Konglin, the director of American Center for International Labour Solidarity

10.00 a.m. – Presentation "Labour policy that the workers want"

10.30 a.m. – Labour Policy of Chatthai Party

11.00 a.m. – Q and A

11.30 a.m. – Labour Policy of Thai Rak Thai Party

12.00 – Q & A

Afternoon

12.30 p.m. – Lunch

13.30 p.m. – Labour Policy of Democrat Party

14.00 p.m. – Q & A

14.30 p.m. – Labour Policy of Mahachon Party

15.00 p.m. – Q & A

15.30 p.m. – Suggestion to Labour on how to vote by the Election

Commission

Moderated all day by Associate Professor Lae Dilokvithayarat,

Chulalongkorn University Associate Professor Malee Prukpongsaowalee,

Thammasat University

Photo and article = editorial comment

January 13, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

Friday January 13, 3:40 PM **AFP**

Thai PM says government officials killed Muslim lawyer



BANGKOK (AFP) - Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra said a missing Muslim human rights lawyer had been killed by government officials, in a case that has drawn international concern.

At least four officials were involved in the murder of Somchai Neelapaijit, who went missing in Bangkok in March 2004, Thaksin said, adding that prosecutors would file a new case, possibly next month.

"I know that Somchai is dead, and more than four government officials were involved, but witnesses and evidence are still being collected," Thaksin told reporters.

Photo: AFP
[Click to enlarge](#)

Photo and article = editorial comment

– January 13, 2005

Some news editor has picked out a hilariously frivolous photo of Thaksin to counterpoint this grave article about the apparent murder of a "disappeared" Muslim lawyer at the hands of the Thai government.

Police campaign to ‘discredit’ Porntip

January 14, 2005

Categories: Thai Police

[Police campaign to ‘discredit’ Porntip](#) –

Bangkok Post, January 14, 2005

...Dr Porntip played a key role in amending the criminal procedural law to allow prosecutors, doctors and local administration officials to take part in autopsies of suspects who died in police custody. "That made most police feel as though they were the bad guys," one analyst said...

Condolences sign

January 14, 2005

Categories: 2004 Tsunami



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Condolences sign

– January 14, 2005

The sign (left) reads: *Very deep condolence to those who were killed and injured in the tsunami in the six provinces in southern Thailand.*

This sign is located at the heavily traveled Skytrain-Subway junction at Sukumvit. Although the sign is from MRTA, it is placed just within the Skytrain entrance.

Peace Art Project Cambodia

January 14, 2005

Categories: Cambodia

[Peace](#)

[Art Project Cambodia](#) – January
14, 2005

Suvarnabhumi Airport News 2000-2005

January 15, 2005

Categories: Airports and Airlines

Post reparations – August 18, 2005

Concerning the government demands of the *Bangkok Post* over the '[fabricated story](#)': *They demand that the verdict be published in a full-page advertisement in a top-selling foreign newspaper in each country and aired on global television networks, such as CNBC, CCTV and BBC for one hour per day.*

Cormac has a humorous observation about the rather extreme demands: *Since commercial networks only have advertising slots of 5-15 minutes per hour, it will be interesting to see how they manage this. Especially if they really do mean BBC (not BBC World), which has never accepted advertising of any kind.*

I estimate the cost of the remaining newspaper adverts at 3 billion baht, which coincidentally is the approximate market value of Post Publishing. It would also add around 5% to Thailand's monthly trade deficit.

[AIRPORT 'CRACKS' ROW: Govt may sue over runway report](#) – *The Nation*, August 12, 2005

Yesterday: [A tale of two newspapers: Airport cracks and the 'fabricated news report'](#) – August 11, 2005

...The legal threat is a new wave of apparent political pressure that has hit the Bangkok Post over the past few years. The paper is largely owned by the Central Group, which had a showdown with the Transport Ministry over a land-lease contract for its Lat Phrao shopping complex in 2002. The contract extension remains a contentious issue to this day.

Also in 2002, the Central Group fought off a takeover bid by a group of shareholders led by a business figure, a bitter battle that many Bangkok Post reporters thought stemmed from attempted political interference.

Early last year, Bangkok Post reporters decried the murky transfer of its editor Veera Prateep-chaikul, who was known to have been under pressure from the management following news reports critical of the prime minister...

A tale of two newspapers: Airport cracks and the 'fabricated news report' – August 11, 2005

Someone at the *Post* must have really gotten into trouble for their August 9 report, 'US experts insist runways cracked' (*Bangkok Post*, August 9, 2005): *...A team of US aviation experts is insisting that both runways at Suvarnabhumi airport need reconstruction as there are severe cracks that are large enough to sink the nose wheel of an aircraft, according to an aviation source...* (The article has already been removed from the *Post* website)

TNA responds with this oddly entitled article:

[Government spokesman to be responsible for misinformation to media](#) – TNA, August 10, 2005

...For instance, Mr Thaksin said, the fabricated news report in an English-language newspaper that a US engineer had quietly checked the cracked runways had damaged Thailand's reputation in the eyes of the world community that some persons might not visit Thailand because of their concern about such report...

The next day the *Post* is apologizing for its story on the airport cracks while *The Nation* keeps the heat on.

[Correction](#) – *Bangkok Post*, August 10, 2005

A press tour of the West Runway of Suvarnabhumi airport yesterday found no cracks in the middle of the runway as earlier reported by the Bangkok Post. There were small cracks on the shoulders near the touch-down points.

These may have been mistaken by the source for serious cracks on the main runway.

The Bangkok Post apologises for any inconvenience

[HOT ISSUE: Airport wrinkles grow](#) – *The Nation*, August 10, 2005

...Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, Deputy Prime Minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit and Deputy Transport Minister General Chaiyanan Charoensiri tried to convince the public that the cracks on the runway shoulders are not accidental but connection points to accommodate expansion. But the runways allegedly have other serious cracks

this report may have caused to all parties concerned.

[Authorities deny big runway cracks](#) – Bangkok Post, August 10, 2005

...At Government House yesterday, Transport Minister Pongsak Raktapongpaisal confirmed that there were only cracks on runway shoulders that engineers had made to fill with asphalt to prevent cracks in the concrete runway surface when adjoining new taxi-ways are built in the future. The transport minister also quoted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra as denying in the cabinet meeting yesterday that he had invited a team of US experts to examine any cracks on the runways of the new airport.

The report about serious cracks was untrue and New Bangkok International Airport Co (NBIA) would check where the report came from, Mr Pongsak said.

"Rumours are released to make foreigners lose confidence in our airport. As our airport is close to completion, rumours are released to delay the airport," said the minister...

– ones which reporters haven't seen – and they could force reconstruction of the two runways...

[STREET WISE: Runway crack sprouts worries](#) – The Nation, August 10, 2005

...This is what Transport Minister Pongsak Ruktapongpisal said he has concerns about. In an interview yesterday, he said the ministry was trying to find the person who ran his mouth off about the crack.

He also squawked that the culprit must have wanted to delay the airport's construction, which would not a patriotic act at all.

It all sounded rather strange, though. Why does Pongsak need to identify the person? Wouldn't it be more useful if he could convince the public that the crack was intentional and was part of preparatory work for a third runway? ...

[‘A tale of two newspapers’ archives](#)

[Airport town not under BMA](#) – Bangkok Post, February 23, 2005

...The town will be established by appropriating a total of 63.92sq km of land from Prawet, Saphan Sung and Lat Krabang districts in Bangkok and 220sq km from Samut Prakan's Bang Pli district and Bang Sao Thong sub-district.

...Deputy city clerk Pichai Chaipoteapanich said the airport town would definitely dilute some of city hall's administrative authority. The BMA would contribute its ideas in the drafting of the three laws.

... If the economic ramifications were substantial, city hall would consider asking for extra money from the government to make up for lost revenue.

On the forum: [3D presentations of the new Bangkok airport](#) – February 15, 2005

[‘Bangkok International Airport’s consultant is Munich Airport’](#) – luchtzak.be, December 26, 2005

Bangkok International Airport's consultant is Munich Airport. It will provide airport re-location and start of operations advice to the new BKK airport, that is due to open in late September 2005. Munich Airport indeed has some experience and expertise in that field.

More about the world's tallest control tower – November 29, 2004

Dave, among others, alerted us to 2Bangkok.com being [mentioned](#) on the Airliners.net forum. The forumers there scoff at both Malaysian and Thai claims to have the world's tallest tower: *Vancouver Harbour (Canada) at 465ft is the tallest in the world. It sits atop an office tower in downtown Vancouver and controls traffic (mainly seaplane and helicopter) into, out of and around Vancouver Harbour...*

Earlier: Interesting [airport tower](#) thread on the 2Bangkok.com forum – November 26, 2004

Airport photos – November 21, 2004

Victor writes: Did you see these new photos posted on the [constantly changing NBIA website](#)? I'm guessing they're updated weekly!

[TERMINAL tussles: Threat of the new Bangkok airport](#) – Channel News Asia, November 18, 2004

While the fight for flights among airline companies – with or without frills – continues unabated in the air, competition on the airport tarmac is no less intense. Since 1998, Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Seoul have all opened new international airports, spending \$24 billion in all...

[Engineer who used friendly persuasion on locals to sell their land looks back with pride](#) – Bangkok Post, October 24, 2004

...Mr Somboon joined the department in 1962 as a third-class engineer and a year later was assigned to buy land in Bang Pli area for the airport construction. He would spend the next 10 years gathering title deeds covering 12,000 rai of private land for the development.

He was placed solely in charge of land purchase. Expropriation was non-existent in the law prior to the introduction of the Expropriation Act in 1973.

The former C-7 official remembers how his hand ached from manually copying title deeds, the tedious negotiations with land owners and the disbursement of expropriation money that seemed to take forever...

[Don Muang Airport to become new govt hub](#) – TNA, October 20, 2004

...Mr. Jakrapob told journalists here that the plan was discussed by the cabinet at its mobile meeting in Thailand's northwestern province of Tak yesterday.

"After the opening of the Suvarnabhumi Airport, the cabinet wants to turn the Don Muang Airport to become a new centre for government agencies, particularly those of the parliament and the judicial system", he said.

...The cabinet also discussed a related plan to develop the Southern Bangkok Criminal Court building near Sanam Luang ceremonial ground to be a new museum, disclosed the government spokesman...

The airport expressway – September 28, 2004

Inside info from the [forum](#): *...The guy behind this idea was not LTP's secretary (not Dr. Kamloplak) but an economist from NESDB. You may wonder why NESDB has to do with the new airport. It was the land use planning project of new Suwannabhume Airport late last year...*

[Expressway link for Suvarnabhumi](#) – Bangkok Post, September 25, 2004

The government plans to spend 13 billion baht building a 20-kilometre tollway link over the next 7.5 years to Suvarnabhumi airport from the Ram Intra-Art Narong expressway...

[City planning only now getting underway around new airport](#) – Bangkok Post, May 26, 2004

Suvarnabhumi airport is scheduled to open in September next year, but authorities have only just started city planning in the vicinity.

The Department of Public Works and Town and Country Planning yesterday organised the first public hearing at a Bangkok hotel to sound out the demands of the people of Samut Prakan where the capital's new airport is being built at Nong Ngu Hao...

[2004 to be 'Year of new airport construction'](#) – MCOT, December 30, 2003

...Launching the scheme, Mr. Vichet said that he had ordered the Department of Aviation to conduct an urgent feasibility study into the construction of a second airport to serve the growing number of tourist arrivals on the southern resort island of Samui.

... there were several other suitable locations for new airports where the number of visitors would make the construction of an airport cost effective.

These included the district of Pai in the northern province of Mae Hong Son, and an airport for Uttradit Province.

He also called for the acceleration of 26 provincial airport construction projects currently underway, stressing the importance of new airports for the blossoming low-cost airline industry, which looked set to increase annual passenger numbers from eight million to 20 million within the next five years.

[New airport infrastructure plan](#) – Bangkok Post, November 3, 2003

...Most of the spending proposed for a period of 30 years will pay for new roads.

NESDB deputy secretary-general Visnu Bhulsuk, who heads a committee on the city planning around the new Bangkok airport, said the "Suvarnabhumi Aerotropolis Development Plan" studied by four consultant firms would cost 159,127 million baht and be implemented between 2006 and 2035.

Of that, 101,335 million baht will go on road construction and the rest on flood prevention systems, tapwater, power, telephone, wastewater treatment and garbage disposal. The development is split into three 10-year stages and each year of the development should cost about 5,304 million baht...

[More airport projects](#) – The Nation, September 26, 2003

The first facility will be a Bt4-billion passenger terminal with a tunnel at the south end of the airport. It will

accommodate Airbus A380s... The second project will be of a 1.4-kilometre tunnel at the north end of the airport, expected to cost Bt3.515 billion.

[Giant air control tower not yet started – delay a cause for ‘serious concern’](#) – Bangkok Post, October 5, 2003
Despite these warnings of project delays, 2Bangkok.com has always been informed that the ‘tallest air control tower in the world’ project has no practical purpose—it is a vanity project the Prime Minister insisted on after visiting Malaysia’s giant new airport. In fact, such a huge tower in the middle of the airport is considered a safety risk. It may be though that the radar system has been grouped with the giant tower project and that the radar delay will cause a problem with opening on time. The airport will also have two smaller control towers (one for each runway). These are being constructed already. Anyway... : *Delayed construction of the air control tower and radar system are cause for concern at Suvarnabhumi airport, which is expected to start operations in less than two years...*

At least six months are needed for the test run before the official opening set for September 2005.

The 132-metre-high tower and the 800-million-baht radar system will be built by Aeronautical Radio of Thailand (Aerothai). Construction has not yet started. Aerothai could not be reached for comment on the delay...

A tale of two newspapers: Airport construction – September 12, 2003

This is a good one: The *Post* omits the part about a three month delay while *The Nation* puts this in their headline. The *Post* calls the lawsuits flying around the project "legal obligations." This seems to be once again a case of a *Post* reporter taking a government figure at his word, while *The Nation* reporter seems to know the background to what is going on and relies on more sources. More on the [Suvarnabhumi Airport](#)

[Bid to speed construction](#) – Bangkok Post, September 12, 2003

The government wants the new airport to be up and running by Sept 29, 2005...

He would ask the ITO to forget about its legal obligations with the New Bangkok International Airport Co and agree to accelerate the project.

[Airport completion faces 3-month delay](#) – The Nation, September 12, 2003

Completion of the New Bangkok International Airport is likely to be set back three months, due to design revisions of the passenger terminal and aircraft parking surfaces, an official source said yesterday.

Work by contractor ITO Joint Venture is 20-per-cent behind schedule, according to a senior executive of New Bangkok International Airport Co, the state-owned project developer...

Aside from these changes increasing its workload, ITO has had differences with the project’s architect, Murphy Jahn/Tams/Act (MJTA), the source said.

[\\$9 billion security overhaul for LA airport](#) – USA Today, July 10, 2003

Interesting new concepts to be applied to LAX to combat terrorism that might have some relevance to the [new Bangkok airport](#) in the future: *The plan would eliminate the ability of passengers to drive directly into the U-shaped terminal complex, where a car bomb could kill or injure passengers lined up at ticket counters. Instead, passengers would be dropped off at remote locations and receive a preliminary security screening before being whisked to their gates via people movers... United Airlines and its foreign carrier partners, including Lufthansa, Singapore, Thai, Asiana and Air New Zealand, endorse the proposal. But a group that says it represents 80 airlines at LAX says a majority of its members are opposed.*

[Latest supertruss photos](#) – July 9, 2003

[Criticism over weak roof played down](#) – Bangkok Post, July 5, 2003

Sombat Uthaisang, head of the Transport Ministry committee supervising the airport project, said the issue had been raised in 1999 and the terminal designer, the Murphy Jahn/TAMS/ACT consortium (MJTA), confirmed it would not affect the overall structure of the terminal... The miscalculation of the louvre weight occurred in the design process and had nothing to do with changes to the design to cut the construction cost, Mr Sombat said.

A tale of two newspapers: The airport roof

It is not often that the *Bangkok Post* or the *Nation* have more background info than the Thai-language papers, but the *Post* adds in a political element to the latest about 'problems' with the new airport [roof](#). *Matichon* did carry the story a day earlier though.

Arun Chaiseree asking ITO and Murphy Jahn to modify NBIA main terminal or risk roof collapse – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Matichon Daily*, July 3, 2003

Engineer Arun Chaiseree (the founder of Arun Chaiseree Consulting Engineer, an independent consultant hired by ITO) has issued the letter to ITO stating that the weight of the roofs (Supertruss and secondary trusses) designed by MJTA is too heavy for the supports to carry, risking collapse.

The critical points for the supertruss and secondary trusses are:

- 1) The weight of the trellis louver roof is 124 kg/sq-m—three times the initial analysis of 43 kg/sq-m
- 2) The supporting beams for the secondary truss designed by MJTA cannot carry the weight according to specifications creating metal fatigue on the steel supports
- 3) The supporting structure for the supertruss has to carry weight 39% more than the maximum limit and the supporting structure for the secondary truss has to carry weight 109% more than maximum limits. Nobody could accept this overloading of the structure.

Therefore, ITO must cut down the weight of the trellis louver roof and find a way to add more support for the roof now. Reinforcing the structure requires 3 billion baht—lighter roofs will prohibit the ITO from using heavy glass.

[Problems uncovered in terminal roof – Democrats say PM should take blame](#) – *Bangkok Post*, July 4, 2003

Mr Thaworn said Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, former transport minister Wan Muhamad Nor Matha and incumbent transport minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit should take responsibility for 2-3 billion baht damage caused by amending construction specifications. "Corruption was practised every time a change was made," he said. Mr Thaworn said he still had more evidence to prove the project was plagued with corruption, which had caused delays in construction of a hangar as well as the opening of the airport.

[Supertruss!](#) – [thaiengineering.com](#), February 28, 2003

Thanks to Pas of [Bangkok Highrises](#) for alerting us to some photos of the 'super truss' roof structure for SBIA terminal.

[Work starts on new airport runway 2](#) – *Business Day*, February 7, 2003

Unheralded, unannounced, work has begun on building the second runway for the New Bangkok International Airport (NBIA). The start is three months behind the original schedule of November, but aviation industry executives say that it is good sign that Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and his Transport Minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit are beginning to make things happen at the budding new airport....

Airport bus routes/airport gate construction – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager Weekly*, January 27 – February 2, 2002

BMTA are proposing the new six bus routes connecting NBIA with downtown Bangkok and Samut Prakarn.

- 1) Onnut – Phra Khanong – NBIA via Sukhumvit 71 Road, New Ram IX Highway and Motorway (connecting to the Skytrain at Onnut)
- 2) Thai Cultural Center – Ramkhamhaeng – NBIA via Pracha Uthit Road, Ramkhamhaeng Road, (connecting to the Subway at Thai Cultural Center)
- 3) Bang Kapi – Lad Phrao – NBIA via Lad Phrao, Vibhavadee, and Expressway (connecting to the Skytrain at Lad Phrao)
- 4) Min Buri – Romklao – NBIA via Ram Khamhaeng Road, Rom Klao Road and Kingkaeo Road
- 5) Samut Prakarn – Bang Na – NBIA via Sukhumvit and Bang NA – Bang Pakong
- 6) Samut Prakarn – Sri Nakharin – NBIA via Thepharak, Sri Nakharin and Motorway.

The busses would be both Euro 2 Air-conditioned busses and normal red busses.

Progress of the construction of the gateways to NBIA:

- 1) Northern Gate (Access B) – from km 12.700 of Motorway – 867.6 million baht – 46% done since this is the Main Gate of NBIA – all elevated to avoid Eastern Railway and Onnut Road
- 2) Southern Gate (Access D) – from km 14.950 of Bang NA – Bang Pakong Highway – 36% done
- 3) Northern and Western Gate (Access A and E) – 70 million baht budget – design and land expropriation done, but bidding not started yet

- 4) Eastern Gate (Access C) from km 10.19 of Onnut Road – design and land expropriation done, but bidding not started yet
- 5) Royal Route (Western Access) – 300 million baht – design done, but land expropriation not yet completed

[Consultant named for airport](#) – Bangkok Post, December 26, 2002

The airline has also made some adjustments to the company's project schedule, opting for fast-track construction management to ensure the project completion by the end of December 2004 and all system testing by March 2005. THAI expects to require another six months to achieve full operational readiness at the Suvarnabhumi airport, in time for its opening scheduled in September 2005.

[Crucial meeting called to address NBIA kinks](#) – Business Day, December 7, 2002

ITO and Murphy Jahn were then given one month time to make certain changes so the new airport's passenger terminal could accommodate 40 million passengers a year. Transport Minister Suriya Chungrungruangkit on Monday promised the new Bangkok international airport would be as modern and hitech as South Korea's Incheon International Airport and Hong Kong's Chek Lap Kok.

[Airline industry fears new airport might not open until 2007](#) – The Bangkok Post, November 27, 2002

...Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra vowed to ensure that Suvarnabhumi was completed on time. "I want an airport up to international standards, and I want it to be finished on time." The airport would be opened on Sept 29, 2005, he stressed...

Contradictory signals are coming from key officials. Last week, former interior minister Sombat Uthaisaeng, who has been appointed to head a new committee established to speed up work on the new airport, said the project's management consultant had told him that the work could not be completed before October 2005. But Transport Minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit reiterated that construction would be completed by the end of 2004

[Airport will be completed on time](#) – Business Day, November 21, 2002

Sombat's comment came in response to PMC's master plan outlining all construction works inside the NBIA site which said the project might be delayed by one more year.

[Red tape to delay launch by one year](#) – The Bangkok Post, November 15, 2002

ACM Therdsak Sajjarak, president of Airports of Thailand Plc (AoT), said the act required that construction contracts worth more than a billion baht go through at least 19 stages of consideration prior to approval.

[Plans to make the new airport handle 40m passengers](#) – Business Day, November 12, 2002

...Sombat Uthaisang, the chairman of the New Bangkok International Airport's Progress Follow up Committee, said yesterday that the passenger terminal was originally designed to serve only 30 million passengers annually but he wants the design changed so that at least 40 million passengers a year can be handled.... Sombat said his committee found that the new airport passenger terminal and concourse buildings are about 30 percent behind schedule. "The former NBIA board failed to make any decisions, which caused the delay," he said.... "I believe the new airport will complete on time as earlier scheduled," he said. Government ministers, including Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra have repeatedly pledged that the airport construction will be finished by the end of 2004 and the new airport will be operational in 2005.

Airport faces lengthy contractual delays – The Bangkok Post, November 9, 2002

Very brief [blurb](#): *A lengthy process for choosing contractors is delaying work on Suvarnabhumi airport, says Sombat Uthaisang, head of the project's acceleration committee.*

New airport "about six months behind schedule" – Business Day, October 24, 2002

In an acknowledgement that construction of Bangkok's showpiece new international airport is not running smoothly and may be as much as six months behind schedule, the government is set to propose that the consortium led by Murphy Jahn be brought back as design consultant to get the project on track....

Government ministers, including Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, have repeatedly pledged that the airport construction will be finished by the end of 2004 in order for the airport to be operational the following year. But Business Day understands that work is currently about six months behind schedule....

Sombat said the construction of the passenger terminal and concourse buildings of the new airport had been delayed because the ITO Joint Venture, has stated that it didn't have a clear picture of the building model.... (excerpted from "Design supremo appointed to put airport back on flightpath" – Business Day, October 24, 2002)

Murphy Jahn set to complete airport designs – *Business Day*, October 22, 2002

The New Bangkok International Airport's (NBIA) board of directors is set to hire a design consultant for the Suvarnabhumi International Airport, permanent secretary for transport Srisook Chandrangsru said yesterday. To ensure that the new airport starts operations by 2005, NBIA is considering hiring the Murphy Jahn consortium as design consultant to work in tandem with ITO Joint Venture, which is led by Italian-Thai Development, the country's biggest contractor, said Srisook, who was also recently named the new chairman of NBIA after a management shake-up.

More assurances about the airport completion date – October 18, 2002

Business Day: New Transport and Communications Minister Suriya Chungrungruengkit yesterday pledged that the New Bangkok International Airport (NBIA), commonly known as Suwanaphumi International Airport, would definitely be finished on time as scheduled.

Suggestions that the international life of the existing airport at Don Muang should be extended were not an option, he added. His firm remarks and the strong commitment of the new minister may help to reassure airlines, particularly foreign ones, who have expressed their worries as to whether the schedule for building the new airport can be kept.... "We must take full advantage of this opportunity as Singapore is trying to compete with us," Suriya said.

[Post](#): Transport Minister Suriya Jungrungruengkit has ordered the Airports of Thailand Co to put its planned two-billion-baht expansion of Don Muang airport on hold. "It's now certain the Nong Ngu Hao airport will be completed right on schedule," he said. "So there's no value in spending two billion baht expanding Don Muang airport." ... It would be able to handle 45 million passengers a year, compared with 31 million passengers at Don Muang airport.

Words from the new transport minister – October 5, 2002

Depending on which local paper you read, the new airport will open "by the end of 2004" or "in 2005." Most international observers feel these dates are unrealistic.

New Transport Minister Suriya Jungrungruengkit said yesterday he was setting up a taskforce to supervise the construction of Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi international airport. Suriya, the former industry minister, said construction of the long-awaited airport would be completed by the end of 2004. (From The Nation, [SURIYA'S PLEDGE: New airport ready by 2004](#)) and

New Transport Minister Suriya Jungrungruengkit has pledged to give priority to ensuring that Suvarnabhumi International Airport opens on time in 2005. (from the Bangkok Post, [Airport tops Suriya's agenda](#))

[Threats over airport completion](#) – *Business Day*, September 11, 2002

This is in reaction to a news item in the Thai press in which Premchai Kannasut, the CEO of Italian-Thai, [mentions](#) that there are no actual plans for the terminal yet—the plans in hand now are only basic ones for the bidding process with no details. He cautions that the terminal, as proposed, will only be able to handle 30 million passengers—not the 40 million that are expected by 2005.

[Cash-rich AAT upbeat on airport](#) – *The Nation*, August 8, 2002

The new airport, Suvarnabhumi International Airport, is expected to be up and running from August 1, 2005...

[World's 9th busiest airport](#) – *The Nation*, 06:13, June 8, 2002

Bangkok International Airport was ranked the world's ninth busiest in terms of passenger numbers in January, according to figures from Airports Council International. The airport handled 2.73 million passengers in January, which was a 3-per-cent lower count than the first month of last year. Hong Kong's airport was ranked the world's 15th-busiest in January with 2.47 million passengers, a decline of 11.7 per cent. Singapore's Changi Airport was 19th busiest with 2.26 million passengers, a fall of 8.2 per cent. They got the stats from [this site](#) (Don Muang is 18th in cargo).

Airport news from Wisarut Bholsithi – May 10, 2002

Airport on schedule? – Minister Wannor

Minister Wannor (Wan-Muhammad Nor-Matha) told the press that he will quit politics if Suvarnabhumi Airport is not done on time (finished by December 2004 and open for business by March 2005, after 3-6 months of system testing). He also said the accusations by the Democrats of colossal bribery and collusion as well as a delayed opening is nonsense.

Airport on schedule? – Air Marshall Nopport Chanthawanit

Air Marshall Nopport Chanthawanit (Head of the NBIA Board) told Prachachart Thurakij journalists that the construction of the airport is 15% done. By the end of 2002, there will be a contract signing for 10 projects covering 26% of the whole section. The other 15% will be covered in 2003-2004. NBIA will hold back some parts the project (700 million baht worth) for Thai contractors only. Even though JBIC frowns upon the plan to retain parts of the project exclusively for local contractors, NBIA will do their best to make both JBIC and Thai contractors happy with the arrangement.

NBIA will officially open the airport by then end of the 3rd Quarter of 2005.

Donmuang's Future

Donmuang Airport (the existing international airport) will have the following functions after the opening of Suvarnabhumi Airport:

- 1) Aviation center for charter flights and other special aviation businesses
- 2) Airforce base (expanding)
- 3) Small private airlines with NO transfer flights
- 4) Aviation maintenance center
- 5) Emergency airport when Suvarnabhumi Airport can not take flights (the above translated and summarized from the Economic Section, *Thairath Daily*, May 8, 2002 and *Prachachart Thurakij*, May 9, 2002)

Airport oil depot location

PTT and BAFS have agreed about the place for Suvarnabhumi Airport oil depot. It must be outside the airport for safety reasons and risk prevention.

(translated and summarized from the Economic Section, *Thairath Daily*, May 8, 2002)

New airport tour – 21:05, May 8, 2002

Peter Fretten went on a tour of the airport construction and reports:

- * *It will have the tallest control tower in the world—slightly taller than the one at KL.*
- * *12,000 spaces for cars to park (no double parking).*
- * *8 lanes for arriving and departing cars and 8 lanes for busses.*
- * *Cantilevered roof supported by 120 meter-long beams.*
- * *Runways and flight bridges are being built to accommodate the new giant Airbus planes.*
- * *An underground station and channel for a train/skytrain/subway has been built. Eventually a company will be given rights to install and run the service.*
- * *The piling for the terminal is done. A problem is that the final design of the building itself is still being debated.*
- * *They claim they are on schedule for a September 2005 opening and also that they are 6 months ahead of schedule.*

Italian-Thai able to build airport? – 07:36, March 20, 2002

The New Bangkok International Airport has sought the view of the Central Bankruptcy Court to clarify if debt-ridden Italian-Thai Development Co is capable of building the main terminal and concourse of Suvarnabhumi Airport. (*Bangkok Post*, March 20, 2001)

Don Muang Airport to close in 2005? – February 1, 2002

AFP is [reporting](#) on a statement by the transport minister Wan Muhamad Noor Matha that there would be no need for Don Muang Airport once the [new airport](#) opens in 2005. This was a recommendation of a "government committee meeting," but would still have to go to the Cabinet for final approval.

Other snippets: *It could be converted into a maintenance facility or an international conference and exhibition center..... The possibility of the two airports, which are about 50 kilometres apart from each other, operating simultaneously during a transition period has been vigorously opposed by air transport professionals. It would be a disaster as there are no dedicated road or rail links between the facilities and travellers would have to contend with Bangkok's notoriously snarly traffic, experts said.*

[Wan stresses authority of AAT over new airport](#)

Business Day, January 15, 2002

B47bn rail network to link capital with new airport

Two-phase project to be finished by 2005

excerpted from the *Bangkok Post*, January 4, 2002

Thanks to Oran Viriyny for pointing out this article.

A panel has been set up to oversee construction of a 47-billion-baht rail link between the capital and the new international airport at Nong Ngu Hao in Samut Prakan.

...

Under the first phase a rail track and signal system would be built by 2004 between a station at the airport and a station at Phaya Thai, at a projected cost of 25.37 billion baht. The second phase, from 2003 to 2005, would see a track linking stations at Phaya Thai and Bang Sue at an estimated cost of 5.64 billion baht.

...

Where to put the jet fuel facility?

November 15, 2001

Wisarut Bholsithi reports: Italian Thai has signed a deal with NBIA to construct a terminal, but PTT PCL (the national petroleum company privatized on Nov 1, 2001—the first lot of the company's stocks is sold out within minutes) is arguing with NBIA over the location of the jet fuel facility since NBIA awarded the jet fuel facility construction contract to BAFS (Bangkok Aviation Fuel Services) which is the company that handles jet fuel at Donmuang Airport.

PTT said BAFS (Thailand Co. Ltd.) is going to construct the jet fuel facility on the land in the green belt area—far from the airport—while PTT PCL would build the facility within NBIA land.

The winning bid and the likely opening date

October 16, 2001

Wisarut Bholsithi reports: Italian-Thai PCL (with the support from Japanese construction firms such as Takenaka and Obayashi) won the bid for terminal construction for the Suvannabhum Airport with a price tag of 36.60 billion Baht, 120 million baht lower than the set price of 36.7 billion baht, after cutting the costs to the bone.

Victory of Italian-Thai PCL for the terminal bidding has stunned Ch. Karnchan PCL, Vijitrphan Co. Ltd., and Taisei-Mitsubishi. These firms said they never expected that Italian-Thai could cut the construction costs so much. Italian Thai PCL is still on the list for financial rehabilitation (recorded by the Stock Exchange of Thailand), but Japanese firms bailed Italian-Thai out of trouble so it was eligible to join the bidding.

However, IATA (International Air Transportation Association) has warned that Suvannabhum Airport is unlikely to be completed on December 5, 2004, so Italian Thai PCL should focus on the ways to expand the capacity of Suvannabhum Airport to be able to carry at least 40 million passengers a year after opening on December 5, 2005 (or 2006) since the target of 30 million passengers a year (the same capacity as Donmuang Airport) during the first year of operation is unlikely.

And according to *Thaipost*, October 16, 2001: Siam Commercial Bank PCL is backing up Italian-Thai PCL for the NBIA terminal construction with two sets of loans: 9 billion baht and 12 billion baht respectively. Even better, Obayashi and Takenaka (Japanese contractors) said they will continue the terminal construction even if Italian Thai PCL were to go bankrupt. The cabinet also paid 5.5 billion baht back to JBIC.

NBIA passenger terminal construction contract awarded

Italian-Thai sweeps new bid to win NBIA construction contract

[Business Day](#), by Siriphan Pongthanee, October 10, 2001

Italian-Thai Development (Ital-Thai), under the umbrella of the ITO Joint Venture Group, was awarded the contract for the construction of the New Bangkok International Airport (NBIA)'s passenger terminal complex with an offer of 36 billion baht. The bid was announced at the NBIA office and was attended by representatives from the Communications Ministry, the Senate, the House of Representatives, the bidders and members of the media.

Four groups participated in the bid, which had previously been delayed over questions of transparency: The ITO Joint Venture led by Ital-Thai, CKKB Joint Venture, led by CH Karnchang, SVNPK Joint Venture led by Vichitphan Construction and Taisei-Mitsubishi Joint Venture. The bids were based on the design revisions

made by the Murphy/Jahn/TAMS/ACT consortium, which features a passenger terminal consisting of two adjoining buildings. Ital-Thai won the bid with its 36.666 billion baht offer.

Of that amount, 15.085 billion baht will be used for the construction of one of the passenger terminal complex buildings, the remainder on the other building. The Taisei-Mitsubishi's 40.738 billion baht bid was the second lowest, 16.527 billion baht of which was earmarked for the construction of the passenger terminal. The highest bid came from the SVNPK group, who offered 49.213 billion baht.

Communications Ministry permanent secretary Srisook Chandarangsu said in his capacity as acting NBIA president that the NBIA would call in the ITO group to discuss the construction in detail very soon. The NBIA would also inform the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), the project's financier, of the result of the bid as well.

Srisook said that the JBIC would likely approve the bid by Nov 1 and has tentatively set the contract signing date for Nov 30. "We have done everything in accordance with the JBIC's conditions. The four original bidders were called in for the latest bidding contest. The whole process was done in a transparent manner. The JBIC should have no problem approving the loan. The construction will take roughly 36 months to complete and the airport will be operational by 2004 as scheduled," he said.

Ital-Thai executive vice president Tawatchai Suthiprapha said the company was able to offer the lowest price because it has its own steel manufacturing plant in Saraburi province, with a capacity of up to 6,000 tonnes a month. On the possibility that the company might join hands with other bidders in proceeding with the construction, he said it was too soon to talk about the matter as Ital-Thai's joint partners were capable of completing the project on their own.

Note about Latest News – October 1, 2001

There is plenty of ongoing news about Bangkok's Second International Airport. The problem is that it is mostly arguments concerning loans and calls to lower the overall cost of the program. While Malaysia and Singapore have been able to construct world-class facilities, Thailand just cannot manage to get its modern airport underway. So we have skipped posting every depressing "loan/cost-wrangle" article and tried to stick to more interesting things. -Ron Morris

New roads on tap for the airport area

October 3, 2001

Wisarat Bholsithi reports: The Highways Department has signed a contract to construct a new road (actually a road expansion to a 4-6 lane road) and new ramps connecting Suvannabhum Airport with Bangna-Bang Pakong Highway (AKA Bangna-Trat Highway) at the 15th km of the highway. The price tag for the road expansion and new ramps is 760 million baht. The Expressway Authority is also studying a plan to construct a new connection from the Bang Na-Chonburi Expressway to the Suvannabhum Airport.

Odds and ends on the bidding process

August 20, 2001

Wisarat Bholsithi reports: The Thaksin government and JBIC have different viewpoints. JBIC wants the four approved Japanese contractors to submit bids while Premier Thaksin and Ajan Wannor want to see all nine approved contractors compete for the terminal construction. JBIC would never want to see Japanese contractors lose in the bidding for terminal construction even though some European and Korean firms have much cheaper bids. Even though Premier Thaksin has lined up Krungthai Bank PCL as a local creditor, I think he will still need foreign creditors to back the project and Japanese financial institutes have the lowest interest rates. Think about it...

Cost blowout threatens further delay

Travel Trade Report, February 2001

online http://www.ttreport.com/News_Feb/bkk_second_airport_feb14.htm

The Second Bangkok International Airways (Sbia), faces further delay thus resulting in significant economic loss. According to New Bangkok International Airport chairman General Mongkon the latest problem is a Bt8 billion cost blowout.

Unless the passenger terminal and concourse building contract is awarded within the next few months, the Sbia or Suwannabhumi Airport, as it was recently named by His Majesty the King, will not be able to open in 2004 as scheduled. Nbia managing director Somjetr Tinnaphong said not opening the new airport as scheduled cost Bt200 billion in lost revenue annually, based on figures from the International Air Transport Association (Iata).

The biggest losers from further delays would be the tourism, high-value manufacturing and agricultural industries, said Somjetr. The latest setback facing the Suwannabhumi Airport project stems from the fact that all four bids to construct the passenger terminal and the concourse complex are about Bt8 billion higher than the Bt45-billion budget estimate.

