

Earth Observation THEOS will give Thailand an orbital view of earth

July 3, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Earth](#)

[Observation THEOS will give Thailand an orbital view of earth](#)

– SpaceDaily, July 3, 2005

THEOS will provide Thailand with worldwide geo-referenced image products and image processing capabilities for applications in cartography, land use, agricultural monitoring, forestry management, coastal zone monitoring and flood risk management – providing access to any part of Thailand in less than 2 days...

Taxis fare increase in the pipeline

July 3, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Taxis](#)

[fare increase in the pipeline](#) – TNA, July 3, 2005

Thai-language newspapers on July 4, 2005

July 4, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Matichon

– July 4, 2005

* Baby drop daily – The fashion of dropping baby (abandoning babies) is quite serious. Two babies were found again in one day at Kwaeng Huamark and Tungsonghong. The police said the youth are unrestrained and not ready to have babies so they abandon them. Meanwhile the Social Development and Human Security Ministry reveals the data of the trend of baby dropping is growing to average 20-25 babies per month which the cause of the youth are dare to have sex and the bad economy.

Thairath

– July 4, 2005

* July 3 – Mr. Satit Zaekung, 16-years-old, was sitting on the balcony of the 8th floor of Somtawin Mansion and talking on a PCT phone for so long he accidentally fell. His leg, arms and head were broken and he was killed. His roommate said he always telephoned at that place and she warned him not to sit there, but he did not listen.

Aerial pics of the mega-bridge

July 4, 2005

Aerial pics of the mega-bridge

– July 4, 2005

Thomas took these photos of the mega-bridge ([1](#),

[2](#))

from an airplane and another [funny](#)

[one](#) he shot in Jakarta.

Bus 24

July 4, 2005



Bus 24 – July
4, 2005
Anyone know the date of this photo?

More: [Things
we want to know...](#)

An overview of Thai-U.S. relations

July 4, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[An](#)

[overview of Thai-U.S. relations](#) – The

Royal Thai Embassy, Washington, D.C. – July 4, 2005

Right: LBJ arrives in style in front of the old parliament building.

Also: [U.S. Presidential visits to Thailand](#)



Media criticised over ‘unhelpful news’

July 4, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Media](#)

[criticised over ‘unhelpful news’](#) – *The*

Nation, July 4, 2005

The media should refrain from reporting events in the South that are deemed unhelpful or damaging to the government, according to Privy Councillor Surayud Chulanond.

"Truthful words that may not be beneficial should be avoided," said Surayud yesterday at speech to commemorate the eighth anniversary of the Press Council of Thailand. "I would like the media to consider that." ...

‘Crash in space’ has no impact on Thailand

July 4, 2005

[‘Crash in space’ has no impact on Thailand](#)

– TNA, July 4, 2005

A ‘historic crash in space’ today, when a US module successfully struck on a comet, will not affect Thailand, according to a senior Thai astronomer...

SCANNER SCANDAL: Democrats, critic pile on the pressure

July 4, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[SCANNER](#)

[SCANDAL: Democrats, critic pile on the pressure](#)

– *The Nation*, July 4, 2005

...Meanwhile the critic, who chose to identify himself only as “The Regular Academic” but whose identity can be easily guessed by regular political observers, issued a six-page statement pointing out “suspicious facts” in the purchase of 26 CTX 9000 explosive-detecting machines for Bangkok’s new Suvarnabhumi International Airport and calling for the two ministers’ resignations...

Huge sculpture in the works

July 5, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Huge](#)

[sculpture in the works](#) – *The Nation*,

July 5, 2005

...She said Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra had ordered the Culture Ministry to carve a giant sculpture out of a sandstone mountain as a tourist attraction. Tipawadee said the academics would discuss the location and design of the sculpture and forward their recommendation to Culture Minister Uraivan Thienthong this week.
...The Natural Resources and Environment Ministry would find a sandstone mountain suitable for making the sculpture, while the Fine Arts Department would research the design, Tipawadee said.

Press crackdown to be raised with UN panel; Media damages national unity with “unpatriotic reports”

July 5, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Thai press crackdown to be raised with UN panel](#) –
The Nation, July 5, 2005

Attacks on a BBC News reporter and an investigative journalist made during a government radio programme and a separate show aired by the Parliament's radio station will be raised during the upcoming meeting of the UN's human-rights panel...

Thai press crackdown to be raised with UN panel

Published on July 05, 2005

Attacks on a BBC News reporter and an investigative journalist made during a government radio programme and a separate show aired by the Parliament's radio station will be raised during the upcoming meeting of the UN's human-rights panel.

A group of Thais planning to attend the 84th session of the United Nations Human Rights Committee in Geneva, Switzerland yesterday came up with a final draft that will be submitted to the committee, which meets on July 18.

“The situation of media freedom in Thailand is one of the UN committee's major concerns after they previously received information about government pressure on the media,” said Preeda Tongchum-num, the group's representative.

The UN committee has asked the government to provide information on the exercise of the right to freedom of opinion and expression by the Thai media, after receiving reports of increasing government strong-arming of independent media.

“There is much evidence that shows the use of the state's mechanism to pressure and intimidate the media,” she said.

In its written statement, the group cited the case of Nualnoi Thammasathien, a BBC News journalist, who was verbally attacked by two hosts of a radio programme aired on the Thai Parliament radio station. The programme's hosts said she had damaged national unity with her “unpatriotic reports” on the Tak Bai protests and crackdown that led to the deaths of 85 demonstrators.

In her report, Nualnoi said the protesters were piled on top of each other in military trucks, and 78 of them died, many from suffocation – essentially facts that have since been proven.

The two hosts urged their audience to write and call the BBC, to complain about Nualnoi's report and also said the reporter was staying in the country “at this moment”. They also spoke with listeners who phoned into their programme about arranging a protest against any UN representatives that were planning to visit Thailand to investigate the incident.

The group will also bring to the UN committee's attention remarks made by Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra on his weekly radio programme on May 14. That's when he attacked Prasong Lertratanawisute, deputy editor of the Thai-language newspaper Matichon Daily and the vice president of the Thai Journalist Association (TJA).

The premier accused Matichon of being biased against the government in its May 11 headline, which read, “Good governance in the Thai government declines as it failed to control corruption – World Bank rates country at 49 per cent”.

The TJA released a statement to warn that the prime minister's reaction was likely to set a precedent that would prevent the media from criticising the government or reporting events that put it in a bad light.

The prime minister reacted on the state airwaves that Prasong used the TJA to retaliate against him.

Other issues to be highlighted by the Thai group at the discussion include the plight of stateless persons living in Thailand, birth registrations of non-Thai citizens, torture, problems in the South and free-trade agreements.

The 84th session of the Human Rights Committee will be held at the United Nations Office in Geneva from July 11 to 29. The panel will consider reports submitted by state parties under Article 40 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Reports to be considered during the 84th session are from Slovenia, Syria, Tajikistan, Thailand and Yemen.

The government's delegation, led by Sorachak Kasemsuwan, is scheduled to meet with the Human Rights Committee on July 19 and 20.

Amnesty International and the Asian Legal Resource Centre have also submitted to the committee's secretariat written statements on torture, the South and birth registrations in Thailand.

Subhatra Bhumiprabhas

The Nation

In pictures: Hmong evictions in Thailand

July 6, 2005

Categories: Refugees and Migrants

[In pictures: Hmong evictions in Thailand](#) – BBC,
July 6, 2005

Deal opens the gates to a Bangkok boom

July 6, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Deal](#)

[opens the gates to a Bangkok boom](#) – *The*

Age, July 6, 2005

... "Bangkok is, in my view, the best place to hub from in Asia," he says. "It's safe, easy to get to, the people are fabulous, and it's very economical..."

Middle class should get some blame for lack of greenery in Bangkok

July 6, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Middle](#)

[class should get some blame for lack of greenery in Bangkok](#)

– *The Nation*, July 6, 2005

...The National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) recently released a report stating that Bangkokians have an average of 2.24 square metres of green space per person. This is an alarming figure, since the NESDB points out that the international standard is four times higher, or 10 square metres of green area per person. For the 10 million or so Bangkokians, there is only a total of 800 rai of public green areas, and life is generally grey.

...Let's start with the very Thai concept of progress and backwardness. To many Thais, especially Bangkokians, structures, roads and pavements – all made out of concrete – represent progress and modernity, as well as a certain state of civilisation. On the other hand, the Thai term for "barbarian", *khon pa*, literally means "forest people". This suggests that forests and deep greenery were something that Thais, traditionally, have never felt comfortable with...

Phuket plans tsunami ‘party’

July 6, 2005

Categories: 2004 Tsunami

[Phuket](#)

[plans tsunami ‘party’](#) – *The Nation*,

July 6, 2005

Phuket authorities are planning a big bash on December 26 to commemorate the tsunami and have invited old-school rocker Eric Clapton and Taiwanese boy band F4 to perform...

Panel wants ads banned, transmitters checked

July 6, 2005

Categories: Community Radio

[Panel wants ads
banned, transmitters checked](#) – Bangkok

Post, July 6, 2005

A House telecommunications sub-committee will ask the government to suspend the operations of all community radio stations, check their transmitters before licensing and ban all commercial advertising...

...However, Wuthipong Pongsuwan, adviser to Prime Minister's Office Minister Suranand Vejjajiva who supervises community radio operations, said the proposal was not practical.

...Also, the fact some community radio stations were operating from the houses of some MPs, both in the government and opposition camps, would make it very difficult to check them without the consent of those MPs and police support...

Chinese Crackdown on Burmese Casinos Only Partly Successful

July 6, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Chinese](#)

[Crackdown on Burmese Casinos Only Partly Successful](#)

– *The Irrawaddy*, July 6, 2005

...Xinhua said Burmese authorities in Shan State were co-operating with the Chinese anti-gambling campaign, denying entry by Chinese visitors to casinos in Monglar, in southern Shan State. Six casinos bordering Xishuangbanna prefecture of Yunnan Province had been closed down, as well as 80 other gambling establishments in Burma and Laos, Xinhua reported...

Magazine insults Laos

July 6, 2005

Categories: Laos

['SPICY'](#)

[MAGAZINE: Laos riled over insulting article](#)

– *The Nation*, July 6, 2005

...Among other jibes, the magazine jocularly recommended that to curry favour with a Laotian woman, Thai men should call her "e dok thong" ("you little slut"). The expression, which translates to "golden flower" in Thai, refers to a prostitute in a highly derogatory way. " loves to be called that because it makes her look valuable," the article posited...

Charnvit stressed that because even highly educated urbane Thais harboured petty prejudices, the journalists merely reflected mainstream opinion, however objectionable that might be.

[Laos jokes spotlight Thai insensitivities](#)

– *The Nation*, July 7, 2005

...He recommended that Thai journalists and members of the general public take crash courses in "dos and don'ts" about how to cultivate sensitive relationships with neighbours, especially Laotians and Cambodians, many of who speak Thai.

He said that such a manual might help avoid inflaming anti-Thai sentiments like the ones that led to the torching of the Thai Embassy in Phnom Penh in 2003.

"In Thailand, we expect farangs to adhere to the precepts of a 'Do's and don'ts' manual, but it's high time we produced such a booklet for ourselves to learn how to behave with people in neighbouring countries," Charnvit said...

China: Miniskirts enter amusement park at half price

July 7, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[China:](#)

[Miniskirts enter amusement park at half price](#)

– *The Epoch Times*, July 7, 2005

[Bonuses](#)

[for bikini-clad bathers anger South Korean women's group](#)

– AFP, July 8, 2005

No words from PM on Thai politics

July 7, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[No words from PM on Thai politics](#) – TNA, July 7, 2005

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has refused to give any interviews on political issues, saying he wants to wait until the Mercury returns to its normal orbit... Mr. Thaksin has avoided political interviews since he returned from the 2nd Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) Summit in southern China Tuesday night, saying he is waiting for the Mercury to return to its normal orbit...

No words from PM on Thai politics

BANGKOK, July 7 (TNA) – Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has refused to give any interviews on political issues, saying he wants to wait until the Mercury returns to its normal orbit.

Rounded by journalists at the Government House here as usual this morning, the prime minister merely said that the weather was fine, and that he did not sleep well last night.

He refused to give any comments on political issues asked by the journalists, including yesterday's resignation of Deputy Commerce Minister Suriya Lapwisuthisin and the results of his meeting with Minister Attached to the Prime Minister's Office Suranand Vejajiva and Deputy Transport Minister Phumtham Vejjayachai last night.

The deputy commerce minister decided to tender his resignation after his siblings, who are executives of a Thai wellknown cooking gas business, Picnic Corporation, were alleged by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) last week of business misconduct.

The Thaksin cabinet has also been tainted by an alleged corruption scandal concerning the Ministry of Transport's procurement of CTX 9000 bomb scanners for Bangkok's new international airport, or the Suvarnabhumi Airport.

Mr. Thaksin has avoided political interviews since he returned from the 2nd Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) Summit in southern China Tuesday night, saying he is waiting for the Mercury to return to its normal orbit.

It is widely expected that the prime minister will announce a minor cabinet reshuffle soon. (TNA)–E002

Rail-link contractor blamed for city's horror traffic jams

July 7, 2005

Categories: Mass Transit

[Rail-link](#)

[contractor blamed for city's horror traffic jams](#) –

The Nation, July 7, 2005

The State Railway's failure to inform the public about road closures due to construction of the Suvarnabhumi Airport Rail Link has caused traffic paralysis on city roads since Tuesday, traffic police said.

The State Railway of Thailand is closing Kamphaengphet 7 Road to enable contractors to position tractors and materials along the 28-kilometre-long construction site...

The closure forced commuters to detour using the parallel New Phetburi and Rama IX roads. These routes were also affected by severe congestion, which in turn spread to Rajprasong, Rajdamri, Sukhumvit, Sathorn and Rama IV roads, where vehicles queued on the expressway all the way to the Bang Na tollgate.

Other deadlocked areas included Ramkhamhaeng, Lat Phrao, Bang Kapi, Praditmanutham, Srinakarin and Pattanakarn. Also the traffic trap at Phetburi Road affected Rajdamnoen, where vehicles were stalled on the Rama XIII bridge on the way to Talingchan...

‘The Rice Cake Making Rabbit in the Moon’

July 8, 2005

‘The Rice Cake Making Rabbit in the Moon’

– July 8, 2005

Nothing to do with Thailand, but interesting. Nils points out the Japanese version of the man in the moon [here](#) and [here](#).



Bangkok governor orders tightened security in the capital

July 8, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Bangkok governor orders tightened security in the capital](#) – TNA, July 8, 2005

*Bangkok governor orders tightened security in the capital
Be prepared to show ID/Passport*

BANGKOK: — The authorities will beef up security measures with extra patrols and surveillance for the mass transit system and other public places in the city of Bangkok, said the Bangkok Governor Apirak Kosayothin.

Speaking after his talks with Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Pol. Maj. Gen. Dusitsan Therapat, the governor disclosed that the police and the private companies running the mass transit system in the capital would jointly work to tighten security in skytrains, subways, and city buses.

Officials will also step up security in the public places in particular at the parking lots in public parks and department stores. Additional patrols will be conducted to check every corner including trash bins.

Mr. Apirak suggested that people should carry their identity cards in case they are asked to show them to the police. Everyone should report to police if they notice any irregularity.

Although, there is no report of any threat in Bangkok, all necessary safety measures will be put in place, the governor said.

More closed circuit cameras will be installed in public places in the future, he added.

–TNA 2005-07-08

Khin Nyunt reportedly charged with corruption

July 8, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

[Khin](#)

[Nyunt reportedly charged with corruption](#) –

The Irrawaddy, July 8, 2005

Khin Nyunt, the former prime minister and head of Burma's Military Intelligence, has been formerly charged with corruption in a closed trial in Insein Prison, according to lawyers in Rangoon...

Hmong refugees

July 8, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Baby](#)

[first casualty among Hmong refugees cast out of Thai homes](#)

– AP, July 7, 2005

Thousands of ethnic Hmong refugees expelled from their villages under a Thai government to force them to return to neighboring Laos have seen their first casualty: a baby girl who died after she and her parents spent a shelterless day and night in the rain...

[Traffickers](#)

[blamed for Hmong influx, crisis](#) – *The Nation*, July

7, 2005

Some of the 6,500 Hmong who crossed illegally into Thailand and are now stranded in Phetchabun province were brought by traffickers, a Thai official said yesterday.

Many of the Hmong paid Lao and Thai traffickers to help them cross the Mekong River to reach the northeastern province of Loei, before snaking deeper to Phetchabun, the official said...

A tale of two newspapers: Thairath and Matichon

July 8, 2005

Categories: A Tale of Two Newspapers

A tale of two newspapers:

Thairath and *Matichon* editorials –

July 8, 2005

Thailand's two largest circulation newspapers (either one with 10 times the circulation of the English-language dailies) have editorials on Dr Prawes Wasri's criticism of the government. Both editorials discuss Dr. Prawes' comments, but focus on different aspects.

Matichon emphasizes that PM Thaksin should be careful of his word saying that if the PM does not listen to and give honor to people that it will be an obstacle for his country's administration or even bring it to a halt. *Thairath* focuses on the unhealthy imperative for people to become rich at any cost.

Editorial from *Thairath*: Robbing the center of the city – July 8, 2005

It is accepted that Dr. Prawes Wasri

is one of the regular intellectual persons who comes out to criticize society and politics often and recently he criticizes the PM's policy that usually asks the question "how to get rich?"

This is the greedy way that leads to eagerness to use power, small corruption, seizing things and looting the country.

If we look at the way of economic development of the Thai government at present, it all stimulation or promoting people to be greedy to get rich by short cuts and causing corruption and crime.

At present, Thai society measures the growth by GDP. This measure money or wealth, but it does not measure the index of happiness by the way of the Nation Health Assembly.

From 200 survey polls around the world of English organizations recently specified that the quality of Bangkok residents' lives decreased because of traffic jams and the raising crime problem by two times. So Bangkok has a lack of safety in life and assets although the residents have more income and live more conveniently than people in rural areas.

Will people be happy? This time is full of robbing, killing, raping, mercilessness, and no kindness, but is possessed by greedy people racing to get rich and at the same time those who have political power and money aiming to take a lot of wealth for themselves and their followers, making corruption prosper and raising GDP to a world level.

Some people will think cheating is a common matter and accept that for politicians and government officials cheating does not matter if they are effective administrators. But Dr. Prawes regards that cheating of the powerful persons make lots of poor people. This is because cheating is taking all assets for the benefit of a few people. It is robbing the center of the city, but some think that it is success.

Blaming the government or the PM only is not fair because the current trend of globalization now clings to extreme capitalism and promotion of people's greed. The Thai government may lead Thai society to follow the globalization trend. The problem is how we build strong people power to provoke the government to listen to people...

Editorial of *Matichon*: Keeping one's word and the country's leader

– July 8, 2005

Again Dr. Prawes Wasri, a senior person gives comment to Thaksin attitude quite frankly. On July 5 he said that the the PM should be careful of the atmosphere of the "eunuch syndrome"

which means that when one get powers, good people will leave, those who have power will cut off the truth, and the degenerate will come in. This is called "eunuch disease" and will make the country totally destroyed because they don't know reality and will listen to the things they want to listen to.

Although this interview is quite serious, it is full of good wishes for Thaksin to adjust himself in his words to speak honor, accept the facts, and not blame people as "regular critics"

that want to abuse or make the government collapse. Dr. Wasri is also one of regulars because he did not admire Thaksin.

People giving opinions in society at any place or speaking through the mass media to the public is one way of using freedom according the constitution that promotes and protects expression. The other side is testing the qualifications and ability of government—especially the government leader—whether he has the heart to listen to other opinions. If he has high ability, he will control his temper and show his generous mind and listen to every side's opinion. If he can't control himself, he will blast the bad words with the intention hurt to the other side or or make them feel ashamed.

Being a leader with all knowledge, ability, vision, fast work, and effectiveness is the qualification that Thai society wants. But looking back, we have not had that leader completely yet. For the government at present that faces corruption problems seriously, there are many sides coming together to voice concerns, warn against, suggest, but the government did not listen, but counters instead. Although, the output of the government will be seen as the government's effectiveness in action whether the problem of the poor may be solved, whether cheating, corruption, unfairness may be gotten rid of. But the word of the government leader is important for government's credibility. However "bad words" that do not give honor and do not listen to others will be obstacles to the country's administration and even cause the country to come to a sudden stop.

More: [‘A tale of two newspapers’ archives](#) – ‘A tale of two newspapers’ compares how various news sources report the same stories.

A tale of two newspapers: Tsunami drill

July 8, 2005

Categories: A Tale of Two Newspapers

A tale of two newspapers:

Tsunami drill – July 8, 2005

The Nation apparently received its info from local officials who praised the warning efforts. The *Post* reports that leaving evacuation decisions to local officials was a mistake.

DISASTER

ALERT: Temblor gives system first test – *The Nation*,

July 6, 2005

An earthquake off Sumatra yesterday gave Thailand's month-old tsunami early-warning system its first real test...

The National Disaster Warning Centre (NDWC) in Nonthaburi gathered and analysed data from several seismic stations in the region before notifying local authorities at about 9.10am to be on alert. Television stations ran a flash-bar public announcement at 9.26am. The announcement said there would be "a very limited possibility" for a tsunami along southern Thailand's Andaman seacoast...

Quake alert leaves Phuket in confusion – Tsunami not ruled out until over an hour later –

Bangkok Post, July 6, 2005

...A lack of clear safety instructions after yesterday morning's earthquake warning left Phuket in a state of confusion while the National Disaster Warning Centre was heavily criticised.

...It had made a mistake, he said, by letting local administrations try to figure out for themselves whether or not to call for an evacuation when the organisations were not equipped to make such a crucial decision...

'A tale of two newspapers' archives

More on the minting of Thai coins

July 8, 2005

Categories: Economy

More on the minting of Thai coins –

October 14, 2005

Gigabyte writes: *I saw on 2Bangkok that the one-baht coins will be minted in Finland this year. Last year they were minted in Canada and the new coming 2-baht coins will be made... In Canada:* [Royal](#)

[Canadian Mint to produce 400 mln coins for Thailand](#), Yahoo, July 8, 2005

Earlier: [Thai](#)

[coins to be minted in Finland](#) – *ScandAsia*, October 9, 2005

Thanks to Peter for pointing this out: *Mint of Finland, the Finnish coin production company signed contract with the Thai Treasury Department to produce and deliver 670 million pieces of one (1) baht coins to Thailand...*

Others noted this was an odd announcement the same week the government was also announcing Thailand was becoming a "coin-minting hub."

1908 photo looking towards the Golden Mount

July 9, 2005

Categories: Old photos and films



1908 photo looking towards the Golden Mount

– July 9, 2005

[Heinrich Damm](#) writes:

On today's 2Bangkok website there is an old photo entitled "1908 photo of Klong Mahanak looking towards the Golden Mount" I doubt that this is Klong Mahanak. Have a look at the map: looking from Klong Mahanak towards Golden Mount it must be on the left side of the Klong. I'd rather say, this is either Klong Bunglampoo or Klong Ong Ang.

In my book "Bangkok Now and Then" by Steve Van Beek there is a similar photo on p.28 where the caption says "Klong Ong Ang".

BTW have a look at an old photo of Klong Banglampoo on my [website](#), but this is near Samsen Road, you can see the bridge at the lower edge of the photo...

Asiper writes: I have just bought the book "Old photo telling Siam" and see a photo of the same klong you posted on 2B. It is Klong Robkrung, not Klong Mahanak. This klong was built in the King Rama I era, but rebuilt in the King Rama V era. King Rama I ordered the building of the klong surrounded the city to protect it from the enemy and then also built 14 forts such as Fort Prasumen, Fort Yukonthon, Fort Mahaprab, Fort Mahakan, Fort Mootaluang, Fort Sertayan, Fort Mahachai, Fort Jakpetch, Fort Phiser, Fort Mahalerk, Fort Mahayak, Fort Prachan, Fort Pra-atid and Fort Isinthon. Klong Robkrung nowadays is not beautiful and bright as in the old days although the government tries to preserve it.

Thaksinomics takes the bang out of Bangkok

July 10, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Thaksinomics](#)

[takes the bang out of Bangkok: William Pesek Jr.](#)

— Bloomberg, July 10, 2005

...It's also impossible to ignore a death-rattle of sorts pervading Thailand — not of the economy, but of "Thaksinomics," the name given to Thaksin's strategies for growth.

...Yet consumers' vulnerability to higher oil prices exposes what "Thaksinomics" really is: old-fashioned, debt-financed pump priming dressed up as something new and revolutionary. The success of Thaksin's strategy to raise Thai incomes and make the economy less reliant on exports is belied by how quickly millions of his people have fallen on hard times.

... "It's really the media that's creating this idea that Thailand is in trouble again," Claudia Zeisberger, program director of the Asia Pacific Institute of Finance, said at a July 7 panel discussion hosted by Bloomberg. "Let's remember that this is a maturing economy that now can handle these problems..."

Early nightlife closing hours in the past

July 11, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Despite all the controversy—at least in the foreign community—about the early closing times for nightlife spots, this tact has been tried before. In the past it was usually associated with regimes attempting to enforce social order during times of turmoil.

On January 31, 1972, the Thanom junta ordered all nightspots, restaurants (even in hotels), bowling alleys, and food shops to close at midnight. The serving of liquor was also banned between 2pm and 5pm. This afternoon prohibition as been revived at the present time.

In 1976 a curfew was imposed from 12:00am to 4:30am. This was in the wake of the right-wing storming of Thammasat and at the height of the Communist insurgency. Bars and nightspots had to close at 11:30pm. This move was said to be generally welcomed by people who were able to sleep soundly and not be disturbed by noise from nightspots. Nighttime crime was also common and the curfew was an attempt to address this. A *Nation* article at the time described Patpong-area business as upset and described the chaos as the bars closed at 11:30pm and everyone rushed home to beat the curfew

Earlier: From the Thai-language press: [Red light areas in Bangkok in olden days](#)

Three receive prison terms for watching Suu Kyi tape

July 11, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

[Three
receive prison terms for watching Suu Kyi tape](#)

– *The Irrawaddy*, July 11, 2005

*A senior member of the opposition National League for Democracy
and two other people have been jailed after being arrested while
watching a video tape of Suu Kyi addressing campaign supporters...*

Air Siam: Thailand's first independent airline

July 11, 2005

Categories: Airports and Airlines

What we know about Air Siam, Thailand's first independent airline:

It was set up on September 15, 1965, suspended operations on January 11, 1972, and started again on March 7, 1972. It was closed for good on December 1, 1976. At the time Managing Director Vivat Vichitvadakarn cited heavy losses and the government's refusal to confirm if they would renew the airline's operating license. Any readers have more info on this company?

Comparing Luang Prabang and Pagan

July 11, 2005

Comparing Luang Prabang and Pagan

– July 11, 2005

[Friskodude](#)

[points out an interesting article](#) comparing two historic towns...

Wanted posters from Yala

July 12, 2005

Categories: The Thai Deep South

Almost like being there: Wanted poster from Yala – July 12, 2005

The poster reads: *Separatism movement – These persons have collected weapons, forces and raised money for the unrest in the southern border provinces. Its objective is separatism and they want to set up their own government. If you see these people please contact 1340, 1341 – Southern Crime Hotline. PO Box 1340 Yala 95000*
 Email : oc_yala@police.go.th
All information will be kept secret and we assure your safety.
"We absolutely will not reveal (your identity)."



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Wanted posters – July 21, 2005

The poster reads: *Saiburi terrorists (4 persons) – These persons associate to collect weapons, force that misguided to train to create unrest by using religious educational place–Ponoh in Amphure Saiburi, Pattani to be a meeting place. If you see these people please contact 1340, 1341 – Southern Crime Hotline. PO Box 1340 Yala 95000*
 Email : oc_yala@police.go.th – For all information you give, the National Police Operation at the front line will keep secret and assure for your safety. "We absolutely will not reveal (your identity)."

Wanted posters from Yala
 December 8, 2004

An assortment of wanted posters being posted by the police in Yala Province in the South.

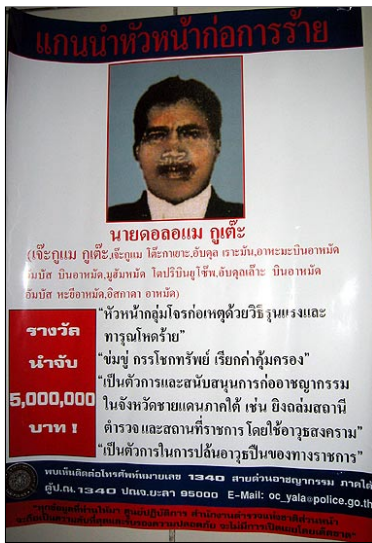
See also [Troubles in the South](#) & [Nationalism & Right-wing Politics](#)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Editorial: All must be condemned: New York and London or Rangoon and Vientiane

July 12, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Editorial: All must be condemned:

New York and London or Rangoon and Vientiane

– *Matichon*, July 12, 2005

It was forecast that London would be a target of fundamentalist Muslims who aim to terrorize because they are upset the UK government headed by Tony Blair cooperated with the US to attack Iraq and overthrow the dictator's Saddam Hussein's government. Up to now the terrorist situation in Iraq that resists the USA and England has existed continuously and severely.

The terrorist event in London at this time is a lesson to the International country to realize that it is necessary to watch for and not be careless about terrorism. This lesson include Thailand.

Moreover the terrorism in London is a repeat warning for the international to cooperate closely to watch doubtful groups. Nations must give each other intelligence information especially watching charitable donations and funds to make merit. This is to make sure this money is not transferred to another country for terrorist activities in that country.

So the important duty of the international community is resist all kinds of terrorism movements no matter what the objective is. The terrorist do not only appear at the World Trade Building in New York, Madrid in Spain, London, and three southern provinces of Thailand, but also in Rangoon, Burma and Vientiane, Laos.

All terrorists have different objectives, but the lives and bodies of innocent persons must be respected by all sides and must not be violated. So terrorist everywhere and at every time must be held responsible without stopping. The world should not discriminate because of focusing more on New York and London than on Rangoon and Vientiane.

The world must realize they must stick together on terrorism that no matter what the objective is it must be condemned.

Proposed pipeline causes concern

July 12, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

[Proposed](#)

[pipeline causes concern](#) – *The Irrawaddy*,

July 12, 2005

International rights group Amnesty International and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions have warned that the recently proposed Burma-India gas pipeline could result in serious human rights violations...

US bidder wins \$500m ticketing contract

July 12, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[US bidder wins \\$500m ticketing contract](#)

– *The Age*, July 12, 2005

Danny points out this interesting article and comments:
Melbourne has had a 3 zone, multi-modal (train, tram and bus) ticketing system since 97. It is similar to the BTS system but the tickets are paper and thus reusable. The new system will be similar to the Octopus system in Hong Kong and will also be for intrastate trains.

Sophon denies picking parliament site alone

July 12, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Sophon](#)
[denies picking parliament site alone](#) –

Bangkok Post, July 12, 2005

...The four choices are a plot belonging to Thai Melon Textile Co in Pathum Thani, an army plot in the Kiakkai area, an arms depot in Nonthaburi and a plot in Pathum Thani's Sam Khok district, the Thai Rak Thai MP for Buri Ram said.

He said property development firm Krisda Nakorn recently offered the free 400-rai plot on Bang Na Trat road.

Panel members had already inspected the land but were still undecided whether to nominate it as a fifth choice because the government would have to invest in infrastructure and landfilling.

...Also yesterday, Senator Wallop said the best location was Don Muang airport since it was widely known and ready in terms of facilities and public transportation. Its terminals and cargo buildings could also be used as offices while its runways could be the sites of new buildings which would save money and prevent corruption and land speculation.

Shanghai Journal: A City's Traffic Plans Are Snarled by China's Car Culture

July 12, 2005

Categories: China

[Shanghai](#)

[Journal: A City's Traffic Plans Are Snarled by China's Car Culture](#)

– *New York Times*, July 12, 2005

*City planners in Shanghai hoped to avoid gridlock, but traffic
and commuters are everywhere...*

Privy Councillor Prem accuses Thaksin of employing “double standards”

July 13, 2005

Categories: High Tension in Thailand 2004-2008

Each day since the story of Prem's 'plea' or 'accusation' (depending on whether you read the *Post* or *Nation*), the *Post* has run a story with the government's response.

[Thaksin sounds off at reporters](#) – Bangkok Post, July 12, 2005

...Mr Thaksin said privy councillor and statesman Prem Tinsulanonda was the latest victim of media distortion.

Gen Prem's speech, delivered at the National Institution of Development Administration, was "systematically twisted" when it was published in newspapers, he said. Gen Prem also shared his thoughts on good governance.

...Personally, he said, he did not care about incorrect news reports, but it damaged the country's image as a whole...

Thaksin sounds off at reporters

Prime Minister accosts journalists, insisting they distort his quotes

The Bangkok Post

Tuesday, July 12, 2005

Newspaper reporters yesterday incurred the wrath of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra who accused them of putting words in his mouth, making factual errors and hurting the country's reputation.