In an attempt to bring the price down, Mongkon said four measures were being taken. The airport's designer Murphy Jahn Consortium has been asked to modify the design to bring the price within the Bt45-billion budget. The government has also been asked to increase the budget. And the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, which is providing the Bt73-billion loan for construction work has been asked for assistance.

Mongkon said he had agreed with Murphy Jahn that the design modification would be complete the soonest time possible. However, the government appears unable to extend the budget. It is as yet unsure whether the bidders will be able to reduce their prices. All initially refused to drop their prices, but the nbia is yet to begin official negotiations. Mongkon said that the government would have no choice but to seek help from the Japanese government as it is paying for the airport's construction — the Thai government and the Airport Authority of Thailand provide only the working capital. Mongkon said if the Nbia was lucky it would be able to finalize the Bt45-billion terminal and concourse contract within this year. Otherwise, the company could be required by the JBC to begin a new bidding process which would take another 18 months. The Thai Finance Ministry will be asked to help during the negotiations with the Japanese government.

More delays at second airport threaten Bangkok's hub status

[*Travel Trade Weekly website*](#), February 12, 2001

The threat of more delays and the loss of gateway status in the region looms over Bangkok's problem-plagued second international airport.

Chairman of the airport project Gen Mongkol Ampornpisit said last week that Suvarnabhumi International Airport would be delayed again beyond the 5 December 2004 opening date that was fixed last year.

Subsequent comments from Airport Authority of Thailand executives suggested the second airport could be delayed as much as two years to 2006. That would require another round of improvements to Don Muang costing an estimated Bt2 billion.

Gen Mongkok warned a further delay to the second airport project would end Bangkok's bid to become the premier gateway in Asia and turn the airport into a branch hub of Singapore.

Changi airport in Singapore plans to open its third passenger terminal in 2006, giving it a capacity for 64 million passengers a year.

In its first phase Suvarnabhumi airport will be able to handle 30 million passengers a year. It will have two runways capable of handling 76 flights per hour.

Last year Don Muang International Airport accommodated nearly 30 million passengers. When Don Muang completes its expansion plan in 2003, it will be able to accommodate up to 36 million passengers.

By 2010 all phases should be ready, giving Suvarnabhumi airport a capacity to handle 112 flights per hour and 100 million passengers a year.

It is now 40 years since the project was first initiated and only 20% of the construction has been completed. Construction of the passenger terminal should have started last November. Design flaws have pushed back the project already by three months, which could mean the airport cannot open on 5 December 2004. Murphy Jahn/TAMS/ACT, the design firm, was accused of dragging its feet on the design, which had to be adapted to meet a revised budget of Bt45,000 million.

A clock is ticking at the airport's development site. As of this publication date the clock shows 1,391 days to the opening date of 5 December 2004 but it has been estimated that it could take another 148 days considering current delays.

Mr Mongkol said, if the airport could not open in 2004, many key airlines would move their regional bases to Singapore for at least 10 years and Thailand will lose a lot of revenue.

New airport doomed to further turmoil – *Bangkok Post*, May 29, 2000

Even those in charge of the new Bangkok international airport project, alias Nong Ngu Hao, are hard pressed to confirm if the troubled project would be completed by its 2004 deadline. Delays have become a defining character of this four-decade-old project and only 13% has so far been completed. The reason, to put it simply, is politics and corruption.

"Every big project has to deal with political influence. This is a national problem," said Deputy Premier and Commerce Minister Supachai Panitchpakdi, who chairs the New Bangkok International Airport Development Committee. He said that in the past, politicians had represented vested interests which tried to make profits from the 120-billion-baht project but he stressed with confidence that the ruling government was free of such problems.

However, he would not be able to make the same assurances after the government ends its tenure this November. "Before the government ends, I will try to set a clear guideline that will guarantee the progress of the project," Mr Supachai said. "If we leave too many problems that need decisions, the project can be shaken. The construction of the new airport should not be delayed beyond 2004 or 2006." Sansern Wongchaum, secretary-general of the National Economic and Social Development Board, admitted that the Nong Ngu Hao project had been problematic because of several government changes in the past. "That deprived the project of continuity in the management and real experts who should have been in charge of the implementation," he said. Although political changes would no longer affect the scheme because loan contracts and the NBIA guaranteed progress, political influence might still delay the completion, he said.

"It is difficult to free Nong Ngu Hao from politics," NBIA managing director Somchet Tinapong said. The Nong Ngu Hao plan was first raised when a city planning consultant firm in 1960 advised the government that Bangkok should have a new airport so the activities of commercial airlines and the military at Don Muang airport could be separated. The firm suggested it should be located east of the capital because Bangkok was likely to grow in that direction. The following year, the Transport and Communications Ministry selected a vast land plot called "Nong Ngu Hao" (cobra swamp) in Bangphli district of Samut Prakan as the location for the development.

It took a decade, from 1963 to 1973, for the Aviation Department to buy and expropriate private land and gather public land which forms the whole plot covering 19,800 rai (about 32 square kilometers) for the new construction. The project was shelved in the following five years and then the Transport and Communications Ministry hired another consultant firm to review it again in 1978. However, the scheme was shelved again for over a decade until 1991 when the Anand Panyarachun government decided it was time for the construction and assigned the Airports Authority of Thailand to implement the project. From that point, the AAT worked with its consultant on the master plan and the conceptual design of the whole airport and won cabinet approval in 1995 to join forces with the Finance Ministry to establish the subsidiary, NBIA.

The serious move by the state to revive the project prompted the children of residents who lived on the airport site since the first land expropriation in 60's and 70's to demand a new round of compensation although their parents received compensation decades ago.

To prove its endlessly problematic nature, the Nong Ngu Hao project ran into problems when Gen Chavalit Yongchaiyudh was deputy premier, in the Banharn Silpa-archa government. The general, overseeing the new Bangkok airport project, unexpectedly aired his idea in 1995 that the facility should be moved to Kamphaeng Saen in Nakhon Pathom, west of Bangkok. However, officials managed to convince him of scrapping this idea the same year.

In 1996, it was revealed that the Nong Ngu Hao airport could not be completed by the 2000 schedule due to a delay in the passenger terminal design and the relocation of villagers from the project site. Problems over

the design focused around a requirement for the contractor, the Murphy Jahn, TAMS and ACT consortium, to include the Thai identity into the passenger terminal, plus an added concern the design would cost more than the allocated budget.

The delay gradually postponed the completion schedule of Nong Ngu Hao from 2000 to 2001 and then 2002. As a result, the authorities turned to an expansion of Don Muang airport so that it would be able to serve the increasing number of air traffic volumes pending the completion of Nong Ngu Hao.

In January 1997, Gen Chavalit, as the newly-appointed prime minister, changed his mind again by proposing to relocate the new airport from Nong Ngu Hao to Bang Pu district in Samut Prakan where a new business city was being planned. The new location in the coastal district, that would require land reclamation from the sea, was raised after the state had spent about seven billion baht acquiring land in Nong Ngu Hao and signed various contracts worth over 14 billion baht with Thai and international companies for the development of the old location.

The idea faded within a month after being attacked by members of both the government and the opposition. However, the Chavalit government decided to officially delay the Nong Ngu Hao project and switch more investment to expand Don Muang. It wanted Don Muang to serve Bangkok air traffic until 2007. In the meantime, it postponed the Nong Ngu Hao schedule to 2003 and reduced the airport's initial capacity from serving 30 million passengers annually to 20 million, and from having two runways to one.

The opposition attacked the decision on the grounds the already-congested Don Muang could not bear an expansion, and the state would have to spend on funding the development at both Don Muang and Nong Ngu Hao.

When the opposition came into power in late 1997, it revived the policy to develop Nong Ngu Hao as the number one airport for Bangkok and a regional aviation hub of Southeast Asia by 2003. The new government scaled down the Don Muang expansion while raising the initial capacity of Nong Ngu Hao back to 30 million annual passengers.

The only quick and decisive, but suspicious, implementation of the new airport project was the effort to start the improvement of the swampy Nong Ngu Hao site. Sand and gravel had to be dumped on the site to compress the swampy soil and water drained out through special plastic pipes, called prefabricated vertical drains (PVD). A bid invitation for the landfill contract was announced in September 1996.

The NBIA opened bids mid-November, swiftly evaluated them and signed the deal with the winning contractor, Italian-Thai Development Plc, in the same month. In the meantime, losing bidders complained to the Counter Corruption Commission about irregularities.

Most bidders thought they were disqualified too fast and unfairly. Each contender had to pay 500,000 baht for tender documents. Out of 19 bidders, 13 found they were disqualified immediately upon opening the documents they had just bought. They were required to have installed five million metres of prefabricated vertical drains (PVD) within a three-year period before entering the bidding contest. Believing that the term was meant to favor some contenders, the losing bidders also raised a complaint with the Council of State which later found the contract terms unusual.

Late in 1997, the council told the NBIA to scrap the landfill contract. The suggestion prompted the Transport Ministry to suspend the landfill in January 1998 to ask for the Office of the Attorney-General's ruling on the controversial deal. In the following month, the office took the same stance as the council and told the ministry to scrap the contract. However, the Transport Ministry dared not terminate the deal for fear of being sued by Italian-Thai Development (ITD), as it had spent heavily on the landfill.

Though not losing the landfill contract outright, ITD had its job scaled down from the price of 11 billion baht to about seven billion baht, because the Chavalit administration decided to downsize the Nong Ngu Hao project from having two runways to one. In other words, one runway was being delayed.

To complete the Nong Ngu Hao airport by 2004, the NBIA announced early last year that the piledriving of the passenger terminal would have to start by the middle of last year. The superstructure construction of the terminal began last January and the past four decades have resulted in only 13% of the work being carried

out. NBIA managing director Somchet has based a progress report on money the state-owned company has spent so far on the project's implementation. After the upcoming general election, it will depend on the new government as to whether or not the Nong Ngu Hao deadline of 2004 will be met.

Crane collapse

January 15, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Crane collapse](#) – *The Nation*, January 15, 2005

The massive arms of a crane being used to build a bridge over the Chao Phya River in Samut Prakan crashed to the earth with a roar on Thursday night, causing Bt5 million in damage – but injuring no one... More on the

[Mega-bridge construction](#)

Asian chewing habit linked to oral cancer

January 15, 2005

Categories: Health

[Asian
chewing habit linked to oral cancer](#)

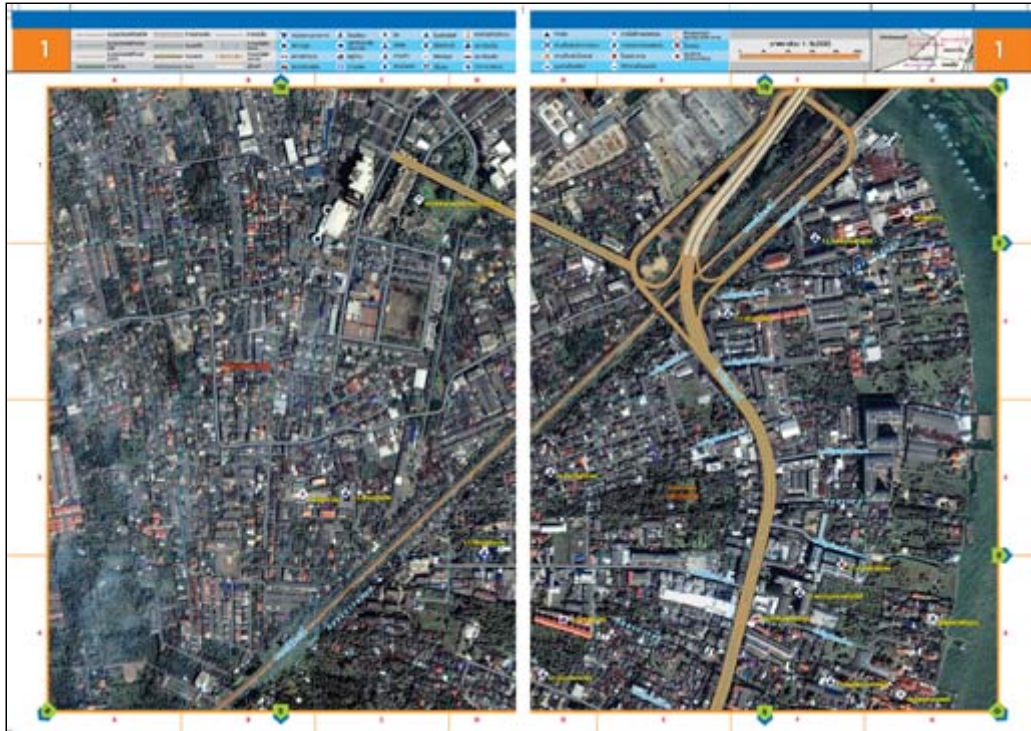
– *Science News*, January 15, 2005

Several hundred million people today practice the ancient custom of chewing betel. In south Asia, where the habit is most prevalent, the signs are hard to miss...

Find your house

January 15, 2005

Categories: Maps



Find your house

– January 15, 2005

Space View from [Sisea](#) is a must-have for any 2Bangkok.com reader. It has the entire extended Bangkok area in a map book composed of satellite photos. You will be able to find your house in this book! It is 1800 baht from Chula Book Center or contact [Sisea](#) and tell them 2Bangkok.com sent you. We were told 5000 copies were printed and less than 1000 are left. We wonder how satellite image companies can continue charging high prices for these images if they are so readily available in book form. However, it may also create a new market as almost everyone who sees this fascinating book wants a copy regardless if they have a particular reason for needing



satellite
photos.

The Bangkok Subway News 2004-2005

January 17, 2005

Categories: Subway



(Photo:
2Bangkok.com)

Above: Detail of a
subway station
entrance

Right: Subway car
arriving in Thailand
on a
Antonov AN124-10
in October, 2003.



(Photo: The Freight Co. Ltd.)

BangkokSubway.com

* [7:14pm, July 3, 2004 – The subway is OPEN!](#)



Left: Subw
excavation
machine be
being lower
into
the site in M
1999.

Below: Sub
construction
workers sit
in front of a
fresh air tun
Morchit Sta
in March 20

(Photo:
2Bangkok.com)

Notable subway articles on 2Bangkok.com

* Phet & Umporn, you are REAL heroes! [Subway construction workers make 175 baht \(about USD \\$4\) a day](#)

* [Ride the subway with 2Bangkok.com](#)
– June, 2004

* [Tour of the Morchit Station construction](#)
– March, 2001

* [When did the subway cars arrive?](#)

* [Future subway expansion](#)

* [Bangkok Subway station locations](#)



(Photo:
2Bangkok.com)

Subway first anniversary
insert – July 11, 2005

There was some recognition of the subway's first anniversary

after all. The flyer (right) was included in the *Post* on July 3, 2005.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Extended hand straps on the subway –
September 5, 2006

The handstraps on the subway have been extended the length of the trains—instead of stopping in front of the subway doors.



(Photo: Withawat)

Subway tunnel segments

– March 21, 2005

Withawat notes the field of subway tunnel panels and writes: *Here is a picture taken along Rama IX Road near Ramkamheang intersection. The site was set up for like this for more than a year...*

Any idea why so many extra segments are left? Was there this much leftover money from the previous project to create all this extra material?

[Map of the new subway & mass transit in Bangkok](#)

[Subway crash – 9:30am, January 17, 2005](#)

[7:14pm, July 3, 2004 – The subway is OPEN!](#)

[Ride the subway with 2Bangkok.com](#)
[Free subway ride tickets & First ride on the subway](#)

[Bangkok Subway symbols](#)
[Subway souvenirs & ephemera](#)

[Future subway expansion](#)
[Bangkok Subway route status in 1999](#)

Subway Construction Photos

[Early construction photos](#) – May, 1999-December, 2000
[Children's Day in the tunnels](#) – January 13, 2001

[Morchit Subway Station construction](#)
 – March 14, 2001

Subway Status Report

Parties lay out rival subway plans – Bangkok Post, September 18, 2006

...Thai Rak Thai is carrying on with its electric train project. The Democrats have their own plan, called "Democrat Train."

The BMCL is the operator of the existing 10-kilometre subway linking Hua Lampong railway station in central Bangkok and Bang Sue district.

Thai Rak Thai accused the Democrats of stealing its mass transit system idea, announced for the first time five years ago during the 2001 general election.

...Thai Rak Thai is pursuing its idea to build 10 routes of a 333-kilometre railway, on and under the ground, at a cost of 570 billion baht, at a flat fare rate of 15 baht a trip.

...According to the Democrat Train project, the party wants to build seven routes of a 139-kilometre railway at a cost of 265 billion baht...

[Nod for subway](#) – The Nation, June 7, 2006

...the dark red, light red and purple lines would go ahead, reasoning that the time-consuming project cannot wait for the formation of a new government...

[MRT ready to develop subway's extended purple and blue](#)

[Restoring the road surface](#) – May-August, 2001

[Various](#) – Subway Station model, Bangkok Subway graphics, Subway Depot, Aerial Photos

[Inside the Rama 9 Station](#) – July 3, 2003

[Delivery of the subway cars](#) – October, 2003

[First looks at the Phetchaburi, Queen Sirikit Convention Center, & Hua Lampong subway stations](#) – April 6, 2004

[What happened to the subway depot development plans?](#) –

2Bangkok.com has the only English-language mention of the attempts to develop expropriated MRTA land for commercial use. It was extensively covered in the Thai-language press.

[The 'How Come' subway deal](#)

Bangkok

Subway Latest News

[About the TVMs](#)

[July 2004-present](#)

[June-July, 2004](#)

[June, 2004](#)

[April-June 2004](#)

[April 2004](#)

[March-April 2004](#)

[January-March 2004](#)

[November-December 2003](#)

[October 2001-October](#)

[2003](#)

[February-September 2001](#)

[March 2000-January 2001](#)

Bangkok Subway FAQ

[Map of the new subway & mass transit in Bangkok](#)

And the number one question we get at 2Bangkok.com->

Is it safe/practical to build a subway in flood-prone Bangkok?

All the entrances and shafts to the subway are built above the 200 year flood level for Bangkok (1.2-1.5 meter above ground level). If the water goes over the 200 year flood level, all openings have "stop block" doors that close to seal the openings. There are also water traps to keep water from going down into the stations.

[routes](#)

– TNA, June 2, 2006

...The subway's extended purple route will start from the Bang Sue Station to Bang Yai area in Bangkok's suburban Nonthaburi Province, according to Ms. Anchalee.

The extended blue route will, on the other hand, start from the Hua Lampong Station to Ta Pra and Bangkai in the city's Thonburi side...

[SRT](#)

[subway line open to bidding soon](#) – *The Nation*, May 31, 2006

The State Railway of Thailand will proceed with the construction of the two subway lines it is in charge of – the Dark Red & Light Red routes – after the government gave the agency the green light to go ahead with the projects using its own budget...

[BMCL](#)

[planning to raise the subway ticket prices on October 1](#)

– *Manager Daily*, *Thairath*, *Dailynews*, August 2, 2005

One year anniversary for the subway – Suriya pushing the Purple Line ahead – translated and summarized from *Manager*, July 4, 2005
At the one year anniversary ridership is 180,000 passengers a day and steadily climbing. It is nearing 200,000 passengers a day by the end of 2005. Furthermore, Suriya is telling the press that he is going to call an e-auction for the construction of the Purple Line by the end of 2005.

The special discount will expire on July 30, 2005 but

MRTA would ask for the extension since the regular rate would cut the daily number of passengers.

There is still more time to buy extra BMCL stock. BMCL is filing an IPO at the SEC on July 5. The first 25% (2.6 billion stock at 1 baht par) to MRTA and the other 2.55 billion stocks IPO to general investors.

Note: This implication from MOTC shows that the government has a clear policy to push this purple line to be done soon as possible at all costs...

What is it called? METRO (in English) / *Rot Fai Fah Mahanakhon* (in Thai).



[Subway station symbols](#)



Will there ever be a tunnel under the Chao Phraya River?

It will happen someday! It is already budgeted at 2 billion baht per kilometer. There are underwater tunnels in Hong Kong and San Francisco, so why not here?

Controversy from the Thai-language press: [Subway unsafe?](#) – June 17, 2004

What is the gauge? 1.435 meter-gauge (the same as for the BTS Skytrain) with a third rail for power transmission

What is the fare? 10 baht for July 3-August 12. After that 14-36 baht with a 15% discount until the end of the year.

How often do the trains run? every 4-6 minutes and every 2-4 minutes during rush hour. Trains run everyday from 06:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

How fast do they go? 35 km/hr

How much did it cost? 108.148 billion baht (about US\$ 2.75 billion) The ratio of investment between public and private sectors is 80:20. The public sector pays for construction and private sector pays for trains.

How much did the workers who worked on the construction site make? 175 baht (about USD\$ 4) a day – [from Manager Sunday, March 10, 2002](#)

What is the passenger capacity? More than 40,000 passengers per hour per direction

Service disrupted for 15 mins by glitch – *Bangkok Post*, June 12, 2005
...*The train that had encountered a problem was towed away to Bang Sue station...*

Plan for discount on subway fares/independent safety inspections for subway – translated and summarized from *Prachachart Thurakij*, May 25, 2005

BMCL has made a settlement on subway discounts offered on June 4, 2005.

It will be a 20% discount for stored value cards (9-baht) and 30% discount for student cards. Those who pay for a single trip would have to pay 12-31 baht rate until September 2005.

During the three month discount experiments, BMCL got 30,000 more passengers a day.

During a trip for subway security in England, MOTC witnessed the contract signing between BMCL and Lloyd's Register Group for the independent subway safety inspection. This measure is to make independent inspection possible.

BMCL has to pay 11 million baht a year to Lloyd's register group for this independent inspection contract.

Pressuring BMCL to offer subway discounts – translated and summarized from *Prachachart Thurakij*, May 25, 2005

Ministry Suriya is trying to pressure BMCL to offer new discounts—something lower than the 12-31 baht rate—despite the contract which allows BMCL to use the 14-36 baht rate, without paying any cash despite a 21 million baht bill. MRTA has decided to pay 21 million baht compensation through debt reductions (credit) instead.

BMCL said this is too much for BMCL to digest since the number of passengers has reached 170,000-180,000 passengers a day instead of the target of

250,000 passengers a day. Even the 15 baht flat rate may not help BMCL

that much since MRTA and MOTC refuse to pay at single satang in cash

to cover 80% of the loss. If BMCL has to comply with the discount policy,

20-25 baht/person would be a better deal.

Some subway fares to be cut – *Bangkok Post*, May 26, 2005

...*Bangkok Metro Co Ltd (BMCL) had agreed to a 30% discount for*

How many passengers is the system expected to carry a day?

Initial estimates: Year 2002-3: 404,880 passengers/day

Year 2010: 631,837 passengers/day

Year 2020: 836,268 passengers/day

Update: December, 2000 – OCMLT estimates daily passengers would be about 300,000 passengers a day instead of 400,000 (based on the experience of the [Bangkok Skytrain](#)).

Update: May, 2001 – *Prachachart Thurakij* reports on May 24-27, 2001 that the estimated number of daily passengers will be 270,000-280,000.

Update: October 17, 2001 – "[BMCL currently estimates](#) a daily ridership of 237,000 for the subway for the first year of operations, down from original projections of 430,000."

Is there an official Bangkok Subway webpage? Yes. It is located at <http://www.bangkokmetro.co.th/>.

What other subway can the design of the Bangkok subway be compared with?

The Bangkok subway is similar to the one in Singapore with doors along the platform to save on air-conditioning, prevent accidents and suicides, and stop hazardous chemicals from easily circulating through the system in the event of a terrorist attack.

What are the stations like? The stations are 20 meters deep, about 18-25 meters wide and 150-200 meters long, [depending upon location](#). The rails will be on either side of the platforms, except at some places that will require multilevel tunnels (e.g. Silom Station).

Most tunnels will run side by side, but under Rama 4 Road, which is covered by elevated roads and hemmed in by utilities, they will run one above the other.

[First looks at the Phetchburi, Queen Sirikit Convention Center, and Hua Lampong subway stations](#)

– April 6, 2004

passengers with pre-paid ticket cards, and 50% for children and those aged over 60 from June 5 to Sept 30, Mr Suriya sai

BMCL refuses to extend subway promotion fares – translated and summarized from *Manager Daily*, May 25, 2005

BMCL refuses to extend the promotional rates (10 for the first 3 stations and 15 baht for the rest). Nevertheless, BM agrees to offer discounts for those who are willing to pay the initial 300 baht for stored value tickets and guarantee that the maximum rate who pay for a single trip token will never exceed 30 baht.

According to the 90-day experiments, BMCL and MRTA found that they got 230,000 passengers a day during the Money Expo at QSNCC while they got only 40,000 passengers a day during Songkran Festival.

So far, MRTA has paid 18 million baht to BMCL for the compensation from loss during the promotion from 21 million baht BM had asked for.

Top subway fares to rise to 36 baht by July 4 – translated and summarized from *Manager Daily*, May 19, 2005

Minister Suriya has publicly admitted that he needs to raise the subway ticket prices from 10-15 baht back to 12-31 baht as of June 4 since the negotiation with BMCL for nationalization is still stalled even though MRTA could purchase 25% of stocks at par (1 baht). Furthermore, MRTA is going to talk with BMCL about the new promotion prices to maximize the public benefit.

The MRTA governor said they are going to talk with BMCL about the ticket price issue during the trip to England and France (the trip about Subway security as well as the trip to Bombardier and ALSTHOM) so as to maximize public benefit without the expense from ticket subsidies.

The 12-31 baht rate will be from June 4-July 3 2005 and the full-price (14-36 baht) will be effective on July 4, 2005.

[Subway resumes service after encountering minor problem](#)
The Nation, March 21, 2005
...The derailed subway train was later pulled to the

Peculiarities of the subway stations

- If you want to go to Lumpini Park, do not get off at Lumpini Station.
Exit at Si Lom Station.
 - If you want to go to Central Lat Phrao, do not get off at Lat Phrao Station.
Exit at Phaholyothin Station.
 - If you want to go to Chatuchak Weekend Market, do not get off at Chatuchak Station. Exit at Kamphaengphet Station.
 - If you want to go to Thailand Cultural Center, you have to get a taxi from the station. Thailand Cultural Center is quite a distance from Thailand Cultural Center Station.
-

How will the Silom Subway Station connect to the Saladaeng Skytrain Station?

Will any of the stations have a special design?

Two stations were originally promised to have special designs:

1. Hualampong Station will have a ‘museum’ detailing railroad mega projects in Thailand starting with the first railroad cars imported by Rama V. On opening day, some informational plaques had been installed detailing past mass transit in Thailand.

2. Queen Sirikit Convention Center Station was to be ‘completely designed with traditional Thai-style decor.’ So far, this station does not have any special design though.

From *Siam Business Weekly* (AKA *Siam Turakij*) (Vol. 7, No. 334, May 6-12, 2001): *So far, BMCL found that they can make a commercial development in ONLY 9 stations. The other 9 either have very little space left or MRTA will turn them into a museum.*

The following stations will not have commercial development for the following reasons:

- 1) Hua Lamphong (museum)
- 2) Silom (narrow space for interchange station)
- 3) Bon Kai (narrow space)
- 4) Queen Sirikit National Convention Center (Thai design inside)
- 5) Asok (narrow space for interchange station)
- 6) Rama IX (narrow space)

Hua Lamphong Station for a technical check-up...

Commuters trapped in train again – *Bangkok Post*, March 21, 2005
...Reports said the train, bound for Hua Lamphong stopped suddenly as it entered the station. All the lights went out and the automatic doors did work. Transport Minister Suriya Jungrung-reangkit said Siemens Thailand, which controls the train system, reported electrical spark near Rama IX station and was looking into the cause...

Police ask prosecution to charge subway staff – *Bangkok Post*, March 1, 2005

Police yesterday asked the prosecution to charge two staff at the metro control centre and two drivers with carelessness causing injury and danger to others in the Jan 17 subway crash... Huay Kwang police investigators, led by deputy station chief Pol Lt-Col Yingyos Inthaburan, presented senior prosecutor N Prasitwiset with a 2,755-page report. They are seeking to arraign Kullachart Lao-asok, 33, the subway control centre head, Rangsan Sawasdeemongkol, 35, a centre staff member, Thawatchai Kanya, 26, the tow train driver, and Thanapol Nithichotiyanont, 32, the driver of the empty train.

Subway stuck again—this time from debris from a discarded pen – translated and summarized from [Channel 11](#), February 20, 2005
The reason for the subway being out of order on Sunday, February 19: the debris from a leftover pen crushed by the subway wheels jamming the signal box and causing MRTA to temporarily stop the service at Chatuchak Station. This cut the number of passengers to 90,000 instead of the normal 110,000. Subway. Even though this is not the fault of Siemens, MRTA will force Siemens to brainstorm with MRTA and BMCL so as to prevent incidents which cause the subway to stop running.

[Siemens warned of consequences if subway continues to fail](#)
TNA, February 21, 2005
The head of the Mass Rapid Transit Authority of Thailand (MRTA), which

- 7) Lad Phrao (park and ride)
- 8) Mochit (narrow space for interchange station)
- 9) Kamphaengphet (narrow space and the weekend market)

Also: [The eight subway stations with the most potential for development](#) – Prachachart Thurakij,
February 25 – 28, 2002

How many people have visited the construction site?

excerpted from the *Bangkok Post*, August 30, 2001
Work on the city subway has attracted 25,894 visitors since the project began in 1999....

Entry to the site is restricted to 50 people at a time for safety reasons, resulting in a waiting list of up to two months. Visitors include people from neighboring countries on study tours to develop similar systems in their own countries....

[2Bangkok.com's tour of the Mochit Station Construction](#) – March 14, 2001

When did the subway cars arrive?

Where to see the subway cars – January 19, 2004

Subway cars are often stored in the open at the MRTA Depot. They can be seen by taking Thiam Ruam Mit Road to where it merges into the road (unnamed?) that circles the subway depot.

What are the lines and when will they be completed?

Blue –

The Bangsue-Huay Kwang section of the MRTA Blue Line (this is the northern section) was going to open December 2002, then was pushed back to August 12, 2003, then late-2003, February 2004, and finally August 2004. Then the opening date was brought forward to July 3, 2004.

Latest on subway extensions: [MRTA planning for 91-km expansion of subway](#) – Thairath, April 5, 2004 and *Than Setthakij*, April 4-7, 2004

See [Bangkok Subway Routes & Stations](#) for complete station lists.

oversees the Bangkok's subway system, has warned Siemens Thailand, that persistent failures on the underground could affect the company's future contract bids involving the expansion of the city's mass transit system....

[No light at end of tunnel for subway](#) – *The Nation*, February 21, 2005

Subway train services were disrupted yesterday afternoon following a problem with the signal system, officials said. It was the fourth incident over the past month that has resulted in a service stoppage....

[Couples tie the knot in Bangkok subway station](#) – TNA, February 15, 2005

...Although the venue was being promoted under the slogan 'Ring the Marriage Bells – Valentine's 2005 with the Bangkok Subway', real bells were notably absent yesterday, as couples queued for the event organized by Bang Sue district in conjunction with the Bangkok Metro Co., Ltd. (BMCL), the operator of the Bangkok's subway system....

Subway passengers boosted by Chinese New Year festival – translated and summarized from *Manager Daily*, February 10, 2005
The number of Subway passengers was boosted by Chinese New Year Festival at Yaowaraj. There were 164,127 passengers a day February 9 to dine and be entertained at Yaowaraj. The top five destinations are:

1) Hua Lamphong, 2) Sukhumvit, 3) Lad Phrao, 4) Phaholyothin, 5) Silom
BMCL will ask BMTA to run the feeder bus service from gate 4 of Hua Lamphong Station (the gate with escalators).
MRTA/BMCL will set up the Valentine Wedding on February 14, 2005 from 8am to 4pm with the district officers from Bang Rak and other Bangkok districts with auspicious names.

Astrological comments – February 11, 2005
Wisarat reports: [Thai Post](#) has astrological comments on the Subway. *Th* said that Ch. Karnchang better change the name of the subway.

company since the name seems to have bad elements which causes lots of trouble. The days of opening and reopening the Subway service were also very inauspicious days. Furthermore, they also ask BMCL owners to worship Phra Raho (the giant serpent-demon who create solar and lunar eclipses).

[Subway](#)
[door failure blamed on technical error](#) –

TNA, February 8, 2005

The operators of the Bangkok subway system experienced a problem this morning after the electric doors at Hua Lamphong station failed to operate properly.

Mr. Praphas Jongsanguan, governor of the Mass Rapid Transit System (MRTA), who stressed that the incident was a minor one who had not compromised passenger safety, blamed the failure on a temporary glitch in the door sensor system, possibly caused by dirt...

[Subway](#)
[resumes operation](#) – TNA, February 5, 2005

Bangkok's subway system resumed its service this afternoon after a two-hour suspension due to a short of power supply. The city's subway has resumed its operation since 1 p.m...

During the incident, a train was stuck between Hualampong railway station and Sam Yan, but all the passengers were evacuated safely...

[Subway](#)
[closed again](#) – TNA, February 5, 2005
Bangkok's subway system is temporarily out of service today due to a short of power supply. The city's underground train service has been suspended since minutes before midday today when the subway system encountered the problem, caused by an explosion of a main power transformer, according to local journalists...

[Bulletin](#)
[from ThaiRath](#)

[SUBWAY CRASH](#)
9:30am, January 17, 2005

[The opening of the](#)
[Bangkok Subway](#)

March 14, 2001- November 15, 2004

Thai-language newspapers – January 17, 2005

January 17, 2005

Categories: Thai Media Project

Matichon

– January 17, 2005

* Maew distributes sweets to teachers on Teacher's Day, January 16. After election day he will organize a workshop to listen to teacher's opinions about their safety, security and curriculum. It is necessary to listen closely otherwise the teachers' lives go down and impact the education system.

* Mr. Sunti Utaiphan, the Deputy Director of the Village and Urban Fund Committee said that they will lift the status of village funds to be village banks as they request. In the beginning, 100 banks will be organized at the end of January. When each fund is ready it can become a bank and the Government Savings Bank will set up a management system and computer network for them.

* Mr.

Aut Somrang, the General Director of Land Development

Department warns that Watermelon-Grape are contaminated with a lot of chemicals. They prepare to push organic agriculture to be a national agenda which is a 5-year-plan after year 2005 and will need a budget around 20,000-30,000 million baht. Meanwhile, NGOs in Surin noted this year is a safe food year, but we still find 2-3 kinds of banned chemicals at the dry grocers in villagers.

Thairath

– January 17, 2005

* On January 16, Mr. Natthi Jitsawang, the Director General of the Penitentiary Department, Ministry of Justice, said that there will relay the execution of prisoners online and show prisoners' activities before they are going to die. Normally the execution zone is mysterious and they do not allow people to see it so online view will be the first time in 86 years people can see it. People can visit www.correct.go.th.

[PRISONER RIGHTS: Death row reality show axed – Justice Ministry halts plan for TV programme on the last days of inmates facing execution](#) – *The Nation*, January 18, 2005
Corrections Department director-general Natthee Jitsawang unveiled the plan on Sunday and a Thai-language

* For

the lottery of January 16, double digits come out again after skipping for two times. Mr. Jumroon Chaloenjit, a farmer from Saraburi province, won 29 million baht with No. 22.

* **Bloody news** – On

January 16 at 2:00am, a 27-year-old in a Chevrolet Safira van, crashed a green Mira making it turn over and catch fire on the tollway Boorapaviti (Bangkok-Chonburi road). The driver of the Mira, Mrs. Samai Somnet, and her daughter and son died in the fire. The van driver and his friend were injured and sent to Chularat Hospital.

mass-circulation newspaper, gave the story front page treatment with promises of live broadcasts about executions. The Justice Ministry pulled the plug yesterday on a plan by the Corrections Department to initiate a reality-show programme by installing Web cams in the cells of inmates on death row and broadcasting live their final moments before they are executed...

Advice from the city of Yangon

January 17, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

Advice from the city of Yangon

– January 17, 2005

[The Public](#)

[Relations and Information Department](#) of the City of Yangon has advice for tourists. Besides the general travel's advice that is similar to that for Thailand (also interesting is [Don't](#)

[stamp on Monk's shadow](#)) there is this [advice](#) on dealing with Officialdom: *ACCEPT THAT THE BUREAUCRAT IS RIGHT*

He knows more about the matter at hand than you do. He'd been doing it. He knows how it is to be done and not done. He knows what is allowed and not allowed. For every argument of yours he has one to better it. Don't argue. There is a maxim: 'The bureaucrat is always right especially when he is wrong.' Accept it.

OBSERVE REGULATIONS

One course to follow to get out of the way of the bureaucrat is to observe the regulations however irksome or irrational. If you don't know what they mean, ask him. He might be pleased. On the other hand, he might be irritated. You can't win. You see what I mean?

Phuket Vignettes

January 17, 2005

Phuket Vignettes

– January 17, 2005

Hey, my name is Steve Rosse and I used to write a column in The Nation about Phuket. I've just published a [book of short stories](#) about the island and I'm donating 25% of my profits to tsunami relief on the island.

Fake Thai Disneyland – Dreamworld

January 17, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Fake](#)

[Thai Disneyland – Dreamworld](#) – miceage,

January 17, 2005

Via BoingBoing: *Check out this four-part photo-essay of a fake Disneyland in Thailand, complete with counterfeit Mickey Mouse gift-shop, Space Mountain and Fantasyland.*

CIA report about the future

January 17, 2005

CIA report about the
future – January 17, 2005

Every 5 years, the CIA makes a forecast of the next 15 years. The [latest](#)

[report](#) is full of rather obvious predictions about China and India becoming economic and political powers. Considering the inaccurate intelligence provided by the CIA in recent years—especially in understanding trends—it will be interesting to look back in a few years and see what was missed. Below are the scant references in the report to Thailand:

(p. 15) *This revival has been accompanied by a deepening solidarity among Muslims caught up in national or regional separatist struggles, such as Palestine, Chechnya, Iraq, Kashmir, Mindanao, and southern Thailand, and has emerged in response to government repression, corruption, and ineffectiveness. Informal networks of charitable foundations, madrassas, hawalas, and other mechanisms will continue to proliferate and be exploited by radical elements; alienation among unemployed youths will swell the ranks of those vulnerable to terrorist recruitment.*

(p. 51) *As India's economy grows, governments in Southeast Asia—Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and other countries—may move closer to India to help build a potential geopolitical counterweight to China. At the same time, India will seek to strengthen its ties with countries in the region without excluding China.*

(p. 93) *This revival has been accompanied by a deepening solidarity among Muslims caught up in national or regional separatist struggles, such as Palestine, Chechnya, Iraq, Kashmir, Mindanao, or southern Thailand and has emerged in response to government repression, corruption, and ineffectiveness.*

Thai-language newspapers – January 18, 2005

January 18, 2005

Categories: Thai Media Project

Matichon

– January 18, 2005

* A 37-year-old English man slit his throat and wrist in front of the British Embassy because he was sorry that his daughter disappears in the tsunami. Meanwhile, Maew goes to the south to talk to Dr. Porntip and give her two weeks to continue working at Wat Yanyao. The four dead bodies of the Satapitanon family were found

* Ten

famous tutoring schools at Siam Square, Victory Monument, Sapan Kwai and Nontaburi violate the standards of tutoring school of the Private Education Promotion Commission. Some have no teaching license, no fire protection equipment, and teach more students than they have permission to.

* At Nakorn Sawan province, Mr. Suchat Ruamsuntea, the gunman who killed Mr. Sanong Naputtra, TRT canvasser, was arrested. He confessed that he was paid by the officer of the subdistrict organization and that person received the order to hire him from another person.

Thairath

– January 18, 2005

* Mr. Nevin Chidchob, Deputy of Agriculture and one of the leaders of Thai Rak Thai Party, called 300 people including the Pattalung Governor, the Satun Governor, candidate MPs and canvassers of Thai Rak Thai Party to attend a meeting in Had Yai on January 16. Mr. Thavorn Senniemi of the Democrat Party said Mr. Navin prepared to buy votes at this meeting. The Election Commission in Songkhla sent an officer to check the meeting, but the officers were forbidden to listen. Mr. Nevin claimed it was an official government meeting. Since the Election Commission in Songkhla was not allowed to investigate, they informed the central election commission. The central election commission said it seems to violate

* On

January 17 at Bangkai district, Mrs. Rattana Pimchai, a principle wife, killed Mrs. Arisa Suksud, the minor wife and widow with whom her husband was fascinated. After that Mrs. Rattana drank poison and was seriously injured in ICU, but the husband evaded injury.

the election law and asked Songkhla to send more information about who was at the meeting and what the content was to check the truth. Before the meeting, a Democrat party MP coordinated with the Songkhla Election Commission to send spies, including one from the Democrat Party, to investigate and now they have evidence such as tape recording and video. The tape allegedly says they will give 100,000 baht to an election area and if they win in that area, that area will get 100,000 baht more.

Thai-language newspapers – January 19, 2005

January 19, 2005

Categories: Thai Media Project



Left: Daily News, January 19, 2005 – Photos of the [wrecked subway car](#). The headline reads: *The southern thieves are ruthless and bloodthirsty. School bus attacked. The children have bad luck and are seriously injured.*

Matichon

– January 19, 2005

* On January 18, at 8:10 pm at the Southern Terminal Bus Station, police arrested Mr. Pawapon Papaphan, who was carrying a paper box and looked suspicious. After checking, the police found a .38 gun and 800 bullets for an M.16. He confessed that he was hired to carry the bullets from the shop in Wangboorapa area to Mr. Prapong Anchansrichat in Amphur Betong, Yala and this is the second delivery.

* A canvasser was shot dead in Amphur Yantakao, Trang province. The police said the dead person is the big construction foreman in Amphur Yantakao and Palian. In the beginning they suspected the motive could be a business issue or love issue, but they think now it is because he was a canvasser for Mr. Somchai Losathaporn, Democrat MP candidate in Trang, district 3.

* The cabinet gives a budget of 400 million baht to compensate 360,000 government officials and employees who worked helping tsunami victims in the six southern provinces. Among the benefits are extra special money of 1000-2500 baht per month, promotions to a higher salary and more annual holiday leave.

Thairath

– January 19, 2005

* On January 18, Mr. Chonatee Kaewmani, killed his father-in-law by cutting his neck at a house in Supanburi province. After being arrested, he confessed that it was revenge for his father-in-law taking his wife to stay apart from him.

* In Ranong Province, Deputy Sheriff (Nai Amphur) Chanat Kaewbumrung was informed by the Kumnun (head of subdistrict) of Ratchakrud that there is a crack under the sea near Laeamson Gulf and also bubbles coming up from under the water. Villagers dove into the sea to see what happened and found a crack about 3-4 inches wide and 1 km in length.

* According to the evidence that accuses the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Newin Chidchob, with violating the election law, Democrat party support its MP candidates, Mr. Thavorn Senniemi and Mr. Pisit Intarasombat to submit evidence to the Election Commission and transfer the governors of Phattalung and Satun since they are not neutral.

Thai-language newspapers – January 20, 2005

January 20, 2005

Categories: Thai Media Project

Matichon

– January 20, 2005

* It is a cool idea to give the 700 passengers involved in the crash on January 16 to ride MTRA free of charge for life. The two drivers and three control officers were charged with carelessness. The summary of all injured is 264 people. The board of MTRA check whether the concession contract of BMCL mistake the agreement.

* A Chulalongkorn University academic reveals that the impact of the tsunami makes the geography of Phuket Island move 15 centimeters. It also made the shape of the 'shaft' of the South move. Meanwhile, the Land Resource department sends officers to survey the crack in Ranong Province.

* Pu

plans to

travel around the world with his wife and a daughter.

He spoke out during the taping of a TV show–*Rak Lon Jor* (Lots of Love). He said everything will go well if politics, the economy and society are developed all together. After his political term expires, he plans to live simply and travel around the world including writing books about the cultures he finds.

Thairath

– January 20, 2005

* In Banglen, Nakornpathom province, a 30-year-old man threatened the owner of a gold shop and stole three necklaces. He ran out to get a taxi which was parked in the soi 15 metres from the shop. Later that day the taxi meter driver came to inform the police that he was hired for 1000 baht by the thief to wait, but the thief would not pay the fare. After watching the video from the gold shop and an investigation, the police figured out the name of the thief and arrested him.

* Thaksin

gave an interview about the case of Mr. Thavorn Senniern, Democrat MP candidate who accused Mr. Nevin

Chidchop, Deputy Agriculture Minister, of vote buying.

Thaksin said it is only about using political matters

to damage each other. People should listen with one ear and keep three ears to listen many times before believing.

Concrete posts touted as latest tourist attraction

January 20, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Concrete](#)

[posts touted as latest tourist attraction](#)

– TNA, January 20, 2005

...According to Mukdahan Governor Phairat Sakonphan, the posts in the Mekong River in Wan Yai district were constructed by French army engineers in 1893 when Laos was still a French colony, as a means of showing safe navigation routes...

No Gloom, only Boom for Thailand: Dr Doom

January 20, 2005

Categories: Economy

[No](#)

[Gloom, only Boom for Thailand: Dr Doom](#)

– *Business Day*, January 20, 2005

...Maverick Marc Faber, author of the Gloom, Doom and Boom report, in comments to Business Day said that the Thai stock market valuations are “very reasonable”; while megabank JP Morgan recommended in a report that investors should buy the baht against the Singapore dollar on optimism about sustained economic growth in Thailand...

More photos from Hong Kong: Bastard Chairs

January 20, 2005

More photos from Hong Kong: [Bastard Chairs](#) – January 20, 2005

Earlier: [Lost Laundry](#) and [Architecture of Density](#)

Thai-language newspapers – January 21, 2005

January 21, 2005

Categories: Thai Media Project

Matichon

– January 21, 2005

* People in Suratthani are shocked to find a crack in the earth 2 rai long that also makes a crack in a house. Trang people are not afraid and will continue

organize underwater wedding ceremonies.

Meanwhile

geologists proved the bubble coming from from a crack

in the sea floor in Ranong are only gas pressure and

it is not dangerous. 200 Morgan people

protest to ask for the return of their land because

Kuek Kak Tambon Administrative organization drove

them off their land after the tsunami disaster and

wants to build the private hospital and OTOP

center

there.

* Democrats

push the Election Commission to punish Nevin Chidchob

and point out that the Election Commission in Songkhla

has recordings and witnesses. Democrats say they believe the witnesses and claim that one of general

directors set about to buy the secret video of the incident. Nevin declared today (January 21) to sue anyone who seeks to destroy his reputation.

Thairath

– January 21, 2005

* Mr. Supachai Chantanapakdi, a-24-year-old taxi driver, was robbed and tied up in his taxi on the way to Bangsan, Nakornpathom. Five thieves who took

over the taxi got drunk and drove very fast to overtake

a bus. Finally the taxi rolled over. One thief died and the rest were injured, but the taxi driver got out alive.

* Chao

Pha Ying Ubonrat visited

tsunami victims at Takuapa Hospital, Pangnga.

She

told them to keep fighting and wished them to pass

by the bad luck. Meanwhile 43 countries will meet

and decide about the policy of an early warning system for tsunamis on January 28-29 in Phuket.

TV commercial: Punching a Tranny

January 22, 2005

Categories: Advertising and Commercials



A man is washing his hands in a dingy bathroom. A katoey asks him if he knows what time it is.



Rather alarmed, the man says he does not have a watch.



The katoey offers to sell him a watch.



The man does not have to take the offer, because an eyeglass company offers a free watch with the purchase of eyeglasses. Originally, the commercial ended with the man punching the katoey, but various groups protested, saying the nonsensical act of violence at the end of the commercial validated violence against gays. The offending punch at the end was then cut out of the commercial.

Luang Phor Kittu dies, aged 69

January 22, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Luang Phor Kittu dies, aged 69](#)

– *Bangkok Post*, January

22, 2005

Senior monk Luang Phor Kittu Vhudto, who sparked controversy when he condoned the killing of communists, died of sudden heart failure in a Chon Buri hospital yesterday. He was 69...

Lessons from Thailand's schools

January 22, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Lessons
from Thailand's schools](#)

– BBC, January 22, 2005

Fanaticism for Liverpool and Manchester United, a capital city clogged solid by traffic jams, and education reform being pushed at a giddy speed by a prime minister preparing to win another election mandate.

The UK? No, this is Thailand...

Chinese military training

January 22, 2005

Categories: China



Chinese military
training – January 22,
2005

From [Tian.cc](http://tian.cc):

During a military news segment of Chinese Central Television's broadcast, it showed soldiers of Chinese army are been trained to be gaming geeks by playing bootlegged copies of Counter Strike, a popular first-person shooting video game.

Thai embassy opens polling booths in Qatar

January 22, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thai
embassy opens polling booths in Qatar](#)

– *The Peninsula*, January

22, 2005

Thai-language newspapers – January 23-24, 2005

January 23, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

ThaiPost front page

– January 23, 2005

The front page of *ThaiPost* (right): The main headline is "Asking to search Pojaman's pocket"– political

parties want to check PM Thaksin's wife financial assets.

Below the headline is a photo (also run in *Matichon*)

from the Thammasat and Chulalongkorn football game.

Students are carrying a large caricature of Thaksin replacing the constitution at Democracy Monument with

a bag of money. The banner reads "Listen to democracy."



(Photo:
2Bangkok.com)

Matichon

– January 24, 2005

* Nipit Intarasombat, the MP candidate for district 2, Pattalung, swears in front of the Emerald Buddha that the evidence of Nevin Chidchob buying votes is true. If it is not true, he will get a unusual occurrence within 3-7 days .

* The State Enterprise Relation Confederation (SERC) will organize a seminar and caravan not to vote for the political party that is selling state enterprises this January 30. People can get more info on their website: www.thaiserc.org.

* On

January 23 the provincial constabulary office of region 9 warns the commander of Pattani, Yala and Naratiwat to coordinate with all officers to prepare and control safety for unrest that may occur on February 2 which is the anniversary of the founding of the Pulo movement day.

* Apisit Weschachiva, Deputy leader of Democrat Party, announces its canvassers were threatened. Mr. Sumrit Linsumlit, the canvasser in district 2, Pitsanulok province, was shot at five times since he began to campaign for the candidates.

Thairath

– January 24, 2005

* Between the devil and the deep blue sea! The female student protected herself from a guy she met chatting

* On

January 23 in Surathani province a female vocation student informed the police that she was raped by Mr. Saengroj Kanjana, the son of MP candidate, Mr. Chumpon Kanjana. Previously, Mr. Saengroj

online who tried to rape her in a motel. She got in a taxi to go back to the dormitory, but on the way she was raped by the taxi driver who drove her to an area of Muang Thong Thani which has not completely built. Finally the police arrested the guy on the same night at 10:00pm.

* An 11-year-old computer game addict ran away from home. His mother informed the police and finally found that he was selling flowers at the Huaykwang-Ratchada intersection at 2:30am. He confessed that he and his friends like to play computer games and were persuaded by two young guys that they could earn money for smoking, glue sniffing, and game playing but selling flowers at the intersection from 1:00-3:00 am.

Kanjana allegedly shot and killed policemen in 1999 and 2000 and is still on the temporary bail during the appeal.

Poor show power from the streets of Thailand

January 24, 2005

Categories: Thai Politics

[Poor](#)

[show power from the streets of Thailand](#) –

The Irrawaddy, January 24, 2005

Article about the Assembly of the Poor...

Welcoming foreign dignitaries

January 24, 2005



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Welcoming foreign dignitaries

– January 24, 2005

Above and below: On Lan Luang Road some of the most elaborate decorations we have seen to welcome foreign dignitaries—in this case Singapore President Nathan and his wife.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Will 2005 be Thailand's annus horribilis?

January 24, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

REGIONAL

PERSPECTIVE: Will 2005 be Thailand's annus horribilis?

– *The Nation*, January 24, 2005

Latest tough editorial from The Nation: ...While critics repeatedly blame the opposition's inertia, they forget that in 2001-2004 the government has maximised every means, formal and informal, within its reach to eviscerate dissident voices and activities. Mass media and civil-society organisations that used to speak up against abuses of power have now been snuffed out by the government...

REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE: Will 2005 be Thailand's annus horribilis?

Published on January 24, 2005

With the election less than two weeks away, political arrogance has reached its zenith. In the aftermath of the tsunami, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's popularity is at an all-time high.

He has already declared an electoral triumph. His words and body language are harbingers of his autocratic tendencies and of what lies ahead.

While critics repeatedly blame the opposition's inertia, they forget that in 2001-2004 the government has maximised every means, formal and informal, within its reach to eviscerate dissident voices and activities. Mass media and civil-society organisations that used to speak up against abuses of power have now been snuffed out by the government.

The level playing field enjoyed by the ruling Thai Rak Thai (TRT) party before its ascension no longer exists. Neither do the political pluralism and tolerance that once made Thailand an example of representative democracy.

Both the Democrat and Mahachon parties have appealed to the electorate to vote in sufficient opposition seats to check and monitor the government. The Democrats have called for 201 seats while Mahachon has boiled its message down to a simple "fight and get rid of authoritarianism". Even Chat Thai Party leader Banharn Silapa-archa has not been able to remain idle: he has come out to say that the TRT party has abused state power. Such comments could not have come easily as his party is a key coalition partner in the present government.

Given the current atmosphere, attempting to get through to citizens who are still enjoying the populist giveaways and political marketing of the lurking authoritarianism can be difficult, if not insane. Sooner rather than later the TRT's direct-sale political campaign will morph into a new dictatorship based on plebiscite politics.

Never since the country's political transformation in 1932 has Thailand confronted an era in which popular sovereignty has been tested, yet this is what could happen if the TRT gets the absolute majority that it wants in the parliament on February 6. Still, winning the ballots is one thing; popular legitimacy is another.

Thaksin has enjoyed political legitimacy through numerical majority during the past four years. He is obsessed with numbers. He has made numerous predictions about how many seats his party will win, targeting anywhere from 350 to 400 of the 500 available. With him in charge, he has insisted, there is no need for an opposition. Over the past two weeks, he has been beaming with joy because the foreign press has

praised him for his quick action in dealing with the tsunami in comparison with the slow pace of neighbouring countries.

In a democracy like Thailand's, though it is rapidly deteriorating, legitimacy has a wider meaning. It encompasses a respect for views other than one's own as well as the ability of independent monitoring bodies to check performance and governance on the part of the powers that be.

Every time Thaksin says he is not a dictator, one gets goose bumps. Every time he says he is just following the rules of democracy, he violates its very spirit.

During his four-year reign, Thaksin has caused a deep schism in Thai society between his supporters and his opponents because of the preferential treatment he shows the former. The situation is similar to the apartheid system as it seeks to exclude those who are not of the same kind. Only here it is not about skin colour but hard-core cronyism.

This situation, if sustained, will allow the prime minister to strengthen his power and control through plebiscites that allow him to retain the facade of democracy. For highly democratic countries such as Switzerland or Sweden, referendums on various issues are common because popular sovereignty is respected and hard to manipulate. But when elected tyrants use such techniques, the consequences can be disastrous.

In the past century, direct public referendums have been the favourite tool of undemocratic leaders looking to exploit the prevailing democratic environment. Ironically, since 2001 Thailand's democracy has bred a mutant dictatorship, epitomised by Thaksin's undeterred exercise of power.

Public opinion can be used to win backing for favoured policies, bypassing the parliamentary process. The public is given two options, either to accept or to reject a government initiative. The more gullible citizens will probably like this system and vote according to whim.

Beyond the domestic realm, Thaksin has turned Thai foreign policy upside down by going it alone, offending our Asean friends, especially at the recent Vientiane summit. Most importantly, government policy has alienated the country's key neighbours, Malaysia and Indonesia. These are moderate Islamic countries that have made progress in the march towards democracy and enjoy growing international stature. Thailand meanwhile is suffering from a downward trend. Sadder still is Thaksin's unwavering connivance with the Burmese junta leaders.

When Asean leaders and politicians, especially those from Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore, finally worked up enough courage to speak out against Burma's increased intransigence, Thaksin chose to back the rogue state with a huge smile.

How on earth could Burma have become the country's top priority? It is worth noting that every effort has been made to save and maintain the commercial deals this government has been responsible for. But as time passes, deadlier diplomatic minefields lie ahead thanks to a series of published allegations from Thaksin that Thai militants have been inspired and trained in Malaysia and Indonesia.

Such faux pas will have serious ramifications. Thaksin should have been more discreet and sensitive. Instead of waiting until such claims had been proven or clarifications had been given by those concerned, he preferred to blow the whistle. As it turned out, we have made fools of ourselves by making false claims.

So far his talk-tough, Thai-can-do attitude has won him more accolades at home, particularly in the rural North and Northeast. Creating imaginary enemies for domestic hype and electoral gain is not difficult, but in the long run such practices may backfire. So may stirring up nationalism in times of conflict. A small incident could ignite the flames of nationalism. Lessons from Cambodia must not be lost.

Inevitably, in months to come, the troubles in the southern provinces will take their toll on the rest of the country in terms of the economy and security.

The government will use the threat of militancy, which is no longer a domestic affair, as a new reason to place restrictions on civil liberties. Security policy-makers believe that these problems can be solved within five years through the prudent application of force and a massive financial mobilisation.

More threats, more controls, more insidious ploys – what could be worse for 2005?

Thai-language newspapers – January 25-26, 2005

January 25, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Matichon

– January 25, 2005

* At 2:00am on January 25, Kanjanaburi people panicked after hearing people say that the tsunami made two big dams break (Srinakarin and Wachiralongkorn). Some ran away in fright in the middle of the night. The Kanjanaburi governor and directors of the dam confirm both dams are strong and firm. Meanwhile Mr. Samit Thammasarot declared that U.S. will help Thailand set up a tsunami early warning system by linking the Hawaii center with Thailand. The news can be relayed directly by hotline and special fax.

* On January 24 at the government house, Mr. Jaturon Chaisaeng, Deputy Prime Minister and chairman of the group considering the bird flu situation, had a meeting with livestock organizations. After the meeting it was announced that all areas will be checked from February 1-28 in order to guard against the bird flu. A budget is also being requested to buy vaccine to protect against H5N1. Livestock associations will make stickers to put on the chicken confirming its safety for the coming Chinese New Year.

Thairath

January 25, 2005

* At Huaykwang police station, a Ramkamhaeng University student was arrested. He tried to rape his girlfriend because he was angry after knowing she deceived him into buying things for her and then abusing him that he is dull.

* At the Crime Suppression Division, police announced at a press conference that they would arrest big gangsters who are stealing cars. This gang includes seven persons and is headed by a former police captain who was dismissed three years ago. They steal Hondas to sell in Cambodia and have sold more than 50 cars.

January
26, 2005

* Luckless candidates! Mr. Boonmak Sirinaowakul, Democrat MP candidate, and Mrs. Kobkul, MP candidate of TRT (district 1 Ratchaburi province), were both traveling by motorcycle and going from door-to-door asking for votes. Both were bitten by dogs, both had to go to the hospital, and both received seven stitches each.

* The victim who alleged she was raped by Mr. Saengroj Kanjana on Jan 23 informed the Pavina Foundation and asked for the military to protect her instead of the police. This is because the accused rapist is familiar with police at the station and everybody in the rape victim's family has been threatened with death.

Earlier: ([ThaiRath](#), January 24, 2005) On January 23 in Surathani province, a female vocation student informed the police that she was raped by Mr. Saengroj Kanjana, the son of

MP candidate, Mr. Chumpon Kanjana. Previously, Mr. Saengroj Kanjana allegedly shot and killed policemen in 1999 and 2000 and is still on the temporary bail during the appeal.

Dog rides motorcycle

January 25, 2005

Dog rides motorcycle
– January 25, 2005



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Thai-language newspapers – January 27, 2005

January 27, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Matichon

– January 27, 2005

* All the world commemorates one month since the tsunami disaster. The victims in the six southern provinces prepare to demand Thaksin resist rules to building houses far from the shore where is it not convenient to do fishing. They want to build houses by their own styles. Also they ask to check the more than 1000 land documents of capitalists that appear to overlap the peoples' land.

* On January 26, Mr. Anusorn Thaidecha, Director of the Administrative Office of the Private Promotion of Education said after a meeting that it had found that 15 schools in the Siam Square area have no the fire exit, building map, or fire equipment so they have to solve the problem within 15 days. Violation may lead to withdraw of licenses.

Thairath

– January 27, 2005

* At 5 pm on January 26, a team of police in Samkok, Pathumthani province raided gamblers who were playing in a house, but all but seven women were able to run away. As the police were checking the house, the owner of the house appeared pretending to know nothing so the police asked her to go to police station, but she resisted and finally fought with the police. Finally she was subdued, but a policeman was bloody cut from her fingernails.

* On January 26, the Culture Ministry and Chulalongkorn University reveals the research of “Compiling the situation of children and the youth problem.” Youth are sinking in the culture of fast shopping, fast food, luxury—especially mobile phones, and the attitude of swinging sex.

* Thaksin gives an interview on January 26 that the Malaysian government caught Jehkumae Kuteh, the leader of the group who want to separate three provinces in the South from Thailand. He said that Jehkumae is very damned and wants him to be prosecuted in Thailand.

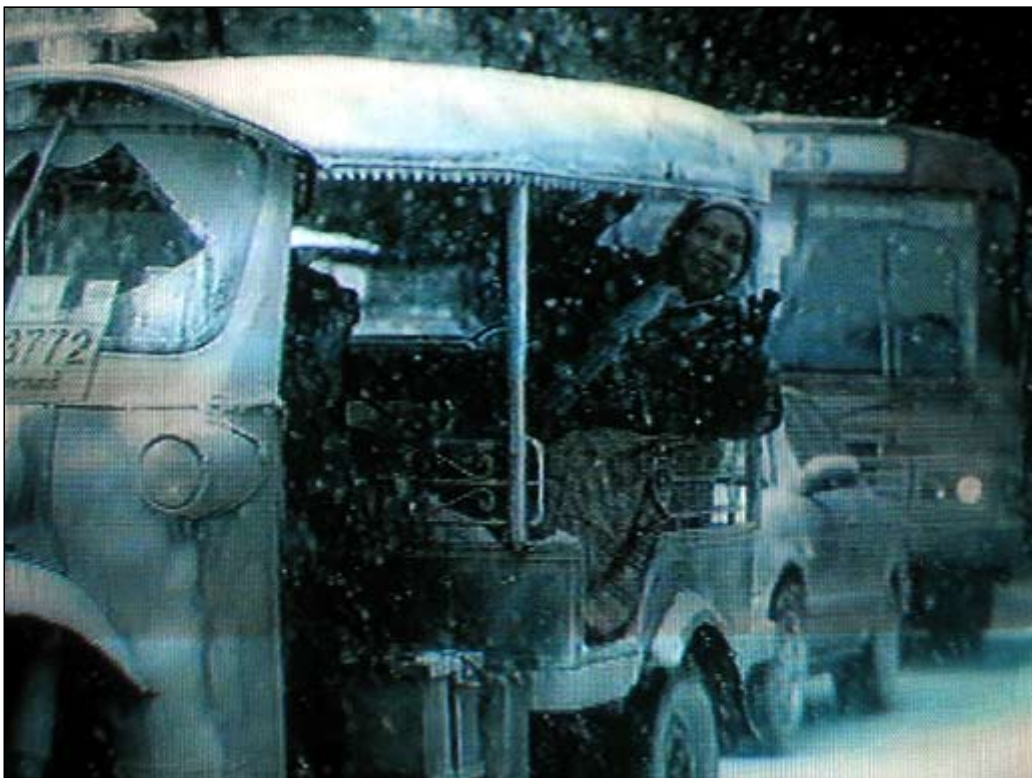
TV commercials: Bangkok snowstorm

January 27, 2005

Categories: Advertising and Commercials



This commercial is a thrilling tour de force of computer graphics than shows familiar Bangkok sights covered in snow. The commercial is for Johnny Walker Red Label and profiles a computer graphics technician.



A series of shots shows Bangkok residents thrilled with the snow.



A snowball fight in front
of the Muay Thai stadium on Ratchadamneorn Avenue.



The computer graphics technician who is profiled in the ad walks across a frozen Chao Phraya River in front of the Rama 8 Bridge. People skate across the river behind him.



A bottle of Johnny Walker Red Label appears as snowflakes fall, creating the outline of the bottle.

A tale of two newspapers archives 2001-2008

January 28, 2005

Categories: A Tale of Two Newspapers, Thai Newspapers and Magazines

‘A tale of two newspapers’ archives

‘A tale of two newspapers’ compares how various news sources report the same stories and is probably 2Bangkok.com’s most popular feature. Most often the toothless *Bangkok Post* and the rabid *Nation* are contrasted, but many other sources are compared as well.

Big surprises in new cabinet

– *Bangkok Post*, March 10, 2005

Few surprises in Thaksin’s new Thai cabinet

– *Reuters*, March 10, 2005



[Junta friends out or in?](#) – March, 2008

[Will TRT accept the court’s](#)

[ruling?](#) – May 1, 2006

[Decision day](#) – April 28, 2006

[Airport delayed?](#)

– April 28, 2006

[Invited or arrested?](#)

– April 19, 2006

[Did the Transport](#)

[Ministry "refuse to approve" or "soften its](#)

[stance"?](#) – October 26, 2005

[The Transport](#)

[Ministry meets about the Skytrain](#) – October 24, 2005

[Airport](#)

[cracks and the ‘fabricated news report’](#) – August 11, 2005

[Before and After: Post editing](#) – July 30, 2005

[The Anand/Thaksin address I](#) –

July 29, 2005

[The Anand/Thaksin address II](#) –

July 29, 2005

[Anand’s comments](#) – July

20, 2005

[Special powers and problems in](#)

[the South](#) – July 16, 2005

[Stimulus package](#) – July 13, 2005

[Prem’s ‘accusation’](#) – July 11,

2005

[Thairath](#)

[and Matichon editorials](#) – July 8, 2005

[Tsunami drill](#) – July 8,

2005

[Jaruvan relieved](#) – June 28,

[HM](#)

[The Queen’s speech](#) – November 19, 2004

[The government fair](#) – November 8, 2004

[The fake press briefing](#) – November 6, 2004

[Deaths in custody](#) – October 27, 2004

[The threatening billboard](#) – September 27, 2004

[Subway car delivery](#) – September 24, 2004

[Chamlong’s land grab charge](#) – September 22,

[Akeyuth targeted by the government](#) – September 2004

[The Nation questions the government’s legiti](#)

[June 21, 2004](#)

[Death of Thanom](#) – June 19, 2004

[Bangkok governor predictions](#) – June 10, 2004

[Violating building code](#) – June 5, 2004

[Traffic at the new airport](#) – May 28, 2004

[Censure debate](#) – May 20, 2004

[Theories about the South](#) – May 10, 2004

[Same article, different headline](#) – May 10, 2004

[Soi Luenrit](#) – April 12, 2004

[Ghost buildings](#) – March 26,

2004

[US ‘error’](#) – March 25, 2004

[US ‘apology’](#) – March 24, 2004

[TRT win?](#) – March 22, 2004

[Laem Phakbia Bridge](#) – January 20, 2004

[Expressway](#)

[extensions approved](#) – December 26, 2003

[Ratchadamnoen plans](#) – September 20, 2003

[Airport construction](#) – September 12, 2003

[2005](#)
[The same event?](#) – June 27, 2005
[Website closures](#) – June 22, 2005
[Subway](#)
[passengers after the fare hike](#) – June 6, 2005
[Closing community radio III](#) –
 June 1, 2005
[Scanner probe extended](#) – June 1, 2005
[Closing community radio II](#) –
 May 21, 2005
[Closing community radio I](#) –
 May 20, 2005
[Black May 13 years](#)
[later](#) – May 18, 2005
[Bhokin and the new parliament](#)
[building](#) – May 13, 2005
[Dengue fever](#) – May 11,
 2005
[Krue Se and Tak Bai reports ‘censored?’](#) – April 25,
 2005
[Krue Se and Tak Bai reports](#)
[are released](#) – April 25, 2005
[Security measures](#) – April 7, 2005
[Thaksin’s ‘right’ quote](#) – April 2, 2005
[Tsunami warning](#) – March 30, 2005
[Reporting on the new cabinet](#) – March 12, 2005
[Surprises in the cabinet?](#) – March 11, 2005
[Thaksin’s speech](#) – March
 11, 2005
[Prem’s ‘rebuke’](#) – March 1,
 2005
[Buying back the](#)
[Skytrain](#) – January 28, 2005
[Sea gypsy protest](#) – January
 25, 2005
[The Democrats’](#)
[rally](#) – December 20, 2004
[Beer](#)
[bar demolition](#) – December 15, 2004
[PM unhappy](#)
 – December 12, 2004
[The](#)
[security decree](#) – December 2, 2004
["Winds](#)
[calm" at Ko Samui?](#) – November 26, 2004
[Which one is wrong?](#) – November 21, 2004

[Skytrain vendetta](#) (one of the best) – August 2

[When publicity goes wrong](#)
 – August 16, 2003

[Skytrain extensions](#)
 – July 18, 2003

[The airport roof](#) – July 3, 2003

[Gangs controlling motorcycle taxis](#) – May 23
[Describing a local tycoon](#) – May 3, 2003
[The Nation debunks Post articles–Post stands](#)
[story](#) – August 18, 2002
[Mass transit details](#) – June 22, 2001

Note: Since *Bangkok Post* now removes stories from the net after one week (no great loss as they often contain incorrect or incomplete information), links to stories will likely not work.

Thai-language newspapers – January 28, 2005

January 28, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Matichon

– January 28, 2005

* Lots of Bangkok residents went to each district to make ID cards and this caused computer systems to fail. They want to vote in the coming general election but their ID cards are being held by creditors because most people are in debts with informal loans (in debt to loan sharks).



* On

January 27, in a protest against the Honda Company, an irate female cloth seller used a big hammer to bash her new CRV car in front of Shinawatra building
3. People and press crowded around to watch. She bought the new car one month ago, but she has to fix it very often. Although she appeals to the company, they did not give her a new car.

Thairath

– January 28, 2005

* In Banglamung, Chonburi, Mr. Van Joseph Pusjoh, a 47-year-old from Holland killed himself in his room by using a big plastic bag to cover his head and inhaling cigarette lighter gas. The police believe he had been dead for 48 hours when found.

* For

a short term solution, Suwat Lipatapunlob, Deputy Prime Minister, said at a meeting in Phuket that they will organize a contest of Miss Universe in the six southern provinces and do public relations to persuade tourists to come back to Thailand.

Thai prime minister confirms reports of leadership tensions in neighboring Myanmar

January 28, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

[Thai prime minister confirms reports of leadership tensions in neighboring Myanmar](#) – AP, January 28, 2005

From Thursday:

[Rumors of bizarre gun battle in Rangoon](#) – *The Irrawaddy*, January 27, 2005

In the absence of a free press, Rangoon's rumor mill is hyper-active even in quiet times. But in recent days it has bordered on the bizarre, with reports of a gun battle among the Burmese military regime's top three leaders. Adding fuel has been the mysterious public disappearance of one of them...

From Monday: [Officer's death sparks rumors in Rangoon](#)
– *The Irrawaddy*, January 24, 2005

The funeral of a Burmese army officer occurred on Sunday amid rumors of a planned shake-up in the country's military command structure...

How the Philippines fails to sell itself abroad

January 28, 2005

Categories: The Philippines

[How the Philippines fails to sell itself abroad](#)

– *Arab News*, January 28, 2005

...So what happened? A lack of infrastructure and no advertising, is the answer in short...

TRT pamphlet with promises for future Bangkok mass transit

January 29, 2005

Categories: Mass Transit, Master Plans, Thai Politics



TRT pamphlet with promises for future Bangkok mass transit – January 29, 2005

Wisarat scanned the campaign map for the Bangkok mass transit expansion (875kb) with up to 10 new lines.

Fascinating in that the Skytrain is totally omitted from future plans (the Skytrain is being punished for resisting nationalization).

Wisarat comments: 361 km in 6 years? Even 10 years would be very optimistic, even if they had lots of money to burn.

I note that the Yellow LRT and Pink Monorail (Pakkret – Minburi – Suwinthawongse) as well as Brown Monorail (Pakkret – Bang Yai) and Lime LRT (Bang Kapi – Minburi) are going to be handled by MRTA.

However, I have lots of criticism of the project which has been poorly executed.

Yellow Line LRT

1) Wat Bueng Thong Lang (Lad Phrao 101) may not be a good place to set up the station. They better set up the station at Lad Phrao 112 (the gate of Bodin Decha High School – a brand name high school which has granted franchises to other high schools). After that, they should move Mahat Thai Station (a station near Mahad Thai Road – a short cut to Hua Mark Stadium) to be in between Mahad Thai and Wat Buang Thong Lang instead. However, such a provision could provoke a tug-of-war between those Bodin Decha students and those who live in Lad Phrao 101.

2) Onnut Station of LRT should be changed to Sri Nut station so as not to be confused with Onnut station of BTS.

3) Rama 9 Park (Suan Luang Ror 9) should have its name changed to "Seacon" since it is in front of Seacon Square.

4) Udomsuk station should be changed Rama 9 Park since it is closer to the park than Seacon Station and it would distinguish the station from

the upcoming Udomsuk station.

5) La Salle Station ... even though the station name is okay but I think they should use "Sikharin" station instead since it is on Sikharin intersection and the station should be distinguished from the other end of this Soi (Sukhumvit 105). However, it is up to local people to decide though.

6) Bearing Station – this one deserves to be changed to Sri Nakharin Station so as not to be confused with Bearing Station of BTS. It seems to me that MOTC has come up with duplicated name to confuse the public at large on purpose as to way to put stumbling block up for the BTW Samrong extension.

Pink Monorail

1) There should be intermediate station between Pakkret Station and Muang Thong Thani Station. One good candidate would be "Pakkret Bypass" since it is near Pakkret bypass route.

2) There should be an intermediate station between Laksi Railway Station and Prachachuen Station for the New Chaeng Watthana Bureaucrat center.

3) There should be an intermediate station between Laksi Railway Station and Wat Prasri Station to serve students at Rajabhat Phranakhon.

4) There should be a station between Wat Phra Sri Mahathat and Lad Pla Khao to serve those who live in Amarin Niwet village, students of Krik University, Central Ramindra, and of course Army officers at the 11th Infantry Regiment.

5) It seems to me that they forgot about Suan Siam Water Park. Thus they move the station to Phraya Suren (a short cut to Safari World) so they should either move the Phraya Suyren Station to Suan Siam Water Park which has a theme park, suburb villages, and a shortcut to Serithai Road.

New Line: Lime Link (Bang Kapi – Minburi)

1) This link should be the extension of the Orange Line instead of the LRT or Monorail.

2) There are only four stations after Bang Kapi

2.1) Summakorn – suburb villages run by Royal Crown Property

2.2) Tiam Udom Nomklao (Saphan Soong) – a franchise of Triam Udom High School not far from Kanchanaphisek Outer Ring Road

2.2) Min Phatthana – a short cut to Minburi

2.4) Suwinthawongse – interchange with Pink Monorail

3) Too few stations for this line – better have some intermediate stations

New Line: Brown Link (Bang Phai – Pakkret)

1) It should be either an extension of the Pink Monorail or Purple line

2) There will be 3 stations

2.1) Bua Thong

2.2) New Ratchapruek – the intersection between the new Rachapruet Road and the road from Pakkret to Kanchanaphisek Outer Ring Road

2.3) Pakkret

3) Too few stations – needs a new station at Pakkret Pier to pick those who live in Koh Kret, Tha It Mosque, etc.