"You won't fool me. Whatever I say you find ways to distort," he told an army of reporters at Government House.

Mr Thaksin said privy councillor and statesman Prem Tinsulanonda was the latest victim of media distortion.

Gen Prem's speech, delivered at the National Institution of Development Administration, was "systematically twisted" when it was published in newspapers, he said. Gen Prem also shared his thoughts on good governance.

In an angry mood, Mr Thaksin refused to answer reporters' questions about other government affairs, choosing instead to criticise those asking the questions. He said distorted news reports had spoiled the atmosphere and the media must think hard about the purpose false statements served.

"I want the media to think it over carefully. If they want to be manipulated as tools or create a fantasy, it won't make anyone any better off," Mr Thaksin said.

Personally, he said, he did not care about incorrect news reports, but it damaged the country's image as a whole.

Attempts later by reporters to interview Mr Thaksin were also turned down. He said he would rather speak into TV cameras to ensure people heard him correctly.

Meanwhile, the Thai Journalists Association issued an open letter refuting Mr Thaksin's comments, saying they were empty accusations.

The association said the press had reported news straightforwardly only to face government criticism with issues unfavourable to its popularity rating.

Published: Tuesday, July 12, 2005

[PM agrees with Gen Prem](#) – Bangkok Post, July 11, 2005

...Mr Suranand was referring to remarks made on Saturday by Gen Prem, who said the government should keep a clear conscience. Gen Prem, also the Privy Council president, said the government would not be genuinely good in governance if it merely observed the law but still flouted ethical and moral principles.

...Regarding Gen Prem's remark about self-centred administrators and conflict of interest, Mr Suranand said the fact is Mr Thaksin had realised the importance of creating a new political culture but this cannot be achieved overnight. At this stage, new and old styles of politics still mingled and the government needed time to achieve clean and transparent politics, he said.

Mr Suranand denied Gen Prem was sending a signal to warn the government not to misuse power.

PM agrees with Gen Prem

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra shares similar opinions with statesman Gen Prem Tinsulanonda in several matters and is trying to create a new political culture based on a clean and transparent government, PM's Office Minister Suranand Vejajiva said yesterday. Mr Suranand was referring to remarks made on Saturday by Gen Prem, who said the government should keep a clear conscience. Gen Prem, also the Privy Council president, said the government would not be genuinely good in governance if it merely observed the law but still flouted ethical and moral principles. Mr Suranand said the government would always lend an ear to the statesman and former prime minister who was highly experienced in various fields. "The government always listens to him. In fact, the government shares the same opinions with Gen Prem in several matters, especially the fact that there were still some major problems that had not been attended to. He is a senior figure advising the government what should be done. "This should not be taken as a conflict of opinion as Gen Prem was putting the interests of the country at heart," he said. Regarding Gen Prem's remark about self-centred administrators and conflict of interest, Mr Suranand said the fact is Mr Thaksin had realised the importance of creating a new political culture but this cannot be achieved overnight. At this stage, new and old styles of politics still mingled and the government needed time to achieve clean and transparent politics, he said. Mr Suranand denied Gen Prem was sending a signal to warn the government not to misuse power.

A tale of two newspapers: Prem's 'accusation' – July 11, 2005

Depending on which newspaper you read, Prem's speech was either a warning to Thaksin that his government might end prematurely because of rampant corruption or a general talk about accountability that did not mention the Prime Minister directly.

Both papers also carry comments from social critic Sombat, but the *Post* again generalizes these without a direct reference to the PM. *The Nation*, on the other hand, quotes Sombat calling Thaksin a dictator and warning that a Philippines-style people-power revolution could overthrow him.

The *Post* reserves some of Sombat's criticism in a separate article ([PM 'running out of ideas' that sell – Admits cabinet recruits hard to find](#), Bangkok Post, July 10, 2005), but it is decidedly weaker than what *The Nation* published.

A key part of *The Nation*'s article is criticism by both Prem and Sombat of the handling of the problems in the South. The *Post* omits any mention of government policy in the South.

Reuters also reports this story ([Thaksin criticised by respected former Thai PM](#), Reuters, July 10, 2005) as Prem criticizing Thaksin for his handling of the South and notes it "was the strongest directed at the government since it took office in 2001."

[Prem urges govt to keep conscience – Rule of law, ethics must go hand in hand](#) – Bangkok Post, July 10, 2005

Statesman Gen Prem Tinsulanonda has pleaded with the government to keep a clear conscience, saying it is not genuinely committed to good governance if it

[Prem hits out at govt for 'doublestandards'](#) – The Nation, July 10, 2005

Privy Councillor General Prem Tinsulanonda yesterday accused the government of employing "double standards" in running the country and criticised its handling of the violence in the South, which he said would be

merely observes the law but still flouts ethical and moral principles.

... "In other countries, accountability, transparency, participation and predictability are part and parcel of good governance. In Thailand, we must also add moral and ethical principles," he said.

Gen Prem said that under unethical leaders, administration of the state would fail, adding the seven qualities government leaders must have were honesty, legitimacy, fairness, efficiency, transparency, good values and embody the security of the state.

... "The law bars one doing something, but is not applied to one's family, siblings and relatives," he said.

... In a seminar that followed, Sombat Thamrongthanyawong, of the faculty of public administration, presented political reform ideas which included direct elections for prime minister.

Mr Sombat said the strongest elected civilian government did not guarantee transparency and a government with stability could still be plagued with corruption, causing public trust and faith to erode.

... Direct elections for prime minister would make vote-buying more difficult. Candidates also would not have to "invest" in contestants vying for House seats because they would not need them to get elected so they could vote them to Government House.

prolonged indefinitely unless a new course was taken.

... Prem also warned the government of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra to curb rampant corruption or face being removed from office before its term ended.

He accused the government of using "double standards", one for "family and friends" and another for the rest of the country.

Another speaker, Sombat Thamrongthanyawong, a Nida academic, said the violence in the Muslim-majority South was being prolonged not only by the government's leadership and strategy but the mind set of officials on the ground as well.

... He said the current government had too much power over the Parliament and that the prime minister had virtual absolute control over MPs in just about every aspect of governance.

... Sombat said it was an open secret that the government dominated the Senate and that at least half of the senators sided with the government, "although no senator would admit the truth".

He described Thaksin as "a dictator" whose power was legitimised by a general election.

... The fact that more than 300 MPs voted in support of Transport Minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit in the no-confidence debate, he said, does not mean the government's credibility is intact.

"If the people lose faith in the government's ability to run the country, they will stage an uprising to overthrow it," he said, pointing to the example of the Philippines.

Earlier: [A tale of two newspapers: Privy Councillor Prem "rebukes" Thaksin](#)

1978: Chopping down Sathorn's trees

July 13, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Sathorn's trees face the

axe – *The Nation*, April, 1978

The city administration has made up its mind. The 300-odd trees that adorn Sathorn Road will be chopped down to make way for the construction of Sathorn Bridge.

The decision was made despite strong objections from a handful of environmentalists. The administration had originally planned to transplant 150 of the big trees, some of which were more than 30 years old.

The shade and greenery provided by the trees had made Sathorn one of the city's most eye-pleasing avenues. The process of removing the trees began in the middle of 1979. After the axe job, many said Sathorn lost its character, becoming just another concrete road in the concrete jungle.



(Photo: *The Nation*, 1979)

[Metro](#)

[Star plans new Sathorn tower](#)

– *The Nation*, July 11, 2005

...Sadly though, Sathorn has lost its beautiful boulevards and canals.

It was once considered the most beautiful part of Bangkok, with large trees lining its canal, at a time when the city was known as the Venice of the East, now lost in the name of progress. Its old landscape appeared like Wireless Road today, only prettier, with homes of bluebloods and tycoons as well as elegant embassy grounds lining both sides of the canal.

Much of all that has long been lost. And had the US ambassador in the 1970s not object to the cutting down of the tall trees on Wireless, this last scenic strip of old Bangkok would have been degraded as well.

For this very reason, the price of real estate on Wireless today is higher than that on Sathorn.

But as far as concrete jungles go, Sathorn may be revived. Big plans are mapped by many developers to overhaul its grim, concrete look...

Royal Canadian Mint to produce 400MLN coins for Thailand

July 13, 2005

Categories: Economy

[Royal Canadian Mint to produce 400MLN coins for Thailand](#) –

Asia Pulse, July 13, 2005

Technology The Royal Canadian Mint is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a contract valued at over \$10 million to produce 400 million 2 Baht Thailand coins...

Hanoi overland Highway No. 8 opens new vistas for tourists traveling between Vietnam and Thailand via Laos

July 13, 2005

Categories: Highways and Roads, Vietnam

[Hanoi overland Highway No. 8 opens new vistas for tourists traveling between Vietnam and Thailand via Laos](#) –

Bangkok Post, July 13, 2005

Travelling overland from Thailand to Vietnam was an exacting task until recently. However, the opening of Highway No. 8 that runs from Tha Khek in Laos cutting through lush forest and scenic mist-clad mountains to central Vietnam now allows visitors to travel there by road from the northeastern province of Nakhon Phanom...

‘Safety Zone on Zoning’

July 13, 2005

Categories: Signs and Billboards



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

‘Safety Zone on Zoning’

– July 13, 2005

A more accurate translation would be *Safety zone for people*

– *Suttisarn Police Station*. This is another one of the ‘safety districts’ being set up in the city which includes tightening security protocols in buildings and increased patrolling of neighborhoods.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Bangkok ranked world's second best city

July 13, 2005

[Bangkok ranked world's second best city](#) – CNN,
July 13, 2005

Thanks to Conor Bracken for pointing this out: *Australia's biggest city, Sydney, has again been named the world's best city by readers of the U.S. magazine Travel and Leisure.*

It is the eighth time in 10 years that Sydney, known for its iconic opera house, harbor bridge and stunning beaches, has topped the list.

It was followed by the Thai capital Bangkok in second place, with Italy's Rome and Florence in third and fourth places respectively.

The northern Thai city of Chiang Mai made its first appearance in the top 10, placing fifth.

...Eight hotels have ranked on the list of top 100 hotels worldwide every year since 1996. They are the Four Seasons Resort Bali at Jimbaran Bay; the Oriental, Bangkok; the Halekulani, Hawaii; the Peninsula, Hong Kong; Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea; Ritz-Carlton Cancun; Ritz-Carlton, Chicago; and the Inn at Spanish Bay, Pebble Beach, California.

Tales from the founding of the Thai Rak Thai Party

July 13, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Thaksin is loyal but wishy-washy: TRT](#) – *The Nation*,

July 13, 2005

...The following are excerpts of an interview with Thirapat, one of the party's 23 founding members, published on Sunday in the Thai-language newspaper Thai Post. He reveals why the party's "name" and "launch date" mattered so much to Thaksin, and what kind of person he believes Thaksin really is.

...When it came to the registration to legalise the party, we discussed the best date for the launch. Thaksin said he preferred July 14, 1998.

I argued that the date was the national day of France – the day that led to the end of the French absolute monarchy. Thaksin told me he would reconsider the matter. A week later, he came back and insisted that July 14 was best for us.

...Thaksin asked me how much debt I was handling. He said he would manage it for me. Another option was that I run for a House seat, which would mean I would rank within the top 100 of the party-list. The other option was that I told him which key position I wanted. He said I would get it if he became prime minister after the election in 2001...

A tale of two newspapers: Stimulus package

July 13, 2005

Categories: A Tale of Two Newspapers

A tale of two newspapers: Stimulus package – July 13, 2005

The *Post* has another 'just-the-facts-as-the-government-tells-us' article and reserves its modest criticism for an editorial the next day ([A](#)

[need to trim populist spending](#), *Bangkok Post*, July 14, 2005). *The Nation* states in its headline that the "PM throws caution to the wind," but does give perspective to the moves citing the diesel float and sagging government popularity. The *Post* lets the PM have the last word while *The Nation* quotes a poll.

[PM](#)

[pledges major push for economy – Major speech outlines GDP stimulus package](#) – *Bangkok*

Post, July 13, 2005

The government has pledged to give the slow economy a new push by cutting back on unnecessary expenses, salary increment for civil servants and a minimum wage hike for workers, and tax incentives to encourage the private sector to pay their employees more.

In a speech given at last night's fund-raising dinner celebrating Mont Fort School's 72nd anniversary, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra said the Thai economy was in for a huge stimulus package.

He urged the people not to panic in the face of rising fuel prices, insisting that all relevant figures confirmed the economy was still in fine shape. However, public confidence was essential to keep the national economy afloat, he said.

...Mr Thaksin concluded his speech with a call for the public to trust him and let him work for the country. "You don't have to love me or like me. Help the country and I'll do my best."

Also: [Editorial:](#)

[A need to trim populist spending](#) – *Bangkok Post*, July 14, 2005

...While populist spending schemes for state officials, pensioners, old people and labourers are justified, the government's promise to inject 250,000 baht into each of the 80,000 villages to be spent "freely" by the village committees on so-called SML projects they drew up is most troubling.

Due to insufficient state control of the spending, absence of follow-up of the results, as well as the doubtful ability of village committees to manage state funds, the likelihood is that much of the money will be poorly invested if not totally wasted.

...The government may be powerless to control oil prices. But it can resort to more effective ways to save energy and hence reduce the huge oil import bill which is exacerbating the country's current account deficit and thus threatening its economic stability. And that means the government must have the courage to apply the bitter pill, to cut back on populist spending and to adopt an austerity approach.

To start with, the government should rethink its planned investment in mega infrastructure projects.

[ECONOMIC](#)

[PUMP-PRIMING: Embattled PM throws caution to the wind](#)

– *The Nation*, July 13, 2005

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra yesterday unveiled an economic-stimulus package highlighted by more populist spending schemes. The measures represent a major political gamble apparently aimed at arresting the slump in the prime minister's popularity and cushioning the impact of the government's decision to end the diesel-price subsidy yesterday.

...Almost 47 per cent of a focus group comprising 144 people said they were "rather satisfied" with the government's short-term measures to boost the economy. About 40 per cent of focus group viewers said they were "rather confident" that the measures announced would be beneficial.

[‘A tale of two newspapers’](#)

[archives](#)

Border closing blamed on sneaky business tactics

July 13, 2005

Categories: Border Issues, Myanmar/Burma

[Border closing blamed on sneaky business tactics](#)

– *The Irrawaddy*, July 13, 2005

Thailand's closure of the Three Pagodas Pass in Kanchanaburi province to motor vehicles is reportedly causing hardship to a Burmese frontier township...

Burmese exiles mount anti-Total protests worldwide

July 13, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

[Burmese](#)

[exiles mount anti-Total protests worldwide](#) –

The Irrawaddy, July 13, 2005

Demonstrations were being mounted on Wednesday by Burmese exiles outside French embassies worldwide in protest at alleged French government support for investment in Burma by the French oil giant Total...

Notes on Thaksin's broadcast and oil

July 13, 2005

Categories: Energy

Notes on Thaksin's broadcast
and oil – July 13, 2005

Cormac notes: *Maybe you already knew about this; I've never seen anyone quote it before: the Thai "Government Public Relations Department", fluently translated into English.*

For example, last Saturday's Thaksin broadcast was [online in English](#) by Monday.

Incidentally I found the site through [this article](#). You've probably heard of the issue of impending (or not) "peak oil", which most western governments are being very quiet about now that oil prices have doubled. Interesting to see that Thaksin mentioned it to the the nation in June 2004 while oil prices were still unexceptional; and the King suggested commercial ethanol production in 2000...

Also: [Southeast](#)

[Asia reels from impact of oil subsidies](#) – Weekend Standard,

July 11, 2005

When Southeast Asian energy ministers meet in Cambodia this week, many of them must face the fact that the pain they are feeling from US\$60 (HK\$468) a barrel oil is partly of their own making...

...Thailand, ASEAN's second-largest oil consumer, has moved more aggressively than most to wind down subsidies that cost Bangkok US\$2.2 billion since January 2004.

Bangkok ended gasoline benefits last year and is now phasing out diesel subsidies, while also considering curbs on consumption including earlier closing hours for petrol stations and electricity price increases...

Tearing Down New World Department Store

July 15, 2005

Categories: Buildings

[BMA seals off New World Mall 'fishpond'](#) – The Nation, July 1, 2014

Demolition sign – April 29, 2005

The sign reads: *Krungtepmahanakorn . Danger area. Don't come close to this place. Limited partnership will demolish the building of New World Department Store (Kaewpha Plaza 5-11th floor) according to Supreme Court judgment no. 466/2537 which starts on January 26, 2005 and finishes on July 26, 2005. Sorry for the inconvenience.*



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

[Razing of New World to proceed](#) – The Nation, January 13, 2005

Demolition of the closed New World Department Store, where a partial collapse killed a woman last year, will resume by January 26. The operation has been suspended for several months while the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) and building owner Kaewfa Shopping Arcade fought over who would be responsible for the demolition...

Prakob Saisuwan, Kaewfa Shopping Arcade's attorney, said that after the demolition is completed, the company planned to build a four-storey night bazaar on New World's lot.

The Bangkok Post adds some detail: Demolition will start by Jan 26 and be finished by July 26. The BMA will supervise the task to ensure public safety. If there is any delay Kaewfa Shopping Arcade agrees to a daily fine of 1,000 baht. (from [New World store to come down by July](#), Bangkok Post, January 13, 2005)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

[Court allows city to carry out demolition](#) – Bangkok Post, July 20, 2004

The Civil Court yesterday ruled in favour of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) in its legal battle against the Kaewfa Shopping Arcade, giving it the right to demolish the illegally modified section of New World department store in Bang Lamphu.

Prakob Saisuwan, the lawyer representing the Kaew Fah Shopping Arcade, said the company would accept the court ruling and no appeal was planned...

Yesterday's ruling would end the long-standing legal row between the BMA and the department store owner over the right to demolish the illegally modified part of the building.

In 1994, the city administration won a lawsuit that forced the operator to dismantle the four storeys it had illegally added to the structure.

Kaewfa had delayed the demolition work until early this year, when the city administration moved in to do the job itself, and to have the operator foot the bill, estimated at 36 million baht.

Kaewfa then hired Sunisa Construction to carry out the task, saying it would be cheaper than the sum quoted by the BMA. It also claimed that it had the right to dismantle the problematic part...

The unprofessional demolition work caused the higher floors to collapse.

[One victim of New World building collapse dies](#) – TNA, 11:51am, June 7, 2004

...Ms. Sadanan Chanthong, 28, died of liver and blood circulation failure at around 02:30 a.m. at Wachira Payaban Hospital, the hospital's Director M.D. Wivat Wanaraj said ...relatives of the dead victim have refused to move Ms. Sadanan's body from the hospital for her funeral until parties would come out to take responsible for her death...

Right: New World Department Store. The orange sign from the 'Gay Cuts' saloon that was damaged in the collapse is visible. There are still vendors operating under the eaves of the building.

[Supervisor Nawin has murky past](#) – Bangkok Post, June 5, 2004

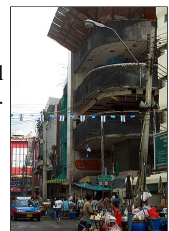
...It could not be confirmed whether the man was eventually sent to jail or had escaped before he was hired by Sunisa Construction and Supply Co Ltd, the demolition contractor.

"It is unknown whether Mr Nawin is really an engineer. We have yet to find out how Sunisa hired him as its supervising engineer," said Mr Sukhum who gave the evidence to Chana Songkhram police yesterday...

His lawyer said Mr Rungroj took over the job after Mr Nawin's licence "happened to expire without renewal".

Mr Rungroj claimed he had a licence to demolish New World's floors from the first to the fifth only, while another engineer called "Mongkol" had a licence to work on the upper floors.

Mr Adisak refused to reveal Mr Mongkol's family name, saying only that the man was travelling...



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

[Engineers issue red alert on building 'Clear it now before it caves in again'](#) – Bangkok Post, June 4, 2004

The Engineering Institute of Thailand (EIT) has issued a red alert warning to authorities to clear the New World building or it might collapse again soon...

On Friday, the EIT's expert committee, which prepared a report to police, found the building's collapse resulted from a risky and unprofessional dismantling method, applied by Sunisa Construction and Supply.

"I hardly believed any engineer would use this method," Mhan Sriruenthong, expert on civil construction said after inspecting the site. Mr Mhan has helped police investigate many public disasters including the collapse of Royal Plaza Hotel in Nakhon Ratchasima that claimed 150 lives more than 10 years ago, and the fire accidents at Kader toy factory and Royal Jomtien hotel.

Below are links to additional stories about the collapse along with some commentary by 2Bangkok.com.

[Engineer supervising demolition 'fictional' – Samak denies city to blame for negligence](#) – Bangkok Post, June 4, 2004



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Above: New World Department Store demolition (dated March 28, 2004) from the 2Bangkok.com archives

A tale of two newspapers: Violating building code – June 5, 2004

Note that the much more conservative *Post*, entangled with many powerful business interests around town (including the Central Pattana Group), does not specifically mention the buildings that are violators. *The Nation* names them. Also: What is the unsafe theater at Siam Square that the *Post* alludes to?

Engineers warn 1,000 city buildings unsafe – Many structures close to caving in, they say – Bangkok Post, June 4, 2004

...Such buildings included a department store and a shoe shop in Bang Lamphu, a department store in Lat Phrao, a theatre in Siam Square and a tutorial school in front of Ramkhamhaeng University.

"The New World incident will certainly be repeated," he said...

50 dept stores violate city code – *The Nation*, June 4, 2004

...Besides New World – part of which collapsed on Wednesday – Banglamphu, Kaew Fah Plaza, ATM, Merry King's, Phahurat Plaza, Laksi Plaza, City Pratunam, Future Park and some branches of Tang Hua Seng, Central and The Mall are among the illegally modified stores reported by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA).

Most of the offending buildings – including shop houses, residences and skyscrapers – are located in Huai Khwang and Phra Nakhon districts...

Kosin Teswong, director of Phra Nakhon district, blamed the companies for ignoring the district's orders to halt the demolition work and close the building to the public.

Bangkok Governor Samak Sundaravej said a civil lawsuit by the store's management in March asking for a court order to allow them to carry out the demolition, had stalled action by the city authorities.

The Civil Court is scheduled to read its ruling on July 19.

Beautician in hospital on respirator – Controversy rages over who is to blame – Bangkok Post, June 4, 2004

...*"We don't understand why New World department store was still open while demolition work continued on the upper floors. We also don't know whether our sister was aware of any risk,"* said Miss Sadanan's elder sisters.

Grave New World disaster – Bangkok Post, June 4, 2004

...I remember walking by New World Department Store in Bang Lamphu a few years ago and wondering why people are so foolish. They continued to go inside to work and shop despite a large sign at the entrance installed by the city administration warning people to stay out because the store had been ordered to tear down the top seven floors that had been added illegally to the original four-storey structure...

It was not until Bhisit Rattakul became Bangkok governor that the Supreme Court order was enforced. But even then, all he did was chip away part of the structure of the top seven floors to ensure the space could not be used for commercial purposes, hoping to force the store to demolish the rest. But the store didn't, and the wrangle continued.

Both the store and the city administration must share responsibility for this accident, and any damage to life and property. The store should have respected the Supreme Court decision and carried out the demolition in speedy fashion. The city administration should have exercised its emergency authority to shut down the store altogether as soon as it was clear the owner had no intention of abiding by the court decision, declaring the building a hazard to public safety.

The stage was set for this accident to happen when the store owner acquired a new partner and started to knock down the illegal floors so that the building could be developed to suit their business plan. But the work went ahead without city authorisation. The district authority apparently was aware of this illegal act but failed to stop it.

Now at least one person may die and some of the others who are in hospital could be disabled for life. Someone should go to jail for this.

Demolition work 'substandard' : Waste dumped onto single floor : Workers recount their fears – Bangkok Post, June 3, 2004

"The collapse was caused by substandard demolition," assistant director of Phra Nakhon district office Suwaporn Chirmsan said.

City in legal struggle with errant stores for 2 decades – Bangkok Post, June 3, 2004

Under the Building Control Act, violators can prolong compliance almost indefinitely by proposing to demolish illegal modifications themselves, even if they apparently have no intention of complying...

Four-year demolition plan – *The Nation*, June 4, 2004

...Twenty per cent of the 3,313 faulty structures would be dealt with in 2005, followed by another 30 per cent in 2006 and the remaining 40 per cent in 2007, Krisda said.

City inspectors had found that about 50 of the city's department stores were among the structures with building code violations and 15 residential buildings were found in precarious states...



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Above: Top floors of the New World Department Store being demolished (dated April 25, 2004) from the 2Bangkok.com archives

Part of New World Department Store collapses – 1:15pm, June 2, 2004

News being reported on the Thai traffic radio stations today–New World Department store, which was being dismantled by the owners, has collapsed and there are injuries.

More: Coming over the AP wire:

[Part of shopping mall in Thai capital collapses, 10 injured](#) – AP, June 2, 2004

Parts of a shopping mall where workers were demolishing the upper floors collapsed Wednesday on shops operating on lower levels, injuring at least 10 people—two of them seriously, police and rescue workers said.

[Part of Shopping Mall in Bangkok Collapses](#) – AP, June 2, 2004

Part of a shopping mall under demolition collapsed Wednesday in the Thai capital, injuring at least seven people, two of them seriously, police and rescue workers said.

[Part of shopping mall in Thai capital collapses, seven injured](#) – AP, June 2, 2004

Parts of a shopping mall where workers were demolishing the upper floors collapsed Wednesday on shops still operating on the lower levels, injuring at least seven people—two of them seriously, police and rescue workers said.

More: ["Injuries from New World building collapse remain at seven, no people die", says BMA](#) – TNA, June 2, 2004

The old building of the New World Department Store, located in Banglumphu area here, collapsed this morning, causing seven injuries, but no people have been found to have died from the incident so far.

The incident took place at 10:30 a.m. when dozens of people were reportedly inside the building, which was being demolished from its 11th-5th floor...

The injured victims, including a 4-year-old boy, who were rushed to a nearby hospital, were inside a beauty salon opened at the first floor of the old building when the building collapsed.

One of the injured victims who work at the beauty salon, named 'Gay Cut', later told reporters that stores insided the building were informed by a caretaker of the building that the building could still be used despited the demolition at its upper part.

The victim said that many people managed to flee from the building; while others are supposed to be still missing...

The building, which was found to have added more stories illegally, from 5th-11th floor; was forced to be demolished after a fire in the late 1990s...

More: [Seven injured in building collapse in Bang Lumphu](#) – The Nation, June 2, 2004

Senior city officials blamed a demolition contractor and lengthy court proceedings for yesterday's collapse of the New World building in Bang Lumphu, which left seven people injured – two seriously.

The building housed the New World Department Store, shut down since 1985 due to buildingcode violations.

... Susisa Construction and Supplies Co was contracted for the demolition.

In March, the building's owner filed a civil suit to take over the demolition work, Nathanon said.

As the court has scheduled its first hearing in July, the contractor is obliged to suspend its work pending the court decision, she said...



Left: New World Department Store demolition with Khao Sarn Road buildings in the foreground (dated April 25, 2004) from the 2Bangkok.com archives.

(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

[Store insists on handling demolition -City budget a 'waste of taxpayer money'](#) – Bangkok Post, February 20, 2004

The managers of New World Department Store say they will continue to demolish the illegally-modified building, rather than let city administration do the job.

The demolition would go on even without a permit, said the store managers, Kaew Fah Shopping Arcade. They claimed the 36-million baht budget for demolition work which the administration had just approved was too much and would waste taxpayer money.

It was the responsibility of the company to tear down the illegal part, seven out of 11 floors, the firm said through lawyers.

The firm had attempted to dismantle that part of the building, but City Hall had stopped it. City Hall obstructed the process probably because it wanted to use the money for something else, the lawyers said. The city denies the claim.

A court told the company in 1994 to remove the illegal section, but work did not begin until last December after the city decided to do the job.

DEADLY BUILDINGS: Residents risk getting crushed – The Nation, October 11, 2003

... Jim Bhandhukomol, director-general of Bangkok Metropolitan Administration's Public Works Department, said complaints of fractured and collapsing buildings come to his attention almost every day.

"Some cases result from negligence and many others from selfishness. Some people have constructed their buildings without a building permit," Jim said. He cited as an example the New World Department Store, which is currently defying a demolition order.

"We need a conscience and scruples to maintain a safe society," he said...

[BMA to raze extension](#) – *The Nation*, Nov 7, 2001

The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) will demolish the seven-storey extension of the New World Department Store itself, after waiting for the building owner to do so for seven years... According to Kriangsak, the New World Department Store in Bang Lamphu had originally asked for permission from the BMA to construct a four-storey building. However, the store later unlawfully constructed an extension, turning the building into an 11-storey high-rise. The court ordered the demolition in 1994, but the owner has failed to comply.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

New World Department Store coming down – April 27, 2004
Latest shot of the Banglamphu highrise being demolished.

[BMA compromises on New World demolition order](#) – *The Nation*, October 22, 2003

The demolition of the New World building, which partially collapsed in June, has been delayed due to a dispute between the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration and Kaewfa Shopping Arcade Co Ltd over who should do the work, a Civil Court source said yesterday. But, the BMA in court compromised by asking the company to demolish the building in Bang Lumphu themselves with the agency in a supervisory role to ensure safety, the source said...



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Banglampoo Department Store (left) and New World Department Store (right) being demolished.

Illegal monstrosities finally coming down – March 14, 2003

Since the 1980s, those visiting the heart of Banglampoo were greeted by this sight—two ugly highrise shopping centers constructed in blatant violation of limits on building height. After over a decade of wrangling and being defended by influential people, New World Department Store and Banglampoo Department Store are finally being cut down to size. Banglampoo Department Store (left) was notable for an exterior that looked like an Orwellian prison.

Barefoot Garden

July 15, 2005



(Photo: Asiper)

Barefoot Garden

– July 15, 2005

Asiper writes: *Above is a photo of the Barefoot Garden at Wangyang River-park Resort and Spa, Amphur Sriprachan, Suphanburi (Tel. 66-3554-8870-2). And here's a poem that is at the site:*

*Whole body bearing on
the two feet,
Who else realized?
Body and mind related to, indeed,
why isolately wrap them tight?
Let the two feet exposed as bare-foot
touch the bare earth.
All natural surfaces beneath we stood,
empowering in search.
– Anusak Kongmalai*

Thaksin's wife owns new party headquarters

July 15, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Thaksin's wife owns new party headquarters](#) – Bangkok Post, July 15, 2005

...Some critics have called into question the willingness on the part of the prime minister's family to make sacrifices to the party.

But Mr Phumtham said the party had what it took to become a fully-fledged political institution. Its success hinged on its ability to stay in politics, create a desirable political culture and expand party membership, he said.

"Unlike some parties whose existence is rendered meaningless by its failure to serve a political purpose, our party has delivered goals throughout the seven years since it was established," he said, ending with a swipe at the rival Democrat party.

Ruling party moves into new headquarters

BANGKOK: — Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's Thai Rak Thai Party celebrated the seventh anniversary of its inception in 1998 by moving into its new headquarters yesterday. Dozens of party executives, ministers and MPs gathered at the IFCT Building on New Phetburi Road to inspect their new offices.

The otherwise smooth celebration of the anniversary was marred by a minor accident when Thaksin's car bumped into the car of his youngest daughter.

Shortly after Thaksin and his wife, Pojaman, left their car, their chauffeur, while backing into a parking space, accidentally hit the car of the couple's youngest child, Paetongtarn Shinawatra.

Both cars sustained minor scratches and nobody was hurt in the accident, which happened just before a religious ceremony.

The party's new headquarters comprises an eight- and a 14-floor building, complete with fully equipped gyms, libraries, gardens and high-speed computer terminals.

At the main entrance, an exhibition room documents the landslide victory of the party at the two most recent elections. It also displays copies of the 109 books Thaksin has recommended for party members.

Thaksin presided over the opening ceremony, but refused to speak to the press. Thaksin is said to remain furious at journalists for allegedly perpetuating skewed reports about his leadership.

Both buildings of the new party headquarters belong to Pojaman Shinawatra, who spent Bt800 million on them. Party officials explained the need for the new headquarters by saying that the party apparatus had outgrown its old home. At its inception in 1998, Thai Rak Thai had 23 members and not a single parliamentarian. Today, the party's membership exceeds 12 million. The number of party MPs in the 500-seat House jumped from 247 after the 2001 election to 377 in 2005.

With such rapid growth, this is the third time the party has relocated its headquarters. The previous headquarters were in the Shin Tower III Building, which also houses the nerve centres of firms owned by the Shinawatra family. The party's first headquarters were on Rachavithree Road.

It is believed that beyond the growth in membership, another reason for the relocation has been Thaksin's desire to disassociate the party from his family's business empire.