[Mass Transit News main page](#)

Suzuki campaign – Do not enjoy. Action brings back life.

January 29, 2005

Categories: Signs and Billboards



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Suzuki campaign
– January 29, 2005

Above: *Do not enjoy. Action brings back life (liveliness).*

The ad shows people crashing into warning signs such as the one above. There are also versions that say "Do not smile" and "Do not run."

We think this means that one should not follow prohibitions against having fun and that people should enjoy themselves instead (presumably while riding Suzuki motorcycles).

A [teaser for this campaign is here](#). If anyone has any other interpretations of this, post on [this thread](#).

Reconstructed map of Thailand

January 29, 2005

Categories: Art, Maps



['Thailand/thailand'](#)

– January 29, 2005

Left: Another cool project from artist Wit:
Thailand/Thailand is a reconstructed map of Thailand that relocate 76 provinces shape of Thailand in order to fit the proportion space as much as the size of 80×200 cm...

(Photo: Wit Pimkanchanapong)

A Timeline of Thai Railways

January 30, 2005

Categories: Thai Railroads

The following list includes all rail-bound mass transit: railways, trams, Skytrain and Subway; but excludes industrial branch lines for sugar factories, rubber plantations and the like.

Note: Names and routes of the Bangkok tram lines are somewhat disputed and vary according to different sources. The details of the early ownership changes of the first line are also not clear.

22 September 1888	First Bangkok Tram Line (horse-drawn) opened between City Pillar and Thanon Tok (AKA Bangkholaem Line) by a Danish company
between 1889-91?	Tram line sold to British company Bangkok Tramways Co., Ltd.
1890	Royal Siamese Railway (RSR) founded
1891	Bangkok-Ayutthaya-Nakhon Ratchasima Railway construction started (originally standard gauge)
23 May 1892	Tram ownership transferred to Siam Electricity Company Ltd. (SEC)
01 February 1893	Tram Line No. 1 electrified
11 April 1893	Hualamphong-Paknam Railway (private) opened
26 March 1897	Hualamphong-Ayutthaya Line (state-run) opened
01 May 1897	Ayutthaya-Ban Phachi-Kaeng Khoi extension opened
03 March 1898	Kaeng Khoi-Muak Lek extension opened
25 May 1899	Muak Lek-Pak Chong extension opened
21 December 1900	Pak Chong-Nakhon Ratchasima extension opened

01 April 1901	Ban Phachi-Lopburi section of Northern Line opened (originally standard gauge)
September 1901	Bangkok Tram Line No. 2 opened between Bang Krabue and Hualamphong (AKA Samsen line), owned by Bangkok Tramways Co., Ltd., which has become a subsidiary of SEC; Atsadang and Ratchawong feeder lines added later
19 June 1903	Thonburi-Phetchaburi section of the Southern Railway opened
04 January 1905	Khlong San-Mahachai Railway (private) opened for the public (official opening ceremony by King Vajiravut on 29 December 1904)
01 October 1905	Bangkok Tram Lines No. 5, 6 and 7 opened: between Banglamphoo and Hualamphong (AKA Hualamphong Line); between Thewet and Wat Liab (AKA Dusit Line); and the City Circle Line – all owned by the Siamese Tramways Co., Ltd. of HRH Prince Naradhip
31 October 1905	Lopburi-Pak Nam Pho (Nakhon Sawan) section of Northern Line opened (originally standard gauge)
1905 or 1906	Tha Ruea-Phra Phutthabat Railway (750 mm gauge) opened
1907-1918	Construction of the Khun Tan Tunnel
around 1908	‘Phra Pradaeng Tram’ opened – a private concession, gasoline-driven tram on a meter gauge rail shortcut through the narrowest land portion within the Chao Phraya River bend (Samut Prakan)
24 January 1908	Pak Nam Pho-Phitsanulok section of Northern Line opened (originally standard gauge)
24 January 1908	Yommarat-Makkasan-Chachoengsao section of Eastern Line opened (originally standard gauge)
01 February 1908	Bangkok Tramways Co., Ltd. (now a subsidiary

	of SEC) becomes a major shareholder of Siamese Tramways Co., Ltd.
11 August 1909	Ban Laem-Maeklong Railway (private) opened
15 August 1909	Ban Dara-Sawankhalok branch line opened (originally standard gauge)
15 February 1910	Makkasan-Khlong Toey Line (AKA Port Railway, Maenam Railway) opened (originally standard gauge)
June 1910	Makkasan Railway Plant (depot and maintenance center) opened
circa 1910-1912	Short feeder tram line between mouth of Khlong Samsen and Wachira Hospital ('Sukhothai Line') opened
1913	Separation of Thai Railways into a Northern and Southern Railway Department – under German and British influence, respectively
01 January 1914	Phetchaburi-Hua Hin-Wang Pho and Phatthalung-U Tapao sections of Southern Railway opened; Thung Song-Katang and Hat Yai (U Tapao)-Songkhla branch lines opened
01 October 1914	Khao Chumthong-Nakhon Si Thammarat branch line opened
between 1914 and 1918	Junction of Southern Railway and Songkhla branch line relocated to Hat Yai due to frequent flooding at U Tapao
1915	Thonburi-Bang Bua Thong Railway (750 mm gauge) opened
01 April 1916	Phitsanulok-Lampang section of Northern Line opened
01 September 1916	Bang Saphan Yai-Chumphon section of Southern Railway opened: Southern Line between Bangkok and Hat Yai (U Tapao) completed
1917	Merger of Northern and Southern Railway Departments

01 July 1918	Hat Yai-Padang Besar Line opened (connection with Malayan Railway: 01 March 1918)
02 January 1919	First international express from Thonburi to Malaya
September 1919	Decision to use meter gauge nationwide
Sept. 1920-1930	Regauging of some of the first railway lines operated by RSR (from standard to meter gauge): Northern Line up to Pang Ton Phueng (Uttaradit), Eastern line up to Chachoengsao, and Khorat Line
1922-1927	Construction of Rama VI Bridge, the first – and to present the only – rail bridge across the Chao Phraya River
01 January 1922	Lampang-Chiang Mai section opened: Northern Line completed
17 September 1922	Hat Yai-Sungai Kolok Line opened (bridge connecting with Malayan Railway at Rantau Panjang: 01 November 1921)
1925	Bangkok tram network continues to grow with Hualamphong-Sathorn-Khlong Toey extension and Pratunam-Silom Line
01 January 1925	Chachoengsao-Kabin Buri section of Eastern Line opened
01 April 1925	Nakhon Ratchasima-Buri Ram section of Ubon Ratchathani Line opened
1926	Two more tram extensions added: Yotse-Pathumwan-Ratchaprasong Intersection and Bang Krabue-Saphan Daeng-Bang Sue; readjustment of Dusit tram line to go along Phitsanulok Road (instead of Uthong Nok/Ratchasima Roads and Wang Suan Kulab); Bangkok tram network reaches a length of 42 km in the end
12 February 1926	Start of an electric tram service on Mahachai Line (between Khlong San and Wat Sai Stations; later extended to Wat Singh in 1927)

01 May 1926	Buri Ram-Surin section of Ubon Ratchathani Line opened
13 September 1926	Paknam Railway electrified
08 November 1926	Kabin Buri-Aranyaprathet section opened: Eastern Line completed
01 January 1927	Taling Chan-Bangsue connection opened (via Rama VI Bridge)
05 May 1927	SEC merged with Siamese Tramways Co., Ltd. to form Siam Electricity Corporation
1928	First two Diesel locomotives acquired by RSR (from Switzerland)
01 August 1928	Surin-Si Sa Ket section of Ubon Ratchathani Line opened
1930	Bang Bua Thong Railway extended to Lat Lum Kaeo
01 April 1930	Si Sa Ket-Warin Chamrap section opened: Ubon Ratchathani Line completed
1932	Double tracking between Bangkok and Khlong Rangsit completed
01 April 1933	Nakhon Ratchasima-Khon Kaen section of Nongkhai Line opened
1936	Paknam Railway nationalized (for a price of 360,000 Baht)
15 October 1936	Chitladda rail triangle completed
1938	Expansion of Makkasan Railway Plant

28 September 1939	Name of SEC changed to Thai Electricity Corporation
1940	Phra Pradaeng Tram closed
24 June 1940	Double tracking between Rangsit and Bang Pa-in completed
24 June 1941	Khon Kaen-Udon Thani section of Nongkhai Line Line opened
26 January 1942	The military assumes control over the Maeklong Railway and the Thai Electricity Corporation
24 June 1942	Double tracking between Bang Pa-in and Ban Phachi completed
July 1942	Tha Ruea-Phra Phutthabat Railway closed
16 July 1942	Bang Bua Thong Railway closed
16 September 1942	Start of works on the Burma Line (AKA Death Railway) (Nong Pladuk-Kanchanaburi-Three Pagodas Pass-Thanbyuzayat) by POWs of the Japanese Imperial Army
February 1943	Wooden bridge across the River Kwai at Tha Makham completed
April 1943	Steel/concrete bridge across the River Kwai at Tha Makham completed
June 1943	Start on works for another Japanese military line from Chumphon to Kraburi and La-Un (Ranong) (standard gauge)
November 1943	Chumphon-La-Un Line completed
25 October 1943	Burma Line opened (for Japanese military use only)
09 February 1945	Rama VI Bridge destroyed in allied air raid

13 February 1945	Both wooden and steel bridge across the River Kwai damaged by American bombs, subsequently repaired
05 March 1945	Thonburi Station destroyed in allied air raid
19 March 1945	Parts of Chumphon-La-Un Line damaged in allied air raid
03 April 1945	Both wooden and steel bridge across the River Kwai damaged by American bombs, subsequently repaired
June 1945	Chumphon-La-Un Line partially dismantled (km 28-30) by the Japanese
24 June 1945	Three central spans of (steel) River Kwai Bridge destroyed in American air raid
Other major railway infrastructure damaged or destroyed during WWII: Makkasan Railway Plant, Railway Department HQ, Chiang Mai Station, Uttaradit Station, Chulachomklao Bridge across Tapi River at Surat Thani, Paramen Bridge across Nan River at Ban Dara	
14 August 1945	Mahachai and MaeKlong Railways nationalized
after August 1945	Chumphon-La-Un Line completely dismantled by the British military
1947-1958	Nam Tok-Three Pagodas Pass section of Burma Railway dismantled
24 June 1949	Nong Pladuk-Kanchanaburi section of Burma Railway re-opened after track rehabilitation
before 1950	Ratchawong (feeder) Line of Bangkok tramways closed
1950	Thonburi Station reconstructed and re-opened
1950	Silom Tramline shortened to end up at Saladaeng

	Intersection
01 January 1950	Bangkok tramways nationalized to Bangkok Municipality and run by the Department of Civil Works, Ministry of Interior
01 July 1951	Name of RSR changed to State Railway of Thailand (SRT) by government act
21 December 1951	Two more short branches of Bangkok tram network closed: Chao Phraya River-Bang Krabue Intersection (?) and Chao Phraya-Wachira Intersection ('Sukhothai Line'); after that: Yotse-Ratchaprasong Tram Line extended to Soi Ruam Ruedi (with unrealised plans to reach Sukhumwit 19)
01 April 1952	Kanchanaburi-Wang Pho section of Burma Railway re-opened
circa1955- 01 Dec.1962	The short period of operation of the Lopburi Tramway (1 Line)
22 April 1955	Extension of Eastern Line from Aranyaprathet to Khlong Luek and Thai Stop opened
13 September 1955	Udon Thani-Na Tha section of Nongkhai Line opened
13 April 1956	Thung Pho-Khirirat Nikhom branch line opened (originally intended to reach Phuket, but never completed)
01 July 1958	Wang Pho-Nam Tok (wartime station name: Tha Sao) section of Burma Railway re-opened
31 July 1958	Na Tha-Nongkhai section opened: Nongkhai Line completed
01 January 1960	Paknam Railway closed and dismantled, stations demolished
01 January 1961	Khlong San-Wong Wian Yai section of Mahachai Line closed, Khlong San Station demolished

19 December 1961	Cabinet resolution to close down all tramways in Thailand; Electric tram service on Mahachai Line discontinued around this time
January 1962	Bang Krabue-Hualamphong section of Samsen Tram Line closed and dismantled
April 1962	Bang Krabue-Bang Sue Tram Line closed and dismantled
May 1962	Banglamphoo-Hualamphong Tram Line closed and dismantled
June 1962	Pratunam-Silom Tram Line closed and dismantled
July 1962	Yotse-Ratchaprasong Tram Line closed and dismantled
October 1962	Hualamphong-Sathorn (-Khlong Toey?) section of Samsen Tram Line closed and dismantled
December 1962	City Pillar-Saphan Lek section of Bangkholaem Tram Line closed and dismantled
16 June 1963	Nong Pladuk-Suphanburi branch line opened (from leftovers of the Death Railway; originally intended to reach Lopburi, but never completed)
July 1963	Saphan Lek-Thanon Tok section of Bangkholaem Tram Line and Thewet-Saphan Dam section of Dusit Tram Line closed and dismantled; Saphan Dam-Wat Liab section of Dusit Line added to City Circle – the last tram line in Bangkok
October 1963	Wang Burapha-Wat Liab section of City Circle Tram Line closed
December 1963	City Circle Tram Line cut into two unconnected sections by removing the rails from National Theater to Phra Arthit Road
19 August 1967	Kaeng Khoi-Bua Yai shortcut of the Northeastern Line opened
around 1968	SRT freight terminal relocated from Hualamphong

	to Phahonyothin
01 October 1968	Last parts of Bangkok Tramways (two unconnected sections of City Circle Line: Saphan Dam-National Museum and Phra Arthit Road-Wang Burapha) closed and dismantled
1974	Train service between Aranyaprathet/Khlong Luek and Poipet discontinued
1975	Steam Maintenance Center at Makkasan closed; most (all?) SRT steam engines transferred to the Southern Railway and maintained at the depots in Thung Song and Hat Yai
1978	Rail service between Sungai Kolok and Tumpat (Malaysia) discontinued
01 July 1978	Hat Yai-Songkhla Line closed
1979	54 people are killed in the worst accident in Thai railway history when a commuter train collides with a cargo train at Taling Chan
1979	The Bangkok Mass Transit Master Plan comes up with the first (?) proposal for an elevated/underground rail system (Lavilin Skytrain – three lines expected to open in 1984)
1982	End of steam traction on Thai railways in regular service
28 September 1984	Chachoengsao-Sattahip Line opened up to Pattaya for passenger service (first cargo train: 16 July 1985)
14 July 1989	Pattaya-Sattahip section finished: Sattahip Line completed
27 February 1990	Official opening of Chachoengsao-Sattahip Line
09 November 1990	Contract over construction of the BERTS (Bangkok Elevated Road and Train System) signed between the Thai Government and Hopewell Holdings of Hong Kong

1992	Contract for the Lavilin Skytrain scrapped by the government
1994	Rail track from Nongkhai Station to Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge laid
19 August 1995	Khlong Sip Kao-Kaeng Khoi shortcut, Si Racha-Laem Chabang branch line and Khao Chi Jan-Map Tha Put branch line opened (all for cargo trains only)
May 1995	‘Bangkok Land Skytrain’ project cancelled by the government
1996	Proposal for ‘Khlong Tramway’ (monorail along three major canals in Bangkok) by Governor Bhichit–never realised
August 1997	Hopewell Project (BERTS – Bangkok Elevated Road and Train System) abandoned due to financial difficulties and corruption
25 November 1999	New track alignment of Kaeng Khoi-Bua Yai shortcut via Pasak Chonlasit Dam opened
05 December 1999	First 2 BTS (Elevated Railway, Skytrain) Lines in Bangkok opened (Light Green and Dark Green Line: National Stadium – Saphan Taksin and Mor Chit – On Nut)
2000	Double tracking from Bang Sue to Taling Chan completed, but Bang Sue-Bang Bamru section not yet operational (missing signal equipment and reinforcement of Rama VI Bridge)
25 July 2002	Double tracking from Ban Phachi to Lopburi and Map Krabao completed (also without modern signals)
01 October 2002	Double tracking from Nong Wiwat to Ban Pawai (Northern Line) and from Nong Kuay to Nong Bua (Northeastern Line) completed
25 November 2002	Double tracking from Taling Chan to Nakhon Pathom completed (without signals)

11 April 2003	Double tracking from Hua Mark to Chachoengsao completed (without signals)
14 May 2003	Double track from Bang Bamru to Nakhon Pathom operational after installation of signal equipment
04 October 2003	Thonburi Station closed/relocated to Bangkok Noi Station to make way for Sirirat Hospital extension
15 December 2003	Double track from Hua Mark to Chachoengsao operational after installation of signal equipment
2003 or early 2004	Short extension of the Burma Line: section between Nam Tok and Nam Tok Sai Yok Noi re-opened
20 March 2004	Agreement signed between Thai and Lao governments over the 3.5 km track extension from the Friendship Bridge to Tha Nalaeng (first ever railway in Laos)
03 July 2004	First Bangkok MRT (Subway) Line opened (Blue Line initial phase: Hualamphong-Bangsue)
29 December 2004	Signal installation for double track from Bang Sue to Bang Bamru completed
17 January 2005	More than 200 people are injured in a subway accident at Thailand Cultural Centre Station; MRT service suspended for two weeks
20 January 2005	Contract about the construction of the Suvarnabhumi Airport Link signed between SRT and STECON/B Grimm/Siemens consortium

The future/proposed rail projects in Thailand

BTS extensions
MRT extensions
Hopewell Revival/Red Line Commuter

[Lat Phrao
Road Monorail](#)

[Bangkok Ring
Railway](#)

SRT Double Tracking (Chachoengsao-Laem Chabang, Chachoengsao-Khlong Sip Kao-Kaeng Khoi, and nationwide)

SRT Electrification

Rail Lines to the [New
City at Ban Na](#)

High Speed Rail to Khorat

High Speed Rail to Prachuap Khiri Khan

High Speed Rail to Padang Besar

SRT network extensions (Den Chai-Phayao-Chiang Rai/Chiang Saen; Chiang Mai-Mae Hong Son; Bua Yai-Roi Et-Mukdahan-Nakhon Phanom; Map Tha Phut-Rayong-Chanthaburi; Khirirat Nikhom (or Surat Thani?)-Tha Nun-Phuket; also proposed: Warin Chamrap-Chong Mek; Phitsanulok-Tak-Mae Sot; reconstruction of Burma Line to Three Pagodas Pass, or Kanchanaburi-Dan Bong Tee; Lam Narai-Phetchabun-Loei-Chiang Khan, or Jaturat-Chaiyaphum-Loei-Chiang Khan; Lang Suan-Ranong; Ban Tap Lamu (Phang Nga)-Ban Bang Poe (Nakhon Si Thammarat); Satun-Songkhla)

Hualamphong-Pak Tho Line with bridges across the Chao Phraya, Tha Chin and MaeKlong Rivers / upgrading and electrification of Mahachai and MaeKlong Railway

[Chiang
Mai Subway/LRT](#)

Hat Yai Monorail/Hat Yai-Songkhla LRT

Phuket LRT

*Compiled by Nils Rennenberg
with many valuable contributions by Wisarut
September 2004*

Also:

[Thai Railway/SRT main page](#)

Subway crash – January 17, 2005

January 31, 2005

Categories: Subway



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Above: Gated entrance to Si Lom subway station

More subway notes –

February 4, 2005

Wisarut reports: *Many subway passengers in the first day of the reopening ([here](#) and [here](#)).*

Those who work at Sathon and live in Samrong area said they would believe in the policy of the government if the government help BMA and BTS to start construction of the Taksin and Samrong extensions. Furthermore, those those live in Thonburi also ask for the extension to Central Pinklao and Central Phra Ram 2 despite of the fact that the new lines and extension would not go to both places so they better learn how to lobby (pay legal bribery to) the government and play tug-of-war with Bangkokians from other districts would like Subway-Skytrain extensions and new line to their home and offices...

Subway notes, February 3, 2005

From [Manager](#)

[Online](#): On the first day of subway service (February 1, 2005) there were 142,632 passengers. Most people rode the subway during the following period: 6am-9am and 4pm-8pm.

From [Manager](#)

[Online](#): The major starting points: Hua Lamphong, Silom, Huai Kwang, Phaholyothin (43% of passengers use these 4 stations as the starting point)

The major ending points: Sukhumvit, Silom, Phaholyothin, Hua Lamphong, Lad Phrao (45% of passengers use these 5 stations as the main destinations)

After resuming the Subway service, BTS loses the passengers by 10,000 passengers especially at Saladaeng and Mochit. However, BTS got the compensation from those passengers who interchange at Asok station, thanks to comfortable interchange at Asok-Sukhumvit

From [Manager](#)

[Online](#): MRTA is asking for the government to help MRTA set up a rolling stock assembly line and maintenance center at Huay Kwang Depot to create more jobs, gain expertise and cut down the repair period.

[Subway](#)

[resumes service](#) – TNA, February 1, 2005

Bangkok's subway system re-opens today after a two-week temporary closure due to an accident, which caused over 100 passengers injured. The city's first underground train has resumed its service since 06:00 a.m. today, with an apparently warm welcome by a number of passengers who were returning to use the service, according to local journalists...

Subway opening – translated
and summarized from [Manager](#)

[Online](#), January 31, 2005

Premier Thaksin, officers from MOTC, and artists from Grammy Entertainment PCL are going to Huay Kwang Depot for a test run of the subway before its reopening on February 1, 2005.

The test run will go from Huay Kwang Depot to Bangsue and then Bangsue to Si Lom so as to inspect the viaduct connecting Saladaeng BTS Station and Si Lom Subway Station before ending up at Hua Lamphong Station.

[Subway](#)

[is 100% safe, Thaksin declares](#) –

The Nation, February 1, 2004

...MRTA Governor Prapas said the MRTA had paid as much as Bt40 million to hire a consulting company from Germany, which will send experts to inspect the operation 24-hours-a-day for six months. BMCL will foot the bill...

[Subway](#)

[reopens, safety assured](#) – *Bangkok*

Post, February 1, 2004

[Subway](#)

[service to re-open Feb. 1](#) – TNA,

January 31, 2005

[SUBWAY:](#)

[Suriya to decide on re-opening](#) –

The Nation, January 31, 2004

Bangkok Subway news > [BangkokSubway.com](#)

Below: MRTA workers mill around while waiting for Thaksin and company to make their inspection tour of the new Sala Daeng-Si

Lom walkway on January 31.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Authority

[threatens to halt opening](#) – *The Nation*,

January 30, 2005

... “BMCL was told that it’s supposed to accept the contract changes by the end of tomorrow or else the firm would not have approval to reopen the subway on February 1 as scheduled,” the source said.

Essentially, the contract amendment would require BMCL to overhaul its system-operating plan and appoint MRTA representatives on its operation and maintenance committees as well as its safety committee...

Media

[test run before reopening Subway](#) – *Manager*

Online, January 30, 2005

MRTA

[better correct the poorly-designed interchanges and ramp at Huay Kwang Depot before reopening the subway even though it will cost MRTA and BMCL 300 million baht](#) – The Editorial Page, *Than Setthakij*,

January 27-29, 2005

BMCL

[running fire drills at Lad Phrao Subway Station before the reopening of subway on Feb 1](#) – *Manager Daily*, January 27, 2005

SUBWAY

[CRASH: One week of safety training](#) – *The Nation*, January 25, 2005

Editorial cartoon on the subway crash

– January 25, 2005

Don Entz points out *The Nation's* [editorial cartoon](#) from Saturday.

The damaged subway – translated

and summarized from *Manager Daily*, January

24, 2005

The Thailand Cultural Center station needs some repair before resuming full services:

- 1) Track replacement since the crash damaged the steel rails
- 2) Screen door system – needs to be reconfigured so doors open automatically during accidents.
- 3) Signals – the signal system was been damaged by the crash.

Commentary: Additional reparation I wish MRTA would do immediately:

- 1) 3rd rail at all parts of the depot to prevent such an accident in the same way BTS has done.
 - 2) Moving the track switchings further away from the gate of the tunnel.
 - 3) Correcting the grading of tunnel from 4% to 2%
 - 4) Reconfiguring subway gate to be opened immediately after the accident
-

Subway to reopen on February 1

– translated and summarized from *Manager Daily*,

January 24, 2005

MRTA said they will open subway service (Phra Ram 9-Hua Lamphong, Bangsue-Huay Kwang) on February 1, 2005. Thailand Cultural Center is closed for renovation and track rehabilitation.

[Operator](#)

[wants nod to restart subway](#) – *The Nation*, January 23, 2005

[Govt wants German train](#)

[drivers, staff trainers for subway](#) – *Bangkok*

Post, January 22, 2005

Specialists from Germany are likely to be put in charge of subway operations when services are resumed to ensure safety, said Transport Minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit...

[MRTA](#)

[to propose resuming subway service](#) – TNA, January 20, 2005

...Initially, the subway may be available from Bangsue station to Ratchada station, and from Hualamphong station to Phra Ram IX station...

Subway crash updates from *The Nation*

– January 19, 2005

[Photos](#)

[from ThaiRath](#) and [here](#)

and [here](#)

and [the](#)

[injured](#) and [damage](#)

[photos](#) and [more](#)

[injured](#)

[UNDERGROUND](#)

[ACCIDENT: Probe: It was a schoolboy error](#)

[SUBWAY](#)

[CRASH : Chronic traffic jams return](#)

[Passengers](#)

[lament slow response time](#)

[Subway](#)

[to sit idle for many weeks](#) – *The Cabinet yesterday instructed the Mass Rapid Transit Authority of Thailand (MRTA) to close the subway indefinitely...*

Also: [SUBWAY](#)

[CRASH – 9:30am, January 17, 2005](#)

[SUBWAY](#)

[ACCIDENT: Cloud over expansion, stock listing](#)

– *The Nation*, January 18, 2005

Having an accident so soon after operations began could jeopardise the prospect of the subway company Bangkok Metro Co Ltd (BMCL) expanding its routes, winning future contracts from the government and listing on the stock market, officials said...

[EDITORIAL:](#)

[Human error derails new metro](#) – *The Nation*, January 18, 2005

The subway crash shows that no amount of hi-tech gadgetry can counteract Thailand's culture of inefficiency...



Above: *Post* headlines 18 hours after the event—no hint of the subway crash

Post disappoints and CBC confuses – January 18, 2005

While Thai-newspaper websites were being bombarded all day by those looking for updates about the subway crash, the *Bangkok Post*'s static, one-update-a-day site had nothing to offer. Their first tsunami info page also came online 10 days after the event.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) caused much confusion

with their article "200 dead in Bangkok subway crash."
This was one of the first articles online about the event. It was later changed to "[200 injured in Bangkok subway crash](#)." Unlike printed newspapers where editors have to acknowledge and print corrections, on the internet, the original article can just vanish to be replaced with a corrected piece.

Below: CBC's original headline—which was in error.

<p>200 dead in Bangkok subway crash CBC News, Canada - 12 hours ago BANGKOK - At least 200 people were killed Monday when a ... into another one stopped at a station in Bangl with the dead, about 24 others were injured. ...</p>

SUBWAY CRASH – 9:30am,
January 17, 2005

5:53pm – Wisarut reports: *From Manager Online*

[The Government is planing to take over BMCL by force due to the subway accident](#)

[One week suspension after the accident will cause the loss of revenue of 17.5 million baht](#)

[After treatment, only 10 injured and 1 in ICU are still in hospital](#)

[Thippahaya Insurance PCL agrees to pay 12 billion baht](#)

[Director of Insurance Dept asking Insurance& Assurance companies to speed up payment for those injured](#)

[Deputy PM Jaturon is asking MRTA to review safety measures after the crash](#)

[Ministry of Public Health praising the well-prepared MRTA-BMCL workers for the speedy rescue and fast recovery](#)

[Senator Sawai Brahmanee Lambasting MRTA + MOTC—asking both MRTA Governor Praphat and MOTC Minister Suriya to resign immediately](#)

[Premier Thaksin coming to the subway crash site for investigation](#)

[More subway crash photos](#)

[Premier Thaksin delivering the Subway crash report to Her Majesty](#)

Premier

Thaksin points out human error from the driver who unlocked the safety brake as the main cause—massive revision on training needed

3:57pm – Wisarut reports: Governor Abhilux and Governor Praphat will have a press conference at 4:00pm to ensure public safety and raise public confidence in the mass transit system.

From Manager Online:

Social

Security – 30-baht health care is going to pay for Subway accident victims with strings attached

Suriya

claiming that human error is the main cause of the accident, not the system—1 of the 2 seriously Injured is the driver of the empty Subway that slammed into the car with passengers

More

photos about the crash from Channel 11

Phra

Ram 9 Hospital Director said 2 women are in critical care—one with pulverized liver and spleen and the other with a head injury

Even

Mr. Karun Jantharasuk (the former member of BTS Board) said it is human error

Governor

Praphat said a broken couple caused the empty train to slide down from Huay Kwang depot to slam the passenger train at Thailand Cultural Center

Suriya

ordering MRTA to temporarily halt subway service for one week for a deep investigation of the accident

The

Subway driver who slammed into the car with passengers is not at Hua Chiaw Hospital

2:06pm – Wisarut reports: Now, there are 180 people injured from Subway Accident when Subway Number 1015 (empty train) colliding with Subway No 1028 (with passengers). 7 patients are still in ICU.

From Manager Online:

The

list of those 180 injured

Photo

of the subway accident

BMA

City Clerk said subway accident is due to human error

Governor

Abhilux Claiming that BTS has Security measure to ensure Safe Services

Suriya

said he feel very regretful about this Subway tragedy – Thippaya Insurance PCL (the Insurance Company for State Enterprises) said they have to pay 800 million baht

Regular

subway customers fell scared on the subway – malfunctioning emergency doors!

Subway

driver with chin injury: needs 5 stitches... and the study of the empty subway train slamming into an occupied train

Suriya

getting angry: Quick investigation has to happen immediately

MRTA

explaining that system malfunction is the cause of the accident – Subway drivers are still in hospital

Thai

Railfans' responses toward the accident

2:01pm – Subway

accident injury toll approaches 200 in Thailand's capital – AP

12:52pm – The Nation/AFP file a wire report: 100

injured in Bangkok train crash

...The passenger train had just closed its doors and was still stopped at the platform, he said, adding that the empty train seemed to be going in reverse when they collided. Passengers reportedly attempted to get out of the train, but there was no emergency exit and it took about 10 minutes for the guards had to find keys to open the doors...

12:10pm – Photos

and story from Manager Online

11:28am – Modern TV 9 is reporting that the entire subway network is closed until further notice.

11:26am – Modern TV 9 (which has studios close to the accident) is reporting that the train that went backwards and crashed was empty. On the train with passengers, many broken arms and legs are reported. Victims can make claims from Tippiya Insurance Company.

11:19am – Subway

accident injures many people in Thailand's capital – AP

A subway train slammed into another one stopped at a station during morning rush hour Monday, injuring as many as 100 people, six months after the subway system opened in the Thai capital, police and officials said.

Some of the victims were bleeding as rescue workers carried them up the stairs of the Cultural Center station to ambulances. Others, dazed and crying, were helped up the stairs to the street.

The driver of one of the trains was trapped in the wreckage and rescue workers were trying to reach him, said Yupadee Srinak, the spokeswoman for the underground train service.

The accident occurred when a train that was preparing to leave the

station was struck by another train from behind, leaving both of them heavily damaged, police said.

Police said dozens of people were injured, but Yupadee said as many as 100 were hurt.

The new subway system opened to the public in July, linking at three stations with elevated rail lines launched in 1999 to alleviate Bangkok's notoriously heavy traffic.

11:15am – *The Nation* has their [first online bulletin](#) about the accident: *Rescue workers said the passengers were still being rescued and part of the train has been cut through to access them.*

Posted at 11:06am – Nation News Radio is reporting no one died. Now more 100 passengers injured. The driver was seriously injured. Injured sent to Praram 9, Krungtep and Police hospital. Massive traffic jam at Ratchada and Praram 9 Roads. The Minister of Transportation, Suriya Juenrungroengkit, said it is an accident and not terrorism, because the subway is controlled by computer. He said the subway is responsible for everything. Of the 100 injuries, 10 are serious. Thai language forums on the accident. Thai netters' responses to the first serious subway accident: [here](#) and [here](#)

11:02am – AP posts their first report: [Report: subway accident injures more than 50 people in Thai capital](#)

Posted at 10:47am – Ron Morris (2Bangkok.com editor) reports: *I was in Suthisarn Station at 9:25am. and boarded a car towards Hualamphong. It seemed the car had been sitting there for awhile. At 9:37am they came into the station with bullhorns and told everyone to leave.*

Posted at 10:43am – Nation News Radio is reporting two subway cars crashed at Thai Cultural Center Station at 9.30 a.m. 50 were injured. Officers need help to carry the passengers who were injured. One car was to go to Hualumpong and one to Bangsue. But nobody knew why the Hualumpong direction train started going backwards and crashed into the train going to Bangsue (more details to come).

The Hopewell Project – A defunct mass transit project

January 31, 2005

Categories: Mass Transit

Idea for Hopewell? – [Ruins of electric train turned into terribly cool amusement park in Lima](#) – *Tree Hugger*, February, 2010

[SRT launches appeal, bids for compensation – Rail agency defends contract cancellation](#) – *Bangkok Post*, November 17, 2008

...Early this month an arbitration committee ruled that the SRT and the Transport Ministry should pay 11.8 billion baht, plus 7.5% interest per year, and return a letter of guarantee worth 500 million baht to the Hong Kong-based Hopewell (Thailand) in compensation for terminating a concession contract to build a 60km elevated system for ordinary and electric trains, a tollway and frontage roads...

ELEVATED

[RAILWAY: Hopewell wants bond money back](#) –

The Nation, October 14, 2005

Hong Kong's Hopewell Holdings wants its Bt2.8-billion bid bond guarantee money back if the government opts to use the substructure of its unfinished elevated train project in Bangkok to build a new mass-transit route...

SRT demolishing Hopewell pillars
in July 2005 – translated and summarized
from *Dailynews*, June 27, 2005

Mr. Suthon Jetkeskan (Director of SRT Electrified Railway Project) told *Dailynews* correspondents that STECON has put the sign of Suvannabhum Airport Link construction site on Kamphaengphet 7 Local Road from Phet Uthai Intersection near Uruphongse Intersection to Klong Tan Station while the contractors are working on demolishing the Hopewell structure. The demolition would start in July 2005 and take 3-5 months to complete before the construction of the new pillars.

OTP has studied the strength of the 500 Hopewell pillars with a 30 million baht study and found that most of Hopewell pillars are good for use for the red line commuter. However the Airport Link has started so the Hopewell pillars can be used from Phayathai to Donmuang via Bangsue and Bangsue to Makkasan, but the pillars at Klongtan Station must be removed.

The demolition of Hopewell pillars at Klongtan would waste about 50-60 million baht even though this structure could be used for at least 50 years. It would save about 1 billion baht if all Hopewell pillars could be used instead of demolishing them.

Fate of the Hopewell pillars – translated
and summarized from *Prachachat Thurakij*,
June 5-7, 2005

AIT has submitted the test results and found that 1,560 Hopewell Pillars from Yommaraj to Bangsue and Bangsue to Rangsit are still usable. Only 135 pillars from Thung Songhong to Donmuang need some skin repair due to the concrete pox. The government could save at least 1 billion baht after repairing the pillars and using them for Hua lamphong-Rangsit Red line commuter.

Only those along Makkasan-Hua Mark have to be demolished to make the way for the [Airport Link](#).

1,560 pillars need special material to prevent concrete from making a reaction with pyrite and humidity. Otherwise, the broken pillars will become weaker and weaker. The pillars with leaking spots will be venerable for corrosion by rain.

Most Hopewell pillars can be used for another 60 years with repair while they can be used for 80-100 years with special care due to the fact that the total strength of the concrete is 500-520 kg/sq-cm—very good for concrete strength.

Even though the section from Makkasan to Hua Mark is okay for usage, some of them—about 50 pillars—obstruct the construction of the Suvannabhum Airport Link so they have to be demolished with the price tag of 2 million baht per pillar. Only the northern routes pillars can be used immediately.

Hopewell and Railway Number 9

– February 4, 2005

Wisarat reports: [*Most*](#)

[*people say*](#) OTP and SRT are telling a big lie to the public about the weak Hopewell concrete. Expect a deep investigation sooner or later.

Pillars to be reused for provincial link – Study has high hopes for concrete from Hopewell mass transit project – Bangkok

Post, February 6, 2005

...The study of the pillars used along Bangkok's northern railway tracks between Bang Sue and Rangsit was commissioned by the Office of Transport and Traffic Policy and Planning (OTP) to follow up on a previous report carried out by consultants, which concluded that the pillars were too weak to be reused.

A source from the OTP said the latest tests had led to the discovery of a miscalculation in the previous test.

"As a matter of fact, the pillars have not been used or put under any pressure, so they should not deteriorate."...

Hopewell and Railway Number 9 – February 4, 2005

Wisarat reports: [*Most*](#)

[*people say*](#) OTP and SRT are telling a big lie to the public about the weak Hopewell concrete. Expect a deep investigation sooner or later.

Hopewell project 'will have to go' – Bangkok Post, February 1, 2005

More on the Hopewell demolition – Manager Daily, January 31, 2005

Wisarat sums up the article: *After Premier Thaksin found that virtually all Hopewell Structure is very substandard, he ordered immediate demolition of the rotten Hopewell pillars.*

Warning! Hopewell structure is so substandard that virtually all of it has to be demolished – Manager Online,

January 30, 2005

2.1) 500 sets of Hopewell structure along the Eastern Railway could only support 100 kg/cm³ load instead of 350 kg/cm³ load as Hopewell claimed

2.2) For the Hopewell structure along the Northern Railway: only 50 of the 550 pillars meets the standard of 350 kg/cm³

2.3) Demolishing the Hopewell structure and rebuilding the new one

will cost the government 6 billion baht more instead of saving 5 billion baht as has been proposed. The one billion baht extra is for demolishing all of the Hopewell structure.

Goodbye, Hopewell

This moribund project appears to have died once and for all. On September 27, 2001, Prime Minister Thaksin refused to endorse SRT's plan to revive the project and SRT governor Saravut Thammasiri said existing pillars would be torn down if they were in the way of future rail-track expansion. This, coupled with the rusting rebar in the existing pillars, means there is probably no hope left for Hopewell.

Hello, Hopewell?

This comes up periodically... usually so political parties who have lots to gain from Hopewell construction will not lose face by having to accept cancellation.

October 2, 2001 – [Reaction to the killing of the Hopewell Project](#)

October 25, 2001 – [Thaksin revives the project???](#)

From the November 3, 2001 *Bangkok Post*: *A consultancy firm will be hired to study investment costs and new construction patterns for the defunct Hopewell mass transit project, and set terms of reference for the selection of contractors.*

August 18, 2002 – [Reviving Hopewell?](#)

December 1, 2002 – Hopewell is still in the 10 and 20 year plans for Bangkok mass transit. A new plan for a commuter train only along the route is due in early 2003. (*Thansetthakij* – December 1-4, 2002)

March 23, 2003 – [Planning to electrify Hopewell](#)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)
The leftover pillars



A rare photo from the construction phase in the early 1990's from an old SRT report.
(Thanks to Wisarut Bholsithi for finding this photo in the National Archives.)

The Story

Originally called the "Bangkok Elevated Road and Train System" (or BERTS), the Hopewell project was to be a highway to Don Muang Airport, a main line railway (for regular trains), a light rail line (a shuttle/tram from the airport into town), and a shopping center corridor—all elevated over local traffic.

[Crosssection graphic of the Hopewell Project](#)

There were to be three phases—from Hualamphong (the main railway depot) to Don Muang Airport, an east-west line from Taling Chan to Huamark, and a spur to the port. All these lines would follow the traditional trains lines.



The way it was to be...



Cross section of Thai-styled Hopewell Station



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

The only section along the route with the upper tiers finished.

Since so much of the route has no piling at all, this may have been a test or demonstration section.

Depending on who you ask, part of the 60 km project was to be in operation in December, 1995. The rest was to be done by December, 1999. Hopewell (Thailand) Co, a subsidiary of Hong Kong-based infrastructure developer Hopewell Holdings, stopped construction in August 1997. According to different sources, Hopewell completed anywhere from 13 to less than 10 percent. The contract allowed eight years for the completion of the project. Hopewell claims the work so far had cost US\$575 million (about 20 billion baht).

There is no piling in town except for some sections on the east-bound rail tracks south of the Royal City Avenue area. The northern pillars start around the Bangsue rail station and extend in various states of completion to Don Muang Airport.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

What happened?

Hopewell, headed by the charismatic Gordon Wu, seemed a good choice to undertake the project. Wu had developed a reputation for completing infrastructure projects in "difficult" Asian countries where big-money deals are often hampered by graft, poor planning, and endless committees.

According to newspaper accounts, the main problem seemed to be a lack of synergy... bad planning and relations between the parties involved.

Mr. Wu's Hopewell Holdings Ltd. received approval for the project in 1990 without conducting a feasibility study. It began construction before securing ownership of land along the route.

Without any clear timetable for completion, Mr. Wu had running public disputes with officials over the speed of construction. Last year, with less than 10 percent of the project completed, the government canceled Hopewell's contract.

Thai officials said Mr. Wu had run out of money, while he blamed government instability for slowing land acquisition. Since 1990, Thailand has had one coup and an average of a government a year—besides numerous leadership changes at the Ministry of Transport and Communication.

Mr. Wu is threatening to sue the government for breach of contract, and Mr. Akapol said the government would seek compensation for incomplete work.

At the peak of his career Mr. Wu, son of a Hong Kong taxi driver, built a reputation for completing infrastructure projects across Asia on time despite difficult conditions. He cultivated political connections continentwide and enjoyed facing adversity in flamboyant style, once promising to take a swim in the polluted Hong Kong harbor if a project was not completed on time.

But his company is now derided in Bangkok as “Hopeless” Holdings, and a newspaper has dubbed its half-completed pilings in the city the “Stonehenge of Bangkok.”

from **Thais Revisit a Troubled Mass-Transit Project**,
International Herald Tribune, October 10, 1998

The Hopewell Project was signed by MOTC (Mr. Montri Phongphanit), SRT and Hopewell (Thailand) Co.Ltd. (Mr. Gordon Woo) on November 9, 1990 during the tenure of the late Montri Phong Phanit (Minister of MOTC), amid controversial rumours of corruption and unusual land deals. Hopewell had to find financial resources (about 80 billion baht – then US\$ 3.2 billion) to backup the project for the right to develop real estate along the SRT lines. However, there were so many obstacles to deal with—including blueprints, land transfers, the routes which go parallel to other projects, and a financial crunch—that the project bogged down. There were also many committees dealing with the Hopewell project.... After September 1997, Mr. Suwat Liptaphallop (MOTC Minister during the Gen. Chawalit Yopngjaiyut government) sent the issue of the project delay to the cabinet and Mr. Suthep Thueaksubun decided to terminate the project in 1998. Even though several groups offered to revive it, controversies still haunt the project, earning it the the nickname "the 7-generation project."

from **Studying the "7-Generation Project"**
(translated from Thai), *Matichon*, June 7, 2001

The State Railway of Thailand (SRT – they control the land on which the Hopewell project was to be built) has posted [their explanation](#) (now a dead link) of the cancellation of the project. In any event, it was a tactical mistake for SRT to stop the project. After that, the focus shifted from "why can't Hopewell finish it" to "what is SRT going to do about the project now?" It also cemented their reputation as a state agency impossible to deal with.

There were also many oddities associated with the project. Two concessions were granted to two different companies to have exclusive permission to build a tollroad to Don Muang Airport.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Unfinished Hopewell columns alongside the completed Don Muang Tollway.

The Don Muang Tollway was finished first and constructed flyovers for cross streets in such a way as to make it difficult for the Hopewell project to proceed (since large parts of both projects were side by side). Another project, the [Bangkok](#)

[Skytrain](#), had a massive station situated directly across the Hopewell Phase 2 east-west route.

Normally, a scrapped project would not warrant much mention, but Hopewell left a long line of unfinished columns that look like the ruins of an ancient Roman viaduct. Since the pillars line the main road to the airport and parallel another completed tollway, they are a constant reminder of schizophrenic planning that came to naught.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Revival plans

Many government agencies proposed ideas to enable parts of the project to be salvaged. Even Hopewell expressed interest in finishing a scaled-down version of the project, but was denied permission to restart the project since the government considered it was “no longer a viable contractor.” (*Bangkok Post*, May 12, 1999).



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

A new road, called “Local Road,” has been constructed along the piling easement to allow another route to the airport.

2001: The End

The arrival of the Taksin Government brought new proposals to restart the Hopewell Project, but by September, 2001, it became clear a revival would not occur.

From "Thaksin halts SRT's plan to revive Hopewell project," *Business Day*, September 28, 2001, by Siriphan Pongthanee:
Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has turned down the State Railway of

Thailand's (SRT) proposal to revive the Hopewell project, and ordered the agency to cut back on future investment....

Meanwhile, SRT chairman Veera Musikapong said the workshop had agreed to put the Hopewell extension on hold since the project cost was improper for the current economic situation, while the solution for the remaining structure would be determined at a later date.....

The SRT has been under pressure from the public over its train services, with numerous complaints from train users including the punctuality of trains and rude conductors.

BTW: [Hopewell](#)

[Holdings doing fine](#) – AP, August 24, 2002

In case anyone was wondering, the company that tried to build the ill-fated Hopewell Project locally has been profitable for the last four years.

See also [Latest News](#) for more info.



(Photo: Oran Viriyincy)

Hopewell Train Mockup

April 16, 2001

– Oran Viriyincy sent in a photo of the Hopewell demo train that sits in a junkyard along Highway 7 (36) in Chonburi.

Like the remains of the Hopewell project itself, it is impossible to miss as you drive by.

Wisarat adds the following: *I saw the Hopewell mockup when it was at Hua Lamphong before a junkyard dealer bought it around 1991. Later on I heard that it was sold to a collector, but I didn't expect it would end up off the New Bangkok-Chonburi Highway.*



(Photo: Photoshopped 2Bangkok.com image on MThai forums)

Hopewell on the forums

– September 13, 2004

Wisarut found [this](#)

[thread on Hopewell](#) in the Thai-language forums along with the latest clever photoshopping of a 2Bangkok.com image (above).

An earlier example of 2Bangkok image photoshopping is here: [The amazing field of pipes](#)

Giant fish save Burma from tsunami

January 31, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

[Giant](#)

[fish save Burma from tsunami](#) – *The*

Irrawaddy, January 31, 2005

...The three fish—Nga Shwe, Nga Htwe and Nga Mann—stopped the waves and ordered them to turn back...

The tidal waves asked why. One fish answered: “This is enough. We have already destroyed the country.”

Sympathizing with the people of Burma, the colossal waves receded. Burma was saved the tsunami’s full fury.

Monorails Around the World

February 1, 2005

Categories: Mass Transit

Daily Monorail

A series of monorail photos from the collection of Reiner Zimmermann
(to complement this [thread](#)
[on the forum](#)).

Daily Monorail – February 1, 2005

Right: One of the earliest monorails, Patiala State Monorail
Trainways of 1907. Makers: Orenstein and Koppel, Berlin.
Now at
the New Delhi Railway Museum.



(Photo: Reiner Zimmermann)

Daily Monorail
– February 5, 2005

Right: Chiba, since 1988, Safege-type suspension.
Pleasant
urban theme resembling Wuppertal.



(Photo: Reiner Zimmermann)

Daily Monorail – February
8, 2005

Right: Chiba monorail. This section is less pleasing to the eye than other sections. That happens when a second line has to be accommodated.



(Photo: Reiner Zimmermann)

Daily Monorail
– February 9, 2005

Right: Japan's first real monorail, the Hitachi-Alweg straddle system, Haneda Line, here crossing Shinkansen tracks at Hamamatsucho terminus.



(Photo: Reiner Zimmermann)

Daily Monorail
– February 10, 2005

Right: Second generation train at a typical Tokyo waterfront setting.



(Photo: Reiner Zimmermann)

Daily Monorail
– February 11, 2005

Right: Sleek appearance of present day Tokyo Monorail.
Compare with [yesterday's](#)

[photo](#). True to the original Alweg design, the wheelbase protrudes into the interior.



(Photo: Reiner Zimmermann)



(Photo: Reiner Zimmermann)

Daily Monorail

– February 15, 2005

Above: Subsequently established Japanese design standards place the wheel arrangements underneath the car floor (Tamatoshi Monorail, 1998).

Daily Monorail
– February 19, 2005

Right: Train of Tamatoshi monorail crossing Japan rail tracks at Tachikawa, urban sector.



(Photo: Reiner Zimmermann)

Daily Monorail
– February 22, 2005

Right: Depot trackwork
at Tachikawa.



(Photo: Reiner Zimmermann)

Daily Monorail –
February 27, 2005

Right: Some intriguing trackwork at
Osaka. The loop in the
background is not part of the system.



(Photo: Reiner Zimmermann)

Thai-language newspapers – February 1, 2005

February 1, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Matichon

– February 1, 2005

* On January 31, at 9am at the Criminal Court of South Bangkok, Sanam Luang, the Justice of the Court of Appeals decided to acquit the accused Prasong Soonsiri, the Naewna columnist of Naewna newspaper company who was accused of insulting ‘Maew’ .

* The Interior Minister, Pokin Polkul, ordered the Administrative Department to gather evidence that Chae Kumae is Thai—including his 13 digit ID number and fingerprint. This will be sent to Malaysia to insist and hope that Chae Kumae will be brought back to Thailand and prosecuted.

* In

Satun, Mr. Prajaub Soosom and Mr. Jamlong Chuenmak

gave Takbai VCDs to the police of Tungwa District

because they were afraid of being prosecuted.

They

also inform that there are lots of Takbai VCD in Tungwa. The police will give that VCDs to the Election

Committee in Satun to investigate whether it is related to the general election.

Thairath

– February 1, 2005

* **Bloody news** – On January 31 at Bangsaothong, Samutprakarn, Mr. Sawai Sinlap and his two girlfriends were shot cruelly in his house. The police assume that it is either about a love case or an enemy who did not like him.

* Pracha Malinon, Deputy of Interior Minister, wrote in his new book, *Two years at Interior Ministry*, that there is a new sex drug which causes girls to want to take off their clothes because they will feel hot inside and have lots of sweat.

* In

Saraburi, Mrs. Pimporn Prasatkaew, a 22-year-old,

had just delivered her baby in the morning. The same day afternoon as she went to the toilet, her baby was kidnapped by a kidnapping gangster who

pretended to be a relative to visit her. Police are checking from the close circuit cameras and are tracking the thief with the utmost urgency.

New map reclassifies capital as quake-prone

February 1, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[New map reclassifies capital as quake-prone](#)

– *Bangkok Post*, February 1, 2005

U-TAPAO: Speculation rife on new US role

February 1, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[U-TAPAO: Speculation rife on new US role](#) –

The Nation, February 1, 2005

TV commercials: The Loan Shark

February 2, 2005

Categories: Advertising and Commercials



A loan shark and her boys
arrive to confront a food vendor who is past due in his
loan. Thais commonly call this an 'informal loan.'



However, they see no one,
so the woman shouts out and kicks the LP gas canister
before she and the boys walk away.



Once she leaves, the canister is revealed to be the vendor
in disguise—even holding the gas pipe in his mouth.



As he rubs
his back and starts to get up, the scene cuts to the emblem
of the Government Saving Bank and encourages people to
get small loans from the bank—and not take out informal
loans from individuals.

This commercial is extremely amusing. It is fast-paced and characters are wry and deadpan. These screen captures do not do it justice, but if one looks at the mock serious expressions on the loan shark and her cronies at the top of this page, one can get an idea of the tone.

It is also worth noting that the recent ‘invention’ of micro credit is not an invention at all—people have always needed and have always taken out these small loans, but usually from other individuals.

Critics have charged that this commercial and two others are actually thinly veiled endorsement of the ruling TRT government:

[Critics riled over ad explosion – State budget used to trumpet TRT policies](#) – *Bangkok Post*, January 31, 2005
...*"Since the beginning of the year, on Channel 9, you have frequently seen commercials for the Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Co-operatives (BAAC) and the Government Savings Bank (GSB)," said one critic who asked not to be named.*
The banks' TV commercials have been aired exclusively on the network of recently privatised MCOT Plc, in particular Channel 9. The advertisements emphasise how many poor people have improved their standard of living by participating in the debt-suspension programme or gaining access to credit...

BMA English-language ads

February 2, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

BMA English-language

ads – February 2, 2005

Terry writes: *The BMA Tourist Authority has run a series of full-page advertisements in the Bangkok Post over the last month or so. The adds highlight various tourist spots around the city. They are all well-illustrated with obvious attention to the graphic layout. The other thing that they have in common is the absolutely appalling English.*

The first few sentences of one article: "At Charoenkrung Road between Soi 26 and 28 locates a place all the tourists who are sure having been around every alley of Bangkok but never realize that this unseen place still exists. This mention place is "Rare Stone Museum." This is the fist place in Thailand where exhibits rear stones by gathering stones from diverse sources around the world."

The final paragraph reads: "For those who have some spare times, spending time in the museum where displaying natural and human products increases knowledge and pleases your life as well as develops the life quality to urban people. Each museum comes from taxes you paid, so all Thais and foreigners who are here please be invited regarding your interest."

My guess is that they are spending millions of baht on this campaign but nothing on proofreading.

Thai-language newspapers – February 3, 2005

February 3, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Matichon

– February 3, 2005

* In Kalasin, the sign of Samchai Community radio station was destroyed and also an officer and DJ were punched by a group of 20 drunken men. The shouted that the radio station was not neutral and supported the Thai Rak Thai party. The situation of the election campaign in Kalasin is very tense and competitive especially in zone 4 where Thai Rak Thai, Mahachon, and Chat Thai parties compete.

* The intelligence office reports that [Jeh Kumae Kuteh](#) was the founder of the Gerakan Mujahideen Islam Patani or GMIP and lured young men who were unemployes and desperados to be members. The members had GMIP IDs which has rights and was recognized by Malaysian officers as a PULO card.

* For

the month of love in February, Thai Airways Company Ltd. prepares to organize a big ceremony of “Return to Lanna Wedding” and will invite 55 couples from all the world to join a Thai Lanna wedding ceremony which will be organized at Mandarin Oriental Daradhevi, Chaing Mai on February 26-28.

Thairath

– February 3, 2005

* The house of the Nan governor, Suwat Choksuwattanakul, was bombed early in the morning of January 2, but the bomb bounced back to a nearby Public Health office so nobody was injured. The same day at 2:30pm, his secretary got a phone call that threatened to bomb three areas at the government offices, because the governor are not neutral in the general election. The police went to check, but found nothing. Mr. Suwat said it involves political issues and the bid of a construction project which the governor strictly controlled so someone who lost profit

* **Bloody**

news – Lopburi

– While driving to the police station, Mr. Preecha Sripetch, a policeman was informed by police radio about two robbers. Suddenly he saw they pass by so he overtook the motorcycle make them fall. But the officier had no gun so he was shot in the back part of the skull and died later in the hospital. One of the two young robbers robbers was arrested and the other died in an extra judicial killing.

from
the work may not be satisfied with him.

* Saraburi – Mr. Sanoe Pledjuntik, a widower fruit
monger is very lucky to win a lottery jackpot of
34 million baht. He got no. 54 from his dream
where
his sister who died seven years ago told him to
buy car registration no. 3454.

Yala Election Posters 2005 – Posters Along the Road

February 4, 2005

Categories: Elections, The Thai Deep South

See also: [Yala](#)

[election posters 2005: Posters from zone 1 and zone 2](#)

See also: ThaiElections.com



(Photo: Dr. Has)

*Please vote for Paisarn to be a
MP of Yala district 2, no.9*



(Photo: Dr. Has)

Left: Democrat Party – Build people
 – build the future – Mr. Prasert Pongsuwansiri – Yala zone 1 No.
 4 – Choose both the person and the party
 Right: Right Build Peace monthly (also from the Democrats)



(Photo: Dr. Has)

This is the only poster for New Aspiration
 in zone 2 Yala and it was not easy to find. This party was once

the biggest party in the area before its ex-leader, Chaowalit Yongjaiyuth, moved to TRT.

The poster reads: *New Aspiration Party – New dimension politics is a victory of the people – Vote Mr. Slittisak Marohabutra Delor Kroonawae to be MP of zone 2 Yala No. 10 – Will build the justice for brothers-sisters in Yala. – "Dare to speak, act actually"*
– Sunday of 6 February 2005, 8.00-15.00



(Photo: Dr. Has)

This is one style of Thai Rak Thai campaign poster. The candidate wears a Malayu dress and has his name in Malayu language.

Mr. Paisarn Yingsamarn – Zone 2 No. 9

Posters along the road

Below are some shots of the roads in Yala with plenty of posters everywhere.



(Photo: Dr. Has)



(Photo: Dr. Has)



(Photo: Dr. Has)



(Photo: Dr. Has)



(Photo: Dr. Has)

Posters on vehicles



(Photo: Dr. Has)

Car campaign: Mahachon candidates



(Photo: Dr. Has)

Chat Thai party No. 1 on a mini truck.



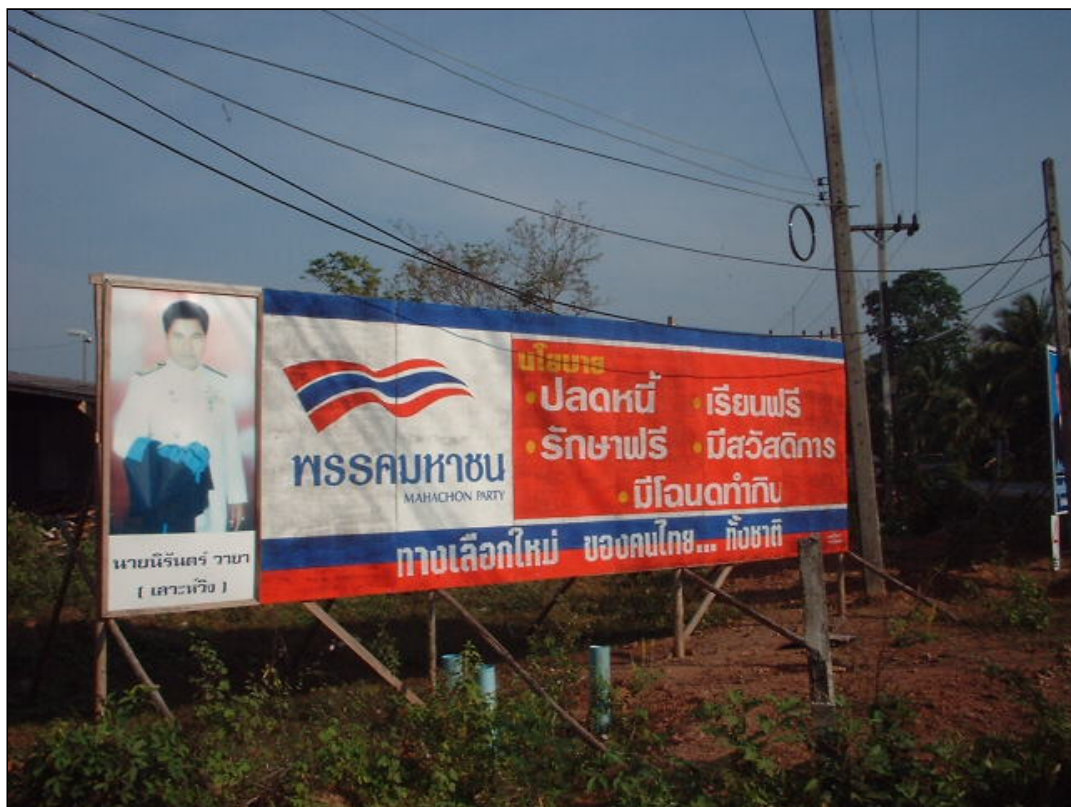
(Photo: Dr. Has)

Car campaign: Mahachon candidate—Mr.
Anand Saengwanit – No.11

The posters below are from the Yala Road intersection. They mostly belong to the Democrat Party and TRT. The most dominant one is the TRT sign with the photo of Thaksin making rubber gum (the second photo above).



(Photo: Dr. Has)



(Photo: Dr. Has)



(Photo: Dr. Has)



(Photo: Dr. Has)



(Photo: Dr. Has)



(Photo: Dr. Has)

Above is PM Thaksin tapping a rubber tree.



(Photo: Dr. Has)

The second most prominent poster at the intersection. It is notable that it features former Democrat leader Chuan along with the candidate (middle) and Bunyat (the current leader). The slogan reads: *It is time to ask for the peace back to the southern border.*

Election Posters 2005

February 5, 2005

Categories: Elections

See also: ThaiElections.com

See also: [Yala](#)

[election posters 2005: Posters along the road – Posters on vehicles – Yala intersection posters](#)

See also: [Yala](#)

[election posters 2005: Posters from zone 1 and zone 2](#)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Election posters: 9 – February 5, 2005
During the election campaign, TRT's number 9 has loomed over Bangkok from Baiyoke II, Thailand's tallest building.

Election posters: Create good things – February 4, 2005

Right: Democrat Party – Create only good things – Have outcome – Surun Chanpitak to be MP of Bangkokyai, Pasichaloen No. 4



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Election posters: Choose Thaksin
– February 4, 2005

Right: *One vote from you will give me the energy/power to work hard one more time – for the opportunity and the future of our children. Choose Thaksin... mark number 9 on both ballots (Thanks to Nils for contributing this)*



(Photo: Nils)

Election posters: Thaksin effigy
– February 3, 2005

Left: A Thaksin scarecrow left by anonymous persons at Saphan Kwai.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

The message reads: *Stop the businesses that consume/profit from the country – On 6 February vote to retard them and to restore balance*

These kinds of accusations—that Thaksin's businesses have profited from his governance—have resulted in lawsuits against those who make the claims, so it is understandable that this messages is anonymous.

UPDATE: A source informs us: *The scarecrow was probably made by NGOs that oppose Thaksin—the last part of the slogan has been used by NGOs. In the last two weeks there was a seminar not to vote for Thaksin and they distributed similar green flags which said 'Do not vote for Thaksin.' That seminar was organized by many NGOs.*

Election posters: The female lawyer
– February 3, 2005

Left: *Thai Rak Thai Party – Support Thaksin Shinawatra to be P.M. – Vote both for the person and the party – No. 9 – The female lawyer – Master degree of Law from USA. – Silumpa Lertnuwat*



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Election posters: Medal
winner – February 3, 2005

Right: Democrat Party – Build people build future
– "Will use sport to develop life" – Feungwit
Anirutdheva – The golden medal athlete of National
riding
horse team – The 13rd of Asean Games – The 18th of Sea
Games
– No.4 District 11 Dindaeng



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Election posters: Happy
New Year – February 2, 2005

Right: Happy New Year 2005 – Riches and glory
to everybody – Siri Wangboonlert – Pranakorn-
Prompab district
– Thai Rak Thai Party



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Election posters: 201

– February 2, 2005

Left: *Vote to reach 201 – In this country, people are not only the renters – Protect the country from being monopolized – Choose Democrats to reach 201 votes – Make a cross on No.4 in the second blank – No. 4*

Election posters: Election jokes

– February 2, 2005

We are not sure if this is real or not—it is going around by email. It makes a joke of TRT slogans and the party number for the Democrats.

The poster on the left side is for TRT and reads: *4 years for repairing – 4 years for building –*

Let me serve people again.

The poster on the right side is for the Democrats and reads: *Vote for No. 4 – Democrat Party*



(Photo: Unknown)

Demands for
Thaksin – February 1,
2005

The reverse of this
"greeting card to the
PM"

produced by

Aidsaccess.com

reads (in part): *We wish you happiness and ask you to consider on our demands for everyone's happiness. Such as setting up a mechanism to control, assure the quality and price of medicine. Also support organizations in the country to invent and produce new necessary medicines in order to be sustainable in producing medicine in our country...*



Election posters: Everything on one poster

– February 1, 2005

Left: Mahachon Party – Dr. Pichai Sirirattanaponkul

– MP Candidate of Dusit district Bangkok No.11 – Party

policies:

14 regulations

(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Election posters: The young guy

– January 31, 2005

Above: Democrat Party – District 6 Sumphantawong, Bangrak, Sathorn – ML (Mom Luang) Abhimongkol Sonakul – No.4



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Faux election poster:

Vote for the bug! – January 31, 2005

Telephone directory service Bug 1113 modified one of their highway billboards to be a faux election poster asking for people to vote for candidate 1113 (1113 is the number to dial for directory assistance).

Left: Bug 1113 – Know all subjects, know truly, know everything – Ask for telephone numbers, addresses, tourism, emergency numbers, booking movie tickets, discount coupons for restaurants, download ringtones or Mor Yong forecast . There are more things I can help with. Just press 1113.

[TRT](#)

[pamphlet with promises for future Bangkok mass transit](#)

– January 29, 2005



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Election posters: Double faucet

– January 29, 2005

Above left: *Captain Rachata No.9 – Ra-cha-ta –*

(a pronunciation of how to say his name–some may pronounce

it as ‘Rachod’) *Thai Rak Thai Party – Supplement faucet*

– *Second career – Supplement career – Increase income*

(in Thai, one faucet means your first

career and second faucet means second or supplemental career—one

of the TRT policies is to enable people to have extra income

from supplemental careers)

Above middle (with the basketball): *Captain Rachata*

No.9 – To be armed – Fight drugs – have community sports –

It build up immunity in youth (to drugs)

Election posters: Minor

party poster – January 28, 2005

A poster for one of the smaller political parties.

Right: *Kasikornthai Party – The leader of the party, Professor Chamlong Dumsim – We know people’s problems*

and understand local development work – We are the people

who have experience and are ready to work immediately –

Party list No.16



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Election posters: Highway billboard

– January 27, 2005

Above: Mahachon Party No.11 – New alternative of Bangkok residents – Capitalist dictation of politics leads the country to disaster



Election posters: Better way –

January 25, 2005

Left: Democrat Party – The better way to a secure future – Please vote – Jermmad Juenglertsiri to be MP of Pranakorn, Prompab – No.4

(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Election posters: Dindaeng

Paradise – January 24, 2005

Right: Let us build up Dindaeng to be a land of paradise – "Sam" Yuranan Pamornmontri – No.9 Thai Rak Thai Party – Dindaeng district



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Election posters: New alternative
– January 23, 2005

Left: Mahachon Party – New alternative for Bangkok
resident – Natchanon Phadungsong No. 11 – District 11 Dindaeng

Election posters: An ordinary person – January 21, 2005
After the movie stars and big personalities featured on our daily election posters, here is an average-looking candidate a few steps away from the flashy poster of [Orathai](#).

Right: Chatthai Party – Give an ordinary person chance to speak the truth in Parliament – Mr. Thannachai Rungjirarat – No.1 The candidate M.P. District 6

Bangrak,
Sumphantawong, Sathorn



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Election posters: Dr. Chai knows you
– January 21, 2005

Compared to the flashy, modern layout of posters for TRT, Democrat, and Mahachon candidates, Chatthai is sticking to more a conservative and traditional design. Their slogans play up the humble everyman image as well.

Left: Chatthai Party – Realism Build society in balance – Please vote – Pol. Col. Dr. Auoichai Chunawan (Dr. Chai – Chai Clinic) No. 1 – Dr. Chai – you know him and he knows you – M.P. candidate of district 11 Dindaeng

Election posters: With the Japanese PM – January 20, 2005
A candidate poses with Japanese Prime Minister Koriizumi

Right: With the experience as the secretary of the Commerce Minister – I volunteer to serve the district again – Please vote for No.9 Thai Rak Thai Party – Orathai Thanajaro – Candidat M.P. district 6
Sumphantawong, Bangrak,
Sathorn

[Controversial posters upset diplomats](#) – The Nation, January 20, 2005

Thai Rak Thai has ordered the removal of some election posters after foreign diplomats were believed to be upset by the appearance on the posters of several world leaders, including US President George W Bush, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao...



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Election
posters: Payathai-Rachathevi
– January 19, 2005

This relaxed, half-smiling and colorful military portrait (left) is an interesting update on the old-style, serious military poses. There are about 150 of these posters right outside the military base along Wepahwadeerangsit Road.

Above left: No.9 Thai Rak Thai Party – *I have my goal – I volunteer to be your representative – Capt. Ratata Pisitbannakorn – District 4 Payathai-Rachathevi*
Above right: No.4 – *"4 years never stop*

working" – Puttipong Punnakan – District Payathai-Rachathevi
– Democrat Party



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Election posters: poster
praises Thaksin by name – January
18, 2005

This is not an actual election poster (above), but an example of support of Prime Minister Thaksin, by name, from a state enterprise. The poster hangs in a prominent location at the Sukumvit juncture between the Skytrain and subway. It reads: *New year greetings 2005 – MRTA sends you the happiness with a promise to push forward the project to connect and extend the tracks within six years which is the policy of Prime Minister Thaksin. The travel of people who live in Bangkok and outskirts will be changed. With Best wishes, MRTA.*

This kind of endorsement is not seen as fair in many quarters with the entire route expansion plan and fare reductions seen by some as tantamount to vote buying.

Toward the end of its term, government has made many promises concerning future mass transit plans. However, in the first years of the government's tenure, mass transit plans were halted and the Skytrain is still [barred from expanding](#). Thanks to Nekochan for pointing out this sign.

Election posters: 'Transform property to capital' – January 15, 2005

A general TRT poster: *Build/create Opportunity – Build/create status by transforming property into capital.*

One of TRT's policies is to transform property or assets to capital. So if the government or people do not have money, they can use land or valuable things to invest or start a business.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Election posters: 'New generation Thai-Chinese'
– January 13, 2005

Left: Give a chance to the new generation of
zintueng

(Thai-Chinese) who dare to think, do, lead and
speak like me.

Mahachon Party

Please vote for No. 11 – Mr. Damrongsak
Tharndamrong

MP Candidate of District 6

Sampuntavong/Bangrak/Sathorn

Moral principles lead knowledge.

Enhance Thai society.

Election posters: Sam –

January 12, 2005

TRT candidate and famous Thai actor "Sam," aka Yuranan
Pamonmontri (left), who has appeared in many soap operas
&

host TV variety shows. Thanks to Pas for the identification.

A thread about Sam is [here](#).



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Election poster: Thaksin
portrait – January 11, 2005

Thaksin's bold portrait poster (left). No words needed. It is also notable for its grin—last year's governor's race saw more and more candidates willing to sport a modern smile in their posters as opposed to the traditional emotionless or serious face.

Yala election posters 2005: Posters from zone 1 and zone 2

February 5, 2005

Categories: Elections, The Thai Deep South

See also: [Yala](#)

[election posters 2005: Posters along the road – Posters on vehicles](#)
[– Yala intersection posters](#)

See also: [ThaiElections.com](#)

Posters from zone 1 and zone 2

Below are posters from each MP candidate for zone 1 and 2 in Yala. In zone 1 (district 1) the leading candidate is No.4 from the Democrats who have a strong voice, but a strong challenge is coming from Thai Rak Thai and Mahachon.

Zone 2 is the hometown of Mr. Wanmuhamad Normudtha and this is a TRT area, but this year, a strong challenge is being made by the Democrats and Mahachon. So campaigning will go up to the last minute. TRT uses its leader Thaksin, but Democrats use former leader Chuan Leekpai instead of Bunyat Buntadthan, the current leader.



(Photo: Dr. Has)

*Thai Rak Thai Party – Thai Rak
Thai The heart is people – Recommend Paisarn Yingsamarn to serve
brothers and sisters – Choose the person – choose the party –
choose Thai Rak Thai – No. 9, zone 2 (district 2) Yala*



(Photo: Dr. Has)

*Democrat Party – Build the people
– Build the future – Abdul Karim Tengrakina No.4 – Zone 2 Yala*



(Photo: Dr. Has)

*Nirun Waya No. 11 – MP candidate
zone 2 Yala, 6 February change – choose a new party and new person
who understand us*



(Photo: Dr. Has)

Left: Mr. Abdul Karim Tengrakina
(Kumnan Karim) – No. 4 –

Our people – our zone (district) vote for someone from our district
Right: TRT – Paisarn Yingsamarn – Has experience which can
be used immediately



(Photo: Dr. Has)

No. 11 zone 2 – Dare to speak,
dare to act, act immediately – 6 February strengthen to change
to a new person



(Photo: Dr. Has)

*Build opportunity in every village,
every community – have power to develop and solve the southern
problems with the SML budget – No. 9 Thai Rak Thai*



(Photo: Dr. Has)

Many posters on a house



(Photo: Dr. Has)

*Paisarn – Thai Rak Thai – 6 February
2005 – No. 9*



(Photo: Dr. Has)

The poster with Mr. Bunharn Silapararcha
– leader of Chat Thai party. It reads: *Chat Thai Party*
– *Realism to build society in balance* – *Bunharn Silapaarcha, the*
leader of Chat Thai party, the 21st Prime Minister – No. 1 Chatee

*Madorlor – On 6 February 2005,
8.00-15.00, mark 2 crosses in the table for no. 1*



(Photo: Dr. Has)

*Democrat Party – Prasert Pongsuwansiri
– No. 4*



(Photo: Dr. Has)

*Chat Thai Party – Realism to build
society in balance – Unity – Peace – Brotherhood – We are brothers-sisters
– No. 1 Hajji Chatee Madorlor to be M.P. zone 1 Yala- 6 February
2005 the election day*



(Photo: Dr. Has)

*Mahachon Party – Anand Sangwan
– The MP candidate zone 1, Yala province – On 6 February change
– Choose the new party, new person who understands us – No. 11*



(Photo: Dr. Has)

*Forward to the secure future –
Choose No. 9 both person and party – Thai Rak Thai the heart is
people – Thai Rak Thai party*



(Photo: Dr. Has)

Left is Mahachon, next Democrat and others are posters touting the
Democrat's promises
Green – Free study
Orange – After graduation, we will have work for you
Blue – Clear up the debt – No debt anymore – with work.
Violet – At 60 years old get an allowance
Pink – Free and quality health treatment

Why Thaksin succeeds

February 6, 2005

Categories: Analysis, Thai Politics

Amid the overly simplistic talk of coming dictatorship and blanket English-language press condemnation of TRT and his tactics, the reasons behind the Thaksin phenomenon are lost. His popularity is dismissed by saying he fools voters or bribes them with handouts. The reality is more complex. Thaksin is in tune with the voters and appeals to them on many levels that are not always apparent (or even understandable) to non-Thais. What factors have allowed Thaksin to succeed?



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

1. Catering to public opinion

That Thaksin publicly creates policies to react to public opinion leaves traditional politicians aghast. Thai politicians—and the Democrat Party in particular—have an unwritten pact: elect us because we are capable and then after the election you should not protest or put pressure on the government—the time to speak up is during an election campaign. Thaksin has allowed this idea to be turned on its head by quickly reacting to the mood of the people. Thailand has always been a country where those in higher positions validate and put their approval on the people's actions—not the other way around and the old guard politicians have not been able to deal with this new reality.

2. "Impurity of protest" and pressure on critical media

The suppression of TV shows critical of TRT, propaganda by state run agencies, and pressure on the print media stems from I call the "impurity of protest." This is a Thai belief that protest should be dismissed if it can be said that the motives behind the protest are not pure. For example, that certain people stand to benefit from the protest.

Almost all dissent in the Thai system is eventually labeled to be tainted using this tact. TRT pressure on media is rooted in the belief that protests in the press against their policies are tainted and thus they are justified to strike back to be able to implement their plans.