–The Nation 2005-07-15

The Simpsons in Thailand

July 16, 2005

Categories: The Simpsons in Thailand



(Source: www.geocities.com/bangkokfm/)

[‘Flaming Moe’s Bangkok’](#) – November 21, 2005

An all-time classic for *The Simpsons* in Thailand—the website of [‘Flaming Moe’s Bangkok.’](#) Instead of baht, the drinks are priced in "Bart."



(Source: www.geocities.com/bangkokfm/)

Thai Homer Simpson – October 20, 2005

On the evening of October 19, 2005, [iTV](#) news carried a wire story about the translation of *The Simpsons* into Arabic ([D’oh! Arabized Simpsons Aren’t Getting Many Laughs](#), *WSJ*, October 14, 2005) including the detail that the Arabic Homer drinks Coke, not Duff Beef. After the report, the Thai newscasters joked that a Thai Homer could drink Mekong and be a gambler.



(Photo: BangkokEyes.com)

History of Bangkok nightlife – July 16, 2005

Above is the sign for a Simpsons-themed bar on Sukumvit Soi 22 from [Bangkokeyes](#), a website that tracks the history of the Bangkok nightlife scene.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

OTOP Simpsons mask – July 15, 2005

A knock-off latex Simpsons mask for 135 baht is one of the offerings at an OTOP (One Tamboon, One Product) shop in Songkhla.



(Photo: ANROAV.org)

[Melted Bart](#)

From 2005: *The Simpsons* in Thailand FAQ

How long has *The Simpsons* been shown in Thailand?

Since 1994, *The Simpsons* has aired each Saturday night at 9 pm. In 2001, [UBC](#) changed its schedule to make use of dead time between their commercial-free shows, and began airing the Simpsons at 8:40pm. In October, 2002, they gave up on this scheduling and switched the Simpsons to 9:00pm. It is then repeated twice on Sunday and then on the following Thursday. After each season, the show is replaced by a season of another animated season (such as *King of the Hill*, *Futurama*, or *Family Guy*) before the next season is shown. *The Simpsons* appears on a cable network, originally called IBC, which eventually merged with its only competitor and become [UBC](#). The network is commercial free, so there are no interruptions during the show. The network logo always appears in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. See [The Simpsons translated into Thai](#) for an example of what the show looks like onscreen.

Is the Simpsons dubbed or subtitled in Thailand?

Subtitled. See [here](#) for some screenshots.

Na Phrathat Road

July 16, 2005



(Source: Undated photo from the 2Bangkok.com collection)

Na Phrathat Road
– July 16, 2005

The old national library on Na Phrathat Road – Note the open gutters and that there are no sidewalks. There seems to be some building at end of the road (the roof is just visible). In the present day the road is much wider and the [Rama VIII Bridge](#) (on the other side of the river) is in the distance.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Monday ban brings hope to city centre

July 16, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Monday ban brings hope to city centre](#) – *The Nation*, July 16, 2005

...The improved flow was not brought on by new roads, expressways or a fancy mega-project that cost taxpayers trillions of baht.

Neither did it require drastic measures like an executive decree or bulldozers to clear messy areas.

In one clean sweep, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) imposed a ban on street vendors that saved hundreds of millions of baht in fuel costs, wasted working hours and lost opportunities, not to mention the positive impact it had on real estate in the city centre...

RIGHTS-THAILAND: Thaksin company courts controversy

July 16, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[RIGHTS-THAILAND: Thaksin company courts controversy](#) – IPS,

July 16, 2005

...It is a case that has brought into relief a range of issues, including the right of a citizen to criticise a company linked to the political establishment, Thailand's commitment to international treaties it has signed on political and civil liberties and the concerns over conflicts-of-interest between politics and business.

...Thai and foreign media and human rights groups were astounded by such demands, since it was an unparalleled amount being made here by a business giant that had earned a net profit of 9.7 billion baht (242.5 million dollars) the year the libel charges were made.

... "This case will be closely followed by many people beyond Thailand because Shin Corp. is not your typical business," Roby Alampay, executive director of the South-east Asia Press Alliance, a regional media watchdog, told IPS. "It will clarify what leeway and rights a citizen has to question a big company."

The intertwining of business and political interests has been a common phenomenon in the developing democracies of the region, he added. "Supinya's case is the most blatant illustration of this problem," Alampay said.

Such examples abound in the current Thai government, with cabinet ministers and parliamentarians coming from families — or with close links to — having entertainment, construction and transportation empires...

Safety fears after truck rams into jet

July 16, 2005

[Safety fears after truck rams into jet](#)

— *Bangkok Post*, July 16, 2005

... Operators at the airport say incidents of service vehicles damaging parked aircraft are not uncommon at Don Muang.

"It happens at least once a month and many cases aren't reported outside the airport.

"Don Muang is not a safe airport," one said...

Ultraman on the Skytrain

July 16, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News



Ultraman on the Skytrain – July 16, 2005

New series of Skytrain tickets featuring Ultraman...

More on [Bangkok](#)

[Skytrain](#) and the [extensions](#)

Cartoon spoofing the building boom

July 16, 2005

Categories: Buildings

[Cartoon](#)

[spoofing the building boom](#)

– *The Nation*, July 16, 2005

Floodgates put community lifeline and water supply at risk, residents fear

July 17, 2005

Categories: Communities

CANAL CHARM IN PERIL

– Floodgates put community lifeline and water supply at risk, residents fear – Bangkok Post, July 17, 2005

The Khlong Bang Pratun canal community in Bangkok's Chom Thong district enchants visitors with its unique charm, for people here still maintain traditional livelihoods.

Located just 20km from Sathon, the city's bustling business district, the area is tranquil, with green orchards set in a web of canals.

In fact, boats and canals are the community's lifelines.

With limited road access, residents rely largely on water transportation.

Farmers use boats to transport fruit to city markets while monks reach alms-makers on boats. There are boat taxis cruising along the canals. When people get sick, it is boats and not ambulances that deliver patients to a local doctor. Without access to tap water, residents still use water from the canal in their everyday lives.

However, this rustic canal community may become a thing of the past now that the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) is planning to build floodgates to block the water flow, said Thawatchai Thongsima, city councillor for Chom Thong district. The floodgates are part of a flood prevention scheme which has received a 340-million-baht budget from the BMA.

...Residents have complained that the BMA went ahead with the project without consulting them.

They learned about it only when the city's workers moved heavy construction machinery into the area ...

Malaysia ‘teapot cult’ attacked

July 18, 2005

Categories: Malaysia

[Malaysia ‘teapot cult’ attacked](#) – BBC, July 18, 2005

Thai Restaurants in Fairbanks Alaska

July 18, 2005

Categories: Uncategorized

Thai Restaurants in Fairbanks Alaska

– July 18, 2005

Stephen Cysewski writes: *I just put up a web page on the [Thai Restaurants in Fairbanks Alaska](#).*

I thought it might be interesting to the 2Bangkok.com community.

Fairbanks Alaska is the second largest city in Alaska, the total population in the area is around 80,000. Fairbanks has nine Thai restaurants. The Thai House was the first and the new restaurant being, opened by the owners of Bahn Thai, is the newest. So far all the restaurants are successful. It is kind of amazing that Fairbanks can support so many Thai restaurants.

1113 billboard

July 20, 2005



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

1113 billboard

– July 20, 2005

A billboard for the heavily promoted directory assistance service 1113: *New! check horoscope with famous fortune teller. Press 1113 one number – Moryong / Poo Lokbiew / Arjan Suea .*

Press 1113 anytime, you get every matter.

A tale of two newspapers: Anand's comments

July 20, 2005

Categories: A Tale of Two Newspapers, The Thai Deep South, The Thaksin Years

A tale of two newspapers:

Anand's comments – July 20, 2005

The *Post* says Anand 'called on the government' and is 'concerned.' *The Nation* says Anand 'slammed' the government and 'warned' them. The *Post* says "They may exercise the power under the executive decree intentionally or unintentionally in ways that could aggravate the crisis" while *The Nation* interprets this 'quote' as : "So, giving them broader power may lead to increased violence and eventually a real crisis." *The Nation* omits a call from Prawase Wasi not to oppose the decree and adds a quote by Chamlong Srimuang supporting it.

Anand:

Don't use decree in haste – Officials 'not ready' to wield sweeping power – Bangkok

Post, July 19, 2005

Former prime minister Anand Panyarachun, now chairman of the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC) for the restive deep South, yesterday called on the government to delay application of the executive decree on administrative rule in emergency situations.

Mr Anand said officials at the action level are not yet ready to exercise the decree and quick but wrong applications could aggravate the southern unrest.

..."So far the government mechanisms have failed to arrest any culprits and do not know who are responsible (for the on-going unrest). Government officials are inefficient ... If government officials cannot bring in the culprits for punishment and continue to create hatred and mistrust against themselves, there will be serious concern when more sweeping powers are given to the officials. They may exercise the power under the executive decree intentionally or unintentionally in ways that could aggravate the crisis," he said.

..."They (new measures) should not be announced in haste like the decree. Please be calm. Do not announce them. The biggest concern is that the decree can lead to another crisis. If there is no efficiency, there will be considerable chances for mistakes. If there is a mistake, the prime minister cannot deny responsibility," he warned. ...NRC vice-chairman Prawase Wasi yesterday urged the government to apply the executive decree very carefully to guarantee justice for the people.

Unfair application of the decree would compound violence in the deep South, Dr Prawase warned.

DR Prawase warned critics not to oppose the executive decree, saying the government would otherwise have an excuse for failing to quell violence in the deep South. He suggested that opponents campaign for fair application of the decree instead. With the decree in force, if the government still failed to solve the unrest, it would have to take responsibility, he said...

EMERGENCY

DECREEES: Anand slams govt as editors up in arms

– *The Nation*, July 19, 2005

Former prime minister Anand Panyarachun yesterday slammed the government for "hastily" issuing an executive decree to give the prime minister broad emergency powers to stamp out unrest in the deep South. Anand, as chairman of the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC), warned that the State of Emergency Decree would only lead to more violence and possibly a "real crisis" as the authorities' main problem was a lack of efficiency, and not lack of power.

"The authorities have worked inefficiently. They have arrested innocent people instead of the real culprits, leading to mistrust among locals. So, giving them broader power may lead to increased violence and eventually a real crisis," said Anand after emerging from a meeting of an NRC working group last night at Government House.

Prawase Wasi, a member of the NRC, urged the government to employ its emergency powers with caution in order to avoid causing injustice and even further violence in the deep South.

"The government should tread carefully. If there is a mistake, I believe the violence will worsen," he said...

Chamlong Srimuang, a former deputy prime minister, yesterday expressed support for the emergency decree. He said it was needed as violence was growing in the Muslim-majority border provinces...

Thailand mulls import of Vietnamese, Filipino workers

July 21, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thailand](#)

[mulls import of Vietnamese, Filipino workers](#)

– TNA, July 21, 2005

...Currently the Thai law allows for import of migrant labour from three countries, including Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia...

The Rama III flyovers

July 21, 2005



(Photo: Jerry)

The Rama III flyovers

– July 21, 2005

Jerry has photos of the new flyovers on Rama II Road: *The five flyovers under construction are Narathiwat, Entry/Exit from new bridge access road, Satu Phradit, Rama 9 bridge access, and Montien junction.*



(Photo: Jerry)



(Photo: Jerry)

Ozone Generators in Thailand

July 25, 2005

Categories: Scams

The ozone scam returns

– July 25, 2005

It has been a few years since the unhealthy fad of ozone generators swept through Thailand and it seems that they are back again. The *Bangkok Post* has a tradition of copying long complimentary blurbs or quotes from a product's website and presenting them as their article. Saturday's story, "Where there's smoke," is no exception.

Terry King writes: *The extract below comes from the Bangkok Post, July 23, 2005. A Google search shows that the text comes [directly from the website of the company selling the device concerned](#). Scientifically it looks like an April fool's day joke—oxygen atoms chasing germs and then exploding. This is nuclear fission and oxygen atoms are not fissionable. Below is a US Department of Health and Human Services quote (about devices like this). I have emailed the Post about this it will be interesting to see whether I get a response.*

From the *Post* article: "Using a specific frequency of ultraviolet light, an oxygen molecule can be temporarily broken up into three atoms, known as ozone, instead of its normal two. The third atom will then 'search' for a contaminant, like a germ, to attach to. After latching onto the one, the atom 'explodes', destroying both itself and the germ. The remaining two oxygen atoms then recombine to achieve their usual molecular state," explained Mr Logan.



(Source: *Bangkok Post*, July 23, 2005)

The following extracts are taken from the website of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) which comes under the US government Department of Health and Human Services):

HOW OZONE DISTURBS YOUR BODY — Inhaled
ozone travels down the windpipe and enters the lungs through the large bronchial tubes, which branch into smaller airways, or bronchioles. At the end of the bronchioles are tiny air sacs called alveoli, which fill up and expand like little balloons to put oxygen into the bloodstream. Ozone primarily injures these key oxygen exchangers, the alveoli, along with the bronchioles. Animals also suffer from ozone. Studies demonstrate how ozone exposure injures their lung cells and causes unusual changes in lung tissue. Other studies have shown that ozone can make people more susceptible to bacterial pneumonia, a potential killer. People with existing lung diseases—asthma, bronchitis, or emphysema—are particularly vulnerable to the respiratory effects of ozone. There are also particularly sensitive individuals.

Save your money — Resist ozone
"air fresheners"

Having just read a bit about ozone, you might think it darn odd that someone might want to breathe more of it—or want you to. But, despite Federal Trade Commission and state actions against their claims, there remain people who want to take some money from you in exchange for an "air cleaner" or "air freshener" that claims to work by generating ozone. You can read a long report at <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/ozonegen.html> on why this is a silly and potentially harmful idea. The bottom line is this: To generate enough ozone to be potentially effective, the ozone equipment would have to produce dangerous amounts of ozone. Contrary to suggestions from some sales people, no federal agency approves, much

less recommends, ozone generators for use in occupied spaces. There are other kinds of air cleaners you can buy. Some use high efficiency particle arrestance (HEPA) filters or charcoal to work safely, according to a California consumer bulletin in 1998. But as for the cleaners using ozone: The bulletin states that air cleaners that rely on ozone generation just don't destroy enough microbes, remove enough odor sources or reduce indoor pollutants enough to provide health benefits—and "may contribute to eye and nose irritation or other respiratory health problems" and "can cause damage to building materials and electronic devices."

More scams and frauds:

[Medical scam from the Post:](#)

[Prognos](#) – February 19, 2005

[Tsunami warning on December 30 based on quackery](#) – December 31, 2004

[The anti-mosquito program](#) – August 1, 2002

Three crucial facts about ozone:

Ozone does not clean air

Ozone will not take odors out of the air

Breathing ozone is harmful

[The California Department of Health Services](#),
[U.S. Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#),
[U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\)](#),
[U.S. Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#),
[American Lung Association](#),

and [Health Canada](#)

all recommend against using ozone generators.

Ozonic fined for false claims

Excerpted from the [Bangkok Post](#).

September 8, 2001

....Krasae Chanawong, PM's Office minister and chairman of the consumer agency, said the advertisement for Ozonic would be banned and the product's manufacturer, Izonic International Co, fined 50,000 baht for publicising misinformation.

He said the ad incorrectly claimed the product could combat allergies, kill bacteria and viruses and clean formalin-tainted vegetables, fruits and seafood....

Health Canada names names: [Don't buy these generators!](#)

... Consumer Reports (1992), the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) (Boeniger, 1995), and the U.S. EPA (1995) concluded that tabletop and room unit ozone generators are not effective in improving indoor air quality.

The FDA has set a limit of 0.05 ppm of ozone for medical devices. A small percentage of cleaners that claim a health benefit are listed by the FDA and these devices conform to FDA regulations. However, ozone generators, negative ion generators, and certain other electronic air cleaners that are not listed by the FDA, or cannot otherwise prove that their ozone emission levels are lower than 0.05 ppm, may produce levels of ozone recognized as unsafe for humans and are not recommended for use in occupied spaces because of the risk of generation of ozone. For similar reasons, the [American Lung Association](#) does not suggest the use of these products.

[FAQ from Health Canada](#)

Q5. What are the health effects of breathing ozone?

A5. Ozone is a powerful oxidizing agent and is highly toxic. In clinical studies, adverse effects have been observed in normal individuals at concentrations as low as 80 ppb. Concentrations of 2,000 to 4,000 ppb can cause irritation to the eyes within six minutes. Daily intermittent exposure to concentrations above 5,000 ppb can cause incapacitating lung congestion. Epidemiological and human clinical studies have shown a definite link between increases in outdoor ozone levels and increases in adverse health effects, including small lung function changes, inflammation, increases in respiratory symptoms, increased use of medication, visits to doctors and hospital emergency departments, and hospitalization for respiratory ailments.

[California](#)
[Department of Health Services](#)

...Over the last 20 years, billions of dollars have been spent in this country to reduce levels of smog and its main ingredient, ozone. Ironically, ozone generators are being marketed heavily as a means to "purify" indoor air...

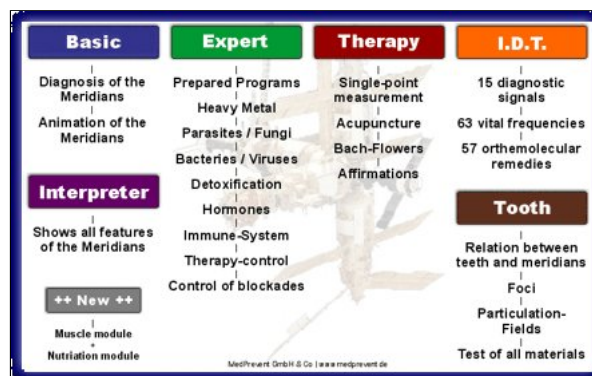
[U.S.](#)
[Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) position paper](#)

CONCLUSIONS

Whether in its pure form or mixed with other chemicals, ozone can be harmful to health. When inhaled, ozone can damage the lungs. Relatively low amounts of ozone can cause chest pain, coughing, shortness of breath and, throat irritation. It may also worsen chronic respiratory diseases such as asthma as well as compromise the ability of the body to fight respiratory infections. Some studies show that ozone concentrations produced by ozone generators can exceed health standards even when one follows manufacturer's instructions. Many factors affect ozone concentrations including the amount of ozone produced by the machine(s), the size of the indoor space, the amount of material in the room with which ozone reacts, the outdoor ozone concentration, and the amount of ventilation. These factors make it difficult to control the ozone concentration in all circumstances.

Available scientific evidence shows that, at concentrations that do not exceed public health standards, ozone is generally ineffective in controlling indoor air pollution. The concentration of ozone would have to greatly exceed health standards to be effective in removing most indoor air contaminants. In the process of reacting with chemicals indoors, ozone can produce other chemicals that themselves can be irritating and corrosive.

[U.S.](#)
[Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\)](#)
OSHA letter not recommending the use of ozone generators



Medical scam from the *Post*:

Prognos – February 19, 2005

Thailand seems to be fertile ground for Western medical scams. Terry King writes: ...of interest in the February 4 *Post* supplement "*The Magazine*" is a new medical scam called the "prognos system" which claims to be able to diagnose and treat all sorts of disease by just touching various points on the skin with an electrode. A quote from the article: "Our treatments are usually in the form of frequencies. These are given to the body in one of two ways: either through water (taken in drops) or by a metal disk, which is stuck to the patient's abdomen with a very sticky plaster." This is presented as a news article in the magazine. I have attached a graphic that I found on a website promoting the prognos system in Europe.

A common ATM scam

– February 19, 2002

Here's a PowerPoint presentation ([622kb zipped](#)) explaining a common ATM scam in Thai and English. Thanks to Don Entz for passing it along.

The anti-mosquito program

– August 1, 2002

The [Thai mosquito-repelling program](#) has been upgraded and has again been covered on [CNN](#).

Slashdot has a [thread](#)

too. However, one person posted this report from [Rutgers](#):
Hand-held electronic devices that rely on high-frequency sound to repel mosquitoes have become surprisingly popular in recent years Scientific studies have repeatedly shown that electronic mosquito repellents do not prevent host seeking mosquitoes from biting. In most cases, the claims made by distributors border on fraud. Another poster reports that the Linux version runs but seems to do nothing. One joker comments that

if we are having problems with mosquitoes, cockroaches, and rats around our computers, we better move them indoors!

‘Don’t panic over waves’

July 25, 2005

Categories: Weather

[Quake](#)

[Hits India; Tsunami Warning Lifted](#) – AP, July 25, 2005

[Tsunami](#)

[warning for southern provinces](#) – *The Nation*, July 25, 2005

[Thai authorities issue tsunami warning after major quake in Andaman Sea](#) – AP, July 25, 2005

Note: This quake occurred on July 24, 2005 at 10:42:05pm Bangkok time.

[Magnitude](#)

[7.0 – NICOBAR ISLANDS](#) – USGS, July 25, 2005

[‘Don’t](#)

[panic over waves’](#) – *The Nation*, July 24, 2005

Pushing the mass transit lines

July 25, 2005

Categories: Uncategorized



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Pushing the mass transit lines

– July 25, 2005

The government has been quick to promote their plans for new mass transit routes. The poster reads: *Metropolitan Police Bureau*

– *Main road project line 2 – Red line: Vipavadee Road all route*

– *Memorial Institute to Dindaeng Intersection – For convenience, speed, safety*

At the same time the government has [permanently canceled all Skytrain extensions](#).

Local radio stations generate strong bonds between neighbours

July 25, 2005

Categories: Community Radio

[Local radio stations generate strong bonds between neighbours](#)

– Bangkok Post, July 25, 2005

...It is now part of everyday life in the community. People tune in to the station when they sip coffee in the morning, clean the house, work their orchards or cook their meals. Programmes range from news and fruit trade reports to chat shows, sing-alongs and phone-ins, with people asking questions, sharing opinions and dedicating songs to others. They can even call the station and ask the host to tell a noodle vendor listening in to deliver a few bowls to their door.

...Somneuk Somboonchan, hosting a Mon cultural programme, said a young Mon man once called and told him a girl had eloped with him, and asked for a traditional way to apologise to her parents.

Mr Somneuk said he told the man what he should do and helped talk the girl's parents, on air, into accepting his apology. Sometimes he played Cupid.

... "Some of our hosts here are from the Northeast. They play Isan songs, warn their folks about being duped by job brokers and not to drink too much to save money for families back home," he said.

...A man in a rage took his gun and sped off in his car to kill a friend who had cheated him of 20 million baht. On his way, he happened to tune in to a station where Phra Siangsin Chatawaro was preaching about anger management. The man made a U-turn and drove to the station instead.

"I gave him a dhamma cassette tape and told him to give it to his friend instead. He took it and really gave it to that person. Not long after that, his friend paid back almost all the money. He was very happy," the monk said.

Latest from Chang Noi: No news is bad, bad news

July 25, 2005

Latest from Chang Noi: [No news is bad, bad news](#) – *The Nation*, July 25, 2005

It is Monday and thus time for another tough editorial from *The Nation*. The harshest editorials (like this one) are written under the pseudonym "Chang Noi" (Little Elephant).

...The pathetic list of government PR announcements that has come to replace the news is so short and boring that television channels also add human-interest stories. Most channels now have a regular slot highlighting the plight of the less fortunate in society. A typical story shows some individual rendered helpless, perhaps just by old age and poverty, but often by some physical disability too. This person is shown living alone or accompanied by a child or some shattered pet animal.

Collectively, these stories build a picture of a society incapable of helping itself. We almost never see neighbours, relatives, community organisations or NGOs in these clips. We can't tell whether they are really absent or whether this is just part of the genre...

Chang Noi's [website](#).

Go the right way

July 25, 2005

Categories: The Thai Deep South

Editorial: Go the right way

– translated and summarized from *Thairath*,

July 25, 2005

The editor said there are three criticisms with the emergency decree. The first is worrying for over power that effects the rights and freedom of innocent people because officers are amnestied in advance. The second is wondering whether some parts of the decree are opposed to the constitution. The last issue is—can the decree actually solve the southern problem?

Mr. Anan Panyarachun of the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC), criticizes that the decree is opposite to the reconciliation principles because this decree supports using violence to solve problems in the three southern border provinces. He also worried that the culture of using violence is rooted in Thai ways and has become innate.

Actually, the government and government officials have power to implement keeping the peace, because of martial law in the three southern provinces. However, eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth proved that violence cannot help, but makes it worse.

The vital obstacle for solving problems in the south is not because officials or the government does not have absolute power to deal with the terrorists. The point is how much they (government and officials) appreciate the King's speech "Access, Understand and Develop" and whether they use the power by law in the right way? Do they use excessive power?

He believes that Thai people give moral support to the government for success in reviving the peace.

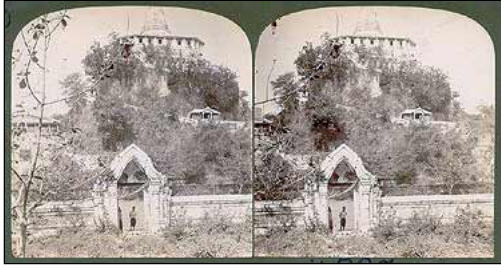
If this decree make the government successful, it is good, but if not, there will have more voices demanding the government be responsible. But experience inside and outside the country proves that violence only cannot quench violence. It leads to more violence such as with the USA and Iraq.

Thais also had a lesson fighting with the Communist party and finally they used reconciliation.

So, in solving the situation in the south, we just hope the government will go to the right way finally.

Golden Mount

July 26, 2005



Golden Mount

– July 26, 2005

Golden Mount (Wat Saket) from Boriphat Road. We could not find any human size gates as shown in the old photos. Like in most wats these all seem to have been replaced by gates for cars (below left).



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Marketing disaster predicted at CAT – Network stumbles on go-it-alone decision

July 26, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Marketing disaster predicted at CAT – Network stumbles on go-it-alone decision](#)
– Bangkok Post, July 26, 2005

...The new service has no reputation, few subscribers, no current promotions from its inexperienced marketing department, no brand loyalty, and bureaucratic management in which all decisions must come from the board in the traditional state enterprise manner, said the executive, who requested anonymity for this story. CAT was pursuing the model of Thai Mobile, a former joint venture of TOT and CAT Telecom recently acquired wholly by TOT. That humble venture undertook all marketing to itself, failed, and then hired Samart Corporation to try _ unsuccessfully so far _ to pick up the pieces. Thai Mobile claims an improbable 200,000 subscribers after two years in business.

...The bottom line is that, well, all operators require a mobile phone service for their bottom line. The problem was how these former state enterprises could survive in a competitive business world.

Thai baht drops on rising trade deficit: World's biggest mover

July 27, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thai](#)

[baht drops on rising trade deficit: World's biggest mover](#)

– Bloomberg, July 27, 2005

The Thai baht had the biggest fluctuation of any currency, falling after a government report yesterday showed the nation's trade deficit rose to the highest in nine years...

LUNAR CALENDAR: Buddhist holy days held late

July 27, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

LUNAR

CALENDAR: Buddhist holy days held late – *The*

Nation, July 27, 2005

...The miscalculation was discovered a few days ago by the head of an astrology association and made public on Monday by Kom Chad Luek newspaper. The “100 Years Horoscope Calendar” is said to accurately cover the calendar years 1921-2020 and is widely used by soothsayers and astrologers in Thailand.

There has been no official notice regarding the schedule of the remaining traditional events based on the lunar calculation, and whether they should be brought forward – including the end of Buddhist Lent on October 18, which should actually be October 17. Loy Krathong is scheduled to be celebrated on December 16 but actually falls on December 15.

Thongthae Ang-kaew, the son of Thongjua Ang-kaew, late author of the “100 Years Horoscope Calendar”, said he could guarantee the accuracy of his father’s calculation of the calendars, but admitted that mistakes occurred when the numeric information was computerised two years ago...

To prevent is better than mending

July 27, 2005

Categories: 2004 Tsunami

Editorial: To prevent is better than mending – translated and summarized from *Matichon*, July 27, 2005

After practicing tsunami evacuations many times in the six Andaman provinces, it went into actual practice late on the night of July 24. Mr. Plodprasob Surasawadee, director of the National Warning Disaster, specified there was an earthquake in the Nicobar Islands and asked people to move to safe places, but there was no tsunami.

The warning to people this time is regarded as effective because it is fast and serious at about the time of nearly midnight when people slept and could panic.

This warning may upset both Thais and foreigners, but it is common and it is not correct to blame the authorities who make the warning. It is regarded as lucky to people that still survive because if the tsunami came, no one would have complained.

It is known that it is still difficult to make an advance forecast for tsunami warnings from earthquake. Anyway, the geology scientist did the good job. Not only Thailand, but also CNN reported the news around the world.

No carelessness calls to mind that humans must behave carefully. People sometimes do not know about natural disasters and when info exists, although well prepared, we still not heed the danger. So we should have optimism about earthquake warning in Nicobar and think it is a test for all authorities, social organizations, local administrative organizations, the mass media and people in six Andaman provinces. This should be an evaluation of weak points or deficiencies. At the same time, we need to improve the instruments to be accurate in early warning including coordinating disaster warning organizations with other countries, otherwise what they drills or actual warnings might not be as successful as it should be.

King Mongkut billboard

July 28, 2005

Categories: Uncategorized



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

King Mongkut billboard

– July 28, 2005

A colorful bus drives past a billboard at the end of Ratchadamneorn
Road showing King Rama IV, King Mongkut.

Hmong refugees pleading to stay

July 28, 2005

Categories: Refugees and Migrants

[Hmong refugees pleading to stay](#) – BBC, July 28, 2005

Cormac writes: *More on the Hmong refugee camp, which doesn't seem to have moved anywhere, nor suffered a crackdown from Thai authorities (this is currently linked from BBC news front page).*

Guru magazine

July 29, 2005

Categories: Thai Newspapers and Magazines



Guru
magazine – July 29, 2005

How does the *Bangkok Post* get younger readers interested in its bland and bowdlerized articles? Produce a magazine aping trendy Western culture (left). We find the cover hilarious...

[GURU'S TAKE ON CITY LIFE – New weekly magazine for the smart set](#)
– *Bangkok Post*, July 29, 2005

Guru is a weekly lifestyle and entertainment magazine with a humorous, authoritative style that packs an edgy punch. With a hip, witty and at times irreverent tone, the magazine delivers the latest and freshest lifestyle news to readers...

Interestingly enough, *The Nation* also recently ruminated on the phenomenon of "young people more interested in listening to mp3 players than reading newspapers:"

[STOPPAGE](#)

[TIME: Death or a new beginning for newspapers?](#) –

The Nation, July 27, 2005

...Our problem is with them, the urban 20-something to early-30s. This is a difficult lot. The majority of them don't even buy newspapers anymore, let alone subscribe. Those who still keenly follow news do so through other channels. When was the last time you saw a young person buy a newspaper or be immersed in a daily on the Skytrain? This generation is more likely seen plugged into ultra-small MP3 players, or carrying a magazine, or studying their mobile phones like a newfound sweetheart. ...We need to unlock their essence, which remains largely inaccessible. Do they really like shorter stories? Are they damned bored with politics? What's more important to them – or what should make front-page headlines, in other words? Burma withdrawing its Asean meeting chairmanship or health and beauty concerns? Do they expect newspapers to change the world, or do they consider the press a boring, holier-than-thou hypocrite trying to be smarter than everyone else? Do they want newspapers to be just an informative friend who's not so aloof and intelligent, but fun to be with? ...

Ghost bottle gourd tree

July 29, 2005

Categories: Culture and Society



(Photo: Unknown)

‘Ghost bottle gourd tree’

– July 29, 2005

This tree is a bottle gourd tree, but the fruit is deformed to look like ghost face so people called it "ton namtao phi"

(phi = ghost, ton=tree, namtao is the name of the type of tree).

These photos are being circulated by email—we do not know the source of the photos or what province they are from.



(Photo: Unknown)



(Photo: Unknown)

Quash corruption—not duty

July 29, 2005

Categories: Airports and Airlines, The Thaksin Years

Editorial: Quash corruption—not duty –
translated and summarized from *Matichon*,
July 29, 2005

It has become chaotic for the case of Mr. Alongkorn Polabutr, Petchaburi MP (Democrat Party) who said that one relative of the PM was involved with bribes from Mr. Latapon Ketkothin, chairperson of Lutfertai Company, Ltd, who was to receive the car park construction contract at Suwanapoom Airport.

Mr. Alongkorn came forward to reveal information investigating corruption of the car park construction at Nong-ngoo Hao Airport (Suwanapoom Airport), but TRT MPs considered that Mr. Alongkorn intended to discredit the PM and slander the PM's relatives—one who is a woman that may not be involved.

This is like a novel that has many actors and many sides including Mr. Alongkorn and the Democrat Party MPs that fight with TRT (the PM's party), police that accept the charge, and newspapers accused by the state of distributing the news to the public.

The PM's relative did not tell the truth and Mr. Latapon, who is the key person, did not appear to confess is the truth.

Actually this complex novel is one part of the corruption problem that destroys Thailand's image and it reflects the failure of the system that is corrupt. The evidence from each side cannot be judged as to who is correct, who got the bribe, and no independent organizations or ministers investigated.