3. Making promises

Thaksin makes promises and promises are rare in Thai politics partially because of the patriarchal style of Thai society ("if you are good, things will be given to you—but you don't ask for anything") and partially because of coalition government in which promises would be difficult to follow through on. From looking at the dynamics of previous governments, it is clear that once in power, a government's

focus is on catering to various political factions and not gauging the mood of the populace. All parties had initiatives they wanted to push, but no voter expected more than competent representation from those elected.

Thaksin's promise making has likely started a change in other political parties. They will not be able to campaign around simple ideas like "we are capable" and expect to be elected without making and following through on promises. Through most of the government's first term, the opposition used the fact that the government made promises to voters as a criticism, but it never stuck.

4. Money/Influence

Underlying TRT's promises and initiatives are vast economic and corporate resources. TRT has boldly used money in service of goals it sees as deserving, to appease politicians in the parties it has absorbed, and to penalize business groups associated with the opposition. In many ways, these tactics are no different than policies implemented by previous governments. What is different is the sheer scale of the wealth available and the extent to which TRT seems willing to go to designate business winners and losers without regards to transparency (this is beginning to look similar to the system Malaysia's Mahatir created).

5. TRT runs a modern campaign

TRT's organization, message, discipline, and modern public relations management have left the opposition in the dust. Democrats, bafflingly, had no unidentifiable identity in the election until the "201" concept. The 201 campaign, intended to preserve the opposition's ability to censure the government and the PM, was instantly derided as indicating the Democrats were conceding the election. It is believed that the 2001 campaign would cause people to vote for the ruling TRT to make sure they were being represented by those in power—as opposed to electing an opposition figure who could do anything for them. That the Democrats placed their hopes on a stinging critique of Thaksin in parliament (by Chuan, no doubt) is even more indicative of their backwards thinking. Today the fate of a government does not rest with a PM 'losing face' in the halls of parliament TRT has expanded the arena aggressively to curry favor with voters directly throughout its term.

6. Thaksin fits voter expectations

What Thaksin offers fits the expectations and desires of many voters. Voters used to old, cautious politicians who basically guarantee nothing ever really changes are energized by a party with policies that are still in place six months after they are implemented. In the past, a characteristic of a new policy or rule change was that within six months everything would revert to normal. That Thaksin insists that rules be maintained makes him extremely threatening to the old system of compromise.

Even the ability to change the constitution can be seen in this light. Opposition politicians' pleas to give them enough votes to stop a change in the charter can again be seen as a guarantee that there is no chance for change.

7. The traditionalism of the opposition

The Democrats are so far unable to find an alternative to TRT's public relations. Their tactics to spin public opinion—arranging public seminars where academics warn the public about Thaksin—are a top-down method that assume people will listen to those more educated and in loftier positions than themselves. Not only was this tactic old-fashioned, but it was also troubling that the opposition continued them as a main tactic long after it was clear it was not working.

The slow disintegration of the Democrats is one of the unanswered mysteries of the last four years. As a party that prides itself in maintaining Thailand's democratic tradition, it can consider that its comportment over the past four years has let the country down.

8. It does not matter that Thaksin is so rich

Westerners in particular have a hard time understanding why being rich is alone not a cause for branding someone as self-serving or otherwise unfit for office. Thais typically do not have these beliefs about the rich. While voters may disapprove of the wealth Thaksin has accumulated while in office, they fully accept that anyone in that position will likely behave like this. A rich individual such as Thaksin is thought to understand and handle others who are trying to enrich themselves in the same way massage-parlour king Chuwit's shady background is seen to qualify him to deal with the shady influences in society.

9. Lots of free money to the people

TRT makes sure that money is distributed (or that appears to be distributed) at the lowest level possible. Thai politics has always been driven by handouts, pork barrel projects, and other programs to allow the elected to recoup their investment in running for office. What TRT did was to make sure the money was injected at the lowest level possible. Something like this really appeals to the man on the street.

10. Attention to social issues

Campaigns for social hygiene are very popular with the public—even in Bangkok. A staple of the Thai-language press are nearly weekly sensational articles about outrageous immoral behavior that is threatening society. This kind of fear is always prominent in societies undergoing rapid changes—and the last few decades have contained unprecedented change for Thailand. TRT has made confronting these social ills a key party characteristic and the public loves it.

11. Quickly turning negative into a positive

Whether it was the southern insurgency, the tsunami, or the many scandals, Thaksin was out in front, sometimes taking responsibility, sometimes assigning blame, sometimes just talking. Thaksin has a flare for boldness that is definitely unusual in Thai politicians who are used to coalition governments and are always looking to keep their options open.

12. High death tolls are acceptable under certain circumstances

Prominent in most foreign articles about Thaksin is the mention

of the 2000+ deaths in the anti-drug campaign. Everyone accepts that these deaths were largely, if not exclusively, extra-judicial killings and part of a conscious campaign. Most people accept that this kind of tactic is the only way to deal with the social ill of drugs as local police and government are crooked, easily intimidated, and will never be able to effect the change themselves.

13. Delivering the solid Northeast

Once again, the massive, patriarchal-based population continues to be key to controlling the country. TRT made sure it was part of their plan through its consumption of parties with power base in the Northeast like NAP.

14. Co-opting the men who must be in power

Thaksin successfully cowed the power-men who must be in power—Chawolit (NAP), Banharn (Chat Thai), and Suwat (Chat Pattana Party). The old guard politicians seemed initially confused as to why Thaksin continued to bring these people into the government, since he was already the government in power. However, TRT understood that having these men on the outside, backed by their party machinery, would insure constant plotting against the government.

Thaksin has also been able to enforce party discipline. In the past, political conflict was often greatest between factions inside a government. While the press still looks hard for these kind of conflicts, by and large Thaksin has stamped these out to present a united front.

Beyond this, the same factors that allow Thaksin to out maneuver the old guard politicians in the opposition allows him to out maneuver this coalition partners.

15. Doom and gloom scenarios have not come to pass

Predictions of imminent doom are never wise in politics. Economic collapse has not yet happened after four solid years of warnings.

16. The southern unrest did not hurt Thaksin

The southern insurgency is another issue that can be seen differently when contrasting the foreign press to what people actually feel in the country. Throughout 2004, the English-language press and opposition parties made sure that a "Thaksin is in trouble and confused" line was the prominent in the press. This was often at the same time his public approval for broader and harsher measures were at an all-time high. Quite simply, the more the unrest, the more people will demand harsher crackdowns and not blame government 'bumbling.' The southern unrest also stirred patriotism along with the idea that the Democrats have sold out the country by exposing it to foreign criticism over the Tak Bai incident.

Also see ThaiElections.com

Photos of Voting in Yala Province

February 6, 2005

Categories: Elections, The Thai Deep South

Photos of voting in Yala Province

February 6, 2005

See also: [Yala](#)

[election posters 2005: Posters from zone 1 and zone 2](#)

See also: [Yala](#)

[election posters: Posters along the road – Posters on vehicles – Yala intersection posters](#)

See also: [ThaiElections.com](#)



(Photo: Dr. Has)

These photos shows the atmosphere of people going to vote at various election booths in zone 1 and 2 in Yala. Some booths are crowded and some are not.

Photos of voting in Yala Province –
February 6, 2005



(Photo: Dr. Has)

Early morning at the election station set up in a football field in Amphur Raman, Yala.



(Photo: Dr. Has)

Waiting to vote at a polling station in a school.



(Photo: Dr. Has)

Waiting in the sun to vote.



(Photo: Dr. Has)



(Photo: Dr. Has)

In the evening after the the polls closed at 3:00pm in the football field in Amphur Raman, Yala. Lots of people are still hanging around. There are also lots of military and police to provide security.

Thai-language newspapers – February 7, 2005

February 7, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Manager Online

– February 7, 2005

* After knowing the informal results and his ability to a party list candidate for Chat Thai party, Chuvit Kamonvisit said he is ready to be in the opposition and investigate the government.

He will be an ordinary person to enter the parliament as he has told people.

* Mr. Anek Laothammatat, the leader of Mahachon party, apologized that he blamed the exit poll which said that Mahachon can only one seat. He also congratulates the Thai Rak Thai party which received lots of votes.

* Sanan Kajornprasat, the advisor chairperson of Mahachon Party had a press conference at his house in Sanambinnam and said that he will retire from politics. He will quit his position in the party and accept the mistakes that led to a wrong political evaluation.

Komchadleuk

– February 7, 2005

* Thaksin pointed out that politics has changed. History is interesting to learn but we should not stick with it forever. For the Thai Rak Thai candidates that lost in the South it is a wake up call and will be considered and studied.

* Bunyat Buntadthan, the leader of Democrat party, declared to the executives of the party that he will quit tomorrow and will discuss what caused the Democrats to be defeated.

A nation divided

February 8, 2005

Categories: The Thai Deep South

[More](#)
[on Troubles in the South](#)
and [Nationalism and Right-wing Politics](#)

From the Thai-language press: A nation divided – translation and summary from *Manager Daily*, February 8, 2005

The causes of Thai Rak Thai being defeated in the three southern provinces – by Siang Sao Long (pen name of Khun Sonthi Limthongkul – the owner of Manager Group) and further comment by Prachachon

Thai Rak Thai had an overwhelming victory in almost all the country, except for one area. Even though Thaksin and TRT made a strong decision to win in the South, they were totally defeated there.

This is despite TRT fielded an old cast of characters which is the Wadah group and four ex-Democrat Party candidates who defected to join TRT. The TRT faced destiny and were obviously judged by the people. This means people do not agree with the way that government is solving problems in the three provinces.

Three causes for the loss

The cause may be three points as follows:

First, the political election tactic to not use all elements to support the election campaign in the south, but instead rely on money. The candidates know the tendency of the voters and using lots of money alone is useless.

Next, TRT also tried to explained that there was a group that tried to destroy the TRT candidates and that group may have good relationship with the Democrat Party. This is only a way to hide the problem temporarily.

And third, the destiny of Wadah group may be that they are not useful for TRT to get back the seats in the South.

Wadah group or the Muslim reform is now compared to one standing between buffalo horns which are closing in from left and right. The police and military believe that the Wadah group is involved with the Muslim separatists so they keep an eye on Den Tohmima and Areephen Uttrarasin. Some Muslim groups think that is the wrong way because people will think "they work with the government, but they let the Muslims be suppressed." Although Wadah have a seat in the government–Wan Muhamadnormata–and others, they cannot seem to help solve Muslim problems in the south. The Wadah politicians may not be accepted when they visit people in areas of the South.

People have different reactions to these politicians.

There is some group or people who feel glad to see a Muslim

representative in the government and these Muslims have become Minister, Deputy Minister and Chairperson of the House of Representatives. But in our natural election system, which is called 'Democratic Patronage,' all of them face the election trap involving the 'gray way,' benefits, and networks like other politicians all the country. The one thing they know is that when they are part of the government, they have to listen to government and they get patronage from the government also.

Reasons for problems in the South

For the problems in the South, there is not only the old problem of land separatism, but also the conservative Islamic religion which is a new problem that arose especially after Thailand sent soldiers to Iraq, arrested Hambali in Thailand, and charged that community leaders were J.I. It also did not help that Muslim lawyer Somchai Nilapaijit was kidnapped and disappeared. Some problems could be solved by Muslim reformers, but we do not know when we will have the new Muslim reform group that will be accepted be able to participate in the center of government power. The phenomenon that Thaksin has no winning candidate in three provinces makes it harder to solve the problem.

Exit polls were completely wrong

Another big problem is the exit poll done by Mr. Sukhum Chaloeisap from Suan Dusit Poll. The team of Mr. Sukhum from Suan Dusit poll make the poll and spread out the result showing TRT get seats in The south, but the truth is different totally.

This shows how their work is not professional—especially the results from the three southern provinces. They should do it carefully and professional standard and not favor a certain party. The poll result and election result in many constituencies was conclusive and obvious—especially in the three southern provinces. If the pollsters survey an area using international standards, they would not be completely wrong.

Considering in superficial, it is just an individual nonstandard poll made favorable to TRT.

If we consider more deeply, we have to ask why AIS hired Suan Dusit Poll, why the TV pool cooperated with Suan Dusit Poll, why the Election Commission turned a blind eye to this and why Thai Rak Thai hired Suan Dusit Poll. Are these questions related or linked together?

This is a question of academic ethics that no one has been able to answer.

Comment by Prachachon in response Siang Sao Long's article

Solving the southern problem cannot be done in a short time no matter using the way of 'politics lead military' or 'military leads politics,' because the situation is just in the beginning and the government still uses violence to suppress.

Solving problems may not be regular work for government officials because there is no more political pressure.

The terrorists may continue operating, but it will be not easy as it was. Aceh—where both people and arms were being hidden—was destroyed in the Tsunami. Malaysia also has to be careful if it provide them the place to hide.

At the moment, the world has vigorous leaders and has the policy to resist Muslims. These are leaders such as Bush, Ms Rice (the new Secretary of State is a hard person), and Tony Blair. The opposition to Blair, Michael Howard, is like Bunyat—a person whom English people do not accept. Although many do not like Mr. Blair, the people have no other choices.

There will probably be bombs and conflict the South for some time like in Iraq where people still live, have an election, life is sacrificed by bombs, and America will not leave until they are tired.

Astrologers foretell the future of Thaksin—it's not good

February 8, 2005

Categories: Local Beliefs, The Thaksin Years

Astrologers foretell the
future of Thaksin—it's not good

— translated from [*Thai Post*](#), February 8, 2005

Although TRT won an overwhelming victory, astrologers foretells that the single party may face an event like October 14.

Meanwhile the sage Panuwat repeats the forecast to be careful of people attacking and to protect the PM's son.

Mr. Kengkaj specifies that lots of people will protest on the street.

Ajarn Pinyo Pongchaloen, the president of International Astrology Society said that there is no problem with TRT setting up a single party if it is in tune with the people.

However the winner's fate is in the balance so be careful of disaster and accident. He believed that a single party may not be stable for four years because the main star has some problems that makes lots of problems and obstacles.

Mr. Panuwat Puntuwichatkul, the famous sage specifies that Thaksin's fate will be good after Chinese New Year, but according to his age—56—it is the luck of that age that he has to be careful of his health and of attacks which could be fatal. The problem that should not be overlooked is an attack on his family, especially his son. Panthongtae has to be careful with women problems that make his father lose face and also things that cause his business to lose profit. It will be good in the next year.

Ajarn Kengkaj Jongjaipra also specifies that nowadays the fate of the country is quite bad with lots of problems, so it is appropriate to have Thaksin who is an absolute leader to set a single party to solve the problem. But this should be on the right basis. For getting lots of votes, the issues he has to be careful of are boldness, monopoly, and self-confidence in business. If he cannot control this, problems will occur. Be careful of the big protest in parliament.

The astrology just wants the leader to be careful with power because it is as a fire which, if not used properly, will cause him to burn himself.

Mr. Jedsada Lohaounjit, a professional astrologer and economic academic who was an executive committee member of MFC Corporation, commented on the direction of politics and stock market.

A new government should be vigilant of political accidents in the half year because there will be an unexpected event or something like people or state enterprise officers protesting, terrorism, an important person assaulted, deep crisis in the south, a plane crash, earthquake, fighting, or a purge in the opposition party. However the government will be able to solve the problem.

This moving of a star influencing a political crisis in the last half of the year means that the government should

be careful in the end of 2005 continue and the first three months of 2006 which is when fate shows the government ending. This may be the dissolution of parliament or crisis of parliament or constitution or a small thing like a changing or adjusting of the cabinet.

Mr. Jedsada add that the Prime Minister's fate is facing lots of obstacles. In the last half of the year, he has to be endure, using consciousness to solve problems and do not decide from emotion and feeling otherwise the problem become increasingly complicated and put him in the bad situation.

Thailand: Friendly, Fun and Becoming Less Free

February 8, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[THAILAND:](#)

[FRIENDLY, FUN, AND BECOMING LESS FREE \(PART 2\)](#)

– February 8, 2005

Earlier: Musings on Thailand – February 3, 2005

[THAILAND:](#)

[FRIENDLY, FUN, AND BECOMING LESS FREE](#) – *Free Market News*,

February 1, 2006

...Seriously, any family would love to be able to take a Thai gal home and store her away until needed for greeting guests and providing festiveness at special occasions...

We saw a lot of American men in their fifties hanging around with these gals too. Perhaps Thailand is not a good place for a man to go alone, unless he is single and hoping to marry one of these gems—at least after (Lord willing) converting them to Christianity...

...seeing a dozen different Buddhist temples (most of the older ones with hundreds of decapitated stone idols) and floating for three hours up a polluted river (that features scenery not unlike a river trip from Memphis to Cape Girardeau) is just a waste of time. Besides, it is discouraging to watch so many people lost in their sin and worshipping stone statues and gold-overlaid brass Buddhas twenty feet tall. Some of their Buddha idols are reclining (chiseled to reflect when the "lord" Buddha had gotten old and tired)...

A thread on this article is [here](#).

Happy Chinese New Year

February 9, 2005

Categories: Thai Holidays and Festivals



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Happy Chinese New Year

– February 9, 2005

Above: Offerings in
front of a residence

Ameriquest ad

February 9, 2005

Categories: Advertising and Commercials



Ameriquest ad



Krung Thai Bank ad

[Superbowl](#)

[ad based on Thai ad](#) – *Slate*,

February 9, 2005

Thanks to Loren for pointing this out review of a Superbowl commercial that copies a Thai TV ad: *Ameriquest breaks out its second funny ad of the evening. In the first one, a guy talking on his cell phone about a negotiation—"You are being robbed!"—gets mistaken for a crook. In this second spot, an innocent man looks like a brutal cat-killer—thanks to some spilled pasta sauce. These ads brought me closer to the verge of laughter than anything else I saw tonight. (Though a reader e-mailed me after the game to point out that the cat ad may be somewhat derivative. [Check out this spot for what appears to be a Thai bank.](#))*

Skytrain dragon

February 10, 2005

Categories: Signs and Billboards



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Skytrain dragon

– February 10, 2005

DragonAir advertisement on a Skytrain car

Oarfish!

February 10, 2005

Categories: Wildlife and Nature

[Oarfish!](#)

– *Sydney Morning Herald*, February 10, 2005

Just in time for Chinese New Year: a dragon/sea serpent-like oarfish washed up in Australia. These have sometimes been found in Thailand. Don't miss the photo!

Thailand's marine national parks in Andaman Sea re-opened

February 10, 2005

Categories: Tourism

[Thailand's](#)

[marine national parks in Andaman Sea re-opened](#) – TNA, February 10, 2005

...The parks are all in the country's six tsunami-ravaged provinces of Ranong, Krabi, Phang Nga, Phuket, Trang and Satun.

They include Auao Phang-Nga National Park, Khao Lam Pee-Had Tai Muang National Park, Chao Mai National Park, Phetra Island National Park, Tarutao National Park, Taleban National Park, Tharn Bokkharanee National Park, Lanta National Park, Khao Lak-Lumru National Park, Samilan Island National Park, and Nopparat Thara-Phi Phi Island National Park...

Temporary ban on fishing in the Gulf of Thailand

February 10, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Temporary
ban on fishing in the Gulf of Thailand](#) –

TNA, February 10, 2005

The Thai government has imposed a three-month fishing ban in the Gulf of Thailand, from 15 February-15 May, to help protect breeding mackerels, the Director-General of the Department of Fisheries, Sidthi Boonyaratpalin, told TNA on Wednesday...

Something about Boney M

February 10, 2005

Categories: Music

Something about Boney M –

February 10, 2005

While much of the world has heard of Boney M, they are unknown in the States and Americans are perplexed when they first hear their odd songs that are often played in Thailand. Nils writes: *Wasn't Boney M mentioned at the last 2Bangkok meeting? Well, yesterday I heard "Hooray! Hooray! It's a holi-holiday" being played in Ploenchit Center..... couldn't believe my ears. Have a look [here](#).*

They were of course utter crap, but once very big in Germany (and elsewhere) during the disco fever of the late 70s. I was too young then to catch them in their heyday, but nevertheless I still remember some of the songs from my childhood in the early 80s.

** Rasputin – from this [album](#)*

** Ma Baker*

** Rivers of Babylon*

** Brown Girl in the Ring*

** and of course... Daddy Cool!*

Some of it is so bad that in a way, it's good again, and today they are regarded as cult by some.

The group was originally a creation of infamous German pop producer Frank Farian, also fondly remembered for the [Milli Vanilli](#) scandal a decade later... The interesting thing was that 'Bobby', the male lead singer, couldn't sing and his voice was actually that of Mr. Farian, I think. His job was only to dance and make antics on stage. [Boney M on Wikipedia](#)

Ong-Bak: The Thai Warrior

February 11, 2005

Categories: Film and TV

[Ong-Bak:](#)

[The Thai Warrior](#) – Roger Ebert, February
11, 2005

Dengue fever explodes in Surat Thani

February 11, 2005

Categories: Health

[Dengue](#)

[fever explodes in Surat Thani](#) – TNA,

February 11, 2005

Dengue fever is making a comeback in Thailand's southern province of Surat Thani, with 70 cases already reported this year, the province's chief health official revealed today.

Mr. Phumiwit Khwanmuang warned that unless sufficient control and prevention measures were put in place, lives could be lost, as they were when the disease hit the province two years ago.

The province is now campaigning for all households to destroy the breeding grounds for the mosquitoes which spread the disease, while local officials are spraying houses with smoke as a mosquito repellent.

The real Thai thing: Tony Jaa

February 11, 2005

Categories: Film and TV

[The real Thai thing: Tony Jaa](#) – Canoe,

February 11, 2005

Women love him for his wholesome face, humble demeanour and chiselled, athletic body. Men envy and admire him. Martial arts fans are agog over his spectacular moves. "I am so proud," Tony Jaa says quietly through a Thai interpreter in a Sun Media interview in Los Angeles. He is visiting the U.S. to launch the North American release of Ong-Bak: The Thai Warrior, his debut film as a leading man, opening today...

Ghost building on New Phetburi

February 11, 2005

Categories: Buildings



(Photo: Nils)

Ghost building on New Phetburi

Above – September 6, 2008 – Nils writes: *The “ghastly ghost” is now under construction again. It will be – what else? – a luxury condominium.*

Below – February 11, 2005 – Nils writes: *The ghastliest ghost building of Bangkok. Close to IFCT Tower (now Thai Summit Tower, in the background). This one is really “na-glua” (fearsome).*

By the way, in German we call this kind of structure a “Bauruine” (construction ruin), which sums up the facts pretty well. It seems there is no comparable word in English that implies “it was started, but abandoned before it could be finished.”
(?)



(Photo: Nils)

Obscene Jockey Billboard

February 12, 2005

Categories: Local Beliefs, Signs and Billboards



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Jockey billboard –

February 12, 2005

We received 23 requests for 2B to post a photo of offending

Jockey billboard ([Groups call for removal of 'obscene' underwear ads](#), *The Nation*, February 11, 2005). Interestingly enough, all the requests were from overseas Thais. So here photo

(left) of the billboard and its surroundings near Ratchayothin intersection. It has been there for possibly a year a

Also: [VENUS'S](#)

[VISION: Keep your hands off of my morals!](#) –

The Nation, February 12, 2005

...*The Consumer Protection Board was indeed abiding by a law that plainly states: "Advertising must not promote illegal or immoral behaviour or cause cultural damage. But who is qualified to determine right and wrong in our society*

and culture? Which is worse: a man lounging around with his

girlfriend in their underwear or a prime-time soap opera featuring

a hero who rapes the heroine? ...

Update: ['Obscene'](#)

[ads taken down](#) – *The Nation*,

February 16, 2005



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

John Henry ad – February

1, 2005

This ad at a Skytrain station for clothier John Henry reads *You're only young once.*

TV show slammed as sex lure to teens

February 12, 2005

Categories: Film and TV, Local Beliefs

TV

[show slammed as sex lure to teens](#) –

The Nation, February 12, 2005

... “Destiny chapter 1” is similar to the US reality show “The Bachelor”. In this version, the male participant has blind dates with three women, and he eventually has to pick one to be his girlfriend. The programme showed participants touching closely and embracing one another after having only been on two dates...

“I’m sure the programme gets a good rating. If I were single, I would probably like it, he said, “but in fact I have a daughter. I find it unendurable when I imagine how I would feel if my daughter behaved the same way as the women on the programme. I suffer.” ...

Thai-language newspapers – February 14, 2005

February 14, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Matichon

– February 14, 2005

* Thieves in the south are still bold. They shot a villager in the head and seriously injured him at Jao Airong while he is going to tap rubber with his wife. Another group destroys the rubber trees in Raman Yala–100 rubber trees were damaged. Thaksin mobilizes the security unit to discuss the situation today. Areephen Uttrarasin wrote an article pointing out why the Wadah group was defeated. Every time a TRT candidate visited people in a village and mosque to campaign, after they left the military and police came to ask people what was said and they wrote it down in a notebook. So people could not be confident in TRT, because the candidates seemed to be followed all the time.

* The

condoms are selling well on Valentine's Day while flowers are scarce in the market because of the change in the weather and increasing demand. Grade A of roses are 1200 baht each, but there are not enough to sell. Meanwhile young Muslims in Asia eagerly follow the craze of western culture.

Thairath

– February 14, 2005

Luang Por Koon, the abbot of Wad Banrai, left the Siriraj Hospital and returned to his temple yesterday (February 13). Mr. Suwat Lipatapanlob, Deputy PM, said Korat people are glad that he went back and asked for cooperation from the public not to visit him a lot because he could get an infection and his condition could worsen again. Luang Por Koon also wishes for Suwat happy birthday and is glad that Thaksin will remain PM because he loves Thaksin.

‘Bangkok-Bangkok’

February 15, 2005

Categories: Art

‘Bangkok-Bangkok’

– February 15, 2005

Artist Wit Pimkanchanapong writes: *I’ve been to Barcelona for the exhibition Bangkok-Bangkok, which is all about Bangkok in many aspects you can get more information, interview, images [here](#).*

Wit Pimkanchanapong’s [ITINC](#) map was on exhibit. The link to the interview with Wit is broken. The correct link is [here](#).

[Manit Sriwanichpoom](#) was also exhibiting at the ‘Bangkok-Bangkok’ show.

Earlier: Another great map idea from Wit: [‘Thailand/thailand’](#)

Thai General Election 2005

February 16, 2005

Categories: Elections

About 2B's election coverage

– February 11, 2005

From a reader: ...*Thanks for your [coverage of the Thai elections](#), in Australia we received almost no news on the elections. All we got was "The elections have started" and that Thaksin had won. Your site had much more information.*

[For Thailand's PM, getting reelected was the easy part](#)

– *BusinessWeek*, February 16, 2005

Not quite: ...*Thaksin's family also controls ITV, the country's leading television station...*

House leaders announced –

February 14, 2005

From the TV news program *Kuy Kooy Khao* on Channel 9 from 9:30-10:00pm:

After discussion with PM Thaksin, Mr. Pokin Polkul, the former Interior minister, will be named to be the chairperson of the House of Representative. Suchat Tancharoen will be the first vice chairperson and Sutham Saengprotum will be the second vice chairperson.

[Little-known parties knock older brands off the shelf](#) – *Bangkok*

Post, February 12, 2005

...*The names of these parties are foreign to the ears of most voters. Yet they pulled in enough votes to put older and better known parties—such as the New Aspiration, the Prachakorn Thai and the Social Action parties—to shame...*

Critics agreed the parties were nearing the sunset of their political lives, having lost to little-known parties many had dismissed as laughing stocks...

"Farmers and grassroots people are not ignorant. It's just that they didn't have any other choice before," he said.

Some observers, however, said Farmer Force's success had more to do with the party's poll number 19, similar to Thai Rak Thai's number 9. It could have been a mix-up that favoured the party...

[Thailand's losing Democrats appoint caretaker leader](#)

– AP, February 10, 2005

...*Abhisit Vejjajiva replaced Banyat Bantadtan, who resigned after Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and his Thai Rak Thai party won a landslide victory in Sunday's polls...*

[Astrologers foretell the future of Thaksin—it's not good](#)

– translated from *Thai*

Post, February 8, 2005

[Thailand should resist Asia's GDP fetish](#) – Bloomberg, February 10, 2005

"GDP" stands for gross domestic product. Here in Asia, it also could mean "gross domestic problem."

From Indonesia to South Korea and from the Philippines to India, there's a tendency to mask challenges with headline growth rates — preferably very fast ones. They are a form of advertising as well as a diversion. Rapid GDP gets investors' attention and helps governments paper over economic cracks...

EARTH-GODDESS

STATUE: Democrat icon puts on a show – The

Nation, February 10, 2005

...The one-tonne bronze statue, seated outside the party's headquarters and in the act of wringing water from her hair, is developing a reputation for bizarre occurrences.

The latest was earlier this week when former Democrat leader Chuan Leekpai was giving a media interview. He was facing questions about possible replacements for his successor, Banyat Bantadtan, who resigned after the party's failure in Sunday's general election.

The candle in front of the bronze goddess was burning normally. Then it suddenly flared for a while, then the flame died.

Even though Mae Phra Thoranee's candle was burning again yesterday, the press was captivated that a symbol was behaving with such symbolic flourish...

From the forum: Thai

columnist's response to Time magazine – February 8, 2005

The

rise and rise of Thailand's Amway phenomenon –

Sydney Morning Herald, February 10, 2005

... "Thaksin does not know how to build an organisation," said Kavi Chongkittavorn, a long-time Thaksin critic. "All the Thai Rak Thai party identify with him, so he has no one who will come and take his place. Remove Thaksin and there is no one. The question four or five years from now is, without Thaksin, will this party hold together?" ...

Blank

cheque for Thai PM to turn economy 'Japanese' –

New Zealand Herald, February 9, 2005

...On the surface, that may sound grand. Japan is an unusually wealthy and secure nation, one that's about as egalitarian as they come. Given Thailand's history of economic instability, it would seem this nation of 63 million could do far worse than follow that model.

Japan is also a model of political inefficiency, excessive debt accumulation and largess rarely seen in modern history. For better or worse, Thaksin is doing some Japanesque things investors may not appreciate over time. Here are four examples:

- * Thailand is becoming a one-party state...
- * Today's economic policies are increasing debt...
- * Ambiguity about foreign direct investment...
- * Taking the central bank for granted...

Election roundup

– February 8, 2005

Mahachon

party vows to fight on – TNA, February 8, 2005

Thaksin's

victory good news for junta, bad news for opposition

– *The Irrawaddy*, February 8, 2005

...Opposition groups fear that Thaksin may use his consolidated position of strength to support the Burmese government's plan to reconvene the National Convention this month and to control pro-democracy Burmese activists in Thailand.

"It (Thaksin's victory) is likely to lead to a stronger relationship with the Burmese generals, with more pressure on pro-democracy groups in Thailand," said Sunai Phasuk, a consultant with Asia Human Rights Watch...

Public

wants single-party government: poll – TNA, February 8, 2005

The majority of the public are fully behind the landslide victory of the Thai Rak Thai party, and want to see Thaksin Shinawatra lead the country with a one-party government, according to a poll published today...

Abhisit

heavily tipped to be Democrat acting leader –

TNA, February 8, 2005

Democrat deputy leader Abhisit Vejjajiva said today the new party leader would encounter heavy burden reviving the party's popularity as well as creating a better understanding on various changes...

Meanwhile, Democrat chief advisor Chuan Leekpai strongly backed Mr Abhisit as the acting party leader, saying Abhisit was the seniormost deputy leader.

Democrat executives will hand-pick the acting leader and secretary general on Friday. Secretary General Pradit Patraprasit has also tendered his resignation from the post.

New cabinet

to be materialized in mid March, says PM – TNA,

February 8, 2005

The new cabinet is expected to be materialized by mid March, Caretaker Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has announced.

The prime minister told journalists here this morning that he was considering who would be members of the new cabinet, and expected that the new cabinet line-up would be materialized by the middle of next month.

Earlier, the Thai leader said that many outsiders who are experts in specific areas could be invited to join in his new cabinet...



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Newspapers of February 7, 2005

Top left: *Bangkok Post* – Single party rule

Top middle: *The Nation* – One-party rule looms

Top right: *Matichon* – Wannor-Phokin vie to be the House of Representative chairperson – Maew (Thaksin) sets up a single party (government)

Bottom left: *Khaosod* – Thaksin overwhelming victory at almost 400! Democrats are shocked – lower than 100

Bottom middle: *Komchadluek* – Counting the vote is in turmoil – Electricity went out – Protest – Satun has to re-vote

Bottom right: *Daily News* – Thai Rak Thai sweep all nearly almost 400 – pitch a flag (making inroads) to acquire the Bangkok area

Election roundup –

February 8, 2005

[PM decides to form](#)

[single-party govt](#) – TNA, February 8, 2005

[Invalid](#)

[ballots rebound on red-carded Karun](#) – *Bangkok Post*, February 8, 2005

[Thai](#)

[Rak Thai to sweep 374 seats](#) – *The Nation*, February 7, 2005

[No](#)

[Thai Rak Thai fever in the troubled South](#) – *The Nation*, February 7, 2005

[Sweeping](#)

[Cabinet changes in store](#) – *The Nation*, February 7, 2005

[A](#)

[nation divided](#) – *The Nation*, February 8, 2005

[LOSERS:](#)

[Political dynasties shown the door](#) – *The Nation*, February 8, 2005

...Their dash is done – many powerful families who ruled politics like feudal lords and barons for decades have been brutally excised by vengeful voters.

The defeat of the likes of Maj-General Sanan Kachornprasart and Vatana

Asavahame and their flunkys is unprecedented – and final in most cases...

[It'll be business as usual for this 'den of rebels'](#) – *The Nation*, February 8, 2005

...Nobody mentioned that Thaksin had singled out The Nation and our rival, the Bangkok Post, again in his criticism of the media just three days before the election. A couple of senior editors stressed the importance of the voices of the overwhelming majority. Keep your scepticism to yourself, everyone was told, because now it's time to take a long, hard, objective look at this phenomenon that can transform Thai politics beyond recognition...

[Thailand's opposition Democrat leader to resign after poll loss](#) – AFP, February 7, 2005

[Bangkok's big losers in Sunday's general election](#) – TNA, February 7, 2005

[Election results to be officially endorsed on Feb 25](#) – TNA, February 7, 2005

As pointed out on the [forum](#), the *Bangkok Post* got their facts wrong in their lead story today:

[Single party rule](#). It was 67 years ago that Piboonsongkram came to power, not 73.

And Don Entz points out the bland article from CNN about the election:

[PM declares victory in Thai vote](#)

On the forum: [Exit poll too pessimistic](#) – February 7, 2005



(Photo: Dr. Has)

[Photos of voting in Yala Province](#) – February 6, 2005

Election roundup from the *Bangkok Post*

– February 7, 2005

Bangkok: [Democrats](#)

[lose out in the capital](#)

The South: [Democrats](#)

[ward off TRT invader](#)

The Deep South: [Deep](#)

[South votes heavily for TRT ticket](#)

The North: [TRT](#)

[becomes the 'party of the North'](#)

The Central region: [TRT](#)

[seen dominating Central constituencies](#)

The Northeast: [Democrats](#)

[wiped out by TRT sweep in NE](#)

[Poll:](#)

[Big losers among TRT rivals](#)

[Exit](#)

[poll predictions draw ire of party leaders](#)

...Political heavyweights from the Democrat, Chart Thai and Mahachon parties called Suan Dusit Poll's outcome too cruel and said they could be wrong.

"If we don't have a single representative in Nakhon Ratchasima, I will break into the house of Virat Ratanaset, the deputy leader of the Mahachon party," Maj-Gen Sanan Kachornprasart, adviser to the Mahachon, said at his residence in Nonthaburi in the presence of key party figures.

"I will prostrate to Suwat Liptapanlop as I had promised to do and I will stop being an adviser to the Mahachon party if it is true because it will be very embarrassing to have garnered only one seat," he said.

"But if the election results do not match the exit polls, I will stamp on Mr Sukhum Chaleysub," he said angrily...

[Chuwit](#)

[not done yet with politics](#)

[Single party rule](#)

...The outcome mirrored the resounding re-election success

73 years ago of the now-defunct Seri Manangkasila party headed

by the former strongman FM Plaek Piboonsongkram. Seri Manangkasila

won 86 seats, breezing through with a parliamentary majority

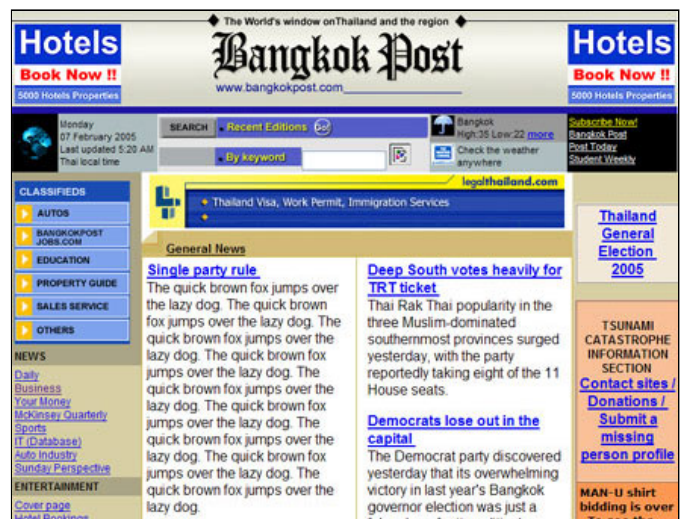
although the contest went down in history as the most fraud-riddled...

The Post finally managed to post articles online overnight (usually they update only once a day). However,

their lead piece was not posted until the morning, so all night

their webpage had an unintended ironic comment on the political

situation (above). Thanks to Stuart McDonald for pointing this out.