The opposition politician do their job by checking that the government is truthful and transparent, but in the meantime, the government politicians just come out to counter, and people who get information from the mass media continuously may have a headache and do not know who to believe.

Finally we will see the politicians prosecute each other in a mess and newspapers as defendants and accused by the government. They are just doing the job honestly and want to see truth and transparency in Thai society.

This case is a precedent that there is no organization that can quash corruption successfully. The investigation only comes from the opposition party. Also that when the mass media does their duty by reporting they take abuse for doing their job.

‘A little Thailand Trivia’

July 29, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[‘A little Thailand Trivia’](#) – BellaOnline, July 29, 2005
What?

Thailand's Age of Libel

July 29, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[FRIDAY](#)

[BUG: T is for trouble in the age of libel](#) –

The Nation, July 29, 2005

After Picnic Corporation filed lawsuits seeking damages of Bt15 billion from newspapers it accuses of libel, experts and the media seem a little less inclined to even mention the names of companies mired in controversy.

...One of the hottest topics was Thai Film Industries Plc, which is also embroiled in a scandal. To keep their feet out of hot water, panellists dubbed the company "T Packaging".

TFI is owned by the politically connected Mahagitsiri family, which also owns the controversial Thainox Stainless Plc. As the seminar continued, however, the use of pseudonyms started confusing the audience and many looked like they were trying to solve riddles in the dark trying to deduce which companies the speakers were talking about.

...And the more explaining he did, the more bewildered the audience grew. Finally, Chalee Chantanayingyong, the Securities and Exchange Commission's assistant secretary-general and one of the speakers, couldn't take it anymore.

Said Chalee curtly: "Let's knock it off. Just say the full name of the company for the sake of understanding."

FRIDAY BUG: T is for trouble in the age of libel

Published on July 29, 2005

After Picnic Corporation filed lawsuits seeking damages of Bt15 billion from newspapers it accuses of libel, experts and the media seem a little less inclined to even mention the names of companies mired in controversy.

On Wednesday, during a seminar on financial budgeting, stock manipulation and monitoring held jointly by the Par-Patr Institute, Dhurakij Pundit University and Krungthep Thurakit Bizweek newspaper, guest speakers and moderators were so cautious that they made up nicknames for each company.

One of the hottest topics was Thai Film Industries Plc, which is also embroiled in a scandal. To keep their feet out of hot water, panellists dubbed the company "T Packaging". TFI is owned by the politically connected Mahagitsiri family, which also owns the controversial Thainox Stainless Plc.

As the seminar continued, however, the use of pseudonyms started confusing the audience and many looked like they were trying to solve riddles in the dark trying to deduce which companies the speakers were talking about.

The speakers tried their hardest to set the record straight, but instead they ended up flummoxing the audience even more. But faces really turned into question marks when one of the speakers tried to explain that T Packaging did not refer to Thainox, but rather Thai Film. He said, "T Packaging is not the T company that relates to the action when you are punched in a boxing match."

And the more explaining he did, the more bewildered the audience grew. Finally, Chalee Chantanayingyong, the Securities and Exchange Commission's assistant secretary-general and one of the speakers, couldn't take it anymore.

Said Chalee curtly: "Let's knock it off. Just say the full name of the company for the sake of understanding."

The Anand/Thaksin address

July 30, 2005

Categories: High Tension in Thailand 2004-2008

Before and After: *Post*

editing – July 30, 2005

Here is a pre-edit (left) and post-edit (right) of the *Post*'s article on the joint Thaksin/Anand address Thursday night. As usual, the article is complimentary to the Prime Minister, but the pre-edit is even more so, calling the PM 'a real class act.'

Untitled – *Bangkok Post*, July 29, 2005

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra sent the whole nation to bed seeing light at the end of the tunnel for the southern unrest with his pledges never to put aside peaceful means and reconciliation principle in favour of the use of state power and force to end the violence in the region. Mr Thaksin was a real class act in last night's live television appearance with Anand Panyarachun, chairman of the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC), to calm a storm of controversy over the enforcement of the tough emergency situations decree in the far South feared by peace advocates to fan the fire.

Mr Thaksin lifted the cloud of suspicions over whether his government had abandoned peaceful means, saying the decree was a security necessity but the government would impose self-restraint and would always ensure a balance between human rights and civil liberties and national security.

The prime minister said the government could not afford to condone mistreatments against innocent people in Muslim-dominated Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat by state authorities now cooperation of local people in giving information that could lead to the arrest of those causing trouble was what it was needing the most...

Mr Anand, also a former prime minister, argued, however, that he did not think the three provinces wanted a split from Thailand but held official failure to recognise cultural and religious differences responsible...

"There are no bad feelings between us," he said.

The government had adopted several

PM, Anand agree to disagree

-Thaksin to keep all options open – *Bangkok Post*, July 29, 2005

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra last night pledged never to put aside peaceful means and the principle of reconciliation in favour of the use of state power and force to end the violence in the far South.

Mr Thaksin dominated last night's live television appearance with Anand Panyarachun, chairman of the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC), to calm a storm of controversy over the enforcement of the emergency decree in the region.

Mr Thaksin lifted the cloud of suspicion over whether his government had abandoned peaceful means, saying the decree was a security necessity but the government would exercise self-restraint and ensure a balance between human rights, civil liberties and national security.

He said the government could not afford to condone mistreatment of innocent people in Muslim-dominated Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat by state authorities now local cooperation in giving information that could lead to the arrest of trouble-makers was what it needed most...

Mr Anand, a former prime minister, argued, that he did not think the three provinces wanted a split from Thailand.

He held official failure to recognise cultural and religious differences responsible...

At the end, Mr Anand said he could not tell when the violence would be brought to an end but believed the situation would get better if the government avoided using violence itself.

Mr Thaksin pledged to pursue peace through respect of human rights and education development and pleaded for people's cooperation in restoring peace.

A tale of two newspapers: The

Anand/Thaksin address I – July 29, 2005

Compare the *Post* article above that mentions Thaksin *lifted the cloud of suspicion and dominated last night's live television appearance with Anand* with *The Nation* article below. *The Nation* article certainly does not imply the PM dominated the talk and adds many of the most pointed comments from Anand that the *Post* omitted. As expected, *The Nation* gives Anand the last word while the *Post* leaves the last word for the PM.

[SOUTHERN CONFLICT: Irreconcilable?](#) – *The Nation*, July 29, 2005

... "The local community sees this decree as a licence to kill," said Anand, which drew a quick interruption from Thaksin to insist that the highly disputed decree was not as bad as it seemed.

... He also blamed the underground world with interests in drugs, smuggling and illegal activities, saying they were part of what he called a volcano that blew up during his term in office.

Anand, on the other hand, made no mention of historical distortion and instead blamed state mechanisms for creating the conditions that led to violence in the region.

In one of his most subtle and probably strongest messages to the government, Anand pointed out that a relatively high 74 per cent of eligible voters in the South had turned out in the last general election because they still had faith in the country's system of governance. Yet not one of the 14 candidates from the ruling Thai Rak Thai Party was elected.

Thaksin defended the decree on the grounds that law and order must be upheld, and blasted its critics.

"Many people have been too quick to make a judgement without first reading the decree," the prime minister said.

... The former prime minister pointed to the abduction of suspects by government officials, the disappearance of hundreds of people from the region and the slow workings of the legal system as the causes for the mistrust among the local community.

... Anand suggested that "Thai" was a loaded word and

pointed out that Kingdom is ethnically diverse and consists of Mon like himself and Chinese like the prime minister, as well as Malays in the deep South...

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

A tale of two newspapers: The

Anand/Thaksin address II – July 29, 2005

TNA is even more one-sided than the *Post* in its reporting of the joint Anand/Thaksin talk. It is basically all the PM's reassuring statements including the theories that the Southern unrest is caused by drug traffickers and influential figures and reassurances that the government would "stick to its policy on using peaceful tactics."

[Reconciliation](#)

[in deep South is govt ultimate goal](#) – TNA, July 29, 2005

The government will remain its peaceful approaches in tackling the insurgency problems in Thailand's southern border region to achieve reconciliation, which is its ultimate goal eventually.

...The southern insurgency had also been caused by drug trafficking gangs and influential figures in the region, he noted.

The government would, however, stick to its policy on using peaceful tactics as its main approach to ease tension and address the problems in the region eventually...

Thai Beauty Queen from 1934

July 30, 2005

Categories: Old photos and films



Beauty Queen

– October 1, 2005

John writes: *You posted an old BW photo of a young girl from the 1920s or 1930s (below) and asked who it is. I thought I recognized her; and sure enough, I found her in my collection of old cigarette cards. She was featured in Beauty Queen Series, Serial No. 4, inscribed on the back as follows: "Miss Lampang II was awarded second prize at the Beauty Contest held at Lampang in the year 1934." (left) Unfortunately no name.*

Something about the cigarette

card series: "2C. Issues 1919-40 Set ZB5-9. Titled

"Beauty Queen Series". Oval shape, 66 x 38.

Brown. Front and back illustrated at Fig. ZB5-9. Nd. (16).

Issued in Siam in 1935"

Earlier: Who is this? – July 30, 2005

We love this undated photo (right)–probably from the 1920s or 1930s, of a young Thai beauty...

Below: Another card from

the series: "Miss Chiangmai I was awarded first prize

at the Beauty Contest held at Chiangmai in the year 1934"



(Photo: Undated photo from the 2Bangkok.com collection)

Oil prices cripple Thai economy

July 30, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Oil](#)

[prices cripple Thai economy](#) – *The Standard*,

July 30, 2005

...*Soaring energy prices. Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has a lot to grapple with as economic growth sputters, threatening his once-stellar popularity...*

Another big screen going up

July 31, 2005

Categories: Uncategorized



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Another big screen going up

– July 31, 2005

Workers are constructing a big video screen on Ratchadapeisek Road (left and below). A worker can be seen in the photo on the left reaching over the sign. Interestingly, workers add further blocks to the screen as it is showing a commercial and the screen lights up with the commercial block by block.

Another screen is [here](#).

Cambodian Prince Ranariddh has bought an island in Thailand?

July 31, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Cambodian Prince Ranariddh has bought an island in Thailand? – Khmer Intelligence,
July 31, 2005

*Ranariddh has bought an island in Thailand (3)
Prince Norodom Ranariddh has become much richer than one could have thought. Regarding his properties, it has become recently known in Bangkok among diplomats and intelligence experts that Ranariddh has acquired an island near Samui Island where he is to establish a resort and golf club with a French associate married to a cousin of his first wife, Princess Marie. The French associate's name is Alain Dupuis.
Normally in Thailand foreigners are not allowed to buy properties such as the one mentioned above, only condominiums, but the Thai authorities have made an exception for the Khmer prince in order to be able to manipulate him whenever Thai interests need help in Cambodia. Ranariddh already owns a luxurious condominium in Bangkok, at one of the most expensive buildings in the capital city of Thailand, the "All Seasons Place."*

Troubles in the South – August 2005

August 1, 2005

Categories: The Thai Deep South

Troubles in the South
– August 2005

[Troubles in the South index page](#)



Almost like being there: Yala closed – August 12, 2005

(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)

Businesses in Yala once again shuttered as residents heed threats by southern separatists to halt work on Friday.

Dr. Has reports: *Almost 100% of shops in Yala province are closed on Friday (in accordance with the separatists' wishes). At the few shops that remain open, plainclothes policemen stand guard. The situation has been like this for two weeks in Yala. Nowadays it is like a deserted town and there are few cars as well.*

More on [Troubles in the South](#)



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)

[Troubles](#)
[in the South index page](#)

Shanghai Urban Planning Museum

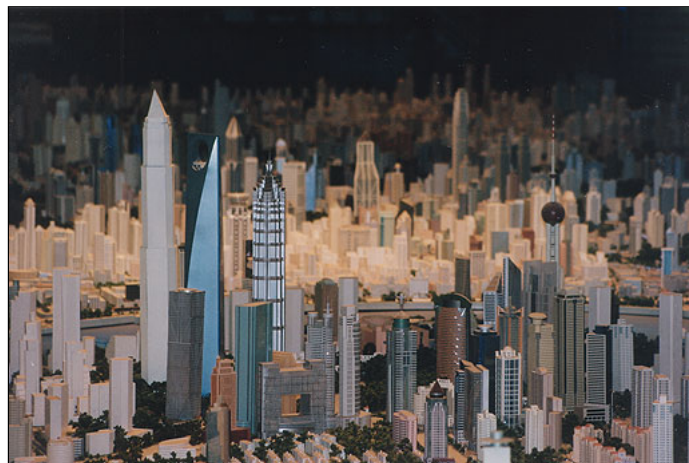
August 1, 2005

Categories: China, Nothing to do with Thailand, but Interesting



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Shanghai in 2020: Shanghai Urban Planning Museum – August, 2005



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Those stymied by the paucity of info available on Bangkok development will be astonished at these bold plans for Shanghai. In the heart of Shanghai stands the multistory Urban Planning Museum, the highlight of which is an extensive model promoting future Shanghai. Part propaganda and part history museum, the exhibits display a unique zeal for modernity in a city where rampant development is unhampered by the multiparty politicking that dogs Thai projects.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Above and left: Map and model of the greater metropolis area.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Right: Sculpture representing development progress in Shanghai in the lobby of the museum.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Stealth reviews and Thailand

August 1, 2005

Categories: Film and TV

Stealth reviews and Thailand

– August 1, 2005

Colin came across a couple of funny reviews of *Stealth* that mention Thailand...

[Stealth](#):

"The pilots get along splendidly, but bashful Kara and flirty Ben look as if they would like to do more than pal around. Hence Mr. Lucas and Ms. Biel's swimsuit duet during a pointless sojourn in Thailand, an exotic backdrop for the usual military R&R (beautiful locals with negligible English skills, etc.) and the only foreign country that these happy three visit and don't shoot up."

[Stealth](#):

"In this case, though, the old issue of man versus machine doesn't entirely satisfy the agenda of director Rob Cohen (XXX, The Fast and the Furious) and screenwriter W.D. Richter (Needful Things, Brubaker). They send their dashing pilots off on R&R in Thailand for the express purposes of filling a tiny blue bikini with Ms. Biel's extraordinary fuselage and giving Foxx an opportunity to romance a local beauty who speaks no English but probably saw him in Ray."

More Thai commercials: Kosanathai

August 1, 2005

More Thai commercials: [Kosanathai](#)

– August 1, 2005

Thanks to Lance for finding more funny commercials...



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Flood tram

August 1, 2005

Categories: Floods, Trams



Flood tram – August
1, 2005

A tram driving in the great flood of 1942. More on the great
flood [here](#) and
[here](#). More on
the [Bangkok trams](#).

On the forum: Disaster and humanitarian mapping

August 1, 2005



(Source: www.reliefweb.int)

On the forum: [Disaster and humanitarian mapping](#)
– August 1, 2005

Danny writes about a [fascinating site](#): ...Want to get the latest on the Tsunami relief effort? See the latest info or view a diverse and comprehensive range of maps on the site. The whole site is voluminous and easy to use. You can search by country, Thailand, or by the latest emergencies.And once the media spotlight has left this is probably the best site for informing yourself on the latest relief info and rehabilitation/development phase. Links to policy and critiques and many links to NGO, govt. and UN agency sites.

A useful resource to get some insight into the real info behind the ubiquitous and fleeting disaster pictures and headlines.

Interesting title for a bird flu map on the reliefweb site by US DOS.

There is a new map of the avian flu (H5N1) area of concern by WFP on the reliefweb site...

Left: Bird flu 'Areas of concern'

On the forum: More on the Chokechai Building

August 1, 2005

On the forum: [More on the Chokechai Building](#) – August 1, 2005

Interesting info on the Chokechai building, the shooting of a James Bond film, and an earthquake: *Later they filmed the James Bond movie, Man With The Golden Gun in Bangkok, the groundfloor was setup as an AMC Car Dealer. The old southern sheriff is test-sitting in a car when Bond jumps in and steals it to make a getaway — he breaks through the glass front of the building and tears down Sukhumvit Rd. I also remember the small earthquake in Bangkok — which opened a crack in the stairwell of the 13th floor — you could see daylight through. They came and patched it with some plaster — "No sweat, GI".*

Also: New section on the forum: [World War II and Siam](#)

Pathumthani Drag Avenue

August 1, 2005
Categories: 2Bangkok News

Pathumthani Drag Avenue – August 1, 2005
[Map](#)
and [website](#)

Articles on Thaksin 2/2

August 2, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

Articles on Thaksin 2/2

Even the *Post* has a rather negative take on this reshuffle, which is basically a swapping of portfolios between key party heavyweights.

[Official list of Cabinet reshuffle](#) – *The Nation*, August 2, 2005

[Cabinet reshuffle announced](#) – *The Nation*, August 2, 2005

[Some new faces as premier plays musical chairs](#) – *The Nation*, August 3, 2005

[STOPPAGE TIME: Time for another round of musical chairs](#) – *The Nation*, August 3, 2005

[Suriya survives cabinet facelift](#) – *Bangkok Post*, August 3, 2005

[Analysts: Same old faces after reshuffle won't save the nation](#) – *Bangkok Post*, August 3, 2005

[Chainant to make airport a priority](#) – *Bangkok Post*, August 3, 2005

[Friendships pay off for Kongsak – Wife a long-time friend of Potjaman](#) – *Bangkok Post*, August 3, 2005

[Financier Pongsak and Pravich make a return to cabinet](#) – *Bangkok Post*, August 3, 2005

Something about the previous cabinet: [A look at Thaksin's cabinet 2/1 – "Where we want to go"](#)

Thailand gets General Assembly seat of honour in Annan drawing

August 2, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

Thailand gets General Assembly seat of honour in Annan drawing – *UN News Centre*, August 2, 2005

Thanks to Danny for pointing out this Thai mention at the

UN: *Thailand gets General Assembly seat of honour in*

Annan drawing – UN News Centre, August 2, 2005

In an annual game of rotating seating, Thailand won the

first front row seat in the United Nations General Assembly

Hall for the next session, starting in September, in a drawing

performed by Secretary-General Kofi Annan, a spokeswoman
for the Assembly said today.

It will replace St. Kitts-Nevis on the right side of the

podium for the Assembly's General Debate, the spokeswoman
Frehiwot Bekele said.

The other delegations are seated alphabetically and speak

in an order initially determined by tradition and courtesy.

Brazil is traditionally the first speaker, followed by the

United States of America, as host country for the UN Headquarters.

ThaiBookDrive.com

August 3, 2005

ThaiBookDrive.com

– August 3, 2005

Andrew Titley writes: *My name is Andrew Titley and I am a 17 year old student from New York, USA. I am a 12th grader from Oceanside High School in New York and will be in Thailand until about the middle of August. I am currently living in Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand. My reason for contacting you is that I am the organizer and founder of Thai Book Drive. My website, www.ThaiBookDrive.com, has the basis and information of my book drive on it. Over the past year or so, I have collected thousands upon thousands of books in English to donate to children all across the Si Sa Ket Province of N.E. Thailand. I collected many of these books from libraries, school, colleges, and households all around the Northeastern part of the United States. The books were sent by ship to Bangkok which was later transported by truckloads to Ubon Ratchathani where I am living. On every weekday, for about a month or so, I will be delivering these books to various schools all around the Si Sa Ket Province. I usually visit about 3 schools on a daily basis and stay at the schools to talk with the children and teachers about the importance of English. My success can be viewed from my website above.*

My inspiration?

Truthfully, it has to do with my first visit to this section of Thailand during the summer of August 2004. After being brought around a local village where my stepmother was born and raised, I was able to visit a school in the area. I met many of the children, teachers, and administrators at the school which were very glad to meet me. It was the initial kindness of the local people that made me want to do something for them, but at that point I was not sure what I could do. It was not until my plane ride home about a week later that I designed and thought up a plan to send children's books in English to their school as well as others in the area to help them. So for the past year, I collected as many books in English that I could to send over to Thailand in which I would follow to distribute them. My logic for helping them to speak English is a very easy one. I believe that with the knowledge of English as well as their Thai, it would open up new opportunities for them when they were older. To be able to find a good job in Thailand and around the world, to go to school, as well as to travel would be much easier if they could learn English. If they were to receive a better job because of their English, then it might as well help out their whole village and their families. I immediately started the project because I wished to do this at the age I am now, rather than waiting until I'm older. For me to travel to these schools, I believe that they will listen to me closely due to my age and it would make an impact on them to learn English.

Why Thailand?

The main reason, which is mainly included in the previous paragraph, is because of my visit to the local area where I am now donating the books. Since my stepmother is from NE Thailand, I wished to help out those in her village and the project increased in size to include many others in the area as well. My first trip to Thailand, which was about 4 years ago when I was about 13 years old, was one that I will always remember. Whether it was in Bangkok, Pattaya, or Chaingmai the people were all very friendly. Over the years, I have formed a great passion for Thailand and that is the primary reason for doing this to help the country and it's citizens. If I was working on a larger scale or had multiples of myself, I would spread to other parts of Thailand.

On the forum: The Plain of Jars

August 3, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

On the forum: [The Plain of Jars](#) – August 3, 2005

Construction at Klong Tan

August 3, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Construction](#)

[at Klong Tan](#) – fullmoon-party.org,

August 3, 2005

Thomas has posted more photos of the airport link construction.

On the forum: Cargo trains running on gas

August 3, 2005

On the forum: [Cargo trains running on gas](#) –
August 3, 2005

Mosquito-free Bangkok

August 3, 2005

Mosquito-free Bangkok

– August 3, 2005

The sign reads: *Bangkok is a free area from 'genus culex' (a mosquito). Police inspectors eradicate 'genus culex.' Hotline call 1555. Come to prevent and eradicate 'genus culex.'*

Death on Rachada

August 4, 2005
Categories: Crime

Death on
Rachada – August 4, 2005

A source sent in this account of a fatal stabbing that occurred last Saturday morning:

Bangkok, 7/30/2005 11:36 PM, Witness Report: At around 4:43am on Saturday the 30th of July, 2005, I and my friend Y, who studies Marketing with me at Bangkok University International College, left Rachada Soi 4 to go to Sukhumvit. I was driving my motorcycle and Y was sitting behind me. We drove on Rachada and stopped at the red traffic light Rachada/Rama IX, right opposite Fortune Town. Y and I were talking, and waiting for the traffic light to turn green, when all over sudden something hit me from behind. Then I turned around and I saw that Y was lying on the road. Three young motorcycle gang boys were stabbing him with knives and machetes and beating him up with from what I remember a wood stick, about the size of a bat. They stabbed him in his back, totally smashed his knee, cut his right hand, and beat him at several other parts around his body. Everything went so fast. I was only focused on Y, and told him to get back on the motorcycle, so that we could drive away. Then the traffic light turned green. Y, pumped up with adrenaline, still had enough energy to get back on my motorcycle, and said: "Bring me to the hospital!", where I said yes, I will bring you to Rama IX hospital. The motorcycle gang had left, and all the cars started driving. Nobody stopped and helped us. However, then he said he felt very dizzy and lost his consciousness.

4:50am – I stopped at the side of the road, and put Y flat on the ground, next to the sidewalk. Then, I stopped a young Thai man with his girlfriend to ask them to call the police and the ambulance with my mobile. Then about 4 minutes after that two motorcycles came with blinking lights, but they were not police, they were not wearing uniform. They carried walky talkies, flash lights, etc. I think they are voluntary police or something. They then called the police over the radio. A few minutes later, two police officers from Ding Daeng Police station showed up on their motorcycles. They looked at him and called the ambulance, who took at least over 12-15 minutes to reach the scene!!! I told them to call Rama 9 hospital or Bangkok General Hospital because they are right next to the accident. I told them to hurry because Y was bleeding really bad. But they didn't listen, instead they called Ratchatevij Hospital at the Victory Monument. Eventually the ambulance came and they put Y in the ambulance car, where he then lost his heartbeat and they had to resuscitate him. They cut open his jeans, and you could see that his knee was totally smashed and crushed. He was bleeding so much, as they hit the main artery in his left leg. The doctors said that they will have to amputate his leg. Then the ambulance drove away, and the police officer told me to follow the ambulance, which I did. The ambulance went onto the express way, and I followed the ambulance even though I am not allowed to drive on the expressway. The ambulance then drove so fast that I couldn't catch up with it, so I lost the ambulance. I went off one exit, having no idea where the ambulance was going. But the police officer at the accident scene told me which police station he works for. So, I went to Ding Daeng Police station to find out which hospital they are bringing Y to. I also called the tourist police three times, but nobody answered!!! Then, the Ding Daeng Police found out that he is in the Ratchatevij Hospital next to Victory Monument. However, I had no idea where that was. So, I asked the policeman to please show me the way to the hospital. I had blood all over me and my motorcycle, so they could see how serious the situation was. However, they refused to bring me to the hospital. Then I asked them to tell the motorcycle taxi to bring me to the hospital. They told the motorcycle taxi and I followed him with my motorcycle for 50 baht. Eventually, I arrived at the hospital; Y was bleeding very heavily. The staff at the hospital responded immediately with the best to their capabilities.

6:43am – I called R, Y's Butanese friend who then called Y's brother. They all arrived at the hospital 30 minutes later. Eventually, one of the police officers that I talked to at Ding Daeng police station came to the hospital. It was the same officer who I asked before to show me the way to the hospital. He then asked me what happened, and I told him with the help of a translator. Then, the police officer and I took a Taxi back to the accident scene, where he took two photos and then talked to the police officer that was controlling the traffic light (at the time of

the accident the police booth was unoccupied). This officer then said that Huaykwang police station is responsible for this.

10:00am – We went back to the hospital, where a nurse took care of my wound at my neck. After that, I left the hospital. The doctors at the hospital were trying their best to stabilize Y, as he lost a lot of blood. He lost his heart beat several times. After the amputation of his left leg, he went into such a bad state that they could not recover his heartbeat. He passed away on Monday afternoon and is resting peacefully with God.

I have to add that during the whole night, Y did never get into an argument or fight with anybody. He was with me and his Butanese friends first at RCA and then he went with me to Rachada Soi 4, where he and I sat by ourselves at a table, drinking beer. The incident was totally surprising to me. Maybe they were after the wrong guy. I did not have a chance to talk to Y after this incident as he lost consciousness.

A similar incident happened to my friend R, who also studies at Bangkok University. He walked across a pedestrian bridge and was hit from behind. They hit him so hard that he lost consciousness. He almost lost the ability to speak. He nearly died. This was a total surprise and random attack as happened to Y. The Police are doing their best at the moment to catch the assailants. Let's hope they find them, even though nothing can justify Y's death.

Tuk-tuk sign

August 4, 2005

Categories: Uncategorized



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Tuk-tuk sign

– August 4, 2005

An unusual homemade sign on the back of tuk-tuk: *Don't follow me. In the past, never could. At present, do not attempt. In the future, do not have to forecast? Thank you. www.kindtuktuk.com.*

Reactions to the cabinet in the press

August 4, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

Reactions to the cabinet
in the press – August 4, 2005

The Nation has a series of scathing articles and editorials,
leading with:

[NEW](#)

[CABINET: New line-up greeted with jeers](#)

*Suriya's new posts slammed; latest team's make-up labelled an
act of political expediency*

[NEW](#)

[CABINET: Expediency played no part: PM](#)

Thaksin sceptical of polls saying 80% unhappy with rejig.

[ANALYSIS:](#)

[‘Best’ Cabinet for the nation or just PM?](#)

[EDITORIAL:](#)

[PM's juggling act fails to impress](#)

*...No self-respecting professional wants to serve a tenacious
and authoritarian prime minister who brooks no dissent and runs
the country as if it were his personal empire.*

*That's why the prime minister was left with less-than-stellar choices
– mainly Thai Rak Thai's key financiers, leaders of various factions
within the party, loyal party cadres with some potential, business
associates, even people recommended by family members....*

TNA assures us: [Private-sector](#)

[executives satisfied with new economic team](#)

The *Post* had a negative take on
the overall cabinet yesterday, but today is back to more general
reporting and criticism of individual appointments:

[Muslims demand Chaturon's return](#)

[Faction miffed about 'downgrades'](#)

[PM sure cabinet will restore battered public confidence](#)

[King to cabinet: Keep pledge](#)

[Activists doubt Watana suited to welfare post](#)

Parched Thailand thirsts for better infrastructure

August 4, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Parched](#)

[Thailand thirsts for better infrastructure](#) –

Reuters, August 4, 2005

In better days, tapioca, pineapple and industry flourished side by side on Thailand's eastern seaboard, long the country's industrial heartland.

Today, the triangle-shaped region, which traces the coastline east of Bangkok to Cambodia, is cracked as a result of unrelenting heat, firing up charges that Thailand's infrastructure is inadequate to support economic expansion...

This frustrates Amata's Vikrom, who sees the construction of more water infrastructure as vital to Thailand's development.

"Thailand is so rich in resources we call ourselves the kitchen of the world," he said. "Why are we so poor?"

Strawberry pizza

August 4, 2005



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Strawberry pizza –
August 4, 2005

A new Pizza Hut promotion in Thailand—a pizza with four sections.
One of the sections is covered with strawberries.

‘Siamese dancers’

August 5, 2005



(Source: Undated postcard from the
2Bangkok.com collection)
‘Siamese dancers’
– August 5, 2005
Postcard image, circa 1920

‘Bangkok Airport Visa Stamp’ on ebay

August 5, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

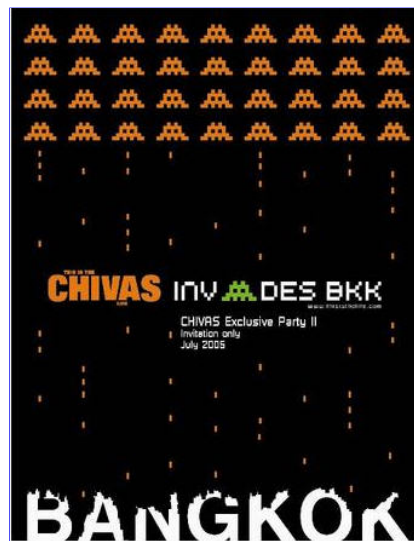


[‘Bangkok Airport Visa Stamp’ on ebay](#) – August 5, 2005

Chivas invite

August 5, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News



Chivas invite

– August 5, 2005

Above: Scan of the [Chivas party invitation from last month](#) from the German-language blog [kofty's bangkok briefs](#).

Also: [‘Absolut Bangkok’](#)

Unpopularity a reverse indicator of success at Finance

August 5, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

OVERDRIVE:

Unpopularity a reverse indicator of success at Finance

– *The Nation*, August 5, 2005

Interesting article: *Thanong Bidaya is the man of the 11th hour. In June 1997, he was shopping with his wife in Hong Kong when he got a call from Prime Minister Chavalit Yongchaiyudh asking him to take over as finance minister. He accepted. No sooner had he arrived at the Finance Ministry than Rerngchai Marakanond, the Bank of Thailand (BOT) governor, went over to tell him the country was bankrupt...*

Chavalit's new book

August 5, 2005

Categories: A Tale of Two Newspapers, Chavalit Yongchaiyudh

Chavalit's new book

– August 5, 2005

The *Post* has a straight review of the book's points.

The Nation has an extremely skeptical analysis...

[Old southern security system worked better, says Chavalit](#) – *Bangkok Post*, August 4, 2005

...He says selfish politicians were behind many of the violent incidents, including the torching of schools. Their intention was to destroy their opponents and protect illegal businesses of their political canvassers.

The arson attacks on many occasions, especially those in 1993, were intended to draw budget allocations to the areas.

The burning of 20 schools in Narathiwat on Jan 4 last year was designed to discredit politicians such as former interior minister Wan Muhamad Nor Matha and Pattani Senator Den Tomena...

[ANALYSIS:](#)

[Chavalit's 'last word' on South](#)

– *The Nation*, August 4, 2005

..."I said at the time that gunfire will erupt in the South once again," he says.

The fact of the matter is that he omits to mention that he was the deputy premier giving the green light to the proposed abolition before the Cabinet.

His book relies on a vast number of intelligence reports, allegedly prepared by the National Intelligence Agency, Special Branch Police and the United States Central Intelligence Agency.

The reports were collated in a confusing manner to support Chavalit's views rather than to shed light on the subject...

He asserts that both incidents were meant to erode the political clout of his ally and Wadah faction leader Wan Muhamad Noor Matha.

In his opinion, the southern terrorism boils down to a simple fight for control over constituencies in the region...

He has compiled several wild theories on the southern violence even though he does not root for any specific explanation.

After giving a bird's eye view of the southern strife, he concludes that "In my heart, I believe southern security is a non-issue"...

Ministers to discuss ‘one-visa, five-countries’ idea

August 5, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Ministers
to discuss ‘one-visa, five-countries’ idea](#)

– *The Nation*, August 5, 2005

This is the same plan that is proposed every five years or so...

Development plans for Nangloeng Market

August 6, 2005

Categories: Communities

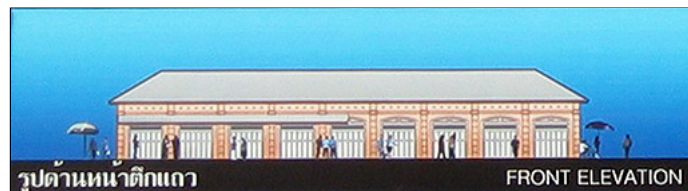
Development
plans for Nangloeng Market – August 6,
2005

Almost like being there: [Nangloeng Market](#) – [Shophouses lining Nakhonsawan Road](#) – [The new market](#) – [Nangloeng Cinema](#) – [Development plans for Nangloeng Market](#)

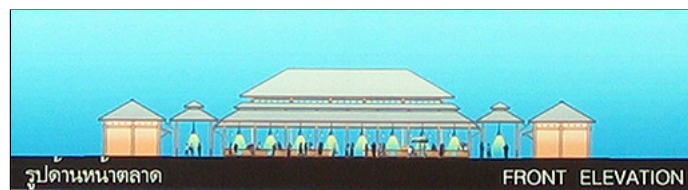
This is the market behind this row
of historic shophouses on the south side of Nakhonsawan Road.
The sign reads: *Looking forward to seeing New Nangloeng Market*
– Clean, convenient, safe, Conservative style – Nangloeng Market
will close for overhaul – During this time, people can buy at the
market in front of ex-Chaloemthani theatre at the meat noodle shop.



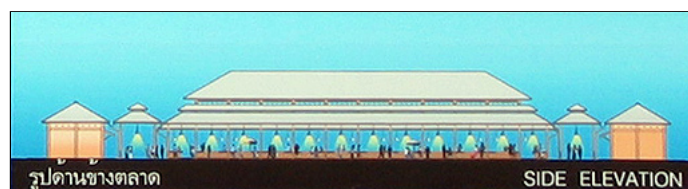
(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: [Nangloeng Market](#) – [Shophouses lining Nakhonsawan Road](#) – [The new market](#) – [Nangloeng Cinema](#) – [Development plans for Nangloeng Market](#)

Thaksin's Cabinet Reshuffle

August 6, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

Thai press reaction to the new cabinet from *Thairath*, *Khaosod*, *Matichon* and *Manager*: 'haew and *bourbok* selling out'
– August 6, 2005

***Thairath*, August 3, 2005**

– The senators critique the new cabinet and wonder that Chainand Charoensiri, Deputy of Transport Minister, got his position because of his relatives. Nakorn Rachasima Senator Sawai Pramane said this reshuffle does not contain the right person and he does not understand why the PM took Air Chief Marshall Kongsak to take over the Interior Ministry. It is like compensation for a friend. The senator is not confident that Air Chief Marshall Kongsak can manage like a CEO governor.

***Khaosod*, August**

3, 2005 – Wangnamyom faction is downgraded

The members come to comfort Somsak Tepsutin and Suriya Jungroengkit. Meanwhile Kroo Aoi (Jaturon Chaisang) taking charge of the Education Ministry is admired and approved. "Maew" took the new cabinet to pledge to the King and listen to the King's speech.

***Matichon*, August**

3, 2005 – Cabinet is not the right person for right job. Thaksin adjusts the cabinet for whom?

The face of Thaksin 2/2, although reshuffling for 17 positions, looks the same. By looking at the ministers' face, it has to say not only it is "old whisky in the old bottle," but also the wrong reshuffle. New people from outside the circles of power are not excited, because all involved in the reshuffle are adherents to Thai Rak Thai or Shinawatra family associates.

***Matichon*, August**

3, 2005 – A poll point out that "Maew 2/2" is not cool – only Thaksin adherents win

On August 3, a Suan Dusit poll surveys 1220 people in Bangkok and outlying areas for their opinion of the cabinet reshuffle of Thaksin 2/2. It found that 60.23% think the government work will be the same, because most people are still from the old team, 27.0% think that it will be better and 12.7% think that is worse because the ministers are not in the right jobs. They are pleased by the new Tourism and Sport Minister, Pracha Malinon, followed by Jaturon Chaisaeng, Education Minister. For the persons they are disappointed with the most are Suriya Jungroengkit followed by Newin Chidchob, Deputy Prime Minister.

***Manager*, August**

3, 2005 – The King gave a speech and repeated to the new cabinet to strictly follow their pledge and suggest to them to consider the meaning of the words in the pledge. He pointed that if they follow strictly, it will be propitious for themselves, the nation and the people.

***Manager*, August**

3, 2005 – Pa Noh (Sanoh Tienthong) compliments that the P.M. is prudent in the reshuffle and that Thaksin 2/2 is getting the right man for the right job. Also that Jaturon Chaisaeng is suitable for the Education Minister before admonishing that the "Wang Namyom faction" should not cheer only their own group.

'Poojadkuan'

***Manager*, August 3, 2005** – After the cabinet reshuffle of Thaksin 2/2, which has not passed one day, not only is stock market vigorous, but also agricultural goods are selling as well.

Some products sold out were water chestnut .
Also sold out was pennywort, . These sales make merchants are very happy.

[More Poojadkuan columns](#)

Editorial: Big reshuffle but it is the same – *Thairath*, August 5, 2005

It can be said that the big cabinet reshuffle under the leader, Thaksin Shinawatra, was quicker than expected, because it was only two months for the Thaksin 2 government. Although there are some critics who say it is the big reshuffle, it gives a little hope to people to solve urgent problems of the country because this is the descending government.

The 17 new name list of cabinet reshuffle did not impress people. Most were reshuffled like playing musical chairs. This is the same as the Thaksin government 1 that reshuffled the cabinet 10 times in 4 years. For this time is the 12th for PM Thaksin.

If Thai society hopes the government is serious on prevention and combating corruption in the bureaucracy and politics, the cabinet reshuffle did not give a new hope. Even the minister who was the target of criticism, does not crash, but gets two positions. This shows that they do not care about criticism.

The situation in the three southern border provinces which became more serious in the present government and it became the urgent critical problem of country.

However this cabinet reshuffle did not show the stronger team for security. On the contrary, the person selected to be Interior Minister, although he was the group captain commander, he had no experience in security and in the south.

The southern problem makes the PM make frequent changes in the responsible person such as changing the Deputy Minister of Security , Defense Minister, Interior Minister, Police Commander, Army Commander and others. But solving the problem is still like looking for a needle in the dark or a blind man trying to size up an elephant by touching a part of the whole. How long does it take until we are able to say that go to the right way finally?

Editorial: Is this the best reshuffle? – *Matichon*, August 5, 2005

The editor said that cabinet reshuffle of 17 positions including the old and new persons look like musical chairs, but the person did not seize the chairs by themselves, the PM managed it for them. To adjust the cabinet for the best should be the best for people. It should not be up to feeling, emotion and pleasing of the PM or his close friends. Or saying it is the best and then adjust continuously and also say that it was the best reshuffle, but the work of the ministers was not the best. People want to hear that the PM accepts that cabinet reshuffle was due to errors. If it was not because of error, it is not necessary to adjust the cabinet continuously including grouping the ministers struggling with big problems, the economy, the poor, debt, corruption ,etc. Whatever way he chooses he should reveal to the public frankly and not employ circumlocution.

Cabinet Secretariat's Web site hacked

August 7, 2005

[Cabinet](#)

[Secretariat's Web site hacked](#)

– *The Nation*, August 7, 2005

Not sure if this is news, but it is amusing: *The Thai*

Cabinet Secretariat's Web site (www.cabinet.thaigov.go.th)

has been hacked by a hacker who called himself an Indonesian newbie...

Right: The defaced site...



Working on a Flyover

August 7, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

New BMA Building Under Construction

August 7, 2005

Categories: Buildings



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Missing WW II U.S. sub found off Thailand

August 8, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Missing](#)

[WW II U.S. sub found off Thailand](#) –

UPI, August 8, 2005

Raid silences outspoken radio station

August 9, 2005

Categories: Community Radio

[Raid](#)

[silences outspoken radio station](#) – *The*

Nation, August 9, 2005

...It has been charged with using a transmitter operating over the licensed 30 megawatts, thereby disturbing the reception of TV signals at nearby homes, and using a transmission tower taller than 30 metres, thereby interfering with Aero Thai's signal.

It has also been charged with broadcasting false information, thereby inciting listener anger against government...

Thaksin and Suchinda

August 9, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

Thaksin and Suchinda

– August 9, 2005

It was [noted](#)

[on the forum](#) how the *Post*, without further comment, mentions that Thaksin attended the birthday party of disgraced former dictator Suchinda: ...*The next army commander should have battlefield experience, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra said.*

"Whoever becomes army chief must have field combat experience. Otherwise, he would not look graceful," Mr Thaksin said on Saturday night.

He was attending a birthday party of former prime minister and army chief Gen Suchinda Kraprayoon... ([Battle](#)

[experience needed, says PM](#), Bangkok Post, August 9, 2005)

Bad publicity

August 9, 2005

Bad publicity

– August 9, 2005

[Andamans](#)

[‘Phuket’ plan sparks row](#) – BBC, August 2, 2005

[Phuket’s](#)

[sex trade eyes Andamans](#) – *The Times of India*, August

6, 2005

[Phuket](#)

[‘a poor role model’ for Andamans](#) – *Bangkok Post*, August

8, 2005

...It added, "Perhaps no other place in the world offers, as does Phuket, such attractions as 'Uncle Charlie's Boys for Men', specifically designed for paedophiles." ...

Another Stealth review

August 9, 2005

Categories: Film and TV

Another *Stealth* review

– August 9, 2005

Don points out more funny Thai-related comments about the

film *Stealth* in [Ebert's](#)

[review](#): *"Meanwhile, the three human pilots, having participated in a mission that destroyed a skyscraper in Burma, may be on a worldwide most-wanted list, but they're immediately sent to Thailand for R&R. This gives Gannon a chance to photograph Wade in a bikini under a waterfall, while Purcell picks up a beautiful Thai girl.*

"Soon all four of them are having lunch, and the three pilots are discussing military secrets in front of the Thai girl, who 'doesn't speak English.' Beautiful Thai girls who allow themselves to be picked up by U.S. pilots almost always speak English, but never mind. It's not that Purcell is too stupid to know that trusting her is dangerous; it's that the movie is too stupid. How stupid? Nothing happens. The girl can't speak English."...

Skyloop

August 9, 2005

Skyloop

– August 9, 2005

Cormac Bracken points out: *Northern Kentucky (Cincinnati) wants a revolutionary [new form of public transport](#)... However it's a ghost site... it died in 2001.*

Cincinnati is also famous for its [abandoned subway](#).

Almost like being there: is Amphur Pai, Maehongson...

August 9, 2005



(Photo: Asiper)

Almost like being there: is Amphur Pai, Maehongson
Province – August 9, 2005

Asiper writes: *I just want to show you the photos of bridge
built by the Japanese in the World War II era... a bridge across
Pai river...*



(Photo: Asiper)



(Photo: Asiper)

iPod on BTS

August 9, 2005

iPod on BTS

– August 9, 2005

Ton writes: Have you seen [this](#)

[BTS train](#)? I have been on it once and only see it twice. I am curious how many trains they have for this. Even though Apple is expected to sell more than 30 million iPods by the end of this year, iPod sales in Thailand have contributed so little. iPods in Thailand sell little (as I guess since they charge a lot more than iPods in the US or else where). I bought mine in Thailand which is around 50 dollars more than I could get in the US. I am surprised to see this kind of thing that is very expensive to advertise. Maybe Apple Thailand has seen the potential in Thai markets as iPods are very famous around the world. Who knows? ... I really like their worldwide campaign that has no message, but says only "iPod".

On the forum: Cracked Runway Scoop Vindicated?

August 9, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

PROPERTY GUIDE

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GENERAL NEWS - Tuesday 09 August 2005

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US experts insist runways cracked

Thaksin, Chaiyapant say airport problem-free

POST REPORTERS

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.

They are also not tiny cracks on runway shoulders that the deputy transport minister showed to reporters, the source said.

But Deputy Transport Minister Chaiyapant Charoensin and Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra deny there is a problem.

The source said yesterday that the serious cracks were at the "touchdown" points of both the western and eastern runways of the new and now-delayed Suvarnabhumi airport.

The American experts, reportedly brought in by the prime minister to give him an independent assessment, recommended the complete reconstruction of the two

090805_new01 (9K)

Reporters were taken to Suvarnabhumi airport on Sunday to see a crack on a runway shoulder which Deputy Transport Minister Chaiyapant Charoensin insisted was normal and not caused by sub-standard construction.

On the forum: [Scoop vindicated?](#)

Left: Original story from August 9, 2005

Ladyboys of Bangkok at the Edinburgh Fringe

August 10, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Ladyboys
of Bangkok at the Edinburgh Fringe](#) –
Scottish TV, August 10, 2005

Siamese lady

August 10, 2005

Categories: Uncategorized



(Photo: Undated postcard from the
2Bangkok.com collection)

Siamese lady
– August 10, 2005

Postcard image of a Siamese lady, circa 1920s. Someone has written on the back, *this is the manner of dressing at Bangkok, Siam. Note the short hair and the trouser-looking skirt.*

We have several postcards featuring this same white pillar.

On the forum: 1669

August 10, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

On the forum: [1669](#)

– August 10, 2005

The number to call for ambulance in Thailand is 1669.

*Please don't dial 191, they have information overloaded
and sometimes don't even bother to relay this kind of information
to 1669 center!!*

Nangloeng Market

August 11, 2005

Categories: Communities



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Nangloeng Market – August 11, 2005

Almost like being there: [Nangloeng Market](#)
– [Shophouses lining Nakhonsawan Road](#)
– [The new market – Nangloeng](#)
[Cinema](#) – [Development plans for Nangloeng Market](#)

From a placard outside the market:

The ancient market opened since March 29, 1899 was built on the old cemetery ground of Wat Sommanat Worawiharn. The word Nang Loeng was originated from E-loeng which was the name of a kind of jar made by Mon people (Peguan), the Mon people transported their E-Loeng jars for sales at the junction of Phadung Krung Kasem Canal and Prem Prachakon Canal which is the present market. The people then called this area E-loeng. The Prime Minister, Field Marshal Plaek Phibunsongkhram renamed it to Nang Loeng, for the reason of sounding more polite in Thai speaking. Nowadays, Nang Loeng, one of only a few old original markets in Bangkok, is under the ownership of the Crown Property Bureau. There are various delicious Thai foods and desserts sold in the market. Besides, the old cinema called Chaloem Thani Chinam and small row-houses built since King Rama V's period reflecting the atmosphere of 100 years ago still can be observed.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

The Chinese-style gate (right) leading to the house (above and left).



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: [Nangloeng Market](#) – [Shophouses lining Nakhonsawan Road](#) – [The new market](#) – [Nangloeng Cinema](#) – [Development plans for Nangloeng Market](#)

Shophouses lining Nakhonsawan Road

August 11, 2005

Categories: Buildings, Communities



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Shophouses lining Nakhonsawan Road
– August 11, 2005

Almost like being there: [Nangloeng Market](#)
– [Shophouses lining Nakhonsawan Road](#)
– [The new market – Nangloeng](#)
[Cinema](#) – [Development plans for Nangloeng Market](#)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Right: Note the display case of cigarettes with the [new](#) [warning labels](#).



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



Left: Pink block apartments – Some insensitive development that has been allowed to go up between the historic shophouses and a temple.

(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

The shophouses lining both sides of Nakhonsawan Road make it one of the most atmospheric areas downtown (above). The shophouse row is only marred by two units that were allowed to rebuild as ugly highrises (below).



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Details: Seascape window bars. The Thai word in the bars is 'Paisarn.'

Almost like being there: [Nangloeng Market](#) – [Shophouses lining Nakhonsawan Road](#) – [The new market](#) – [Nangloeng Cinema](#) – [Development plans for Nangloeng Market](#)

The new Nangloeng Market

August 11, 2005

Categories: Communities

The new Nangloeng Market –
August 11, 2005

Unfortunately, the new Nangloeng Market building is merely the standard, cavernous, dimly lit warehouse structure that has been inflicted on markets across Thailand in a drive to be hygienic. These soulless structures drive shoppers to mega-stores and malls.

Almost like being there: [Nangloeng Market](#) – [Shophouses lining Nakhonsawan Road](#) – [The new market](#) – [Nangloeng Cinema](#) – [Development plans for Nangloeng Market](#)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Left: Derelict trusses cover some of the market alleyways. These have been left over from an earlier attempt to renovate the market in the 1990s.

Almost like being there: [Nangloeng Market](#) – [Shophouses lining Nakhonsawan Road](#) – [The new market](#) – [Nangloeng Cinema](#) – [Development plans for Nangloeng Market](#)

Nangloeng Market

August 11, 2005

Categories: Communities



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Nangloeng Cinema
– August 11, 2005

Almost like being there: [Nangloeng Market](#) – [Shophouses lining Nakhonsawan Road](#) – [The new market](#) – [Nangloeng Cinema](#) – [Development plans for Nangloeng Market](#)

This is what is exactly what is written (including misspellings) on a placard outside the theater:

Also known as Nang Loeng Cinema, the cinema was a two storeyed wooden building. It had started the first screenin since 1918. The occuring of the cinema was made the animation to people in the area and also the travellers who came to see the movie. at the beginning, the status of the cinema's seats were the long benches without fixing numbers, anyone who entered in the cinema could freely selected their own seats, and it had no ticket checkers. At the time it was silent films, the brass band was arranged to play infront of the cinema for stimulating the people, and then moved inside when the movie was starting to screen. Sala Chaloem Thani had been continuously in operation until 1993 when it has to be closed down due to decreasing polarity of Thai films. One of the Bangkok's ancient entertainment places has come to and end ater serving Thai people for 75 years. Today, the place is used as a warehouse with ramshackle condition, waiting to be revived again.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Above: the ticket window

Below: The theater viewed from the market area



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: [Nangloeng Market](#) – [Shophouses lining Nakhonsawan Road](#) – [The new market](#) – [Nangloeng Cinema](#) – [Development plans for Nangloeng Market](#)

Thai banks still cleaning up the wreckage of 1997

August 11, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Analysis](#)

– [Thai banks still cleaning up the wreckage of 1997](#) –

Asia Pulse, August 11, 2005

....And so the lending goes on and consumer debt keeps piling up, despite warnings and curbs from the central bank. As Paul Krugman told his audience in Bangkok, "unsustainable situations usually go on longer than most economists think possible. But they always end, and when they do, it's often painful".

Will new look dent respect?

August 11, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[STREET](#)

[WISE: Will new look dent respect?](#) –

The Nation, August 11, 2005

...Thai visitors often resent the changes that have been made. A visit to Muang Sing Historical Park, for example, reveals patched-up grey cement blotches on the red bricks of an ancient castle. On the ground was also a tiny L-shaped piece of steel, leaving visitors to wonder whether it was a part of the ancient structure, or just something left behind by the workers...

Why should we Buddhists have any complaints? After all, the glossy gold will grow dull as time passes. And that is perfectly in accordance with the Buddha's teaching that nothing is everlasting.

Ratchadamnoen Nok Road in the 1920s

August 11, 2005

Categories: Old photos and films



(Photo: Undated postcard)

Bangkok street – August
11, 2005

A postcard, circa 1920s, of the bridge over Klong Phadung Krungkasem on Ratchadamnoen Nok Road. Someone has written on the back, "How plainly it shows the influence of Paris!"

The lost forts of Rattanakosin

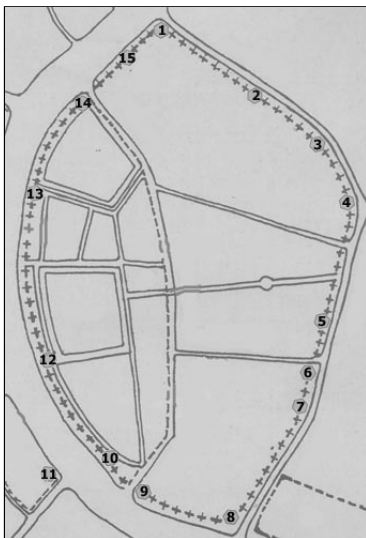
August 13, 2005

Categories: Buildings, History



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Above: Fort
Mahakan in 2003



The lost forts of Rattanakosin
– August 13, 2005

Asiper tells us about the lost forts of Rattanakosin: *King Rama I ordered to build Klong surround the city to protect the enemy and then also build 14 forts such as Fort Prasumen (1), Fort Yukonthon, Fort Mahaprab, Fort Mahakan (4), Fort Mootaluang, Fort Sertayan, Fort Mahachai, Fort Jakpetch, Fort Phiser, Fort Mahalerk, Fort Mahayak, Fort Prachan, Fort Pra-atid and Fort Isinthon.*

We found an old map with the fort locations (left).

Does anyone know which fort was which?

When were they torn down?

Did all the forts look like Fort Prasumen and Fort Mahakan?

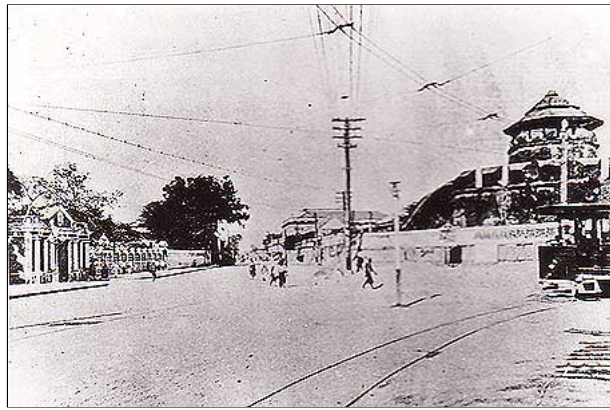
Do photos exist of the demolished forts?

There is a [thread](#)
[about this on the forum.](#)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Above: Fort
Prasumen in 1992



What fort? –
October 8, 2005

Is this one of the lost
forts of Rattanakosin?

Wisarat comments: *For the fort photo, it is unmistakably Fort Mahachai in front of Wang Booraphabhirom before its demolition in 1926. That photo is now kept in the National Archives. The tram (on the right side of the photo) that goes from Saphan Han area and turn left to Wat Liab is definitely the tram from Bang Lamphu to Wat Liab.*

Below: Photo of the same area today. The highrise on the right is Thai Danu Bank. On the left, just out of site, is the Merry King Department Store. In the past this was an estate called Wang Booraphabhirom owned by Prince Bhanurangsee. The gate of Wang Booraphabhirom is on the left side of the old photo above.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

‘Don’t be duped by Thai kadi’

August 13, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[‘Don’t
be duped by Thai kadi’](#) – *Straits Times*,

August 13, 2005

*Malaysian Muslim men who do not check whether the authenticity
of the Thai kadi solemnising their marriage may find themselves
foul of the law.*

The Thai economy: Was hot, now sour

August 13, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Analysis](#)

[– the Thai economy: Was hot, now sour](#)

– Asia Today, August 13, 2005

...In fact, despite the slowdown, growth in the neighborhood of five per cent is a rate many countries aspire to. So why the general gloom?

To some degree, the answer is psychological. With Thaksin having promised continuing high growth, a slowdown feels like a recession to many executives.

...In the face of such problems, some are noting that, after four years in office, the current administration has done little to address fundamental weaknesses in the economy. Among them is an education system that turns out workers who can't solve problems or think creatively, exports that generally have low local content and little value-added, poor infrastructure and logistics capabilities, and, relatively poor corporate governance...

Poll shows Thai prime minister's popularity slipping

August 15, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Poll shows Thai prime minister's popularity slipping](#) –

AP, September 23, 5:30 PM

...The survey conducted by ABAC University in Bangkok shows Thaksin's popularity dipping below 50 percent for the first time in two years. The poll had a margin of error of 2.18 percent.

About 5,300 people were surveyed, with 48.1 percent approving of Thaksin, compared to 61.6 percent just two months earlier. It was Thaksin's lowest rating since August 2002, when it plunged to 44.2 percent...

A Win-Win-Win Proposition for Thaksin

August 15, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma, The Thaksin Years

[A
Win-Win-Win Proposition for Thaksin](#) –

The Irrawaddy, August 2005

...In an era when Thailand's national interest is entwined with the vested interests of its prime minister's family-owned businesses, Thaksin's spongy Burma policy is not surprising. The Shin telecommunications conglomerate currently has a stake in Burma's sole internet service provider; with wide-ranging satellite interests in the pipeline. Thus when Thaksin deals with the SPDC, it is difficult to demarcate where his family's telecom interests end and where Thailand's national interest begins...

Makassan in 1981

August 15, 2005

Categories: Uncategorized



(Photo: Dick van der Spek)

Makassan in 1981

– August 15, 2005

Dick van der Spek sends in a photo of a coach being removed from Makassan Station on April 5, 1981.

When two empires clashed on Burmese soil

August 15, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[When](#)

[two empires clashed on Burmese soil](#) –

The Irrawaddy, August 15, 2005

For many countries in Asia, Japan's declaration of defeat at the end of World War II 60 years ago today marked the end of a long struggle for independence. For Burma, however, it was just the beginning of a process that still has repercussions...

Four Thai airlines likely to have licences revoked

August 15, 2005

Categories: Airports and Airlines

[Four](#)

[Thai airlines likely to have licences revoked: Report](#)

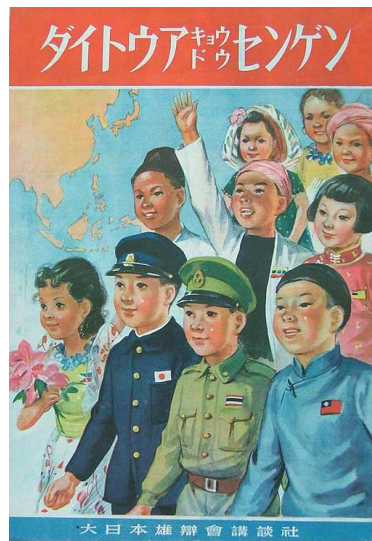
– Asia Pulse, August 15, 2005

*At least four Thai airlines will likely have their licences
revoked due to record-high fuel prices and tougher competition
from low-cost carriers, according to a report...*

Japanese propaganda booklet from World War II

August 16, 2005

Categories: Nothing to do with Thailand, but Interesting



Almost in time for Hiroshima Day, we have a Japanese propaganda booklet from World War II detailing the Imperial Army's plan for dominating the nations of the region...

Also: Studying Abroad in Japan has [a translation and some interesting comments about this booklet](#)
Paul Battley has another translation [here](#).

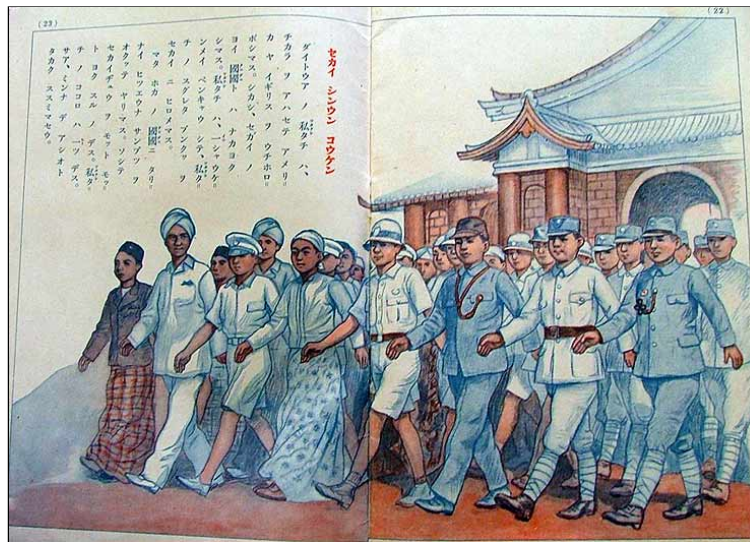
Also: [2Bangkok.com](#) main page



Carleton writes: *While back home in the US this month I went through some old photos and papers of my great aunt who passed away a couple years ago and was in the Women's Army Corp during WW II. A sampling of some Japanese WW2 propaganda emerged. Curious scenes of oppressed/colonized Asia and liberated/happy Asia, from the imperialist Japanese perspective...*



Japanese view of the region before
(above) and after (below).



Left: Ahead of the recognizable Asian flags still used today are ones for Burma (with old peacock design) and Manchuko (Japanese invention of a free Manchuria).



Right: Detail of the blackboard above. The Thai reads *Ka, Tapoo, Bida, Kaba, Jana*

Below: The Thai part reads *Life and prosperity together.*





Below: And from another booklet...

FAREWELL, AMERICAN SOLDIERS!



You are still alive! What a miracle! And marching, too. But WHERE? To the Philippines? To Tokyo? But do you know what awaits you in the Philippines? Let me tell you. It is the Japanese forces with the combined support, both moral and material, of all the awakened Asiatics—the Manchukuoans, Chinese, Filipinos, Annamese, Thais, Burmese, Indians, Malaysians and Indonesians. And the Japanese are there to pound you incessantly and relentlessly as you should have known. Perhaps they may retreat temporarily, but only to attack you again with double fierceness after your reinforcements have arrived. Day in and day out the Japanese troops are also pushing to the front in ever-increasing numbers. And remember, entire Asia is behind them! As long as you persist in marching west, the attacks will continue. Innumerable strongholds are all set to give you hearty welcome from the land, air and sea. The reverberation of their rousing welcome must even now be in your ears.

But this is not all. There is still another thing in store for you along the Philippines front. What is this thing? I will again answer you. It is a grave, YOUR GRAVE! Nobody can say where it exactly is, but it is certain that it does exist somewhere in the Philippines, and you are bound to find it sooner or later, far or near. Today? Tomorrow? Who knows? But one thing is positive. You are heading west for your grave—as positive as the sun sets in the west. Officers and men, you still insist on marching west? If so, I shall have to carve an epitaph for you.

There are only two definite things on earth. LIFE and DEATH. The difference between LIFE and DEATH is absolute. One cannot rely upon the dead; no one can make friends with the dead; the dead can neither speak nor mingle with the all living things must bid you goodbye and stop bothering with you, because we, the living, are too busy to have anything to do with the dead.

Your politicians are among those who survive and are enjoying life comfortably at home. General Marshall and General MacArthur can enjoy their reputation as heroes only because they are alive. But you... you continue to march westwards to sure death, to keep your rendezvous with the grave. The same holds true for your comrades-in-arms who are pathetically struggling to escape their ultimate fate. The graves await you, and you, and ALL OF YOU! So, officers and men, I bid you a pitiful goodbye. Today, you are with the living—tomorrow, with the dead. So again goodbye, American soldiers!..... Farewell!..... Farewell!.....

IT IS DANGEROUS TO READ THE FOLLOWING:

1. Don't pretend lunacy. Your surgeon will detect such deception, and you are sure to be tried by court-martial. Or if you succeed in passing as a lunatic, you will be invalided home, without any more chance to rejoin your comrades at the front.
2. Don't spit freely. If you do, you will be obsessed with the habit of spitting. And remember, it is an early symptom of neurosis.
3. Don't think the reverse of everything you chance to hear. Or it will easily become habitual with you and develop into regular symptoms of neurosis.
4. Don't try to practise sleeping in a fixed posture. This is also one of the symptoms of neurosis. It is contagious to your comrades-in-arms.
5. Don't be so nervous as to feel your heart-beat from time to time. Such a symptom always appears in the early stages of lunacy.
6. Don't worry about the color of your urine or excrement. This is also an early symptom of lunacy.
7. One week's practise is enough to feign naturally the tremor of your hands, shoulders and legs. The tremor of the head, especially, is the most conspicuous sign of neurosis.
8. If you practise to quickly roll your eyeballs horizontally without moving your head, it will soon become habitual. This particular movement of the eyeballs precludes serious neurosis. Even without such a practice, your eyeballs will soon begin to tremor unwittingly if you are constantly worried about it.
9. Don't fall into the habit of glancing sideways at your comrades-in-arms. Your surgeon dislikes such a habit, as it predicts the approaching menace of neurosis.
10. Don't eat your own excrement or drink your own urine in the presence of others. If you do, you are sure to be branded as a lunatic, however warmly you may protest.
11. Don't mumble the same words immediately after you have spoken them. If you practise it repeatedly, your surgeon's verdict will inevitably be neurosis.
12. Don't try to develop your imaginative power to the extent that all human faces look like animals'. Or you are likely to see no more human faces even on your friends.
13. Don't imitate an epileptic fit. If you practise it for three days, you will certainly have a real one. Then you are on your way to lunacy.

Only one candidate to vote for in the Singaporean presidential elections

August 17, 2005

Categories: Singapore

Only one candidate to vote for in the Singaporean presidential elections – August 17, 2005

As pointed out on [Friskodude](#), the elections has [only one candidate](#).

Bangkok from Rama III Bridge

August 18, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News



(Photo: Wanpunsu)

Bangkok from Rama III Bridge
– August 18, 2005

Designers hope to show Thai fashion is more than cheap silk and knock-offs

August 18, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Designers](#)

[hope to show Thai fashion is more than cheap silk and knock-offs](#)

– AFP, August 18, 2005

(Not) Chiang Mai flood photos

August 18, 2005

Categories: Floods, Thai Email Forwards



(Photo: Unknown)



(Photo: Unknown)



(Photo: Unknown)

(Not) Chiang Mai flood photos

– August 18, 2005

Rajan comments these photos must be of the flooding in Mumbai, not Chiang Mai. He adds his comments to the photos left and above.