[Real-time
vote counting report](#) – *The Nation*,
February 6, 2005

[One-party
rule looms](#) – *The Nation*, February
6, 2005

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra looked poised to establish an unprecedented one-party government in Thailand after voters – poor rural villagers and Bangkokians alike – handed his Thai Rak Thai a massive landslide victory in yesterday's general election. The resounding mandate has yet to be officially confirmed, as vote counting only began late yesterday evening. But exit polls showed that Thai Rak Thai could win 340-399 House of Representatives seats, thanks largely to a major sweep of Bangkok, where voters apparently snubbed the opposition Democrat Party's desperate, last-ditch plea for the preservation of parliamentary checks and balances...

[Less
electoral complaints this election](#) – TNA, February
6, 2005

Contrasting foreign press reports that claim the elections was the 'dirtiest ever,' TNA reports: ...*There were 4,000 complaints lodged with the EC during the last election in 2001. The EC had received almost 400 complaints before polling day according to Mr. Prinya. Most of them involved government officials acting partiality, he said. All those accused have been transferred...*

Thaksin on TV – 7:02pm, February
6, 2005

Thaksin is being interviewed on iTV. When he entered the building he claimed victory and said he still had to talk with Chart Thai. The [MCOT](#) and [Election Commission](#) websites are hard to reach as people clamor for elections results.

[TRT:
399](#) – *The Nation*, February 6, 2005
The ruling Thai Rak Thai Party has won an overwhelming 399 Parliamentary seats, according to Suan Dusit's exit poll. The poll which closed at 3 pm Bangkok time today showed the Democrat Party winning just 80 seats, Chat Thai 20 seats and Mahachon 1 seat, according to the exit poll conducted by a unit of a state-owned university...

[Why Thaksin
succeeds](#) – by Ron Morris, 2Bangkok.com
Editor, February 6, 2005

[Discuss
these stories on the 2Bangkok.com Forum](#)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Above: Voters checking for their names at the polling station

Election Day 2005
Polls close at 3pm. Traffic is heavy
all around town. Results are supposed to in by midnight. The
weather is extremely hot—almost like the weather in April.

Below: Lining up to vote – In the background
are the small tables with blinds around them where people vote.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

[Election](#)

[Commission of Thailand](#)

– Good info in Thai, but the English section has not been updated since the last general election. Has an out-of-date, but [interesting page](#) with info on political parties (most of which are defunct or dormant).

[Election](#)

[posters](#)

– 2Bangkok.com's daily election posters

[The](#)

[Nation's election coverage](#)

– *The Nation's* election coverage is the most comprehensive. However, their links page links to defunct parties with dead websites like the [Palang Dharm Party](#) which leads to a fake directory page. [The candidate list](#) is up-to-date. Below is a complete party list:



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

[Almost like being there](#)

– [Yala](#)

[election posters: Posters from zone 1 and zone 2](#)

– February 5, 2005

[Posters](#)

[along the road – Posters on vehicles – Yala intersection posters](#)

– February 4, 2005

No. 1 [Chat](#)

[Thai Party](#) – 100 candidates

No. 2 Social Action Party – 5 candidates

No. 3 Pattana Chat Thai Party – 5 candidates

No. 8 Thai Ground Party – 5 candidates

No. 9 [Thai](#)

[Rak Thai Party](#) – 100 candidates
TRT candidate websites:

[Orathai](#)

[Thanajaro](#)

[Chalermchai Jeenawijarana](#)

No. 14 Labour Party – 7 candidates

No. 15 National Democratic Party – 7 candidates

No. 16 Kasikorn Thai – 5 candidates

No. 4 [Democrat Party](#) – 100 candidates

No. 5 Thai People Party – 47 candidates

No. 6 Khonkhoplodnee Party – 28 candidates

No. 7 [Thai Nature Party](#) – 5 candidates

No. 10 New Aspiration Party – 20 candidates

No. 11 [Mahachon Party](#) – 100 candidates

No. 12 [Thai Citizen Party](#) – "The country have a problem. Thai Citizen Party volunteer to corrected." – 10 candidates

No. 13 Thai Chuay Thai Party – 9 candidates

No. 17 Thai Alternative – 5 candidates

No. 18 The Green Party of Thailand – 8 candidates

No. 19 The Farmer Force – 11 candidates

No. 20 People Power – 5 candidates

News

[TRT leading in *The Nation* vote-counting forecast](#) – *The Nation*, February 6, 2005

[Massive turnout to pass 70 percent](#) – *The Nation*, February 6, 2005

Record turnout is expected in today's election as the polls are due to close within an hour.

[What things cost: Election unlikely to be fair, clean](#)

– *Bangkok Post*, February 6, 2005

...Warin Thiamcharas, secretary of the People's Network for Elections in Thailand (P-Net), said his outfit had received 123 campaign fraud complaints during Jan 13-Feb 5. Forty-eight were against Thai Rak Thai, 11 Mahachon, 7 Chart Thai, and five against the Democrats. The rest did not name any party. Thirteen cases had been sent to the EC while allegations concerning two election workers in Nakhon Pathom and Phitsanulok helping canvass for certain parties were passed on to the Senate, Mr Warin said.

"It appears that cheats do not fear the law and can find various tricks to get to voters. The provincial CEO system in which leaders can pass orders direct to lower echelons could help make this possible." Abac Poll found in a survey of 13,836 voters in the 400 constituencies across the country that voters estimated on average that a candidate had to buy 44,025 votes to secure victory.

Respondents also estimated on average that votes were being bought for 513 baht each but in some constituencies the amount ranged from 800 baht to 2,000 baht, the pollster said.

Bangkok University Poll, meanwhile, said its survey of 2,420 people in the capital revealed voters in 24 of 37 constituencies were offered money, adding vote buying was alleged to be most rampant in constituencies 5, 2 and 36. Respondents in 13 constituencies _ 1, 10, 11, 12, 13 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 33 and 35 _ said no one asked to buy their votes. About 40% of respondents said they would vote for constituency candidates of parties that bought their support and 39% would vote for the party lists of the vote buyers, it said...

Thai
leader Thaksin expected to win overwhelming mandate in general election

– AP, February 6, 2005

Thais voted Sunday in elections expected to return Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra to an unprecedented second term with an even bigger mandate, boosted by strong support from the rural poor and his adroit handling of the tsunami disaster...

Couch
potatoes rely on TV to catch up on poll – *The Nation*, February 6, 2005

...Viewers can watch the election atmosphere with an entertaining spin on Channel 3 or more serious updates throughout the day on Modern Nine TV, Channel 11 and Nation Channel.

Channel 3's political editor Kornravee Thanyatoon said the channel's main concept is "Power of Young People to Turn Thailand".

"Ruang Lao Sao Artit" ("Telling Story on Saturday and Sunday") will report election news and the channel will set up a special programme with the host team of "Phu Ying Phu Ying" ("Women, Women") to cover the election, she said...

Thaksin
vows to go it alone – *Bangkok Post*, February 5, 2005

Thai Rak Thai leader Thaksin Shinawatra has vowed to "go it alone" in forming the next government, abandoning his most loyal ally, the Chart Thai party, whose leader Banharn Silpa-archa he said is no longer trustworthy.

Mr Banharn lamely accepted his fate and insisted he would back Mr Thaksin for prime minister even though he is no longer wanted...

Latest poll shows TRT winning 336 of 500 seats

– *The Nation*, February 4, 2005

At the bottom left of [this page](#). Here is what the codes mean: XL = Thai Rak Thai, L = Democrats, M = Chat Thai, S = Mahachon

Thai
Rak Thai to win 365 seats – *The Nation*, February 5, 2005

Another surrealistic *Nation* poll...

Here is what the codes mean:

XL = Thai Rak Thai

L = Democrats

M = Chat Thai

S = Mahachon

...The XL and L parties

will share the party-list seats between them at a 67-to-33 ratio, leaving other parties no representation via proportional voting...

The M party, which is mounting a fierce campaign to win a House seat in Bangkok, is likely to attract less than 5 per cent of proportional votes, including an estimated 3.2 per cent from the capital.

The Election Commission projects a party would need to win a minimum of 5 per cent of the vote to qualify for one party-list seat.

The newly formed S party is expected to win less than 4 per cent of proportional votes, despite an aggressive campaign billing

itself as an alternative to the majors.

The popularity of the XL party has outpaced its

L rival in every region barring the South.

Among the minor parties, the S party is seemingly

more popular than the M party, even in the M party's own backyard, the Central region...

Should the voter turnout top 70 per cent, the XL

party may secure as many as 70 party-list seats, leaving the rest to the L party.

In another survey by the Interior Ministry's Department of Provincial Administration, it was found that the XL would

sweep as many as 365 of the 500 House seats up for grabs, 68 of them from the party-list system, a source said yesterday.

The L were expected to win 96 seats, 26 of them party-list,

the S 29 with six party-list seats and the M 10 with no party-list seats, said the Interior Ministry source...

Text

[message to vote](#) – AFP, February 4, 2005

... "You are cordially invited to exercise your right to vote

on February 6, between 8 am and 3 pm," read the message written in Thai.

Thailand's Election Commission asked all the mobile phone companies to send the message to remind people to vote in the election...

Vote-buying

[greatest problem for Sunday's Thailand election, poll says](#) –

AP, February 4, 2005

... "Only a buffalo would spend (billions of baht) for an election.

My party has the advantage and there is no need to buy votes,"

said Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra last week...

EDITORIAL:

[Thai democracy at a crossroads](#) –

The Nation, February 5, 2005

...More than at any other time in almost 73 years of democracy, the February 6 general election represents an opportunity for Thailand's voters to redefine the way our country is governed. At stake is nothing less than the future course of the Thai version of this most benevolent of political systems, which we have come to take for granted. Thailand stands at a crossroads...

Khon

[masks, puppets, archetypes and Thai leadership](#)

– Thai History Blog, February 4, 2005

...PM Thaksin himself, I am sure, doesn't know what has him in its grip. He's like someone who unknowingly put a Khon Mask over his head without having done the right dedications to its spirit, not really understanding what the spirit of this particular mask that he chose would ask of him. Any wrong moves, and the spirit punishes severely. However, he did chose the mask, and he'll have to wear it until its energies plays out its complete act...

The

Nation publishes election poll – February 3, 2005

The Nation skirts election regulations again (like they did during the [governor's race](#)), by printing the results of a poll and listing the parties by code. Here is what the codes mean:

XL = Thai Rak Thai
L = Democrats
M = Chat Thai
S = Mahachon

Poll

points to a Bangkok sweep – The Nation, February 3, 2005

The “XL” party, which wants to rule alone in the next government, was the most popular party in 34 of Bangkok’s 37 constituencies as well as the preferred party-list choice, according to a survey conducted by Thammasat University and The Nation. The popularity survey, conducted between January 22-23 on 20,978 respondents in 37 districts, showed that Bangkok voters regarded local elections to be different from national polls.

In the party-list system, the survey found that “XL” was favoured by 47.3 per cent of respondents. “L”, the party that is stressing the need for an effective opposition, was the choice of 26.5 per cent of the respondents, “M”, a medium sized party that wants to have a presence in Bangkok, was chosen by 6.9 per cent, and “S” the party that considers itself the new alternative, was liked by 4.8 per cent...

In the constituency race, “L” was tops in Constituency 6, comprising Bang Rak, Samphantawong and Sathorn, and Constituency 7, comprising Yannawa and Sathorn, and Constituency 30, including Bangkok Noi, the survey showed...

Prime

Minister shrugs off critical "Time" profile

– TNA, February 2, 2005

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has dismissed a critical "Time" magazine assessment of his record in office published ahead of this weekend’s general election, saying it is the people’s judgement that matters.

In the latest edition of the US magazine, the prime minister’s critics voice concern over what they describe as "Thaksinomics." The ruling Thai Rak Thai Party’s economic policies are described as "little more than populist handouts" that, like a “caffeine high,” will fail to produce lasting benefits and inflict long-term economic harm...

And in Thai from Manager

Online

Thai

PM to win reelection, but still far from leading region: analysts

– AFP, February 2, 2005

Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra wants to use a second term to build an image as Southeast Asia’s leading statesman, but analysts say recent diplomatic mis-steps — and competition from Indonesia — are standing in his way.

Thaksin is the strongest civilian leader Thailand has seen. In early January he became the country’s first elected prime minister to serve out a full four-year term and he is certain to be re-elected in February 6 polls.

Since his dash to victory in 2001, the billionaire tycoon-turned-premier has proven himself as one of Southeast Asia’s most powerful and internationally recognised figures since Malaysia’s Mahathir Mohamad emerged in the 1980s...

[TRT](#)
[pamphlet with promises for future Bangkok mass transit](#)
– January 29, 2005

Interesting election
articles from *The Nation*

[TRT](#)
[adds 12 seats in latest forecast](#) – *The Nation*, January 31, 2004

...If the election were held today, according to the Nation Group's seventh weekly electoral assessment as of January 28, Thai Rak Thai would win 266 of the 400 constituency seats, the Democrats would win 83, Chat Thai 35, and Mahachon 16...

[REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE: Will Thai democracy be able to survive next week?](#)

– *The Nation*, January 31, 2004

...Before Thaksin's reign, there were times when opposition parties were also weak. But civil society organisations and the media would fill in and perform the watchdog role. Alternative views coming from proactive non-official sectors and assisted by pluralistic and independent media have promoted healthy debates – one of the pivotal elements in a democratic society – on important issues such as constitutional drafting and privatisation.

The situation is much different now. Monitoring bodies mandated by the constitution – such as the Election Commission, the National Counter Corruption Commission and the Constitutional Court – no longer command public respect and trust. In the past four years, their institutional integrity and dignity have been under fire due to their partisanship. They have contributed to the overall climate of fear and intimidation, so pervasive in all strata of Thai society at this moment...

[Double-tracking cartoon](#) – *The Nation*, January 31, 2004

And the 'hot' article of the week written by pseudonymous [Chang](#)

[Noi](#):

[Newin](#):

[The lion of Songkhla](#) –

The Nation, January 31, 2004

...An election commissioner claims he cannot decipher the audio recording even though newspapers have transcribed it word for word. The Democrats have slipped up before by being too hasty to make use of flaky evidence...

The Nation's election 'poll'

– January 25, 2005

Although the Election Commission has outlawed opinion polls, *The Nation* has created a poll based on 'local and political academics' (from [this page](#)):

How the country's 400 constituencies would be divided if the election were held January 21, 2005.

	Thai Rak Thai	Democrat	Chat Thai	Mahachon
Bangkok (37)	24	12	1	–
Central	63	15	15	4

(97)				
Northern (76)	59	9	5	3
Northeastern (136)	98	5	18	14
Southern (54)	10	44	—	—
Total (400)	254	85	39	21

Source: Nation Group's local and political academics

Opposition

leader simply unmarketable – The Nation, January 18, 2005

...It's cynicism versus sheer arrogance. Whereas the buoyed Thaksin fan club is saying even dogs can win the upcoming election under the Thai Rak Thai banner, desperate Democrat followers are even blaming the "Thaksin jinx" for the continuous chain of bad events befalling the country. Rumours had it that the prime minister had initiated the origami-bird campaign with a secret superstitious agenda to repel his own bad omens. He can't do anything right, but to his supporters, he can do no wrong...

PM vows to crack down influential figures after general election

– TNA, January 11, 2005

... "If they are not suppressed, they'll always create problems. We have to wipe them out. Let's wait until after the next general election. If I am re-elected, my administration will deal with them," he said.

But he said if the government cracked down now, it could accused of abusing its power...

Same-name candidates

confuse all – Bangkok Post, January 12, 2005

... "I've been besieged by these annoying namesakes and even now spend much of my campaign time explaining the situation to villagers. People keep asking me every day about why I am running for different parties. Some seem to understand and others don't," said Mr Sathit, who is competing for the downtown constituency in the province against ex-MP Yongyod Arunwessaset of Thai Rak Thai.

The Democrat said many of his constituents had asked him the same question: "Why don't you join up with the other two and help them out because they are members of your family?" ...

A

very poor showing from the Democrats – The Nation, January 10, 2005

In Praise of Purachai

– January 8, 2005

Political maneuvering –

January 6, 2005

[Purachai](#)

[*calls it a day on politics 'for family'*](#) – *The Nation*,

January 6, 2005

...Purachai was widely tipped as a successor to Thaksin in the early days of the Thai Rak Thai government.

But his abrasive personality undermined his position in the party and the popularity of the party itself...

['Tired'](#)

[*Chavalit to quit politics*](#) – *The Nation*, *January 6, 2005*

...The former prime minister said he was already past working age and would retire to "read books"...

[Chuwit](#)

[*may quit Chat Thai*](#) – *The Nation*, *January 6, 2005*

Lucky election numbers

[Thai](#)

[*Rak Thai draws no.9 on ballot paper*](#) – *The Nation*, *January*

7, 2005

[Mahachon](#)

[*trusts to lucky date*](#) – *The Nation*, *January 8, 2004*

Mahachon Party leaders have put their faith in numerologists to select the most auspicious date to register its candidates...

[Thailand](#)

[*to hold general election on Feb. 6*](#) – *Kyodo*,

January 6, 2005

Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej approved Thursday a decree that sets the country's general election for Feb. 6...

2004 Bangkok Governor election

[Articles on](#)

[*the 2004 Bangkok Governor campaign*](#)

[*The Bangkok*](#)

[*Governor candidates*](#)

[*Bangkok Governor polls*](#)

[*Photoshoppers parody the campaign posters*](#)

[*Back to the main Thai Elections*](#)

[*page*](#)

Thai-language newspapers – February 16, 2005

February 16, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Matichon

– February 16, 2005

* The Interior ministry summarizes that there are 2,874 dead bodies that cannot be identified and the ministry has helped given victims 276 million baht. Meanwhile, professor Suirchai Wankaew, Political Science Faculty of Chulalongkorn University says the cabinet should not waste 260 million baht for the Miss Universe contest at Khaolak. It is better used to help orphans.

* Khonkaen

– Mrs. Maneeporn Euasaptawee parked her car, a black Benz E220 CDI car, in the Khaennakorn marsh. She also attached a sign describing her disappointment. She bought this Benz in September, 2004 for 3.8 million baht, but there is bad smell like animal remains from the air-conditioning system that has been repaired for three times, but cannot be solved. If the administrative is not responsible, she will leave this car to be a memory of her stupidity for choosing Benz. She wanted people to think twice if they want to buy an expensive car. Meanwhile the manager of Auto in Khonkaen apologizes and is in the process of offering to change the car for her.

Thairath

– February 16, 2005

* Danger from toxics in the sweets case – Mrs Thitiporn Ittiponsiri found that his son bought what looked like sweets, but it was a chemical for making hot water. It smelled like a pest killer and there was no Thai language on the package. It was only Chinese and English language. So she went to appeal *Thairath* to spread the word and warn people to be careful of toxic goods that look like sweets because it is danger for children.

* Ratburana,

Bangkok – Fire in a big slum, Berry community. Ms. Siriporn Pimonhailil, 32-year-old, was burned in her house. The fireman thinks she might have smoked and feel as sleep, causing the fire.

Bangkok 'tornado'

February 16, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Bangkok 'tornado'

– February 16, 2005

The swiftly swirling smoke from a fire Tuesday morning had the appearance of a tornado. The Rama 9 Bridge is on the middle left.

Malaysia: a car-driven economy

February 16, 2005

Categories: Malaysia

[Malaysia: a car-driven economy](#) – *Malaysia-today*,
February 16, 2005

...It becomes obvious later that the Malaysian economy is driven by cars – fuelled by subsidised cheap petrol and no-deposit 7 to 9-year financing. Car ownership is at all time high, so great is the nation's love affair with car that the other alternative – public transport, is stifled and fighting for survival. The evidence is all over the country – Intrakota and Park May, bus companies have been bleeding losses for a number of years and on the verge of bankruptcy. A few month ago, a finance company seized Intrakota's buses for non-payment of loans.

...Financing car is cheap and does not make sense; you can buy a small compact hatch for no-deposit and monthly repayment of RM300 or less stretched over 7 to 9 years, using the car as collateral. So in a few years time, the value of the car is worth much less than what you owe the finance company. If you are smart enough to ditch the car (give it back to the finance company, after all the ownership paper says it is still theirs), the finance company would face losses...

Disabled lawyer to take exams for state attorney

February 16, 2005

Categories: Human Rights

[Disabled](#)

[lawyer to take exams for state attorney](#) – TNA, February 16, 2005

...Under the current Attorney General Office's regulations, handicapped people are barred from taking jobs in the office. On that basis, Mr. Sirimit was barred from sitting the examination in 2001...

DISABLED LAWYERS: Backlash grows against ruling

Published on May 12, 2002

Human-rights commissioner says barring handicapped from bench 'discriminatory'

The backlash against the Judicial Commission's decision last week to bar two disabled lawyers from the bench gathered steam yesterday with a human-rights commissioner joining the chorus condemning the "discriminatory" ruling.

"Thailand is a signatory to the United Nations Charter on Human Rights. The Constitution also prohibits discrimination on the basis of physical disability," said human-rights commissioner Dr Pradit Charoenthaitawee.

Disabled persons who have been discriminated against should take their grievance to court via the Human Rights Commission, Pradit said.

His comments follow Tuesday's decision by the Judicial Commission to reject for the second time two handicapped lawyers' applications to become associate judges. The commission voted 13-2 that Sirimit Boonmoon and Boonjuti Klabprasit were too weak to cope with the workload.

The law preventing the disabled from becoming judges is obsolete, said the chairman of the Foundation for the Handicapped.

It was written more than 50 years ago by those who believed the disabled were capable of nothing, Narong Patibatsorakit said.

"The world has come so far. In Germany or Britain there are many judges who are handicapped," he added.

"Instead of saying that it's impossible for a handicapped person to reach the bench, we should ask: Have we built a ramp for them to get there?" Narong said.

The president of the Association for the Handicapped of Thailand said barring the disabled from qualification examinations was discriminatory and unconstitutional in theory, but in practice things are different.

"I filed a petition with the Constitution Court for amendment of more than 40 laws, but it was turned down," said Maj-Colonel Sirichai Sapsiri.

"This year is supposed to be the year to promote the handicapped in the workplace. The government has been telling the private sector to admit the disabled, but the government itself is discriminating against them," Sirichai said.

"If they want to continue the hypocrisy, there's no use promoting the year of handicapped," he said.

The disabled and concerned NGOs will soon gather to fight for justice, Sirichai said.

“We will have a workshop with the prime minister by July,” he said.

Meanwhile, a judge in Court of Appeals Region 3 judge spoke out in favour of the decision to keep the bench disabled-free.

“Imagine when a judge sits on the bench and the involved parties laugh at him, how can the judge get his work done?” Sriamporn Salikhup said.

“Judges must meet the highest standards of society. They must earn respect and trust,” Sriamporn said.

“I want to say that the judicial circle has no bias against the disabled. It just depends on whether society is ready to accept them as judges.”

Napanisa Kaewmorakot and Opas Boonlom

THE NATION

Burma: Tourist boycott benefits no one but China

February 16, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

[Burma:](#)

[Tourist boycott benefits no one but China](#)

– *Bangkok Post*, February 16, 2005

The British prime minister's proposal for a tourism boycott of Burma, raised before Britons and the leaders of the international community, is an idea which, if implemented, would do more harm than good to the people of Burma...

Anguished English

February 16, 2005

Categories: Advertising and Commercials

Those who are interested in learning fine architecture must know "Somdet Chaofah Kromphraya Naritsara Nuwattiwong". He was worshiped as a national significant person in craftsmanship from UNESCO in 1963. He was the 62nd royal prince of the King Rama IV. With his intelligence in both painting, sculpture, architecture, decorative arts, music performance, archaeology and history, his residences therefore must be extraordinary. These mentioned royal residences are ***Plainoen**

Anguished English

– February 16, 2005

Terry sends in more anguished English from BMA's ongoing advertising campaign (these from February 11).

Thailand is a country of long history as well as a nationality of tradition and culture passed on for generations. This is our great pride as it is a cultural heritage which reflects a distinctive civilization, illustrious mind, delicate and neat. It includes a historical background, community's way of life and perfectly describes those originators.

The distraction from seeing these artistic works is happiness and pleasure only among civilized countries. The art of watching, listen, touching or other feelings are all contentment. The governmental and private sectors see the importance of the national arts by maintaining and preserving for the next generations. As a result, we all should not miss these mentioned three palaces as they depict the national and cultural symbol with no one can ever compares.

BMA edits their ads

February 16, 2005

Categories: Advertising and Commercials

BMA edits their ads

– April 5, 2005

Terry writes: *I have just returned from three weeks in Australia. Going through the stack of copies of the Bangkok Post I found three more issues with full-page advertisements promoting Bangkok. The English in them was excellent. Having been very critical of their earlier advertisements I must congratulate the BMA on the quality of their most recent efforts.*

Earlier: [Anguished English](#)

– February 16, 2005

Earlier: [BMA English-language ads](#) – February 2, 2005

Cambodia set to build trans-border industrial zone

February 17, 2005

Categories: Cambodia

[Cambodia](#)

[set to build trans-border industrial zone](#) –

VNA, February 17, 2005

Cambodia will begin construction of Koh Kong trans-border industrial zone in Cambodia's Ban Cham Yeam, east of Thailand. The project will include such items as water supplying, telephone and electric systems and other infrastructure.

Once completed, the project will be the first world-ranked industrial zone in Cambodia. It is expected to attract enterprises in the fields of garment and textile production, agricultural machines, consumer products, glass and motorbike accessories. The project will also create thousands of jobs for local farmers.

Media in jeopardy with TRT victory

February 17, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Media](#)

[in jeopardy with TRT victory](#) – *The Nation*, February 17, 2005

...Thaksin and his friends in the business community are widely perceived to be exerting influence on the print media, either by applying an advertising squeeze on newspapers or by directly influencing management and editorial decisions through the board rooms of those newspapers...

[More](#)

[tricks? Apirak show pushed back](#) – *The Nation*, February 17, 2005

...Officials at the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) said they had received notice of the schedule change in the morning from Pacific Co, the operator of the station under a concession from the Army.

“We wondered why the schedule was shifted by one hour, so we asked the company for an explanation. But we were simply told that the Army has approved the change,” a BMA official said...

Thai-language newspapers – February 18, 2005

February 18, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

<p><i>Matichon</i> – February 18, 2005</p> <p>* The ‘9th Group’ is actually is the arms and legs of Suriya and Somsak. Mr. Bunyin Tungprapakorn, TRT M.P. in Nakornsawan told about setting up a new group whose members were from the power blocks of Suriya Juengrungroengkit and Somsak Tepsutin.</p> <p>The 9th Group will help transfer policy into action by coordinating work in Parliament.</p>	<p>* On February 17, the parents of students of Ladpro Language Tutor school appeal to the media that their 10 children are infected with foot and mouth disease from the school, but the school has not been closed. The officer of the school denies the school was to blame and said students infected each other. However the school was told to close on February 18.</p>
<p><i>Thairath</i> – February 18, 2005</p> <p>* On February 17, a car bomb near Marina Hotel at the center of Sungai Kolok, Narathivat. Five were killed. This was as Thaksin was visiting three provinces in the South. However he had to return to Ubonratchatani to help his candidate in constituency 3, Amphur Khoengnai, on the same night.</p>	<p>* After <i>Thairath</i> <u>warns of the danger of chemical goods from China that look like childrens’ sweets</u>, the officers of many organizations wake up to investigate the products. Recently, the police found the source of the product in Mouichaloen shop in Udomsuk market. Ms.Thongsri, the owner, said she got the consignment from Charter Distribution company and she did not know it was illegal.</p>

Things one sees on the expressway

February 18, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Things one sees on the expressway

– February 18, 2005



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Rap and hip hop to lure young people to Buddhism

February 19, 2005

Categories: Buddhism

[Rap
and hip hop to lure young people to Buddhism](#)

– TNA, February 19, 2005

...In part a desperate bid on the part of a government concerned that the popularity of Valentine's Day has eclipsed that of festivals like Makabucha – the day celebrating the Lord Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death – the ministry is to organize a concert on 23 February that will seek to define a new genre of 'Dhamma Rap'. Doing away with the often violent and misogynist lyrics associated with rap, the new genre will focus on compassion, sharing and the ability to let go of material possessions...

Almost like being there: Shanghai maglev

February 19, 2005

Categories: China

Almost like being there: Shanghai maglev

– February 19, 2005

Jason writes: *Thank you for publishing your excellent site, which I visit daily. I've searched but I can't find anything on the site about the Maglev train in Shanghai. In the extremely remote possibility that you haven't already covered it, I recommend the following blog as it has some good pictures of the Maglev in action:* [Pudong](#)

[Airport Maglev in Depth](#)

There was a piece about it on BBC's Newsnight programme last night as the [UK](#)

[government is said to be considering a Maglev network here.](#)

Unfortunately, I can't see it happening.

‘Find Local Ski Areas Near Bangkok, Thailand’

February 19, 2005

Great Ways to Make the Most of the Snow

Find Local Ski Areas
Near [Bangkok, Thailand](#)
OR



- [Find the Deep Stuff](#)
- [Ultimate Snowmobile Guide](#)
- [Snowboarding Tips & Tricks](#)
- [Top Ski Destinations](#)
- [Snowboarding Hot Spots](#)

‘Find Local Ski Areas Near Bangkok, Thailand’

– weather.com, February 19, 2005

Something funny from weather.com (above). The answer is that there aren’t any.

No Smocking

February 19, 2005

Categories: Advertising and Commercials



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

The 80-day plan to form a Pattani state

February 20, 2005

Categories: Analysis, The Thai Deep South



(Photo: Dr. Has)

Above: Morning market in Yala. Policemen and villagers have been shot here and a bomb was found near the market.

From the Thai-language press: The 80-day plan to form a Pattani state – Betong to be new capital city – translated and summarized from [Manager Online](#), February 20, 2005

Hat Yai News Center: The Intelligence office found a new piece of a plan to establish Pattani state in five southern border provinces in 80 days. The capital would be Betong and the state would cover Yala, Pattani, Narathiwat, three amphur (districts) in Songkhla (Tepa, Sabayoi and Jana), and two districts (Kuandone and Chalung) in Satun.

The HQs for this insurgency are in Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat and they plan to set up a new capital city in the Betong district of Yala while drafting an Islamic constitution based upon the Iranian Constitution. They will demonetize the Thai baht. This struggle will run for 80 days before being raised into an international struggle and invite UN inspectors to handle this in

the same way Palestine and Free Aceh Organization are doing right now.

Foreign forces such as JI, al Qaeda and Malaysia will not join at this time, but will support the operation once it is finished. They have disguised themselves as tourists as well as the illegal labors from Indonesia. They are trying to marry with Thai women including Thai prostitutes from Hat Yai to Sugei Golok to form new generations. They also invited Muslim Missionaries (Dah Wah) and those Muslim Burmese from Arakan to join the struggle. If the operation does not succeed in 80 days, there will be a suicide in a mosque. They will set up a suicide squad to plant human bombs at Masjid every Friday afternoon during Friday prayers.

The plan to form a Pattani state was made in 1992 and first tried in 1993. The plan was modified in 1994 and came to a deep crisis on its tenth anniversary in 2004. The former plan was to rob guns at Battalion No. 4, Amphur Jorai Rong, Narathiwat using commandos and having a protest at Takbai, Nartivat. For that protest it was forbidden to bring weapons and was supposed to stop at 6pm, but it did not go as planned. The situation went out of control causing damage, but an advantage was that will continue to incite future generations. Other protesters disguised themselves as reporters to broadcast news and blame government officers.

It is found that in 2005 they plan to attack the police and military checkpoints and kiosks—to be done by a bomb squad (3-4 men). They are also going to plant big bombs in Bangkok, Chang Mai and Phuket (3 bombs for each targets) to distract the armed forces from concentrating on one area.

However the case of April 28, 2004 –it was unconventional plan by commander Uttaz Sohlæ. He was blamed by the movement and ordered to drink urine. However the two events benefit the separatists by allowing them to blame government officers.

In 2005, they decide to plant bombs at police and military checkpoints and kiosks—to be done by a bomb squad (3-4 men). They are also going to plant big bombs in Bangkok, Chang Mai and Phuket (3 bombs for each targets). This will distract the armed forces. They also plan to kidnap one district officer from each district to be a hostage to exchange for their members in jail.

A D-day is planned. 10-15 days before D-day, commandos who stay in the mountains of Thambon Ayer Wong, Betong district of Yala will go to the villages that are organized. Weapons will be transferred to each village in the day, because there is less inspection than nighttime. On D-day, commandos and PEMUDA will attack battalions, destroy, steal weapons, and seize high-level government

officers as hostages. After that they will withdraw back to forest and wait for the next attack. They will continue attacking in many places combined with planting flags in every village. This operation will be not concentrate on causing damage, but on killing a great number of people in order to get foreign support and have a dialogue for a referendum for self-rule such as in East Timor.

At the same time, 100 commandos in Yaha district of Yala will operate at Yaha Police Office and get cooperation from Muslim students in many universities who will protest to make trouble. 3500 commandos were trained by 50 trainers for 6 months. The members in the villages are organized PEMUDA which is 70-100% composed of local supporting groups. They have collected M-16 and HK 33 rifles and 5000-6000 shotguns. These weapon were collected over 40 years and are in Amphur Bannunagstar, Betong, Yala. They will distribute 2000-3000 rifles to members in five provinces along with funds collected daily and monthly since 2002. Funds will also come from foreign supporters in Sweden, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Philippines, and Malaysia (Banling district of Kota Baru, Kelantan).

The Ponoh who are involved will be in Yaha and Kabang District of Yala. They have relationships with these groups: GMIP, BRNCO, PULO, and BRN Congress. However, the Wahabi Group will have a dialogue when the mission is finished while foreign terrorists will also join the big event.

[More](#)
[on Troubles in the South](#)
and [Nationalism and Right-wing](#)
[Politics](#)

Thai-language newspapers – February 21, 2005

February 21, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Matichon

– February 21, 2005

* PM Thaksin says he has a suitable person for the House of Representatives chairperson, but he wants to keep the name to himself and people can guess. Sources say Mr. Pokin Polkin will be the man. Also that Mr. Suchat Tanjaroen will be the first vice-chairperson and Mr. Sutham Saengpratum is the second. The influential new ministers are “Jae Daeng” or Yaowapa, Adisorn Piengkiet and Phumtham Weschayachai.

* The

PMs play golf with the leader of the army and discusses the southern crisis. He also called Gen. Sirichai Thanyasiri to speak at the defense council meeting today. He also counters the Dr. Praved Wasri, an academic, who criticized the red zone division by saying he should visit the area before criticizing. The foreign media warn Thaksin about using absolute principles for solving southern problems which would cause al-Qaeda to be attracted to Thailand. Meanwhile Arab websites show the [Takbai event video](#) for the first time and some websites are now is interested in the Thai situation.

Thairath

– February 21, 2005

* A fire occurred at Building P Resident Condo, Pravet district. Mr. Kannikar Kengkhum and three children were hurt especially a 2-year-old who was had a head injury and finally died at the hospital. The cause of the fire is that he did not pay for the bill so the electricity was cut. He lit up a candle and feel asleep and it started a fire in a mattress.

* 31

tourists (Thai and foreigners) were arrested at P.S.T. condo, Yannawa district while they were dancing and in possession of drugs. The police found ecstasy, ketamine and cocaine. The owner, Mr. Urache Zaelim, the promotion and marketing manager of Virgin Radio, said the party is a group of gay tourists who went to Silom soi 4,6 and wanted to continue partying so he invited them to his place.

Thailand to dispatch 177 troops to Burundi on peacekeeping missio

February 21, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thailand](#)

[to dispatch 177 troops to Burundi on peacekeeping mission](#)

– AP, February 21, 2005

Wat Politics

February 21, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Wat](#)

[Pasalawan](#) – February 21, 2005

Not quite sure what this is about or why it is important, but the ‘American Founder’ of the *Korat Post* is getting mixed up in wat politics. Scroll down the page for the photo of the quintessential older Thai lady.

[Is a Mafia Controlling](#)

[Wat Pasalawan?](#) – *Korat Post*, February 14, 2005

[American Founder](#)

[of Korat Post Manhandled By Thai Army](#) – *Korat Post*, February 12, 2005

Lak-Ka-Pid-Lak-Ka-Perd

February 21, 2005

Categories: Art

[Lak-Ka-Pid-Lak-Ka-Perd](#)

– February 21, 2005

Artist Wit Pimkanchanapong writes: *I would like to inform you about another art exhibition (in Bangkok this time!) which called [Lak-Ka-Pid-Lak-Ka-Perd](#).*

I will also join the exhibition, with the 10 screen BTS project (but I still don't sure about the subject, whether BTS or Chao-Praya-Express-Boat line.

Road carnage in Thailand

February 21, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Road](#)

[carnage in Thailand](#) – February 21, 2005

Chatchawal points out: [Road](#)

[carnage in Thailand](#) – *13 images which some may find interesting*

Crown aids stalled road scheme

February 21, 2005

Categories: Highways and Roads

[Crown](#)

[aids stalled road scheme](#) – *The Nation*,

February 21 , 2005

...The road would start at Soi Sarasin, go through Wireless Road, across the expressway and end at Benchakitti Park, the source said...