Earlier: Thanks to Cormac for forwarding these photos of the Chiang Mai flood being circulated by email. Anyone know the source of these photos?

Earlier: [Flooding in October, 2002](#) – [Hat Yai Flood of 2000](#) – [The Great Flood of 1942](#)



(Photo: Unknown)



(Photo: Unknown)

Bang Pa-in Station Pavilion

August 19, 2005

Categories: Thai Railroads

Bang Pa-in Station Pavilion –
August 19, 2005

Nils reports: *One of the oldest rail structures in Thailand... text below from a memorial plaque at the site: "Bang Pa-in Station Pavilion is the first special station built by order of King Rama 5 as his rest pavilion on his journey to Bang Pain Palace. The pavilion was built entirely of teakwood*

in western style architecture, above doors and windows, stained-glass panels from Italy were used for decoration. When the first railroad of Thailand (Bangkok-Nakhon Ratchasima)

was completed up to Ayutthaya, the King had presided over the official ceremony on Commencement of Thai Railway Service

and the opening ceremony of the Bang Pa-in Station Pavilion on 26th March 1896."



(Photo: Nils)



(Photo: Nils)



(Photo: Nils)

Right: Present day Bang
Pa-in Station.



(Photo: Nils)

Painting a flyover

August 19, 2005

Painting a flyover
– August 19, 2005

Real Chiang Mai flood photos

August 19, 2005

Real Chiang Mai flood photos

– August 19, 2005

After the Indian [flood photos from yesterday](#), Aspier points out some [Thai flood photos](#).

Tourist Police website

August 19, 2005

Tourist Police website

– August 19, 2005

We like the charming anguished English on the new [Tourist](#)

[Police website](#): *You're supported in the Land of Smile – WE*

*ARE THE AUTHORITY IN CHARGE OF YOUR SAFETTY. WE HOPE YOU HAVE A
PLEASANT TIME IN THAILAND.ADDITIONALLY IF YOU HAVE ANY TROUBLE ,
WE ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE TO SERVE AND PROTECT YOU. IF ANY PROBLEM
OCCURS OR ANY ASSISTANCE NEEDED, PLEASE CALL 1155*

Last look at NASA Spaceadrome

August 20, 2005

Categories: Buildings, History



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Last look at NASA Spaceadrome

– August 20, 2005

Anyone of a certain age will remember NASA Spaceadrome, the massive disco on Ramkamheang Road that once was the trendiest place to be. Admission was 500 baht and the climax of an evening was when a large UFO with flashing lights descended from the ceiling above the crowd. During the height of its fame, legitimate youth activities were limited to a few discos like NASA and somewhat seedy snooker halls.

NASA has long been vacant. The generic mega-disco with paid admission concept that it represented was made obsolete by areas of smaller pubs (like RCA and RCA II on Suthisarn Road) offering more specialized music to a more sophisticated audience—and with no admission charge. And then as now, Bangkok discos existed to relentless advertise alcohol products—especially whiskey—to young people. (The last of the mega-discos to close was [Phoebus](#) which was recently torn down).

NASA Spaceadrome was built on an SRT concession along the Eastern rail lines out of Bangkok. Developed by Excaliber Company, it will soon be torn down to make way for the [Airport Link project](#).



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

In Bangkok, NASA is a Disco – *New York Times*, May 12, 1987

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration may have its troubles at home, but over here on the other side of the world, NASA is the hottest name in town. NASA is a discotheque. No, a "spaceadrome"—a \$3.85 million hangar-size contraption resting on moon-landing legs on the outskirts of Bangkok. It takes a lot to attract the attention of Bangkok's residents, who live in a world of pleasure palaces that leave no sense untempted. But NASA has in two months managed to become the place that everybody has to visit—5,000 or more people on weekends. Everybody includes diplomats, film stars, business leaders, politicians and a few titled people. The very, very V.I.P. merit a booth of black glass so they can see and not be seen.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Below: On the other side of Ramkamheang Road are other Excaliber projects including NASA Vegas Complex Hotel.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Casino caught in \$5m sting

August 21, 2005

Categories: Cambodia, Crime

[Casino](#)

[caught in \\$5m sting](#) – Sunday Times,

August 21, 2005

...Burswood Nominees alleges that the woman, formerly from Bangkok but now believed to be living in Cambodia, was responsible for a Hong Kong bank cheque for \$3.48 million that bounced when the casino tried to cash it in March, 2001.

With interest of 18 per cent per annum, that amount has since risen to \$5,091,438.90.

One payment of \$200,000 was made against the debt in May, 2001.

An investigator hired in Perth reportedly tracked the woman to a casino in Poipet, the so-called Asian Las Vegas in Cambodia, just near the Thai border.

He presented the writ to the woman inside the Grand Diamond Casino about 12 months ago...

The scope of royal power and constitutional rights

August 22, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[The scope of royal power and constitutional rights](#) –
The Nation, August 22, 2005

...In the preface of his book, he states: "This written piece will be useless for a person who does not have an unwavering mind in regards to the framework of constitutional monarchy. Apart from causing further irritation in ears, and eyes and incrementally to the mind, it can also damage the mental health of that person." He fell short of naming names. Indeed, he did not need to do that as everybody knew who he was anyway...

Critical newspapers targeted for takeover

August 22, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Street](#)

[WISE: Speculation running rife](#) – *The Nation*,

August 22, 2005

...Notably, all of these things happened amid rumours that a newspaper was being targeted for take-over. One camp suggested the target was a Thai-language newspaper; but another claimed it could be the Post. Certainly, if the threatened claim for damages is filed, it will push down the price of Post Publishing shares...

China tries to wipe Internet icon from Web

August 23, 2005

[China](#)
[tries to wipe Internet icon from Web](#) —

Reuters, August 23, 2005

... Sister Furong started the craze by posting pictures of herself — draped back-down over a stone ball, bent at the knees with her chest thrust out suggestively and in other poses — on Internet bulletin boards of two top Beijing universities to which she had tried but failed to gain entrance.

The shots, and accompanying captions and passages she wrote proclaiming her own beauty and talent, became a campus sensation.

But when her cult status began to sweep the whole country, Beijing stepped in...

Thaksin asks which minister had his penis enlarged

August 23, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[A rather large issue](#) – *The Nation*,
August 23, 2005

...According to the source, after Thaksin was serious, he changed his tone to be lightly by asking Public Health Minister Suchai Charoenratanakul tong-in-cheek whether he could check and find the minister who had his penis enlarged...

Taiwan largest importer to Thai workers in world

August 23, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Taiwan](#)

[largest importer to Thai workers in world: Report](#)

– August 23, 2005

Economy Taiwan is the largest importer of Thai workers in the world, with about 94,000 laborers from Thailand working in Taiwan, according to a report issued Tuesday by the International Immigrants Foundation...

Thais hunt for a bear-sized catfish

August 24, 2005

Categories: Wildlife and Nature

[Thais](#)

[hunt for a bear-sized catfish](#) – *International*

Herald Tribune, August 24, 2005

... "I saw a stingray in Cambodia in 2003 that was 4.13 meters long," he said. "It had a disc 2 meters across and 2 meters long, and the tail was 2.13 meters long. That fish could have been it, but we couldn't weigh it. It was too big." ...

The giant catfish have been disappearing fast, from more than 60 a year caught here in the early 1990s to just a few today. Their decline coincides with the completion of the first of a series of dams being built upriver in southern China...

As part of its permit to fish for these endangered catfish, the village association then sold the fish to the Department of Fisheries, which harvests their eggs and sperm as part of a captive breeding program.

After that, the fish are to be returned to the river. But, as usually happens, this fish, a female, did not survive the harvesting procedure, in which its belly is vigorously massaged and manipulated.

In the end, the men of the village cut it into giant steaks and sold it...

Thailand Creative & Design Center

August 25, 2005

Thailand Creative & Design Center –

August 25, 2005

Stephane of [Idea Three Co. Ltd.](#)

writes: Thanks for running 2Bangkok on a daily basis, it's the only place where we can find translations of Thai articles and know what's going on!...

We are currently developing a website for TCDC (Thailand Creative & Design Center), and this may be of interest to you and your readers. The center will open in Emporium on 6th floor in November.

Yes, a design center in a shopping mall! Here's the [website](#).

It's a teaser website that will be updated every week to show another facet of the center. There will also be some competitions. The first one is about irritating design, so it's a good occasion to send pictures of crappy signage, bridges, sidewalks, buildings and other irritating stuff here in Thailand!

Thaksin surprises reporters with X sign

August 25, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

Reporters dismayed by PM's X-rating toy

25 August – Bangkok Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra brought a toy paddle with an 'X' on it to his first 'PM Meets the Press' conference. He raised it to deflect questions he considered unconstructive or undeserving of an answer, leading reporters to predict that future sessions would draw fewer visitors. The toy was accompanied by a beeping sound similar to that used on game shows. A foreign reporter asked whether a new emergency decree was a 'licence to kill', but he immediately got the X.



(Source: *Chronicle of Thailand*)

“Reporters dismayed by PM’s X-rating toy”

August 25, 2005 – Here is an amusing tidbit from the Thaksin era from [Chronicle of Thailand](#).

[Thaksin surprises reporters with X sign](#) – *The Nation*, August 25, 2005

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra today (Thursday) surprised reporters by raising a sign to show that a question asked by one of them was "unconstructive" ... A reporter asked Thaksin whether there were foreign terrorists taking part in the terror campaigns in the deep South. Thaksin pressed the buzzer and raised the X mark sign and said the question was unconstructive and refused to answer...

Thaksin surprises reporters with X sign

Published on Aug 25, 2005

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra today (Thursday) surprised reporters by raising a sign to show that a question asked by one of them was “unconstructive”.

The prime minister was taking a stand to answer reporters’ questions during his first “Meet the Press” session at Government held by the new government spokesman, Surapong Suebwonglee.

A reporter asked Thaksin whether there were foreign terrorists taking part in the terror campaigns in the deep South.

Thaksin pressed the buzzer and raised the X mark sign and said the question was unconstructive and refused to answer.

Several reporters laughed but the reporter, who asked the question, gave Thaksin an applause.

At one moment, Thaksin also pressed the buzzer and raised an O sign when a reporter asked about short-term measures for dealing with rising oil prices.

“It’s constructive question,” the prime minister said.

After the press session, Thaksin told reporters that his son, Panthongtae Shinawatra, bought the signs and buzzer from Japan so he borrowed the equipment “to play with media so that they would not be too serious”.

“I don’t want reporters to be too serious,” Thaksin said.

About 100 reporters from various agencies, including senior journalists and some editors, showed up for the session.

Thaksin opened the session by saying he would meet the media once a week on Thursdays.

He said that from now on he would refrain from making comment on other days so that reporters would have questions to ask him on Thursdays.

“For non-urgent issues, please ask ministers in charge so that I could speak only once a week,” Thaksin said.

[PM sets off weekly meet with press](#) – TNA, August 25, 2005

Even TNA cannot avoid mentioning the PM’s press conference stunt that has been widely derided in the press.

...During his 45-minute press conference–broadcast live by TV Channel 11 of the Public Relations Department–the prime minister raised signals to react to reporters’ questions.

A circle was raised if the question was considered constructive and a cross was shown if the question was viewed as non-constructive...

PM sets off weekly meet with press

BANGKOK, Aug 25 (TNA) – Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra today kicked off a weekly ‘Meet the Press’ attended by almost 100 members of the media, domestic and foreign.

Most questions touched on southern border region problems and the emergency decree designed to solve them.

During his 45-minute press conference–broadcast live by TV Channel 11 of the Public Relations Department–the prime minister raised signals to react to reporters’ questions.

A circle was raised if the question was considered constructive and a cross was shown if the question was viewed as non-constructive.

Mr. Thaksin said his 'Meet the Press' would be held every Thursday, and that there would be no more daily conferences, except to make statements on urgent issues.

He suggested that reporters turn to deputy prime ministers or other members of his cabinet for answers to their questions.

Touching on the southern provinces and the emergency decree, the prime minister said that the media should study the contents of the decree in a more scrupulous fashion and advised that they, themselves, spend a night in the troubled region to see how the authorities are performing under the controversial decree.

Mr. Thaksin reconfirmed that the outcome of the emergency rule would be evaluated at three-month intervals, and suggested those who may have been mistreated by the authorities file lawsuits for damage compensation with the Civil Court, though they are not legally allowed to do so with the Administrative Court. (TNA)-E008

And AP has a negative take on the PM's buzzer stunt:

[Thai](#)

[PM gives tough questions the buzzer](#) –

AP, August 26, 2005

Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has long complained of press criticism. But he sought to turn the tables Thursday with a new tactic – sounding a buzzer every time reporters ask questions he deems “not constructive.”

To the surprise of journalists and colleagues alike, Thaksin raised a handheld buzzer – which displayed an “X” sign – from behind the podium to indicate his disapproval of some questions asked at the first in a new series of weekly news conferences.

The button-pushing Thaksin sounded the alarm when a Thai newspaperman asked why the government had failed to seek parliamentary consent before introducing an emergency decree in the volatile southern provinces, where a Muslim insurgency has taken hold.

“Not constructive!” he exclaimed, referring to the reporter’s question and a related one about whether foreign terrorists might be linked to the rebellion.

More: [Thai-language media reacts to Thaksin’s “X”](#)

Welcome to Bangkok, the capital of forgery

August 26, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Unflattering headline: "[Welcome to Bangkok, the capital of forgery](#)"

– *Telegraph*, August 26, 2005

The fringes of Bangkok's Little Arabia district offer more than coffee shops, shoe wholesalers and exotic cuisine.

The alleys where Middle Eastern families stroll with their womenfolk veiled are the hub of the world's fake passport trade, the authorities say...

Forget Shanghai, Try Emulating Bangkok First

August 26, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

In praise of Bangkok: "[Forget Shanghai, Try Emulating Bangkok First](#)" –

Express Hotelier & Caterer, August 26, 2005

...Was it clean? Impressively clean. Was it polluted? I didn't feel any smoke fumes burn my chest. No potholes on the roads, footpaths to walk on, no hanging outside the sky-train or metro, clean streets and very helpful people...

Nothing prepared me for the pleasant surprise I witnessed when I drove out of the Bangkok airport.

Just a day before I took off on my flight from the Mumbai airport, my colleague who has had the opportunity to circumvent the globe regularly, happened to mention that on his last visit to Bangkok, he saw no difference between Mumbai and Bangkok. Both were filthy and dirty.

Nothing matched up to my friend's ramblings about Bangkok. Was it clean? Impressively clean. Was it polluted? I didn't feel any smoke fumes burn my chest. No potholes on the roads, footpaths to walk on, no hanging outside the sky-train or metro, clean streets and very helpful people (even though their English seem like a kindergarten student) – this place certainly didn't look like the Hell's Kitchen, Mumbai looks like.

Having been impressed by my observation, I called all my friends and relatives who had visited Bangkok recently or before to gauge their experience. And not to my surprise this time, everyone seemed impressed by the transformation a city like Bangkok had undergone.

Can you imagine ten years ago, Bangkok was notoriously famous for being a cheap sex hot spot – I am by no means advocating that sex isn't the mainstay of this resurrected city – it still is. But now, the government and its citizens have decided that 'while we continue to unceremoniously promote our sex tourism industry, let's also get our city to look good and concentrate on other businesses. Let's change our sleazy image to one of panache'. In fact when I asked a close friend who works for the Thailand Tourism Authority, what brought about the change in Bangkok everybody seems to be raving about? His response was crisp, 'I guess our government started to care'.

In the year 2004, the tourist arrivals into Bangkok alone was 4.2 million. India as whole achieved 3.3 million. But that didn't stop the Ministry of Tourism (MoT) from going tom-tom about how great we fared against the previous year. May be the tourism industry will do itself good if the comparative set is against a competitive set with other nations in the region.

Take a look at Mumbai; sex doesn't even feature in the top ten industries that supports the economy of this city. Our commercial capital is the powerhouse of money and talented resources. Sadly we have no political will to achieve even half of what a poor country like Thailand can. Our ministers and other self-professed social crusaders have been mooted the idea of turning Mumbai into Shanghai.

Leading international brands have started to look at India to further their hospitality and travel business but in Bangkok, they are already there.

Before we want to get to be Shanghai, I hope our ministers and corporate bigwigs realise that we should try and get close to being Bangkok...

– Savio Rodrigues

Radio Thailand and FTA ads

August 27, 2005

Categories: Business

Over the last few months Radio Thailand has been promoting free trade agreements with a series of ads during its broadcasts. Here are some wav files of these amusing ads.

Ad #1: A clueless foreigner in a bar [spouts off about free trade](#) and a helpful local gives him a speech (to preserve bandwidth, we have truncated the speech, but the amusing part is at the beginning).

Ad #2: *The winds of change are [blowing all over the world](#)... free trade is spreading...*

Taopoon/Purple Line Controversy 2005

August 27, 2005

Categories: Subway

Tussle between Taopoon people vs. MRTA continues as a political football – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, August 27, 2005

Gen. Kittisak has responded to the MRTA Governor's remark on Gen. Kittisak as the henchman for Democrats since he has worked as an aid de camp of the PM Office during the administration of Former PM Chuan Leekpai (Democrat) from 1997 to 2000. He says that "Khun Chuan is a very good man to run both the PM Office and Kalahom. He never abused his power of which I can testify. Therefore, no distraction from Taopoon controversy please!" Gen. Kittisak also claimed that elevated track mass transit are no longer constructed.

MRTA refusing to conduct an EIA – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, August 25, 2005

After the discussion between Gen Kittisak along with 14 representatives from Taopoon people and the Senate Environmental Committee led by Senator Kaosan Atiphothi at 4pm on August 24, Gen Kittisak pointed out that MRTA has never explained to the local people about this project at all and they refuse to perform an updated EIA on this project. MRTA simply used the outdated data for 1997 as the way to implement the project even though the first 4-km of the Purple Line goes up against the 113 sq-km restriction within the Ratchada Ring Road.

Gen. Kittisak has sent the plea of local people to MP offices and PM's Office, but their plea has been thrown to MOTC and OTP which sides with MRTA by insisting that the Purple Line must be all elevated track for 23 km, not 4-km underground.

Senator Kaosan has responded that since both those who have the land expropriated and those who live along the tracks, but did not have their land expropriated have worried about the detrimental effect of elevated tracks on the environment in the same way as those who live in Saphan Kwai, they should sent more information about the environment at Saphan kwai while asking for a Court Order to temporary suspend of the project until the EIA is updated. Failure to perform EIA would allow the suspension of the Purple Line project.

Taopoon communities split – Few protesters after the core organizers agree with MRTA's compromises – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, August 18, 2005

After General Kittisak and other core protesters of the elevated tracks have agreed with MRTA compromises, the protesting has receded to such extend that virtually nobody comes to protest against the MRTA project. This is due to the fact that most of buildings in Taopoon area are commercial rows for rent, not residential areas as Taksin Center. Therefore only a few local people still stand up against MRTA.

A few who still protest (most are those who used to live in Saphan Kwai) have pointed out that they have seen the detrimental effects from elevated tracks of BTS– noise pollution and microparticle pollution.

Settlement on Purple Line controversies – translated and summarized from *Than Setthakij*, August 14-17, 2005

MRTA is planning to settle with local people along Nonthaburi Road by setting up commercial space under stations as well as commercial buildings near the stations as the compensation with a 10-year lease-free period in addition to the payment of land at market price or better. MRTA Governor feels sure that the MRTA Board would approve this compensation.

However, MRTA board feels worried about the new design of stations and tracks to minimize land expropriation. This plan would jeopardize security and public safety due to obstruction during evacuation from commercial areas. The new track design also causes longer evacuation routes and is very bad from public safety viewpoints.

[Renewed push for ads, shops at stations](#) – *Bangkok Post*, July 25, 2005

...If given the green light, the MRTA planned to build small convenience stores on empty space at the entrances of all 18 stations and ticket booths in some popular stations.

"Such convenience stores would hardly generate a profit for the MRTA, but we will develop them for our customers' sake," he said...

Purple Line issues still need a PM decision – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, July 13, 2005

After discussions between OTP, MRTA and protesters from Bangkok-Nonthaburi Road led by Gen Kittisak Rattnaorasod, OTP said, "Those people who have their land expropriated should have another discussion on July 14 so as to gather data to be submitted to Premier Thaksin on July 16."

The MRTA Governor said, "Elevated tracks require 200 square wah for the gate while underground stations require at least 400 square wah to collect the soil during the construction of the tunnel, another 200 square wah for ventilators and another 120-15 square wah for ventilators between each station."

The solution for this case to allow local people to walk around the 400 square wah area as the substitute for the outright land expropriation.

Gen Kittisak retorted back to both MRTA governor and OTP that the local people want to know how MRTA is going to deal with the local people about the construction issue, not what MRTA is going to give local people during the construction.

There are still some unresolved issues which can be described as follows:

- 1) What is the criteria for the decision as to whether this line should be underground or elevated tracks?
- 2) It seems to them that the 1994 cabinet resolution on 87 square km area within the Ratchada Ring is useless because it is not being enforced to be underground track. Why Tao Poon-Wongsawang people do not deserve underground track as those who live along the Ring?
- 3) Why the section from Tao Poon to Rat Boorata has 14 underground sections with the section from Mahaisawan to Dao Khanong still underground track despite the fact that the track is out of Ratchada Ring after passing Mahaisawan Intersection?

Gen. Kittisak said they would not listen to any other people who suffer from the delays of the project, they would listen only to the solution for themselves. They have asked Khun Khanin Bunsuwan to draft a legal letter to the Administrative Court to nullify land expropriation If the Administration Court rejects their plea, they will send an appeal to His Majesty at Klai Kangwon Palace.

The worsening controversies on Purple Line – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, July 14, 2005

Protesters feel convinced that they have to get the new alliance to prevent a counterattack from those Bang Yai-Nonthaburi people as well as other Bangkokians. Therefore, they told those who live in Bang Pho Bang Oh, Bang Phlat, Pinklao, Phrannok and Tha Phra to join with them to go against the elevated tracks of both Blue Ring and Purple Line since they are not satisfied with any explanations from MRTA.

Qualification of contractors for the Purple Line – translated and summarized from *Dailynews*, July 8, 2005

The eligible contractors for Purple Line—three contracts—either single companies or joint ventures—must be Thai firms or joint ventures with Thai firms as the main contractor.

Three contracts on Purple Line

- 1) Bangsue – Phra Nan Klao
- 2) Phra Nanklao – Bang Yai
- 3) Bang Yai Depot and Bang Yai Park and Ride

The qualified form for the first two contracts would be either a single Thai company with revenue more than 3 billion baht from the 2002-2004 period while the joint venture requires the minimum revenue of more than 5 billion baht in 2002-2004 with revenue of the main contractor of at least 3 billion baht at the same period.

The third contract would be either a single Thai company with revenue more than 1.5 billion baht from the in 2002-2004 period while the joint venture requires minimum revenue of more than 2.5 billion baht in 2002-2004 with the revenue of the main contractor of at least 1.5 billion baht in the same period.

The qualified companies would have to make an e-auction so as to get winners and the signing of the contract in early 2006.

Purple Line controversies: No end in sight – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, July 12, 2005, *Matichon*, July 12, 2005, and *Dailynews*, July 12, 2005

There was a seminar at Richmond Hotel on the Purple line to Bang Yai with 400 people attending including 30 people from Bang Buathong who go up against the

delay created by those who live in Taopoon-Wong Sawang-Tiwanon.

There are two designs for elevated 16 stations. One is a regular design like BTS while there are four stations with special designs.

- 1) Bang Ploo
- 2) Saphan Phranangklaio
- 3) Bang Son
- 4) Tao Poon

There will be four park and ride facilities at the following stations:

- 1) Klong Bang Phai Terminal – 1800 cars
- 2) Bang Yai Intersection – 1772 cars
- 3) Tha It – 1244 cars
- 4) Nonthaburi 1 – 470 cars

Klong Bang Phai terminal would be a maintenance center for this line and carry 461,000 passengers a day with 40,000 passengers/hour.

Land Expropriation for the track construction:

Section 1: The Gate of Janthimathanee Village, Kanchanaphisek road

Section 2: Bang Yai – Rattana Thibet Intersection

Section 3: Phra Nangklao Bridge – 5.1 Rai

Section 4: Rattana Thibet – Tiwanon – 700 m – 7.9 Rai

Section 5: Tiwanon Intersection – 650 m – 3.9 Rai

Section 6: Pracharat 2 – Tesco Lotus Prachachuen – 1100 m – 9 Rai

Land Expropriation for 16 stations

- 1) Taopoon – 5.2 Rai
- 2) Bang Son – 3 Rai
- 3) Wong Sawang 3.5 Rai
- 4) Tiwanon – 3.6 Rai
- 5) MOPH – 4.2 Rai
- 6) Sri PornSawan – 3 Rai
- 7) Nonthaburi 1 – 1.9 Rai
- 8) Tha It – 2.4 Rai
- 9) Talad Bang Yai – 2 Rai

The Bang Phai Depot needs land expropriation of 1663.5 rai with the following expense

- 1) 4.082 billion baht for land expropriation
- 2) 1.882 billion baht for building compensation
- 3) 9.500 billion baht for the depot and maintenance center

The opinions about the Purple Line controversies can be seen [here](#).

The survey of the route will be started by the end of July 2005 so as to start construction in early 2006.

Taopoon controversy needs court settlement – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, July 11, 2005 and *Matichon*, July 11, 2005

Taopoon people have decided that they would no longer listen to any explanation from MRTA as well as OTP since both are not going to listen to their pleas anyway.

Therefore, they have to ask the Administrative Court to nullify the Royal Decree for the land expropriation despite of opposition from those who live in Nonthaburi and Bangyai who long for the quick mass transit implementation.

Note: Taopoon people would prefer tracks proposed by the Democrats in 1994-1995 over those proposed by TRT in 2004. The only difference is that the first 4-km has to be underground or they would oppose the implementation of the Purple Line.

Traffic Police supporting Taopoon people for a 4 km underground track – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, July 5, 2005

The continuing protest against the elevated track at Taopoon-Wongsawang area have got another ally for Taopoon people – the Traffic Police Chief.

The Traffic Police Chief said he agrees with Taopoon people about this issue due to the different results between elevated tracks vs. underground track. Police have much less headache for traffic management when tracks are underground due to the fact that underground tracks require blocking only at the gates while the elevated track requires the closure of traffic lanes.

If the budget allows, underground track is a better deal. Only in the case where the underground tracks cost too much that elevated tracks will become the only option. The Traffic Police Chief said the commercial development is the main source of

Note: It seems to me that many people have rejected commercial development inside the stations despite the fact that commercial activities generate only about 5-10% of revenue – yet it makes the stations more likable. Just look at the Subway Station in Tokyo compared with the subway station in New York and London...

No Park and Ride for Purple Line except at Bang Yai depot – translated and summarized from *Dailynews*, July 6, 2005

After the continuing friction between MRTA and local people from Taopoon to Tiwanon for the 4-km underground track with the interchange at Bangsue instead of at Taopoon, MRTA told the press that MRTA needs to expropriate the land of 12 sections for 3 stations, 800 square wah (2 rai) for each station since local people do not want a park and ride at the first 3 stations. The stations are also 17-19 meters from the ground.

Three irregularities on the Purple Line: Rushing, more expensive than BTS, no public hearing – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, July 2, 2005

Local Taopoon people are going to make a second protest after getting the message it is the government's policy that MRTA has to implement. Only government could change the policy to meet local people's demand.

At this time, protesters are going to discuss at Bowornphan School near Taopoon Intersection at 10am on Sunday, July 3, 2005 to pressure the government to comply with the 1994 cabinet resolutions.

The studies from the Transportation Committee of the parliament on November 23, 1994 stated that the elevated section along Bangkok-Nonthaburi Road (Taopoon-Tiwanon) would disrupt the fire fighters' activities if there is a fire. It could create traffic crisis and hurt businesses in the long run.

1) The first irregularity is: Why did the government chooses this line first? This line is a much less important lines that the one that will go through Rattankosin Island.

2) The second irregularity: No public hearing from MRTA despite the obligation for MRTA to set up three public hearings for local people in early 2005. They just got a public hearing for those in Bang Yai, Bang Buathogn and Nonthaburi, but no public hearing for those who live in the Taopoon-Wongsawang area.

3) The third irregularity: Cost overrun – Taking much more budget/km than BTS despite the fact that BTS is within the CBD which is supposed to be more expensive than MRTA which goes into the suburb area of Bang Yai.

OTP points out that Bangsue-Taopoon-Wongsawang can be underground – Cost cutting is the main cause for all elevated tracks – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, June 29, 2005

OTP has explained to *ThaiRath* correspondents that even though the section from Bangsue to Wong Sawang should be an underground section according to the 1994 cabinet resolution, the actual implementation can be readjusted according to the need.

The elevated sections cost MRTA 2 billion baht/km while the underground section cost MRTA 6 billion baht/km. Therefore, MRTA is compelled to all-elevated track to save the budget, reasonable for the lines to suburb areas.

Much of the Yellow LRT Line as well as the Orange Line have become underground track due to the fact that both have to pass through the heavy traffic along Lad Phrao Road and Ram Khamhaeng Road – much heavier than the traffic along Krung Thep-Nonthaburi Road.

Taopoon people revolt! Setting up four protesting centers – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, July 4, 2005

After the meeting of the local people at Bowornphan School at 10am on July 3, 2005, Gen. Kittisak Ratprasoe (the coordinator) told (or instigated) the local people

during 2-hour lecture to "Post More Banners! Never Become Frightened by Public Pressure from other Bangkokians! If you Back Down, Our Rights will be Forfeited! Even Utterly Defeat by Cornering through Sheer Forces, We just do our best."

After that, they set up four protest centers at Taopoon, Bang Son, Wongsawang and Tiwanon to "educate" (or brainwash if you are in the opposite side) local people about the detrimental effects of the project.

They have sent petition to Premier Thaksin three times and got no response and the are going to make a 4th petition to Premier Thaksin and OTP on July 12 and to OTP on July 15, after the meeting on July 5.

Gen. Kittisak said the local people want the government's response on the following irregularities:

- 1) Government already made heavy investment on Bangsue Station but why they still have to invest on Taopoon Interchange Station, is it a waste of money? Have OTP been to Taopoon area at all and to see what should be actually be done?
- 2) Traffic jams from 5:30am. The 17 meter wide road will become 13 meter wide road after the construction of elevated tracks worsening the traffic jam in their areas which the trucks carrying wooden products have to pass through.
- 3) During the construction of the elevated tracks of BTS, there is no land expropriation, so they will ask for no land expropriation – even the size of pinhead – in the same way as BTS has done if the government shows a clear policy supporting the elevated tracks.
- 4) Since there is no problem for the construction of underground track, why don't they choose underground tracks for their area?

[New elevated section planned](#) – Bangkok Post, July 5, 2005

The Transport Ministry plans to extend the subway system from Bang Sue to Bang Yai in Nonthaburi within four years, but the extended section will be elevated to save costs and construction time.

Transport Minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit said the Mass Rapid Transit Authority (MRTA) may select a contractor for the 23km extension through an e-auction before the end of this year.

Construction could then start next year and be completed in 2009...

Asking Premier Thaksin to pressure MRTA to make the line underground – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, June 28, 2005

Mr. Manoj Tengmaneevirat (the former member of the BMA City Council – the leader for the opposition of all-elevated tracks of Purple Line) told *Thairath* correspondents that the discussion with the MRTA governor yields no result at all because they do not want any land expropriation—even land the size of a pinhead. Thus, he and his friends have signed a petition to Premier Thaksin and the Transportation Committee to review this project to make 4-km an underground track.

Trouble with local people intensifies – Fuel hike compelling MRTA to raise the ticket price – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, June 27, 2005

After the discussion at Wat Soeng Wai School about the Purple Line matter, the discussion turns venomous and both MRTA and local people have traded jeers with full venom—both sides refuse to listen to one another.

MRTA is insisting the 23 km be all elevated tracks while the local people along Bangkok-Nonthaburi road insist 4-km be an underground section.

MRTA has explained to local people that the first 20-km all underground track cost MRTA 110 billion baht and another 4 km underground track would add 20-30 billion Baht extra cost form the 46 billion baht which is for all elevated tracks This kind of selfishness of local people along Bangkok-Nonthaburi Road would prevent those who live in Bang Yai suburbs from getting the Subway since all the 46 billion baht budget would go into the 7-km underground tracks.

MRTA needs to expropriated 94 parcels of land (2000 square wah= 5 rai) for Taopoon interchange station, 30 parcels of land (800 square wah = 2 rai) and 21 patches of land at Wong Sawang Station (800 square wah = 2 rai) and the details can be seen at MRTA Head Office.

Furthermore, the station is 360 meters long and 17 meters above the ground and would not create the tunnel effect as those who live in Saphan Kwai have claimed.

However, those who live in Taopoon have been brainwashed by those from Saphan Kwai whose business have been ruined by the Skytrain as well as other Democrat politicians who got no benefit from the Skytrain so those local people of Taopoon-Bang Son-Wong Sawang would never listen to any explanation from MRTA.

Note: Those who live in Saphan Kwai have voted for a Democrat MP and those who live in Taopoon have voted Democrat for BMA City Council and it is possible that Democrats have planned to sabotage the Purple Line since the [Taksin and Samrong Skytrain extensions](#) have been rejected by TRT since 2001. Thus Democrats have come up with the tactic of "if we cannot get what we want, you will never get what you want!" This kind of political dirty tactic would leave Bangkokians without mass transit extensions.

Furthermore, MEA has raised the FT price by 3.55 satang per unit due to the continuing fuel price hike, forcing MRTA to consider raising the ticket prices unless MEA agrees to sell electricity without the extra FT price.

Taopoon – Underground work more disruptive than elevated tracks – translated and summarized from *Dailynews*, June 25, 2005 and *Manager Daily*, June 26, 2005

MRTA Governor told the correspondences from *Dailynews* and *Manager Daily* that MRTA has finished the preliminary criteria for the contractors to work on Bangsue-Bang Yai line which is going to be approved by the MRTA Board on July 6. If the criteria is approved, MRTA will call an e-auction by the end of this year and MRTA has sent letters to landowners about land expropriation along the route and it is going to send another letter this July to explain to the public about this land expropriation issue.

MRTA has responded to the protesters for this project who are asking for 4-km underground section from Bang Sue to Tiwanon that: "The underground section requires more space than the elevated section since Taopoon is to become an interchange station. People would suffer from the construction of the underground section than an elevated section."

"Furthermore, the government has a policy to speed up this project to be done in 3 years. This project requires the budget of 46 billion baht for 21-23 km for all elevated tracks. If they want underground track, the 46 billion baht would cover only the first 7 km and MRTA needs at least 40-50 billion to cover the rest. Even other countries have to construct elevated tracks outside CBDs—no underground tracks as other people have misunderstood."

"MRTA has to ensure that the construction of elevated tracks would have very minimal effect on environment and the elevated tracks would not collapsed."

Protesting for Bangsue-Bang Yai elevated track intensified – translated and summarized from *Manager Daily*, June 27, 2005

Local people and merchants around Bangsue-Taopoon are protesting the elevated tracks of Purple Line by claiming the old buildings worthy to be preserved. However, MRTA governor is trying to explain to the public that MRTA needs to expropriate buildings and the houses only for installing the escalators and elevators at the first three stations. However, the local people refuse to listen due to the instigation from those who live in Saphan kwai who suffer from BTS. Therefore, they have signed the petition to MP Lalita Roeksamran for this matter which has boiled into conflict.

Those who live in Taopoon asking MRTA for the land expropriation Issue – Lalita leading the issue for the underground track in the area – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, June 25, 2005

Mr Manot Tengmaneevatthana (the leader of protests against the elevated track) has told *Thairath* that he and his friends have received the letters from TRT MP Lalita Roeksamran which ask local people to listen to the explanations from MRTA about the Purple Line issue at Wat Soengwai School on Sunday June 26, 2005 at 1pm.

Therefore, Mr Manot is asking local people to discuss and express their viewpoints with MRTA governor about this issue.

Note: MP Lalita is going to face a dilemma—pleasing local people would means she can be kicked out of TRT. By pleasing TRT and pushing for speedy implementation of the Purple Line, she would alienate the voters.

If local people from Bangsue to Tiwanon discover that they would have to pay 20-30 billion baht extra for 4-5 km underground tracks with a 2-3 year delay, they may have to think twice about the issue.

MRTA explaining to Taopoon People about Elevated Purple Line – translated and summarized from *Matichon*, June 23, 2005 and *Prachachat Thurakij*, June 23-26, 3005

The local people from Taopoon to Tiwanon have opposed elevated tracks for the Purple Line since they are afraid of pollution, the blocking of their shops, and ruining their business.

However, MRTA has retorted that the line should still be elevated since MRTA has modified the tracks and come up with slimmer tracks than BTS. Only 1060 sections of the land and 640 houses from Bang Yai to Bangsue will have to be expropriated.

Furthermore, MRTA has responded to the protesters as follows:

- 1) MRTA needs to declare a Royal Decree on May 6, 2005 to grab land in a 100 meter radius from the center of the road, 300-600 meters for the curve and allow the construction of a wide curve. The land survey will be started in July 2005.
 - 2) MRTA elevated track will be 17 meters above the ground with a 40 meter span and 2 meter wide pillars compared with 12-14 meters from ground a 25 meter span and 3-5 meter wide pillar for the [Skytrain](#). This should allow better ventilation and minimization of obstruction. This will allow parking at the spaces between pillars.
 - 3) No commercial areas within stations. Only passengers area are allowed.
 - 4) Underground sections would take more space to be expropriated to install drilling machines.
- Those who live in Bang Buathong, Bang Yai and Nonthaburi have sharpened machetes and sticks to thrash people from Bangsue – Bangson – Wongsawang area who have obstructed and delayed the project for their own greedy interests.
- Underground track would even double the construction bill and delay the project despite strong demands from those people from Nonthaburi – Rattanaibet – Bang Yai.

The list of land expropriation can be as follows:

- 1) Bang Phai Station and Depot, Bang Ploo and Bang Rak Yai – 448 sections with 102 buildings
- 2) Talad Bang Yai station and Bang Yai Intersection with Park and Ride – 33 sections with 28 buildings
- 3) Tha It Station, Sai Mah Park and Ride, Phra Nan Klao, Nonthaburi 1 Park and Ride, Sri Porn Sawan, Nonthaburi Bureaucrat office, Satharanasuk, and Tiwanon Station and the track to Wongsawang -> 372 sections and 331 buildings.
- 4) Wongsawang, Bang Son and Tao Poon interchange station -> 207 sections with 199 buildings.

Elevated track from Taopoon to Wong Sawang violating cabinet resolution – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, June 24, 2005

Thairath correspondents said that when the construction of the Skytrain started in 1993, there was a protest against the construction of elevated tracks which resulted in a cabinet resolution in May 17, 1994 that:

- 1) 25 square-km covering Victory Monument, Silom, Dusit, Yoawaraj, Rattanakosin Island, Old Thonburi must be underground tracks
- 2) the other 87 square-km between Ratchada Ring and 25 square-km restriction area should be underground track.

BTS is exempt due to the contract signing before the cabinet resolution.

Therefore, the section from Bangsue to Wongsawang should be compiled with the cabinet resolution by becoming underground tracks.

In Samut Prakarn Civic Center on June 23, Deputy Governor Samart explaining to 300 local people about the extension from Onnut to Samrong (8.9 km) and Samrong to Pak Nam (10 km) by using elevated tracks.

Even though there is the consensus that there must be mass transit systems through these areas, many such as Mayor Boonlue Phetbodee (Samrong Nuea Municipal) still argue that this route must be underground as it passes their downtown sections because it is very bad assumption by BMA that Samut Prakarn is still rural area so elevated section is okay. Many local people in Samut Prakarn argue that they are a downtown area so it must be underground.

Furthermore, they ask for no commercial area allowed within the stations areas once the extension passes into Samut Prakarn so it will not hurt their local businesses.

Compensation for any damage to infrastructure and buildings along the route as well as the results from infrastructure removal during the construction must be paid back to Samrong and Samut Prakarn Municipality in full.

Asking TRT PM Lalita and the Democrat BMA City Council: "Keep the 4-km Bangsue-Wongsawang route underground" – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, June 23, 2005

Local people from Taopoon to Wongsawang are asking their MP (Dr. Lalita Roeksamran – TRT – now Deputy House Speaker) and their representatives in the BMA City Council of Bangsue district (Miss Pornphimon Kongudom – Democrat – daughter of Senator Chatchawan Kongudom) to pressure Premier Thaksin and Minister Suriya to put the first 4-km section as underground track.

Initially, the BMA City Council Member Pornphimon said this line was proposed since 1995, but it has been proposed again in 2004 as elevated tracks which frightened local people so she asked her father (Senator Chatchawan Kognudom) to pressure the government to rectify this problem by constructing the first 4-km section as underground tracks. The other 19 km would still be elevated track.

However, Mr. Somphong Kengrungruengchai (TRT – member of BMA City Council from Bangsue) said there are so few protesters and he suspect the evil motivation of local people which causes this late protesting. He even asks the local people who protest to listen to those people from Nonthaburi who long for a mass transit line.

Commentary by Wisarut: It is likely that the government would keep the original all-elevated track intact. The raid at the casino in Taopoon has already hurt Senator Chatchawan's business and there is speculation that there will be further problems for Senator Chatchawan and Democrat representatives on the BMA City Council since both are up against Premier Thaksin and Minister Suriya's plans.

Land expropriation at Taopoon intersection for the 4-floor Purple Line interchange station – Will pass Tesco Lotus at the expense of Taopoon Flea Market – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, June 22, 2005

According to the report about the local protest against the elevated track of Purple Line Subway, *Thairath* correspondents have found that the Purple Line will go from the end of the Blue line with a gradient climbing from Siam Cement, passing Tesco Lotus and following Pracharat Sai 1 road to Taopoon intersection.

There will be an interchange station at Taopoon intersection for the Blue Ring and Purple Line in the same way as Siam Station—a 4-floor interchange station.

This interchange station requires the space at all corners of the intersection and land expropriation of commercial buildings, schools, houses and Taopoon Flea Market is a must to allow supporting pillars to carry the interchange station covering the whole Taopoon intersection with a length of 300-400 meters.

After that, the track will turn right to follow Bangkok-Nonthaburi Road to Bang Son, Wong Sawang, Tiwanon, Khae Rai, Rattanaibet and end up at Bang Yai. There will be four stations within the BMA area such as:

- 1) Taopoon interchange station
- 2) Bang Son Station (connecting with the Southern Line Commuter)
- 3) Wong Sawang
- 4) Tiwanon

This will require land expropriation at Bangkok Textile Factory, Krung Thai Bank, and other buildings nearby.

Mr Manot Tengmaneerat said he is collecting signatures of those who are going to suffer from this project to be submitted to the Bangsue District Office, BMA, MOTC and Premier Thaksin—step by step so as to get the sympathy from the government. Even though the construction has not started yet, local people along the route have suffered from the stress from this project.

They would prefer underground track all the way to the BMA border pole so there will be no blocking from pillars and stations at the front of their homes and shops. Otherwise, their business would be ruined.

Bangsue-Bang Yai must be elevated – MRTA expropriating every 700 meters for stairs to stations – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, June 21, 2005

The elevated section of the subway from Bangsue to Bangyai has met with opposition from local people. They are asking MRTA to construct that section as subway track until the tracks pass their communities from Bangsue all the way to Tawanon Intersection. Banner there read:

"NO Elevated Tracks on Bangsue Area PLEASE!"

"Premier Thaksin – Please Don't be RUDE to US Again"

"Please MRTA, Give My Dad Some Mercy – We Don't want Suffer from Elevated Tracks!"

Those protesting banners have shown up from Tao Poon to Tiwanon where the Purple Line will go and be ready to start construction in 2006 and be done in 2008.

The following is an interview with the local people who oppose the elevated tracks of the Purple Line.

Mr. Sawit Jiraratthorn (65 years old) – owner of Sawat Land Electrical Appliances in Bangsue District said: "Elevated Tracks would have very harmful effects on my shop in the same way as my chaps who sell the electrical appliances at Saphan Kwai where the elevated tracks of the Skytrain go through. Sales are much worse selling along very narrow roads. Customers cannot park cars along the road. Even worse, being smoked alive as my peers at Saphan Kwai under the Skytrain tracks." Mr. Samroeng Jai Ngam (40 years old) said: "The elevated tracks cause narrower roads by 2-3 lanes ... the front of my shop will be obstructed. Customers will run away. Where are we going to live since our shops are going to be expropriated? Some have not finished their installment payments on their building yet! Better come up with a subway instead..."

Mr Chet Trakarnwutthiphongse (38 years old) – owner of Trakarn Korsarn construction material shop said: "Even though this mass transit system is a must-have project, it would be much better if the first four km tracks are subway until it passes the Bangkok border pole. We never thought that there will be the elevated track through our area."

"After recognizing that this project is an elevated track, our folks around Bangsue-Wang Sawang get worried about a bleaker future after land expropriation from Tao Poon all the way to Soi Ruam Sirichai in Nonthaburi. Bangkok-Nonthaburi road is 18-meters wide, but the station is 24-meters wide and 300 meters long. Therefore, the land expropriation for the station areas every 700 meters is a big must, but where are people going to work after their shops are gone for good? No clear answer is coming out of MRTA's PR dept. Conflict of interest between those who live in Nonthaburi and those who live in Tao Poon-Wongsawang area is going to explode sooner or later!"

Ms.Rangsiya Santiwatthanachaikul (42 years old) – the owner of Tai Yong Huad Wood Shop along Bangkok Nonthaburi Road said: "I could see a very bleak future for our area in the same way as the Saphan Kwai area after elevated tracks become a reality. Most shops will close due to narrow roads as we cannot park trucks to carry the wood for construction materials. MRTA better come up with a subway where it passes our area."

The protesters' banners are much the same as in case of the controversial Lad Phrao Elevated Way in 2004 which forced the government to come up with the Yellow LRT line as a substitute.

Commentary by Wisarut: For the case of the Lad Phrao Elevated way, the local people of Lad Phrao got support from other Bangkokians who have strong hostility toward elevated ways.

However, I afraid that those who live from Bangsue to Tiwanon Road would get much less support from other Bangkokians because they badly want subway extensions at the cheapest cost and fastest implementation.

More politics in mass transit: OTP plans to solve the conflict on the tunnel-elevated sections of the subway – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, June 7, 2005
OTP is asking to BMA to review the BMA tunnel at the Phrannok intersection and Bommraj Chonnane intersection so as to allow space for the construction of the elevated Blue Ring Line (Bangsue – Charansanitwongse – Tha Phra) and ask BMA to construct pillars for the Blue Ring near both tunnels.

OTP is asking BMA to review the tunnel plan at Mahaisawan Intersection as well as modify the constructed Rama 2 Flyover so as to allow the Purple Line to go through without problem. Mahaisawan tunnel should be handled by MRTA so as to leave the space for Mahaisawan Station without problems since Mahaisawan Station must be underground while Dao Khanong station of the Purple Line must be an elevated station.

For the case of the Yellow Line LRT (Lad Phrao – Happyland – Sri Nakharin – Samrong) and Pink Monorail (Pakkret – Chaeng Watthana – Ram Indra – Minburi), OTP is asking for 394 million baht budget so as to coordinate the Yellow Line LRT with the expressway along Sri Nakharin and the Lum Salee Interchange. OTP would come up with the preliminary design.

Commentary by Wisarut: This is clearly a political football by asking BMA to construct the elevated section of Blue Line as well as modifying Mahaisawan tunnel for the underground section of the Purple Line and Rama 2 Flyover for elevated section of the Purple Line to please TRT while halting Samrong Extension as the way to punish both BMA and BTS.

Sooner or later, the conflicts between BMA and OTP will turn into a full-scale war. The plan for the Yellow LRT as a part of Sri Nakharin Expressway shown the very explicit insincerity of OTP in solving traffic problems. Constructing the expressway would draw people from the mass transit option. The Lum Salee Interchange plan is meant to harm The Mall Bangkok [the owners are supporters of the Democrats]. The same can be said about the halting of the [Taksin Extension](#) to Phetkasem and Blue ring to Mahaisawan so as not to support The Mall Tha Phra.

Reactions to Thaksin's 'X'

August 27, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

From the Thai-language
press: Reactions to Thaksin's 'X'
– August 27, 2005

Manager: The PM meets the mass media for the first time (at the weekly press conference) and specified that he will answer routine questions. He insisted that the Southern problem is a domestic case and other Muslim countries understand this well. He mentioned 'Romli' as a big cause of the turmoil. He repeated there is less corruption, but it seems much more so because they are investigating more. He had spoken for an hour before training the media group that they should ask "constructive" questions (by sign an 'X' sign). He claimed the accusation of the Bangkok Post made it lose its reputation.

Dailynews: "Maew" discusses with the mass media at the first weekly press conference and clears the queue of questions. Then he took a "true-false" sign and raised it when he answered questions like playing on a Japanese game show. After answer questions from the media for one hour, he told that he got the sign from his son "Oak" who bought it in Japan. So "Maew" brought it with him to play with the mass media so there will not be too much too tension because each question makes him feel tired.

Matichon: "The PM meets the media" in the first press conference and surprises by being open to reporters to ask him every issue. But if he did not want to answer, he raised an "X" sign and presses a buzzing sound before saying it is not a constructive question. He explained the plan to discuss the FTA Thai-Japan meeting Prime Minister Koizumi and cooperate to make it a success. He also said he urged solving high gas prices by exchanging jasmine rice with NGV gas from China.

The 50 kilometer bridge over the Gulf of Thailand

August 27, 2005

Categories: Bridges, Infrastructure

The Laem Phak Bai project

The 50 kilometer bridge over the Gulf of Thailand

Royal concern effectively cancelling Laem Phak Bai project – translated and summarized from [Manager Daily](#), [Bangkok Biznews](#), and [Matichon](#), August 8, 2005
Premier Thaksin said he has to cancel the 50 billion baht Laem Phak Bai Project after receiving concern from His Majesty from Klai Kangwon Palace about environmental impact and this controversial project has cost overrun problems after the fuel hike. Furthermore, this project has not passed an Environmental Assessment (EIA). There is serious concern about mercury and lead deposits at the mouth of Mae Klong River and nearby areas which Laem Phak Bai project has to pass through.

The substitute is to construct a new highway parallel with Highway 4 and Highway 35 along with some elevated sections. This also revitalizes the mothballed Bang Yai-Nakhon Pathom-Ban Pong-Cha Am Motorway as a substitute which is cheaper even though it is 30-40 km longer (total 90 km).

Translation from the Thai press: Laem Phak Bia project scrapped! – translated and summarized from *Prachachart Thurakij*, June 16-19, 2005

The highway department decided to delay or even scrap the 56 billion baht Laem Phak Bia project with a total distance of 92 km and they come up with a Bang Yai-Ban Pong Motorway with a provision for Cha Am as an alternative. The demise of this controversial project is due to cost overruns. The price tag for the 47 km mega bridge across the Gulf of Thailand has shot up from 32 billion baht to over 40 billion baht (or from 500 million baht/km to over 800 million baht/km) due to the fuel hike. This is a very controversial project which the Budget Bureau would refuse to approve.

Furthermore, the environmental assessment on the construction site has shown that the area is a soft clay area with a very muddy sea bottom–requiring extensive pillars. This additional cost for support pillars increased their cost from a few billion baht to more than 20 billion baht.

The soil at the sea bottom also shows very intensive amounts of mercury and lead. The mercury and lead would poison sea life around the area. Continuing fuel hikes and construction material hikes are other headaches for the project. Even Premier Thaksin and Minister Suriya know these facts very well.

The Highway Department would have to spend 4.8 billion baht budget for land expropriation (1 billion baht) and highway maintenance (2 billion baht) even though Budget Bureau has approved only 1 billion baht.

The only viable alternative is the Bang Yai-Ban Pong Motorway with a provision of the extension to Cha Am. However, the price tag for Bang Yai-Ban Pong Motorway alone has shot up from 12 billion baht to 15 billion baht—even the land expropriation alone costs the Highway Department 4 billion baht.

[Autumn start planned for Thai mega-causeway](#) – Bridge Web, May 5, 2005

[Thailand to have world's longest road bridge](#) – COWI, May 5, 2005

In the wake of economic growth, very long road bridges are being built...

Thanks to Owen Smith for pointing out these articles.

Gulf of Thailand Bridge – February 8, 2005

On the forum Pas [points out](#) the [50km bridge website](#). Another website set up for the public construction exercise. On [this page](#) you can see photos and video animation of the bridge project, including study of the Oresund bridge linking Denmark and Sweden. More on the bridge is at this [thread on the SkyscraperCity forum](#).

[Bahrain bridge is model for controversial Thai project](#) – *The Nation*, January 27, 2005

... "This will be the first Thai mega-project whose design and construction are done by Thais," said department director-general Therdsak Setthamanop...

[Sea bridge design work 'made harder' – Engineers say EIA should be passed first](#) – *Bangkok Post*, December 10, 2004

The government was wrong to go ahead with designing the 60-billion-baht sea bridge over the Gulf of Thailand before its environmental impact assessment (EIA) study was complete, Chulalongkorn University academics say...

[Engineers oppose sea bridge – Unsound project, something 'fishy'](#) – *Bangkok Post*, November 1, 2004

...The institute says the feasibility study is unreliable and the environmental impact assessment is weak.

The government's decision to implement the project is very questionable," the president of the institute, Assoc Prof Tortrakul Yomnak, said yesterday.

...Some senior officials had falsely claimed that the sea bridge was a royal project.

"It is apparent that some people are trying to silence the project's opponents by claiming that it was the King's initiative," he said.

An abrupt ban on a public forum to discuss the pros and cons of the sea bridge in June only added to his suspicions...

[Details inadequate for impact report approval, says geologist – More details sought on alternative routes](#) – *Bangkok Post*, July 29, 2004

...Experts scrutinising the project's EIA, a prerequisite for a construction permit, have rejected it for lacking detail on alternative routes and the threat of erosion to vulnerable coastlines.

The Mae Klong river runs into the gulf just above Laem Phak Bia, a thin cape serving as a landmark for a section of the bridge in Phetchaburi.

The cape and some nearby shores are already seriously eroded because seaside buildings and jetties in lower southern provinces have trapped sand normally taken north by the sea to the cape...

His division had sent the EIA, which outlines environmental impact mitigation measures, to a panel of experts for approval, he said. The panel, commissioned by the Office of Natural Resources and Environment Policy and Planning, rejected it because it did not give details on alternative routes or give reasons why the gulf bridge was decided on. Panel chairman Prasong Eiam-Anant said: "We told them this was not really an EIA."

Mr Prasit disagreed, but said he had asked a consultant to look at alternative routes.

Toll gates for the Laem Phak Bia project – translated and summarized from *Than Sethakij*, March 14-17, 2004

There will be five toll gates for the Laem Phak Bia project: 1) Nakhon Pathom, 2) Phetkasem, 3) Wat Krasa Khao, 4) Ban Makham Chang (Laem Phak Bia), 5) Cha Am

There will be service areas for both sides of the bridge (Wat Krasa Khao and Ban Makham Chang) and the parking lot for viewing the sea which can carry 150 cars at one time (10 baht parking fee). The toll ticket is 100 baht flat rate.

Thai Press Association criticizing Laem Phak Bia Project – translated and summarized from *Dailynews*, March 21, 2003 and *Siam Turakij*, March 21-28, 2004

Journalists from Thai Press Association have criticized the 128-km Laem Phak Bia Project with a price tag of 56.816 billion baht saying it is a big waste of money since it cuts down the distance by only 13 km and it will cause environmental disasters. This project is conceived to please vested interests and Bangkok voters, but not from the demands from local people including Southerners. The proposed plan also has not passed the environmental assessment, but the government is trying to push it very hard by approving a 400 million baht study budget to finish the study in 1 year so as to start the project and be done in 3 years.

There will be 3 sections for this 128-km motorway

1) From Ban Laem Bua (Bangyai – Ban Pong Motorway) and go south to pass Phetkasem Road and Pinklao-Nakhonchaisri Road before ending up at Rama 2 Highway.

2) From Rama 2 Highway to go over the sea at Wat Krasa Khao and end up at Ban Makham Chang

3) From Ban Makham Chang to pass Route 3117, 3187, and 3147 and then Phetkasem Road before ending up at Cha Am. This section will be constructed with the elevated way across the sea.

There will be 22 communes to be expropriated -> in Nakhon Pathom, Samut Sakhon and Phetburi.

1) Nakhon Pathom 6 Communes

- 1.1) Tambon Tha Krachub (Nakhochaisri District) – commercial commune at Wat Sai (built in 1817) which has the dragon and phoenix drawing. Wat Sai community has 3700 people who are peasants who work on the rice field, plantation and orchards.
- 1.2) Tambon Bang Kaeo (Nakhochaisri District) -> 3500 people who work in the fish ponds and factories
- 1.3) Tambon Klong Mai (Samphan District)
- 1.4) Tambon Bang Chang (Sam Phran District) -> both have 6800 people
- 1.5) Tambon Klongchinda (Nakhochaisri District) -> 7200-12000 people who work in fruit orchards, fish ponds and shrimp ponds
- 1.6) Tambon Kase Phatthana (Nakhochaisri District) -> 4500 people who work in orchards
- 2) Samut Sakhon – 8 communes
 - 2.1) Tambon Nong Nok Khai (Krathumbaen district) – 3200 people
 - 2.2) Tambon Klong Tan (Ban Phaew District) – 4700 people -> most are peasants working in orchards and plantation
 - 2.3) Tambon Suan Som (Ban Phaew District) – 5300 people -> easy to connect with Damnoen Saduak canal and Thachin River
 - 2.4) Tambon Am Phaeng (Ban Phaew District) – 6200 people -> farmers who work in the rice fields, orchards, fish ponds
 - 2.5) Tambon Ban Ko (Muang district)
 - 2.6) Tambon Tha Sai (Muang district)
 - 2.7) Tambon Bang Krachao (Muang district)
 - 2.8) Tambon Ban Bo (Muang district)
- 3) Phetburi – 8 communes
 - 3.1) Tambon Laem Phak Bia (Ban Laem district) – close to the Gulf of Thailand -> most of the 2900 people are fishermen or workers
 - 3.2) Had Chaosamran -> (Muang district) 4500 people – most are farmers working in the rice fields orchards, and plantation as well as workers in tourist industry
 - 3.3) Nong Khon (Muang District) – the swampy area along the sea with 5800 people
 - 3.4) Puck Tian (Tha Yang district) – the area with pristine beach -> 1800 people most are farmers in rice fields
 - 3.5) Nong Sala (Cha Am district) – 2600 people -> Most are farmers in rice fields
 - 3.6) Bang kao (Cha Am district) – 2900 people -> most are farmers and fishermen – this is the place where the old traditions and temples dating back from the Ayutthaya period are still alive -such as the PlenNone, Ubosoth of Wat Tanod Luang with Ayutthaya period architecture style of ships
 - 3.7) Cha Am (Cha Am District) – 2900 people -> most are farmers in the rice field and orchards, fishermen, commercial area and hotels since there are about 50 hotels in Cha Am.
 - 3.8) Khao Yai (Cha Am District) – 8300 people

50km bridge plan to be submitted to the cabinet – translated and summarized from *Bangkok Biznews*, March 9, 2004

The Traffic Policy Office has come up with details on Laem Pak Bai Elevated Way and benefits for the project to be submitted to the cabinet in two weeks. The initial investment will be 400 million baht for design. The design will be done in 1 year and the construction could be started in 2005 and done in the next 3 years. This 92 km motorway will be 6 lanes starting from Rama 2 Highway and elevated for 8 km before heading to the sea at Wat Krasa Khao, Samut Sakhon and going over the sea for 47 km before reaching Ban Makhom Chang, Phetburi and then elevated for another 7km before going across Highway 3117 (11 km from Phetburi) and then elevated again for 30 km before ending up at Cha Am. The budget is 56.816 billion baht—land expropriation 2.018 billion baht, the elevated road in the mainland 18.193 billion baht, the elevated road over the sea 26.683 billion baht, construction control and environmental care 1.032 billion baht, and expense after construction of 2.278 billion baht. Economic benefit will be 14.24% benefit/Investment of 1.29 and the motorway will collect a toll of 100 baht/car. It will take 18 years to pay off all the debts. Minister Suriya said he will push this project to be approved by the cabinet to be ready for the first step of the construction in the next 6 months. **Commentary:** Expect many Thai netters to criticize this project as a plan to serve vested interests and a scheme to drain the funds from mass transit projects—corruption by policy.

A tale of two newspapers – *Bangkok Post*, January 20, 2004

Whoever wrote [this](#) for the *Bangkok Post* either does not know this is the controversial Laem Phak Bia Project – the 50 kilometer bridge over the Gulf of Thailand or is deliberately obscuring the fact: *Cabinet approval would be sought for a 56-billion-baht bypass road linking Samut Sakhon to the South after feasibility studies are completed by the end of this month... The proposed road would be built along the Gulf of Thailand and link Samut Sakhon to Laem Phak Bia and Phetchaburi's Cha-am district.*

The *Bangkok Post* seems to get more vague and cautious with its news every day. Here is the real story on the same day from *Thai Rath*: **Further Studies for Laem Phakbia Bridge across the Gulf of Thailand Needed**

The Traffic Policy Office has asked MOTC to extend the study time and grant 75.75 million baht for further studies on the Laem Phak Bai route to study the following items:

- 1) New city at the foot of the bridge
 - 2) More details before designing due to the fact that Thai engineers have little experience handling massive construction on the sea. Needs further details such as wind forces, erosion, earthquake and so on to calculate into the preliminary estimated construction cost.
- The studies will be handled by Thammasart University from April 2004-April 2005 concerning the route from Rama 2 to Cha Am (92 of 128 km). For the detrimental effects on the mangrove forests along the shore, the project includes 2 billion baht for environmental rehabilitation from Bang Khun Thian by growing mangrove forests and planting more coastal trees.

14-month study for Laem Phak Bia project & small cars promoted – translated and summarized from *Dailynews*, November 25, 2003

Premier Thaksin said the Traffic Policy Office has approved a 14-month feasible study on the Laem Phak Bia Project with a budget of 70 million baht – and he asked to lower the height of the elevated way to 42 meters to cut down the budget as well as the traffic jam during truck movement. After finishing this line, the government will ask the Expressway Authority to handle these elevated ways. He claimed that this elevated way will allow travel from Hua Hin to Ban Na New City in two and a half hours – by a connection with Ram Indra – Lam Lookka Expressway which will be extended to the new city. For the case of the reduction of fuel consumption, the small City Car (such as the Honda City Car) will be promoted as a choice over big gas guzzling SUVs. And new buildings in Bangkok must take traffic problems into account.

[Govt 'distorts' facts on elevated highway](#) – *Bangkok Post*, September 25, 2003

The Phetchaburi MP claimed 95% of his constituents and most people in Samut Songkram were opposed to the elevated highway project pushed forward by Transport Minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit... Building a coastal highway would be a better option, Mr Alongkorn said. It would cost no more than 10 billion baht, seven times cheaper than the planned elevated highway.

[Officials touting shortcut project](#) – *Bangkok Post*, September 24, 2003

Officials are pushing ahead with an elevated highway project to provide a shortcut across the sea to the South from the Central Plains, saying its traffic and economic advantages would outweigh short-term environmental impact.

Angry locals protest against the Laem Phak Bia Project – translated and summarized from *Matichon Daily*, July 6, 2003 -Vol. 26 No. 9249

The Laem Phak Bia elevated road along the Gulf of Thailand approved by the Traffic Committee has inflamed local people. People from Phetburi are raising fists against the projects since the project is going to create an environmental catastrophe along the coastal Provinces. Even the researchers who handle the environmental assessments were puzzled that the project has been approved even though they have not submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment yet. The abuse of power by Premier Thaksin has slapped the faces of intellectuals as well as local people since 95% of local people disapprove of the project and there have been 18 meeting on the project.

After the meeting with the Traffic Committee on July 4, Premier Thaksin said the 127-km Laem Phak Bia does not affect the environment and is worthy to invest in since it cuts the time for traveling from Bangkok to Cha Am by 40 minutes. There are 20,000 daily passengers going from Bangkok to Cha Am. Toll collecting like Donmuang Tollway for the Laem Phak Bia project would be worthy to invest in.

Local people who called in to a local radio forum (a discussion program on Radio Thailand from 10 am to noon on July 5) told the hosts that they "regret that Premier Thaksin rushed to approve the project without thought!" Even the researchers from Chulalongkorn University and Thammasart University who handled the Environmental Assessment said

they have not finished the EIA yet so they cannot submit the final results to the Traffic Committee. Where did Thaksin get the data to approve such a project? 95%

of people from Phetburi strongly disapproved of the project since it was not transparent at all (it is claimed as a royal project to hide hidden agendas) and the initiators refuse to listen to local people. They forced local people to give opinions only about the route that goes across the sea while forbidding people from giving alternatives that go along the coast on the mainland. Only the media who act as mouthpieces of "propaganda for the government like *Dailynews*, and *Manager Daily* said the project is 50% approved by local people!"

Local people said the route that goes over the sea will definitely cause environmental disaster on the coast and pollute the Gulf of Thailand from Mae Klong to Phetburi and neighboring coastal provinces. Locals think that Premier Thaksin is intoxicated with high popularity and has become a megalomaniac so he approved 40 billion baht for the such a project!