Translation of a leaflet left by 'bandits' in the deep South

February 22, 2005

Categories: The Thai Deep South

[More](#)
[on Troubles in the South](#)
and [Nationalism and Right-wing Politics](#)

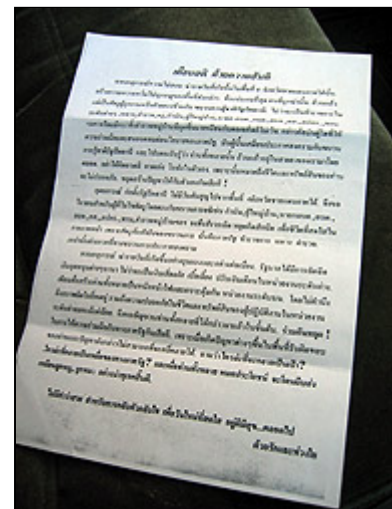
Translation of a leaflet left
by 'bandits' in the deep South –
February 22, 2005

*Warn the mind/consciousness with
peace*

*According to the unrest of daily
killings in 4 provinces in the south, this has
made people apprehensive. The people who are killed
are the enemy of the National Regaining Movement
of Pattani state such as the government officials
in many levels—military, police, teachers, Kamnan
, head of villagers, chairman
of tambon administrative organization, provincial
administrative organizations, volunteers for protecting
land, civil protecting voluntary officers, protecting
village officers, etc. or village police who are
rising up like mushrooms. Whoever cooperates and
repays an obligation to the government declares
to make war with the National Regaining Movement
of Pattani state. Just acknowledge that those
are always in our eyes. Don't be arrogant
and assertive because this means your lives and
your assets will not safe. Stop making problem
for yourselves.*

*Ideal of founding the Pattani state
will never die in the four provinces in the South. We
beg the ones who are not direct enemies with the movement
such as Kamnan, chief of villagers, chairman of Tambon
administrative organizations, tambon administrative
organizations, provincial administrative organizations,
volunteers for protecting land, civil protecting voluntary
officers, protecting village officers, village police
etc. These people should be careful and start thinking
for a better life, because the true enemy of the movement
is the government, government officials, military, and
police whose people our movement declares war on.*

*Events of daily killing will be in crisis
and continue. The government supports many budgets such
as risk money, allowances, and adjusting the salary
for the lower level units. This is just to make you*



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

*to bear the brunt as armor to protect
the upper units without considering the depressed heart
and the safety of lives and assets of the lower level
units.*

*We solicit those people mentioned
above to stop cooperating with the government, because
when the problem takes place in the area you responsible
for and the problem will not unravel. Who will be the
target? Who will be the victim of the government? When
you are useless, you will be kicked out like a pig or
a shabby dog. It is not too late to change your mind for
a better life that is happy always. Love and concern.*

Also: [Another translation
of a leaflet left by 'bandits' in the deep South – May
1, 2005](#)

Master Plan News 2004-2005

February 22, 2005

Categories: Master Plans

This section contains news of the Master Plan, overall Bangkok development, the Bangkok Governor's development plans, and articles about interconnecting mass transit projects.

[Mass Transit News main page](#)

MFC coming up with a financing plan for 7 lines of mass transit – translated and summarized from [Manager Daily](#), February 22, 2005

MFC is coming up with a financing plan for 7 lines of mass transit with a price tag of 410 billion baht.

Government budget for infrastructure: 80 billion baht

Private concession on rolling stock assembly line: 130 billion baht

Open bidding for land leasing: 40-50 billion baht

Revenue bond from license and fuel tax: 40-50 billion baht

Property funds from land development (done by the Treasury Department): 80-100 billion baht

Land development by Treasury Department will be handled at the following stations:

- 1) Makkasan
 - 2) Bang Sue
 - 3) Queen Sirikit National Convention Center
 - 4) Hua Lamphong
 - 5) National Stadium
 - 6) Port Authority land in Klong Toei
- All to be done according to the examples from Hong Kong MRT, Singapore MRT, and the Tokyo Metro.

The new rate for the joint ticket system will be 10 baht + (2 x number of stations)–capped at 50 baht maximum for the route from Mahachai to Rangsit.

Investment plan for megaprojects
– translated and summarized from *Than Setthakij*,
February 20-23, 2005

MOTC has come up with three sources for the 400 billion baht investment on mass transit system with 174 billion baht investment on rolling stock.

- 1) budget -> 5% -> 10% -> 15% investment, up to 50 billion baht/year – total 300 billion baht in 6 years
- 2) capitalization by developing the land along mass transit routes to create another source of revenue
- 3) securitization

Infrastructure will be handled by the government while the government will invite foreign investors to set up rolling stock assembly lines in Thailand and make studies of two new lines:

- 1) Minburi – Suvannabhum
- 2) Bang Kapi – Pak Nam

Foreign investors will invest on the local assembly of rolling stocks

with a price tag of 174 billion baht with long term concession and support from BOI.

The government will hire the private sector to handle the service instead of granting a concession so as to minimize the operating cost and ticket prices.

The government will also come up with an e-auction as the way to cut collusion costs by 15% which have shown success in minimizing the cost for CDMA biddings. Now procurement with price tags of more than 2 million baht are required to be handled by e-auction.

BMA pushing smart card system for Skytrain and Subway as well as the upcoming BRT – translated and summarized from *Manager Daily*, February 14, 2005

Dr. Samart Rajpolasit told the press that BMA is going to cooperate with BTS and MRTA to come up with a joint ticket system with smart cards between BTS Skytrain and MRTA Subway with a revenue sharing scheme according to the traveling distance.

This smart card system will be also used for [BRT systems](#) which will function as feeder lines to cover the lines not served by BTS.

Suriya wants taxes to ensure a 15 baht flat rate for the Subway & insists that he will never give up the plan to nationalize the Skytrain – translated and summarized from *Thai Post*, November 5, 2004

Minister Suriya said he will need funds from Bangkokians to invest in new lines of the Subway. Minister Suriya also Insists that he will never give up the plan to nationalize BTS & BMCL since Premier Thaksin never asked Suriya to stop the nationalization scheme. He said Premier Thaksin has given a green light for him to do so and he expects that Premier Thaksin is not a flip-flop man as those correspondents from *Than Setthakij* have [claimed](#).

Suriya also claims the average ticket price for the Skytrain/Subway will be lowered from 20 baht (from 30 day passes of BTS) to 15 baht. Suriya claimed that BMTA (buses) is 5 billion baht loss a year while BTS (Skytrain) has revenue of 2 billion baht a year and the Subway has the estimated revenue of 1 billion baht despite much less coverage than BMTA buses. Therefore the nationalization of BTS/BMCL will enable both systems to gain more passengers despite a 15 baht flat rate ticket price and less subsidies to BMTA.

Earlier: MASS TRANSIT NATIONALIZATION CANCELED – [Premier Thaksin stuns Suriya by revoking the plan for Skytrain-Subway nationalization](#) – *Than Setthakij*, November 4-6, 2004

Thai-language guides – November 10, 2004

Wisarat point out: [Travel Guide for BTS Skytrain](#) and [Travel Guide for MRTA Subway](#)

On the forums – November 6, 2004

Wisarat points out this MThai thread on [comparisons between BTS Skytrain and MRTA Subway](#).

Suriya opposing the plan to raise VAT from 7% to 8% to fund mass transit expansion – translated and summarized from *Matichon*, November 5, 2004 and *Manager Daily*, November 4, 2004
MOF, Budget Bureau, and MOTC are discussing the plan to finance the 500 billion baht mass transit system with a total distance of 291 km to be done in 6 years.

MOF is proposing the extra 1% of VAT but Minister Suriya opposes the VAT rise which will hurt overall consumption even though the extra percent would fill government coffers with 40 billion baht more tax revenue per year. More budget for MOTC and an extra excise tax on private cars would be fine for him.

At least, the budget for MOTC must be allocated at the level which is at par with the level before the 1997 economic meltdown—up 10% of the national budget. At that time, there was 80-90 billion baht allocated to MOTC and MOTC allocated 40 billion baht for basic infrastructure. However, the budget for MOTC was cut after 1997. At least, MOTC should have 200-300 billion baht for infrastructure in 6 years after the readjustment.

A transportation fund must be set up by using the extra excise tax on the new cars from the current 30,000-50,000 baht/car to the level before the tax cut. This will add 30-50 billion baht per year into transportation funds since the number of car is going to increase from 600,000 to 1 million cars.

Thai forumers comment on Suriya
– November 1, 2004

Wisarut reports: *Many netters comment on the hypocrisy of Transport Minister Suriya* [here](#),
[here](#),
and [here](#).

Earlier: [Government to punish Skytrain: no extensions, no connections to other systems](#)
– October 28, 2004

The BMA-SRT feud: BMA is studying BTS extensions despite complaints from MOTC about overlapping projects
– translated and summarized from *Manager Daily*,
October, 18, 2004

MOTC is complaining that some of the proposed six BTS Skytrain projects studied by BMA have been overlapping SRT projects as well as the 6-year masterplan. They ask BMA to handle only the well-being of Bangkokians instead of messing around with mass transit systems.

BMA told SRT that the system overlapping on SRT land will be a system not the same as one used by SRT. Suvannabhum Airport Link and a modernized Mahachai line will have stations every 4-5 km while BMA claimed that the BTS route to Suvannabhum and Mahachai will have a station every 1-2 km—thus, they will have very different purposes.

BMA even claimed that the construction of the Skytrain is still a duty of BMA although MOTC is going to nationalize the BTS Skytrain.

OTP said BMA has full rights to make such studies, but all the plans must follow the guide line of the 6-year masterplan and it requires cabinet approval on those routes, especially the route to suburbs beyond BMA city limits. BMA should come up with the extensions only after the nationalization of BTS.

There are six routes under studies:

- 1) Saphan Taksin – Talad Plo – Mahachai
- 2) Onnut – NBIA

- 3) Bang Na – BITEC – Wat Sri Lam branch line
- 4) Charansanitwongse (Prannok) – Pinklao – Sanam Luang – National Stadium
- 5) Mochit – Saphan Mai
- 6) Onnut – Samrong Samut Prakarn

Commentary by Wisarut: The feud between BMA and SRT is not a surprise at all since BMA refuses to pay any a single stang on the rent of Chatuchak Weekend Market—despite their long term occupation of SRT land. No wonder, SRT is looking down upon BMA as "a blood sucker" that does not deserve to construct a mass transit system along SRT tracks and land. BMA wants to create their own fiefdom without giving any regard to the central government which is definitely a legacy leftover from Samak. That is why they will have head-on collision with MOTC

on a regular basis. Furthermore, Governor Samak wanted to please his cronies.

The moribund Corn Cob apartments on his friend's land is a good example

. The route from Onnut to NBIA as well as the section from Saphan Mai to Luum Lookka looks like another example of cronyism. The first one for those members of the defunct Prachakornthai party and the second one is for those supporters in RTAF—many of them are ultraconservative.

Mass transit lines deserve to go along the route with high concentrations of people. The section from Bangyai to Bangsue has been approved due to the high grown of suburb villages while I can see very few villages along the road from Khookhot to Lum Lookka.

SRT will respond back to BMA that "they can set electrified railway stations and stops in every 1-2 km since they have done such a thing to the Paknam Railway and the sections from Bangbon to Klong Sarn.

Therefore, the most likely approved lines will be:

- 1) The Branch Line (Bang Na – Wat Sri Lam)—deserves to be an extension to NBIA more than the Onnut – NBIA line. This is not a surprise at all since the route along Bang NA – Bang Pakong Highway is the place for Ramkhamhaeng University (Bangna Campus) and the Nation Group. Governor Samak had very strong hostilities—if not outright hatred—toward those progressive people from the Nation Group and Ramkhamhaeng University.
- 2) Northern extensions (Mochit – Saphan Mai)
- 3) Southern extension (Onnut – Samrong – Paknam)
- 4) Rattanakosin extension (National Stadium – Sanam Luang – Pinklao – Phran Nok)

Bus Rapid Transit route rivalry: BMA

vs. OTP – October 25, 2004

Wisarut reports: The two maps are from *Than Setthakij* (October 14-16, 2004 and October 21-23, 2004) showing the rivalry on BRT plan between [BMA](#) vs. [OTP](#). This conflicts

will tun into an explosive issue sooner or later. There are five routes which are bones of contention:

- 1) Route 3 – Minburi – Bang Kapi – Lum Salee – Sri Nakharin – Samut Prakarn
- 2) Route 5 – Bang Bon – Rama 2 – Wong Wian Yai
- 3) Route 6 – Kanchanaphisek – Rama 5 Bridge – Ngam Wongwan – Kaset
- 4) Route 7 – Highway 3100 – Prapa Canal – Rama 5 Road – Phisanuloke – Yommaraj
- 5) Rotue 9 – Pakkret – Chaeng Watthana – Ram Indra – Kanna Yao – Nawamin – Bang Kapi

Finding investors for mass transit

plans – translated and summarized from *Prachachat Thurakij*, October 14, 2004 and *Matichon Daily*, October 13, 2004

MFC Funds (from MFC Securities PCL) is trying to pursue wealthy Middle Easterners to invest in their funds so as to finance the 400 billion baht mass transit system.

Dusit poll says Bangkokians support nationalization of BMCL and BTSC – translated and summarized from *Dailynews*, October 14, 2004

MRTA Governor said the poll conducted by Rajabhat Dusit said that after collecting data from 3413 passengers from all 18 subway stations from August 9-20, 2004 they have the following results:

- 1) Most said they are very satisfied with Subway services
- 2) The largest number of people like the environment within and around Subway stations
- 3) Next they like ticket purchasing and inspection, Subway facilities, internal PR within the stations, security, and internal service of the Subway
- 4) Top 5 stations for service are (1) Huay kwang, (2) Lumphinee, (3) Kamphaengphet, (4) QSNCC, (5) Bangsue
- 5) Top 5 most frequent used stations are (1) Chatuchak Park (2) Lad Phrao (3) Phaholyothin (4) Hua Lamphong (5) Suthisarn
- 6) 62.32% said the nationalization of BMCL is a big must to cut ticket prices, impose price controls, run better service with direct revenue to government coffers. The system should be for the direct welfare of people and the government is capable of running the system.
- 7) 85.32% said the joint ticketing system between BTSC and BMCL is a must since they are unwilling to carry too many cards for using the systems and they want convenience.

Commentary: While I agree the joint ticket system, I think many people who are not counted in the poll have very skeptical viewpoints about nationalization. Poll manipulation is not a surprise at all since researchers do not want to risk confrontation with Premier Thaksin

Singaporeans amazed – translated and summarized from *Khaosod*, October 8, 2004

Singaporean students feel stunned that Bangkokians could manage to integrate both services (Saensab canal and Chaophraya Express) with the Skytrain-Subway network—not perfect but still amazing indeed.

[Mass Transit News main page](#)

The amazing world of gantry cranes

February 22, 2005

[The
amazing world of gantry cranes](#) –

February 22, 2005

Uwe writes: *With interest I wrote your web-page, because I'm working in this field. Right now I have published a home-page about me and my work and like to asked you if it is possible to [link to my site](#).*

Thai-language newspapers – February 24, 2005

February 24, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Matichon

– February 24, 2005

* The Ministry of Education reveals reports from the 1579 hotline reporting inappropriate behavior of students. Students grade 8-10 are the champions of avoiding class to drink, smoking cigarettes, dancing and having sex instead of walking in shopping centers. Primary school students like to play games and go to the zoo, secondary school students like to talk pleasantries and hug and kiss while university students like to go to hotel or sit at a pub or bar although they are wearing their school uniform.

More [Lurid stories of Thai youth](#)

* On

February 23, the Ministry of Public Health organized a physician-public health meeting for the first time in Phuket. The meeting is to summarize and make a ceremony for every soul in the aftermath of the tsunami to prevent any big event in the future. Meanwhile a deputy chief of the Public Health Ministry said 9000 victims had their mental health impacted.

Thairath

– February 24, 2005

* **Bloody news** – Pathumthani
– Prasit Jamjun, 14-year-old student in grade 9 at a famous school in Pathumnain had his throat cut and was stabbed 24 times by his two classmates. The two friends who committed the murder are a 13-year-old girl and 15-year-old boy. Both confessed that they wanted to get his motorcycle, mobile phone and wanted revenge because Prasit, teased the girl's parents' name and jeered that another male friend looked like a transvestite.

* Nonthaburi

– A fire occurred in the back of Thai Garment factory . Two persons, the owner and the maid, survived by jumping out of the house, but they were seriously injured. A 12-year-old girl who was fat and could not see well burned to death. The police assumed that the cause of the fire was a short circuit.

Thai-language newspapers – February 25, 2005

February 25, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Matichon

– February 25, 2005

* On February 24, 100 villagers from Mu 10, Tambon Koh Plappla, Rachaburi protest in front of the village to resist the concession of Pong Mountain to make a mine which concessioned to Sintanan Company. After a public hearing, the villagers do not agree because it is a high mountain so they afraid of the dust contamination to water, farm areas and they do not want anybody to destroy the environment.

* This

year Thailand will organize a world Visakabucha day by inviting religious leaders from all over the world to attend a gathering in four places: Puttamonton for praying, Sanamluang for Vientien ceremony (walk with a lighted candle around the temple), Suntitham for education, and Impact Arena Muangthong Tani for exhibition. The Supreme Patriarchs from 10 countries and other Buddhist priests from 20 countries will do dharma and broadcast all around the world.

Komchadluek

– February 25, 2005

* Toeng prepares to go to the south on March 15 to getting information for the Parliament meeting. He said the way to solve problems should be different and it should be a moderate way with compromise and patience.

* Anurak

Jureemas, Culture Minister, formally returned Kruse Mosque to Tanyongluloh Thambon Administrative organization in Pattani today (February 25). The mosque was renovated after having been damaged from the unrest on April 28, 2004. It has been repaired over 7 months with a 8.5 million baht budget.

Thais in a flap over public rubbing of breasts

February 25, 2005

Categories: Local Beliefs

['Thais in a flap over public rubbing of breasts'](#) –

Reuters UK, February 25, 2005

A promotion for breast enhancing cream that involved three models having a 15 minute mammary massage in public has caused a furore in Thailand, with family groups saying it violates traditional values and morality.

Despite Bangkok's racy reputation as the "anything goes" sex capital of southeast Asia, most Thais are uncomfortable with public nudity and all newspaper pictures of the demonstration had the breasts blurred out...

Whether it works or not, a headline in the Thai Post tabloid summed up the controversy best in a society obsessed with marketing gimmicks: "Big breast bras good for people with small brains".

Friday February 25, 1:09 PM

Thais in a flap over public rubbing of breasts

BANGKOK (Reuters) – A promotion for breast enhancing cream that involved three models having a 15 minute mammary massage in public has caused a furore in Thailand, with family groups saying it violates traditional values and morality.

Despite Bangkok's racy reputation as the "anything goes" sex capital of southeast Asia, most Thais are uncomfortable with public nudity and all newspaper pictures of the demonstration had the breasts blurred out. "The campaign is just to promote the product without considering the damage to society," Ladda Thangsupachai of the Cultural Watch Centre told the Nation newspaper on Friday. "This is taking advantage of society and an irresponsible act."

Executives of St Herb Co., which makes the "breast beautifying" cream, said they laid on the stunt merely to counter suggestions their advertising claims were exaggerated.

The Nation said Ying, one of the models, was embarrassed at having to bare herself in front of the cameras, but did believe her breasts had become firmer and the gap between them smaller as a result of the treatment.

St Herb is likely to evade the wrath of regulators because the cream is "breast beautifying" rather than "breast enlarging" — a trick missed by makers of a "breast enlarging bra" now under scrutiny from the Thai Food and Drug Administration.

Whether it works or not, a headline in the Thai Post tabloid summed up the controversy best in a society obsessed with marketing gimmicks: "Big breast bras good for people with small brains".

Phi Phi Island: Conflicting visions for the future

February 25, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Phi Phi Island: [Conflicting visions for the future of island's twin bays](#)

– The Nation, February 25, 2005

...On the surface the new look planned for Phi Phi is an environmentalist's delight. It calls for the elimination of all permanent concrete structures from the space between the famous twin-bay beach fronts. Thailand's tropical paradise icon would be restored to the utmost of its natural beauty.

...The plans, drawn up by the Bangkok-based Special Areas Development Organisation, could affect more than 90 per cent of Phi Phi's principal businesses, forcing all development to move to surrounding hillsides.

...Nothing better illustrates the weakening of Islamic values on Phi Phi than the long-time conflict between the mosque and a Muslim landowner who rented his property to Hippiess Bar on the beachfront of Tonsai Bay. The deal allows the bar to operate right next to the island's historic Muslim graveyard.

"I'm very angry," said Konee Kongkhaoreab, a cousin of the landowner and member of the mosque.

"Our grandparents and great-grandparents are buried there. How can they rest peacefully with loud rock music blasting until 4am every day?" ...



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Above right: 2003 – Some areas of the peninsula between Ton Sai Bay and Loh Dalam Bay were developed with almost wall to wall guesthouses and bars. Most of these structures were destroyed or gutted by the tsunami.

[Phi Phi Island](#) in 2003

More on the “Warning sign”

February 25, 2005

Categories: Signs and Billboards

More on the "Warning sign"

– February 25, 2005

Paisa writes: *Jao Mae can also mean female protective spirit, shaman, saint, or deity. Jao Por is the male counterpart. Many Thai cities (including Bangkok) have san jao por luk muang (shrine spirit city pillar).*

Here's a [picture of one](#). Among the well-known Jao Por and Jao Mae in this sense are, [jao mae guan im](#) — and [jao por guan yu](#).

Earlier: Warning sign – February 22, 2005

Nils translates: *"It's forbidden to urinate in this area. There's a san phra phum (spirit house) here, and the jao mae lives in the back." I am still not entirely sure what a "jao mae" is, though my girlfriend said it's something like a (female) owner/boss/influential person. (Thanks to Robert for some suggestions with the translation.)*



(Photo: Nils)

Conor explains: *A Jao Mae is a colloquial term equivalent to “head honcho” or something like that but only for females. There is an implication that the person has power through connections and influence (and perhaps crime) rather than education and a career path. It's rarely used in written language and here its effect is more amusing than intimidating...*

Bangkok Street Dogs

February 26, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Bangkok](#)

[Street Dogs](#) – February 26, 2005

Kevin McLaughlin writes: *Anyway, I recently started a blog called Bangkok Street Dogs, and I was wondering if you could have a look at it and maybe link to it from somewhere on 2bangkok.com. Basically, while I lived there I took lots of pics of Bangkok street dogs, and this blog is a way of creating personalities around them in order to 'humanize' them. I'd appreciate it if you could have a look.*

Cash hand-outs ‘only fuel crime, trafficking’

February 26, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Cash hand-outs](#)

[‘only fuel crime, trafficking’](#) – Bangkok

Post, February 26, 2005

Child rights advocates yesterday urged Thais and foreigners to stop giving money to child beggars, saying their kindness fed crime and fuelled human trafficking...

The report said many beggars were set up to look as if they were a mother and baby even though they were not related to draw sympathy from passers-by.

The report also said foreigners tended to give money to beggars and their daily average income ranged from 500-1,000 baht, depending on the location, with most of the money going to gangsters.

SRT Labor Union website

February 26, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[SRT Labor Union website](#) – February 26, 2005

Wisarat points out the [SRT](#)

[Labor Union website](#): *As usual, SRT Labor Union always opposes free trade as well as privatization.*

Troubles in the South – December 2005

February 28, 2005

Categories: The Thai Deep South

Troubles in the South
– December 2005

[Troubles in the South index page](#)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Yala
checkpoint – December 30, 2005

Mr John reports: *The police of Yala police station set up a checkpoint to supervise safety during the New Year period and encourage people not to drink and drive and to wear helmets and use safety belts every time they drive.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Passing the course – December 30, 2005

Mr. John reports: *350 police, patrol police and village safety officers that passed the security course of the Southern Border Provinces Peace-Building Command. They prepare to perform safety duties in their villages. This is the first team to operate in Amphur Raman, Yala and each receives 4500 baht a month salary. Another team coming from Tak province will join soon.*

What

happens when people are questioned in the deep south?

Report: "How can Poh Ji be guilty?"—people ask how one-legged grandpa could be accused

– *Komchadluek*, December 19, 2005

There were some residents living in the three southern provinces called for questioning who were found to be disabled and hospital patients.

Ma-doh Wabuesa, a disabled old man, showed the official letter received from the government that he was to be investigated for unidentified reasons.

"I have been being inquiring, but up till now I do not understand why a man with one leg left like me was enlisted for investigation?" No one could answer the question expressed in Jawi by Ma-doh Wabuesa, a 70 year-old man with his synthetic left leg from his knee down who supports himself with a crutch.

Ma-doh Wabuesa and another eight persons in his family live in a small wooden hut at 74 Moo.3 Tumbol Buemang,

Amphur Raman, Yala Province. He was suspected of being related to the southern violence and received an official notice letter saying he would be investigated by the national army detectives for information related to the southern violence. The people called must be investigated as a witness of the violence and are required to report in person to the Army Brigade Force Division 12 (Nerancharawas Temple) Tambol Bangnungsta, Amphur Banangsata, Yala Province. The day to report was February 28, 2005.

"That day in the afternoon, the headman of the village came to me to confirm the appointment for me and another 23 men in the same village. The next day we all would first meet at his place and he would lead us to the Army base."

Ma-doh said that when everyone arrived at the appointed place, the headman took them to the Amphur where they were picked up by car and taken to the Army Brigade Force Division in Pattani. The first day they were interviewed for almost two hours and then all were released to the arranged rest house.

"There was an agent who took me to an investigation room which there was a camera installed. I was frightened by such an environment and the agent told me not to be frightened because it is a typically practice and they normally take pictures of everyone for record keeping." The 70-year-old man additionally described to us that he was questioned in Jawi, because he could not speak Thai at all. The questions they asked were his name, how many children he had, each of his children's names and what career they were in. There were also other questions about him such as how many cars did he have, what was his car's license number, etc. He was questioned like this for almost two hours and then they took him to the rest house. They provided him with a loincloth, a hat and a t-shirt to wear during the stay.

"Then, on day two, each of us was interviewed again with exactly the same questions as asked on the first day in the same room and it took two hours. We were interviewed by the agent every day like that for seven days and we were under their supervision during this time."

Ma-doh explained that the questions asked by the soldier never changed and he did not understand why they kept asking the same questions again and again. He no longer felt frightened, but bored, confused and wondered why they asked the same questions again and again. He dared not ask the soldier what he did wrong to make them bring him for questioning.

"When they let me go home, I got a letter. It was a verification letter of investigation approval." The old man guessed that an incident happened that caused to be on the government list for questioning happened 15 days before when a police officer came to his place and asked for a security check inside his little hut.

The police left, nothing was taken from his house, and they did not ask any questions.

"Until today, I still do not know why he was taken. What had he done wrong nobody clarified," said Mrs. Mae-Leemoh Wabuesa, the 62-year-old wife of Madoh. She said that while the headman came to get him, she was very confused and could not imagine what her husband had done illegal. The headman just told her that everything was going to be all right and he will return home within seven days.

"While he was there, me and all my family were really worried about him. We did not know what would happen. My husband lost a leg, got the synthetic leg to replace it, and uses a crutch to be able to walk. I was afraid that he might fall down. He is just an old man. Luckily there were also others that accompanied him that he could possibly ask for help," said by Mae-Leemoh, adding that he was the one-legged for years. Wherever he goes, apart from the synthetic leg, he uses a walking stick, but still needs someone's support to walk. Especially at his present old age, it is impossible for him to go out and do something wrong or hurt someone. He could not even stand on his own. "Myself and everyone in our family were confused about the reason for taking him away. And when he returned home, no agent nor officer or anyone else came to us again."

Mrs. Beebah Wabuesa, 28-year-old daughter of PohJi Madoh, expressed that she was very worried about her father while he was away for investigation. She was confused why a physically disabled 70-year-old man was also being enlisted—most of the enlisted are young men or teenagers, but she thought why the elderly too?

"My brother has never been enlisted for investigative declaration. Today I still feel frightened if the government agent may come to get him and I feel pity for my dad." Mrs. Beebah also said her dad once told her that he was not afraid if there would be another inquiry because he had done no wrong and in his condition he could not hurt anyone so there was no need to fear.

The requisition of investigation happened to Madoh Wabuesa, is another case which really presents the government's performance and judgment—that a weak disabled man was considered as the one in violence involved target group to be investigated.

[Thai military prepared to counter new tactics by insurgents](#)

— Bernama, December 27, 2005

...Sonthi said that the Royal Thai Army is currently operating in small and manoeuvrable squads, instead of large units, in the restive South, and that military units across the nation are instructed to constantly exchange information with each other and with other

government units and civilian agencies and not to take too many days off during festive periods. He dismissed allegations of warnings that a group of foreign militants is currently standing by 'somewhere outside Thailand', waiting to secretly slip into the South for insurgency during the forthcoming New Year...



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Two shot dead – December 25, 2005

Mr. John reports: *The police are investigating the bodies of Mr. Term Srisuwan, 52-years-old, and Mr. Nikom Zaengo, 45-years-old, villagers were shot by bad guys as they were riding motorcycles to visit relatives. The killers also rode motorcycles. This happened at the road Pong-ngoe-Salopatae, Moo 3, Tambon Kayooborkor, Amphur Raman, Yala.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there:
Car bomb/PM visits flood areas –
December 23, 2005

Above: A car bomb injures 7 in Narathiwat. **Below:**
PM Thaksin visits flooded areas in the South after being
criticized in the press for "snubbing" the
region in the wake of the flooding.



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like
being there: Flooded south
– December 21, 2005

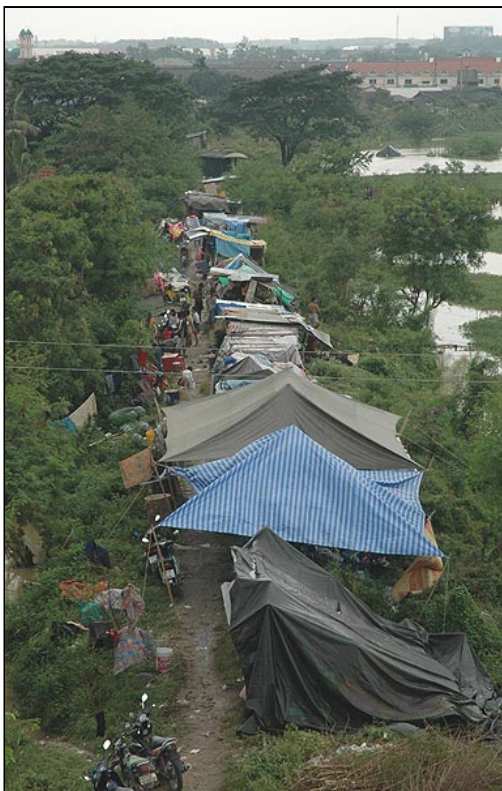
Mr. John writes: *Heavy rain makes
floods in
many districts of Songkhla such as
Had Yai. People
who stay outskirts have trouble.
People complain
that the government emphasizes
preventing floods
in business areas making the
outside areas having
heavy floods.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



Left: Temporary shelters set up by those made homeless by the floods.

(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Yala flooded

– December 19, 2005

More photos of flooded Yala including a cat in a tree
and cows that have moved to higher ground in a football
pitch.



(Photo: Dr. Has for
2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there:

Yala flooded – December 18,
2005

Dr. Has writes: *This is the old market area in Yala.
Yala had the biggest flood in 40 years in the area that
on December 18 at 16.30 p.m.*



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)

Above: *Water is flowing over
to Raman-Talohhalor road at 17.00 p.m. today (December
18). Small cars cannot drive. People in Raman are lacking
water because the water supply does not work.*



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)

Above and below: *On December 17, water in Pattani river overflowing out of a pipe into the municipality of Yala. This is the biggest flood in many years.*



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

A curiosity from the
deep south – December 20, 2005

Mr. John writes: *An old poster used to incite Thai people to resist the English military in WW2, about year 1941. The poster says "Destroy English that is Asia's enemy" and "Join with Japan to fight the English which oppresses Thais for a long time–Japan hopes Thailand to prosper." This poster is hanging at Big Gun Military Battalion 5, Prapokklao Camp, Amphure Muang, Songkhla.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being
there: Mudslide in Songkhla –
December 15, 2005

Mr. John writes: *There was the mudslide at Khao Tungkuan, Songkhla. Mud slid down on peoples' houses damaging two homes at Sadao Road near the back of the Songkhla governor's residence. Mr. Somboon Kumpawong was killed died and his wife was injured. Their 12-year-old son was buried in the side and although officers tried to dig him out, he died as well.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being
there: Words from a bomb maker –
December 10, 2005

Mr. John writes: *Mr. Asawan Arwaekaji (right), 26-years-old, is a suspect in making more than 100 bombs for the unrest in Naratiwat. He reveals for the press conference that he joined the unrest movement since 2003 and it was lead by his friend. He has skill in electronics so he practiced to create bomb circuits.*

He said after the first bomb was set at the telephone organization, he felt guilty and tried to surrender many times, but he was threatened with death so he did not dare. He felt glad more than sorry to be arrested. His mother (left) is sorry for her son's misguided ways and advised others to take care of their children.

Almost like being there: Image
building? – December 9, 2005

Mr. John writes: *On December 9, Air Chief Marshal Kongsak Wantana, Interior Minister, came to get information about the 'risk group' of 137 persons from Pattani and Yala who are thought to be at risk to join the unrest. Some of them revealed that they are not guilty and not involved with the unrest, but were forced by the government to inform and participate. This made the media accuse the government of setting up a scene to make it look like people come to inform and participate.*



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Flooding
in Yala – December 8, 2005



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Capture
of Manazae Jehlah – December
8, 2005

[Interior](#)

[Minister denies top insurgent arrested in Malaysia](#)

– TNA, December 8, 2005



(Photo: Via Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

**Earlier: Almost like being
there: Caught! – December
7, 2005**



Mr. John writes: *The police confine Mr. Manazae Jehlah, leader of PULO, (the unrest movement in the South) and investigate him after Malaysian government arrested him and extradited him to Thailand to continue the investigation. Mr. Manazae is alleged to be involved in many cases of the Southern unrest and has a reward three million baht for his capture.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being
there: "Peace thambon" –

December 7, 2005

Mr. John writes: *About 2000 villagers in Amphure Mayor, Pattani walk in a rally in heavy rain and declare their thambon to be a peace thambon. After the rally, they deliver the banner saying "Peace Thambon" to the thambon center.*



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: A
new school – December 5, 2005

Dr. Has writes: *On December 5, the Yala governor, government officials and people in Yala and nearby areas participated in laying the foundation stone of Prachanukro 41 at Ban Toh Arlee, Thambon Wangpaya, Amphur Raman, Yala. Representatives from Amphur Natawee, Songkhla, Amphure Muang, Satun, Amphur Muang, Pattani and Amphur Rangae Narathiwat also joined the ceremonies. This school, especially for Thai Muslims in the south, is a valuable asset for the people in 5 southern border provinces. It will open in year 2006 and will focus teaching on regular, occupational, and religious subjects.*



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Going to
Bangkok to protest – December
4, 2005

Dr. Has writes: *On December 4, The Confederation of Teachers, Yala sent its representative teachers from the three southern border provinces to Bangkok to resist the transferring of control of education to local administration.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being
there: Training to check for bombs
– December 3, 2005

Mr. John writes: *'Support Peace Unit of the Southern Border' trains more than 100 government officials, civil officials and volunteers to understand how to notice bombs.*

[Security](#)
[forces given 'taboo' phrase manual](#)

– *Bangkok Post*, December 1, 2005

...For example, a "psychological operation" should be replaced with "promotion of understanding". "People" should be used instead of Thai people/Muslim people, while police and soldiers should be referred to as "state officials".

"Shooting of a civilian" should be replaced with "an attempt to do harm to an innocent citizen". And it is more politically correct to refer to an act of shooting at a helicopter by insurgents as "harassing fire directed at an aircraft"...

[Troubles](#)
[in the South index page](#)

Thai-language newspapers – February 28, 2005

February 28, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Matichon

– February 28, 2005

* On February 27, the former Miss universe, Puy or Porntip Nakhirankanok Saimon visited the tsunami area in Amphur Takuapa, Pangnga. She gave 6 million baht to help build 50 houses for the victims and for giving ice-cream to children.

* On

February 27, Sukhothaithammathirat University organized an academic seminar on “Media does not see through Thaksin” in which Mr. Pongsak Payakwichien, the chief executive of *Matichon* newspaper was a speaker. He said it is not totally true that the media do not see through Thaksin because there are critics. Thaksin usually thinks that he is only one who is capable and good so he sometimes does not accept knowledge and suggestions from others. When people have different ideas, he thinks those people are not on his side. This is not good for the top executive person for the country.

Thairath

– February 28, 2005

* On February 27, the Tourism Police pretend to be a customer and arrested Mr. Arun Songserm who took two boys (10 and 15 years old) to sell for queer sex with foreigner in Pattaya. The boys were then sent to have a medical check and then sent to Banglamung Children Aid House.

* On

February 27, a young robber robbed and attacked Ms. Waraporn Tisawipaksakul, the owner of Piyasab Shop selling the priest offerings and electric equipment while she was in her shop alone. She tried to fight, but was hit by an electric mosquito net and soda bottle and was injured so she ran to hide herself in the restroom. The robber ran away. She was sent to the hospital and the police are investigating and arrested the robber.

Anti-Tobacco Treaty's Bite To Be Tested in Thailand

February 28, 2005

Categories: Health

[Anti-Tobacco](#)

[Treaty's Bite To Be Tested in Thailand](#) –

IPS, February 28, 2005

...They have in mind two initiatives that are set to shake up the local smoking culture. On Mar. 25, cigarette packets sold in this country will begin displaying graphic pictures about the health hazards that come with tobacco addiction.

...Another change will come into effect on May 31, marked globally as the world's anti-smoking day. "Retail shops and small stores will not be able to publicly display cigarette packets on their racks," said Hatai. "The cigarettes will have to be hidden away in drawers or cupboards, away from sight."

Haze in KL

February 28, 2005
Categories: Malaysia

Haze in KL – February
28, 2005

News from our neighbors:

[Air
quality remains unhealthy](#) – *Sunday Mail*, February
27, 2005

[Hazy
and Unhealthy](#) – *New Straits Times*, February 25,
2005

[Rain
brings respite to Klang Valley folk](#) – *New Straits Times*,
February 28, 2005