Even intellectuals from Phetburi could smell a hidden agenda—vested interest around Premier Thaksin! Those vested interests are cement firms (such TPI), steel firms (Siam Steel), and local contractors (such as ITD, KPV, and Si Saeng). Those vested interests are trampling on the heads, skulls, and skeletons of local peoples who will die from broken hearts after their local business and economy from Wang Manao to Cha Am are destroyed and pillaged by vested interests who use national interests to disguise their actions and blindfold the other people from making serious scrutiny into the project.

Even worse, using sham Public Hearings (fooling researchers to conduct polls without other choices) is a violation of the 1997 Constitution (Article 46 and 56).

The fishermen from Ban Laem said the coastal fishery at Don Hoy Lord (Mae Klong), Don Hoy Siab, as well as the coastal farms of Hoy Kraeng and Hoy Malaenphoo at Ban Laem will be put to an end for good if such a project has been approved. All local people at Ban Laem reject such projects and they are ready to DIE to stop the project since sea is the lifeline of Ban Laem people.

Even the researchers who conducted the polls said they feel double-crossed by the government since the government has fooled them to conduct the polls to legitimize the project. The researchers will submit the final results to the Traffic Office as well as the government to show that they must come up with an alternative or they will lose local trust which will cause a serious blow up in the next election in early 2005. The data which Premier Thaksin has heard from media such as propaganda from the *Dailynews* has definitely not come from the poll conducted by researchers from Chulalongkorn University and Thammasart University. There will be the grand public hearing in early August 2003 to show how strong local people's disapproval of the project is and to warn the media that they should act as the voice of people, not a mouthpiece of government propaganda.

Commentary: MThai webboards are also considered as a mouthpiece of government propaganda since most posts in the webboards have very strong hatred against NGOs, the Democrats, and media such as *Matichon* and *The Nation*.

Opposition to the 50km bridge over the Gulf of Thailand – translated and summarized from *Bangkok Biznews*, July 9, 2003 and *Thansethakij*, July 10-12, 2003
At 10:30am, Mr Alongkorn Pholabut (Democrat MP from Phetburi) and Ms Rangsim Rotsatsamee (Democrat MP from Samut Songkram) said they strongly oppose the Laem Phak Bia Project since it will ruin the environment, destroy the local economy, put fishermen and orchard farmers out of business. The project does still not have an environmental impact assessment yet and the data available implies that that most local people oppose the project. They still remember the day the Rama II Highway ruined their lives and they are not fully recovered from the disaster even though the fishery at Don Hoy Lord (razor clam dune) and the Floating Market at Tha Kha have helped a little bit.

Furthermore, the project has a hidden agenda as a pork barrel project to feed contractors as well as vested interests such as TPI cement. Due to the strong wind gusts on the offshore section of the bridge, the cost to implement the project will balloon from 40 billion to 85 billion baht. Even though the toll for using the road across the sea is 100 baht, they are not sure when it will ever break event.

Therefore, the projects must be reviewed. There are cheaper options to expand Rama II Highway and construct a link across Ao Bang Taboon between Samut Songkram and Phetburi. If Premier Thaksin still insists on building the elevated way across the sea, the people of Samut Songkram, Ratburi and Phetbui will revolt and a civil war could ensue, the Democrat MPs warn.

Commentary: Lam Phakbia has only received preliminary approval. Premier Thaksin also suggested some modifications for the project:

- 1) The interchange at Laem Phakbia should end up at Phetkasem Road in as direct a route as possible to cut costs.
- 2) Rama II Road at Wat Krasuak Khao Interchange (Rama II Km 32.5) must be expanded.
- 3) Build the road first and add railway tracks later on.

Some specifications for the project are:

- 1) 100 meter space between each pillar
- 2) the height from the sea level to the road is 15-45 meters

If all three things are complete, it will cut costs from 65.45 billion baht to 40 billion baht, Premier Thaksin claimed.

Another public hearing will be held in September 2003 and the project should be approved in early 2004, probably amid strong protests.

BTW: Public debt is now at 2.92 trillion baht (April 30, 2003) – up by 2.768 billion baht (2.917 trillion baht in March 31, 2003)

Bangkok Post has a [longer article](#) about this.

The expressway across the sea in 2027 – translated and summarized from *Thairath Daily*, March 9, 2003 and *Manager Daily*, March 7-8, 2003

The bridge across the Gulf of Thailand

After the first meeting of the Economic and Engineering Feasibility of Laem Phak Bia Inter-City Toll Motorway (a new shortcut to the South – Samut Sakhon – Laem Phak Bia – Cha Am), about 300 representatives from provinces along the route expressed concerns as to the impact of the project (especially Nakhon Pathom, Samut Sakhon, Samut Songkhram, and Phetburi).

There are three proposed routes for this project

A) Route A – from Ban Pong-Bang Yai Motorway at Ban Thung Noy with an intersection at Ban Thung Kralok/Ban Na Khok to reach the seashore at Ban Chai Thaleh Rang Chan (Samut Sakhon) before going through the Gulf of Thailand at Ban Ka Long (Samut Sakhon). It will go back to shore at Ban Thamniab and the pass through Ban Bang Thalu and Ban Nong Yao until it reaches Cha Am – with total distance of 133.5 km and a need to expropriate 3,649 rai of land. A compensation budget of 7.298 billion baht for locals would include 1.78 billion baht for building compensation and 74 million baht for agriculture compensation. The construction cost would be 66.883 billion baht.

B) Route B – from Ban Pong-Bang Yai Motorway at Ban Thung Noy with an intersection at Ban Thung Kralok to reach the seashore at Ban Bang Khud (Samut Sakhon) before going through the Gulf of Thailand at Ban Bang Khud (Samut Sakhon). It will pass through the deep sea part and then the shallow sea and go back on shore at Ban Thamniab and pass through Ban Bang Thalu and Ban Nong Yao until it reaches Cha Am – with total distance of 134 km and a need to expropriate 3,235 rai of land. A compensation budget of 6.471 billion baht for locals would include 1.488 billion baht for building compensation and 71 million baht for agriculture compensation. The construction cost would be 67.074 billion baht.

C) Route C – from Ban Pong-Bang Yai Motorway at Ban Thung Noy with an intersection at Ban Thung Kralok/Ban NA Khok to reach the seashore at Ban Bang Khud near Wat Krasa Khao (Samut Sakhon) before going through the Gulf of Thailand at Ban Bang Khud (Samut Sakhon). It would pass through the deep sea part and then the shallow sea and go back on shore at Ban Thamniab and pass through Ban Bang Thalu and Ban Nong Yao until it reaches Cha Am – with total distance of 127.50 km and a need to expropriate 3,235 rai of land. A compensation budget of 6.471 billion baht for locals would include 1.488 billion baht for building compensation and 71 million baht for agriculture compensation. The construction cost would be 63.174 billion baht.

Probably the best route is route C which can be separated into three sections:

- 1) 44-km elevated way from Nakhon Pathom to Samut Sakhon
- 2) 45-km sea bridge across the Gulf of Thailand
- 3) 38.5-km from Laem Phak Bia to Cha Am—a new road parallel to Phetkasem Road with a total distance of 127.5 km

What it costs

- 1) the land route though the hard clay will cost about 200 million baht/km
- 2) the land route through the soft clay will cost about 240 million baht/km (about 6.05 km)
- 3) Elevated way – 450 million baht/km
- 4) the road through the sea -> 600 million baht/km

This route also would have an interchange with Rama II Highway, Ban Pong – Bangyai Motorway, Pinklao – Nakhorn Chaisri Road, Chao Samran Beach road, and Phetkasem Road at Cha Am.

This project would cut down the travel distance from Bangkok to Phetburi and Prachuab Khirikhan by 35 km by car and 70 km by railway and boost tourism to the south. A study will be done in May 2003 and be submitted to the Traffic Committee later.

Even though most people do not object to the project, but many have environmental concerns.

Why Samut Sakhon and Phetburi are protesting

At one point, local people from Samut Sakhon and Phetburi protested against the project since this project will definitely have detrimental effects to local economy. They have been stunned that all three routes will go through the sea as it is the only option. The sea route will become a noose tightening around the necks of the

local people and a razor which will cut the local economy since most of the transportation to and from the south must pass through Samut Songkram and Phetburi. The fishery business of Samut Songkram will be at great peril since the bridge would block the fishermen's boats. Mom-and-pop confectionery shops along Phetkasem are also going to lose most of their customers (at least 80%) if the sea route becomes a reality. If the mom-and-pop confectionery shops are out of business, workers whose lives have relied on raw materials from the local-grown palmylar (sugar palm tree) will be jobless.

Dangerous pillars

The bridge pillars also have potential hazard to fishermen's ships since there is only 100-meter space between pillars. There are about 1000 ships that go into and go out of Samut Songkram—including fishermen's ships, 3000-4000-ton oil tankers, and transportation ships. During the monsoon season, the pillars could be a cause of major accidents since the ships might not see the pillars clearly. There is also concern that storms could blow cars off the sea bridge. Silt will be deposited along the bridge, blocking the way for ships, and ruining the coastal fisheries – especially clam farming and natural razor clams at Don Hoy Lord (Samut Songkram).

Reasons for the sea route

After hearing the strong protests, the committee explained that the route through the sea is the only way to minimize the effects to the local people since the price for land expropriation costs are higher than going over the sea. The project also has intention to reduce the bottleneck between Phetburi and Wang Manao (Pak Tho – the end of Rama II Highway). Route C has IRR of +9.61% – worthy for consideration. This project also has taken the environmental issues into account and there will be rehabilitation of mangrove forests along the coast as a part of the project.

Ready to open in 2027

In 2027, the traffic at Phetburi – Wang Manao will be 100,000 cars a day – up from the current 30,000 cars a day – 30% to Rama II Highway, and the other 25% will head to Bangkok. If the route becomes a reality, there will be 46,000 cars going along the route in 2027 – the first year of service. It will take about 5-6 year to design and the other 15-20 years to construct. The construction will start in 2007. The Highway Department will handle the construction of this project while the Expressway Authority will collect the ticket fees – using the annual 3 billion baht from Motorway and Expressway revenue to back up the project.

Not final

This project is not at the conclusive phase yet, so the route though the sea can be scrapped if local people of Phetburi and Samut Songkram are willing to surrender their land to accomplish the project over land. Even if the route cannot be constructed across the sea due to detrimental effects to the environment, the results of the studies will be very useful to find an alternative. It will take another four months to finalize the study results and submit them to the cabinet by Traffic Committee.

[Super-long bridge over the Gulf of Thailand](#) – *The Nation*, September 21, 2002

Thaksin said the causeway was not pie-in-the-sky and was technically possible because the route over the gulf was in shallows.

[50km bridge over the Gulf of Thailand!](#) – 00:07, April 18, 2002

Pas Seangsong, webmaster of [Bangkok Highrises](#), writes: *I found an [interesting article](#) about a feasibility study for a new tollway between Bangkok and Cha-am. If gets the go ahead, about 50km of it would be built over the gulf of Thailand!*

We love this line from the article: *No problem with land expropriation was expected as the tollway would consist mainly of bridges built above the Gulf of Thailand...*

Pushing hard for the motorway with a 50km bridge – Highway news, May 10, 2002

The 31.23-billion baht Laem Phak Bia Motorway project has been pushed very hard by Minister Suwat Lippataphanlop even though he has been a minister for a few months. Minister Suwat even rode a helicopter to see the area which the project will cover.

Minister Suwat told the press that "it's a very good project to relieve the bottleneck at Phetkasem Road and Rama II Highway. It will reduce transportation costs by 6 billion baht a year."

Laem Phak Bia Motorway project will be a 4-lane motorway starting from Rama II Highway at Pak Tho, passing through the Gulf of Thailand and ending up at Cha Am Beach with a total distance of 90 km. The project would need 31.230 billion baht of investment, 579 million baht for project design, 836 million baht for land expropriation and compensation, 28.947 billion baht construction, and 868 million baht construction control, with an economic benefit of 13.80%.

OCMLT has asked the cabinet for a study budget of 55 million baht. The Highway Dept. is calling for a bid a Bang Yai-Ban Pong Motorway (a 6-lane motorway with 17.124 billion baht investment and a 51km distance). The 2nd and 3rd section of Bang Yai-Ban Pong Motorway (Ban Pong-Pak Tho and Pak Tho-Phetburi-Cha Am) are under study.

However, Minister Suwat said the Highway Dept should suspend the 2nd and 3rd sections since the Laem Phak Bia project is more investment worthy than the 2nd and 3rd section of Bang Yai-Ban Pong Motorway. If the 2nd and 3rd sections of Bang Yai-Ban Pong Motorway is to become a reality, the government will have to invest 39.968 billion baht and construct a 130-km motorway with an interchange at Bang Yai Motorway (1st Phase) at Ban Klong, an interchange with Phetkasem Road at Ban Klong Thang Luang, and an interchange at Rama II Highway at Ban Pak Tho to realize the project. (translated and summarized from *Prachachart Tharakij*, May 9, 2002)

Commentary: Minister Suwat has worked with the Highway Dept when he was a minister of MOTC, so he knows how to please the department without hurting his interests. There is an expectation that Krung Thon Engineering, Prayoorawongse Witsawakam, Vijitrphan (the gang of five within the Highway Dept, a group of five medium-sized companies that almost always win contracts from the Highway Department) will win the contract for Bang Yai Motorway and Laem Phak Bia Motorway projects.

Foreign VIPs ask for royal treatment, and they get it from D.C. hotels

August 27, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

[Foreign](#)

[VIPs ask for royal treatment, and they get it from D.C. hotels](#)

– *Washington Post*, August 27, 2005

Thai reference in this article...

Replica of Buddha's tooth stolen from Myanmar temple

August 27, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Replica
of Buddha's tooth stolen from Myanmar temple](#) –
cnews, August 27, 2005

...There are generally acknowledged to be only two genuine Buddha's teeth in existence, one in China and the other in Sri Lanka. Buddhists believe the teeth, reportedly found after Buddha was cremated 2,400 years ago, bring peace and good fortune.

Big pirated DVD market in Thailand

August 27, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Big
pirated DVD market in Thailand](#) – *New Straits*

Times, August 27, 2005

State Anti-Smuggling Unit chief Deputy Superintendent Rooslan

Radzi said a total of 164,286 discs were confiscated since March.

*"There is a huge market in Thailand for these locally manufactured
pirated discs." ...*

Suvarnabhumi Airport Runway Cracks

August 28, 2005

Categories: Airports and Airlines

[Post labour union to push for reporter to be reinstated](#) – Bangkok Post, January 28, 2008

...Mr Sermasuk sued for unfair dismissal. He believed the company was pressured by the then government of prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra to sack him, but the court ruled that there was no evidence the company was pressured by the government.

He has appealed the decision.

A large number of cracks have been found in runways at the airport since it opened in September 2006. Many domestic services were re-routed to Don Mueang airport to allow for repairs.

[Former "Bangkok Post" editor sees Thai government hand in his dismissal](#) – ifex.org, September 8, 2005

...Source: Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA)

Person(s): Sermasuk Kasitipradit

Target(s): editor(s)

Type(s) of violation(s): fired

Urgency: Bulletin

(SEAPA/IFEX) – A senior editor who was sacked by the "Bangkok Post" newspaper over a flawed report about alleged cracks in the runway of Thailand's new international airport, said his dismissal was a result of the government's interference in the newspaper's editorial policy, an act he says can threaten the independence of the entire Thai press...

"After reviewing the situation again and again, I find that this is not an ordinary situation. Our sacking is the result of influence from outside – from a major shareholder and the government," he was quoted by "The Nation" newspaper as saying in its 4 September issue...

The Post fights back – August 19, 2005

[Media groups decry legal blitz on 'Post'](#) – Bangkok Post, August 18, 2005:

...On the home front, The Nation questioned the merit of the government filing suit. "The staggering legal offensive by the Thaksin government is bad news for the entire media community," wrote its editor Tulsathit Taptim on the opinion page in an article entitled "Libel Suits Being Used to Intimidate".

He went on to ask: "Should false alarms keep ringing, or does everyone prefer the silence unless the real fire breaks out?"

Thai Day newspaper, meanwhile, said in its commentary "No Cracks Does Not Mean There Is No Corruption" on Wednesday that the press was only doing its job as a watchdog.

The writer of the commentary, Xiang Xao Long, a pseudonym, said he took the side of the press "not because I want to ruin Thaksin's reputation or that of his government, but because I'm opposed to corruption, particularly in mega-projects like Suvarnabhumi airport."

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.

[STOPPAGE TIME: Libel suits being used to intimidate](#) – The Nation, August 17, 2005

...To begin with, Suvarnabhumi is one of the world's most scandalous airport projects. All reporters can testify that new allegations surface on virtually a daily basis. The biggest one, of course, concerns the purchase of the CTX bomb-scanning machines, an issue that has yet to go away despite obvious state attempts to sweep it under the carpet. Naturally, journalists have been keeping an eye on the airport.

...Last but not least, should taxpayers sue Airports of Thailand and New Bangkok International Airport over the CTX scandal? Should taxpayers be asked which is more damaging to their interests and Thailand's image – the CTX bribery allegations or the runway "cracks" report, which was immediately retracted?...

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

[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 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.

[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 – 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 Raktapongpaisal 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

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...

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](#)

Sex charges ‘payback’ for probe

August 28, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Sex](#)

[charges ‘payback’ for probe](#) – *The Weekend*

Australian, August 28, 2005

...Some security-industry sources believe it was more than coincidence that Mr White’s arrest came just days after it was revealed how he tracked down junket operator Thongthip Aektrakul—a woman believed to have close connections with one of Thailand’s political clans and other heavyweight contacts in Cambodia.

Another WA man, debt-collector John Dragosavic, 54, who was working on a separate investigation into the same casino stings, was found dead in a Bangkok hotel on July 14. Australian Federal Police would not comment on any link between Mr White’s arrest and Mr Dragosavic’s death...

More awards for Last Life

August 29, 2005

More awards

for *Last Life*

– August 29, 2005

Gigabyte reports on more awards for [Last](#)

[Life in the Universe](#): ...Fant-Asia

film festival is a big event in Montreal and Last

Life just [picked](#)

[up three awards](#), including the two most prestigious.

France issues airlines blacklist

August 29, 2005

[France issues airlines blacklist](#) – CNN, August 29, 2005

Thanks to Moritz for pointing this out: ...*The airlines barred are: Air Koryo of North Korea; Air St. Thomas of the U.S. Virgin Islands; International Air Services of Liberia; Thailand's Phuket Airlines; and Linhas Aereas de Mocambique and Transairways, both from Mozambique...*

Troubles in the South – August 2005

August 30, 2005

Categories: The Thai Deep South

Troubles in the South – August 2005

[Troubles in the South index page](#)



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: ‘Cutting to prove’ – August 28, 2005

Dr. Has reports: *On August 28, monks from Nakornsawan Province came to distribute auspicious material (Buddha images) to people in Yala. There were lots of people (children and adults) waiting to get the auspicious materials. Once they receive the Buddha image, the monk confirms they cannot be harmed by trying to cut their arm with a machete.*



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Turmoil in Sungai-kolok

Mr. John reports: *August 31, 2005 – The new Toyota pickup (above) of the owner of Kaina Restaurant Karaoke was parked at the back of Grand Garden hotel. Bad guys put the bomb in the back of the pickup. It exploded and damaged the area.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

There were 14 unrest situations in Narathiwat on August 31 such as bombs in the motorcycle queue and bombs at the back of Kenting Hotel. 15 were injured and one person was shot.



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: "Welcome home" – August 30, 2005

Mr. John reports: "Welcome home" – Lt. Col. Chanchai Aem-on welcomed the 11 misguided persons who surrendered and were sent to have mind training at Prapokklao Camp, Songkhal for 7 days. They came back by military six-wheel car to Ban Pree. The Islamic headman, Kamnan (Head of Tambon), head of village, and their relatives were waiting for them at the mosque at Ban Pree, Mu 4, Tambon Janae, Amphur Janae, Narathiwat.

Almost like being there: "Strict control" – August 30, 2005

Mr. John reports: Strict control – About 50 Had Yai police, railway police, and the special operation units including with the sniffer dogs and bomb checking machine, are strictly examining the Had Yai junction railway station after being warned about safety from the security units in the three provinces.

[Malaysia opens arms to Thai Muslims](#) – The Irrawaddy, September 2, 2005

Malaysia would be willing to temporarily shelter Thai Muslims who flee their country's insurgency-wracked south if violence there persists, Malaysia's foreign minister said Thursday...



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Trying to blow up a bridge – August 31, 2005

In Nong Chik, Pattani, separatists tied 18 bombs to a bridge. Eleven bombs detonated.





(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Defusing a bomb – August 31, 2005

Mr. John reports: *The team of Baytong, Yala police patrol checked and defused a bomb that the bad guys made from a 15 kgs of gas tank. It was left in front of the gas shop in Baytong, Yala. After investigating, the police found flammable material inside. It is expected that they wanted to reinforce the bomb power and damage a gasoline station 100 metres away.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Fatalities

Mr. John reports (left): *On August 28, 2005 another Village safety guard was killed. Bad guys shot Mr. Hadi Matasira, 36-years-old, while he was riding a motorcycle. The bad guys were hidden and shot him in the heart and head.*

Mr. John reports (right): *On August 29, 2005, Mr. Apidej Yongmakeh, 40-years-old, from Yala and also a volunteer of the combat team was shot while guarding a monk collecting food early in the morning.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Market for Friday – August 26, 2005

Dr. Has reports: *This is the area for selling cheap goods that the government arranged. It is located at the old market in the Muslim area of Yala and will be opened to sell on Friday.*

Almost like being there: Yala – August 31, 2005

Mr. John reports: *The former Chinese-Malayu communist thief asks for Thai nationality. Mr. Yongfuk Zaechai, 77-years-old, former deputy leader of the Chinese-Malayu communists headquartered at Ban Piyamitr 1, Mu 2, Tambon Tanohmaeror, Baytong, Yala came to meet Yala governor and ask for Thai nationality. He denied that he is involved with the unrest in the deep south.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Yala bomb – August 31, 2005

Mr. John reports: *Bombing the team assigned to protect teachers. The police checked the area where the bad guy bombed the police team assigned to protect teachers, Bannangstar, Yala. Two were injured.*

Almost like being there: Narathiwat – August 31, 2005

Mr. John reports: *Officers rechecked the bomb material and cleared the area where the bad guy tried to blast a team of teachers and a team of police assigned to protect them. This bomb injured Mr. Worn Marin, a teacher of Banbue-rangae School, Tambon Tohdeng, Sungai-golok, Narathiwat.*

[Drug rings 'behind unrest' – Chaos incited to stop narcotics suppression](#) – Bangkok Post, August 31, 2005

The Narcotics Control Office and the military have reiterated their belief the violence in the deep South is mainly caused by drug rings which have given some groups of people both money and drugs to incite chaos.

In this way they draw attention away from their trafficking activities...



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: 15 persons surrender – August 30, 2005

Mr. John reports: *The united front of southern thieves surrender: Lt. Gen. Kwanchat Klaharn, commander in-chief of region 4, Mr. Pracha Terat, Narathiwat Governor, and Pol. Lt. Gen. Adul Saengsingkaew, the Commander of Region 9 meet surrendering members of the united front from four districts in Narathiwat. They want to be good persons are afraid of the situation and want to surrender. The officers will take them to have mind training at the Peace Supporting School, Prapokklao Camp, Songkhla.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



Almost like being there: Yala – August 28, 2005

Mr. John reports: *Killing the safety guards for a village. The police investigated the house at 117 Ban Duzongkuji, Mu 1, Tambon Sa-ey, Amphur Krongping, where the bad guy attacked with a war weapon. There were two persons killed, Mr. Karn Yingsong, 60-years-old, and Mr. Sukij Yingsong, 28-years-old (both safety guards for the village). They died while they were watching TV. The bad guy also stole their rifle.*

(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Yala – August 28, 2005

Mr. John reports: *Pol. Gen. Chidchai Wannasatit, deputy PM and Justice Minister said after the government enforces the emergency decree, there has not been serious situations and unrest is at a good level. He is pleased to see lots of people volunteer to create peace. This is the better way than using the power of the emergency decree. He will speed up the summary of what is happening in the area and will clearly distinguish which problems are caused by the unrest group and which by conflicts between groups.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



Almost like being there: Yala – August 26, 2005

Mr. John reports: *A team of Village Safety (150 persons) from five villages of Tambon Kaluwor Wornuea, Amphur Muang participate in an oath-taking ceremony after training on tactics, using a shotgun, and protecting themselves in the villages. This ceremony was done in front of a photo of the King Rama 9. The oath says the Village Safety will teams will be loyal to the nation, religion, and king and be honest to protect the country with their lives. Also to protect their villages for peace and cooperate with the government officers to fight terrorism in the area.*

(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



Almost like being there: Yala – August 26, 2005

Dr. Has reports: *During August 25-26, the Office of Education in area 1, Yala organized the activity "To be number one" which has many activities such as student contests and interests many school to join in.*

[Thailand denies secret talks with Malay rebels](#) – Reuters, August 29, 2005

[Malay separatists say behind southern Thai unrest](#) – Reuters, August 28, 2005

...In a stunning U-turn by an administration which has favoured an iron fist over reconciliation, the spokesman said the Thai government had entered secret talks with PULO from August 24-27 in Lausanne in Switzerland. There was no immediate comment from the government...

(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)



Almost like being there: Yala – August 29, 2005

Mr. John reports: *Killing the art teacher: Mr. Abdulmana Jehzor, 34-years-old, who stays in Tambon Wangpaya, Amphur Raman, Yala was shot by bad guys and died on route to hospital. Mr. Jehzor was an art teacher at Pattanavittaya which is the second biggest religious school in Yala.*

(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Yala – August 25, 2005

Mr. John reports: *On August 25, Pol. Col. Chaitat Intanoojit, the superintendent of Yala Police is the chairperson for promoting the rank of 65 uniform and plain-clothed police who combat crime in the area by focusing on gun offenses, war weapons and bombs for the August 22-26 Royal visit of The Queen. This also prevents promotes the safety of the people.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: "A Emergency Decree Seminar"– August 22, 2005

Mr. John reports: *"A Emergency Decree Seminar" on August 22. Seminar on Decree: Justice Commission and Human Rights, the House of Representatives, Prapokklao Institute, National Human Rights Commission and Thai Law Society organizes a seminar on "How the emergency decree of 2005 impacts people's life in the three southern border provinces." There are more than 1000 people from the five southern border provinces (Satun, Songkhla, Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat) who joined to listen in. Some speakers are worried that law will make the situation worse.*

Right: Democrat MP Surin Pitsuwan



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



Almost like being there: Disaster training in Hat Yai – August 26, 2005

Mr. John writes: *Training to cope with fire: The unit to cope with disaster in Had Yai municipality and a network of public rescue workers and 300 officers who join police, nurses, and volunteers in a training exercise. They train on fire rescue in the 43-floor Napalai Place Building on Ratyindi Road in the center of Hadyai. People pretend to be trapped and injured. It takes two hours before finishing the exercise.*

(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

[Stricter cell-phone measures likely in south](#) – TNA, August 24, 2005

... While a technical explanation of what the proposal involves has not been presented, it is thought that making or receiving messages by cell phone in the border region will not be possible...



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Narathiwat – August 24, 2005

Mr. John writes: *Police arrest a man who allegedly distributes unrest leaflets. Mr. Hama Jehteh, 21-years-old, from Amphur Bajor, Narathiwat was confined and questioned by police in the case of allegedly participating in, inciting, or arranging to threaten government and people.*

Earlier: [Translation of a leaflet left by 'bandits' in the deep South](#) – May 1, 2005

Earlier: [Translation of a leaflet left by 'bandits' in the deep South](#) – February 22, 2005

More on [Troubles in the South](#)

[Southern conflict marked by a profound sense of history](#) – The Nation, August 22, 2005

It's Monday and time for another blistering editorial from Chang Noi...

On his recent trip to the South, Thaksin told the people of Tak Bai to forget the events of the recent past and begin a new life.

A few years ago, in his speech on the opening of the monument to the uprising of October 14, 1973, Thaksin urged that now the monument had finally been built after years of controversy, people should forget the incident and the controversy and look to the future...

Chang Noi's [website](#).

Almost like being there: Returning the body – August 22, 2005

Mr. John reports: *Back home in Nakorn Ratchasima, Mrs. Supien Mongkhuntod, Mrs. Sumlee Kabkhuntod and Mr. Sungvien Putkhuntod, mother, aunt and uncle of Seaman Kraisorn*

Mongkhuntod, wait for his dead body that is being delivered by army plane. Seaman Kraisorn was in hospital at Songkhlanakarin, Hadyai for 10 days and finally died from wounds suffered in a bomb attack [in front of Saeng Thongvittaya School, Narathiwat on August 11.](#)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Pattani – August 22, 2005

Mr. John reports: *Assassinate the soldier: The officers investigate the area after bandits planted a bomb near the Ban Buejor Road, Takeh Mu 1. Ban Buejor, Thambon Bangpi, Amphur Yaring, Pattani. The bomb went off as four soldier safety officers of Rattanrungsun, Ranong were on patrol. The power of the bomb injured Sgt. Niwat Ratchinpon, 24-years-old, slightly on his arm and leg.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Going to the south with Thaksin – August 8, 2005
Last Sunday, PM Thaksin Shinawatra visited people in Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat to find a way to solve the problem of people [being afraid to work on Friday](#). On August 18-19, the PM visited in the area again and asked people to sell things on Friday. Meanwhile there is the unrest in Yala.



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

[Southern conflict marked by a profound sense of history](#) – *The Nation*, August 22, 2005

It's Monday and time for another blistering editorial from Chang Noi...

On his recent trip to the South, Thaksin told the people of Tak Bai to forget the events of the recent past and begin a new life.

A few years ago, in his speech on the opening of the monument to the uprising of October 14, 1973, Thaksin urged that now the monument had finally been built after years of controversy, people should forget the incident and the controversy and look to the future...

Almost like being there: On patrol in Yala – August 18, 2005



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

A bomb injures a ranger: The bad guy plants a bomb in front of a school in Yala wanting to kill the rangers who patrol. Luckily they passed the point of the hidden bomb before it exploded so they were only slightly injured. After that the bad guys planned to steal guns from a house in Kronpinang, but the owner did not keep the gun at his house.



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

[Let them watch cable: Thailand to install TVs in restive south](#) – AFP, August 16, 2005

Thai authorities have announced their latest plan to stem rampaging violence in three Muslim southern provinces: get residents hooked on cable TV. The government's latest southern scheme, a cooperation with private cable television operator United Broadcasting Corporation (UBC), would see TVs set up in community centres and shops across Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat provinces hit by violence that has left 850 people dead since early 2004. ...Kongsak said the tactic could encourage local teenagers to become interested in sports and exercise rather than become obsessed with fomenting unrest, and brushed off suggestions it would encourage youths to gamble on football matches. "I am convinced that there will be no gambling because they do not even have money to buy television sets," he said...



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Pattani – August 8, 2005

Mr John reports: Ask for peace: Many thousand of peoples in the three southern border provinces, (Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat) joined to do a ceremony of Lamad Hayat which is a chant asking the blessing from God to bring peace to area. This is also dedicated to the Queen's birthday–national Mother's Day. There was news that the bad guys distributed leaflets in Yala and threatened people not to join the ceremony.

Also: [PM seeking 'media blackout' on insurgent reprisal letters](#) – TNA, August 15, 2005

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra Monday asked the press to refrain from reporting on leaflets threatening reprisal attacks against local traders in insurgency-affected areas, warning that by doing so, the media was itself acting as an insurgent mouthpiece, multiplying a few messages and magnifying their effect on an already fearful business community...



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



Almost like being there: Training in the deep south – August 8-11, 2005

Mr. John reports: *Rushing training: The General Headquarters of the Provincial Constabulary, Region 9, organized a special operations training for small combat units for provincial constabulary police stations in the three southern provinces. This training started in July, 2005 in 12 stages. One stage is four days. 1740 persons will go through the training.*

(Photo: Mr.
John for
2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



2Bangkok.com secrets: Million baht kris – August 15, 2005

Dr. Has reports: *This is a kris from Kalantan, Malaysia. The owner said he bought it from a scion of an ancient royal house of Pattani state and it cost about one million baht. The reason for buying it was that he was afraid that the kris would be in the hands of a person who did not appreciate its historical value.*

(Photo: Dr. Has
for
2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Bomb in Narathiwat – August 11, 2005

Mr. John reports: **Above:** In Narathiwat, a bomb exploded at a bus stop and two soldiers were injured, shortly after 8am this morning. The bus stop was near Saengtham Witthaya School in Sungai Kolok.

Below: One the soldiers being taken to hospital.



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Bomb in Pattani – August 9, 2005

Mr. John reports: *August 9, Bomb in Pattani – A 10 kg bomb detonated at noon in a restaurant 30 meters from a school (above). The bomb was set off with a mobile phone. Three school directors and one other were eating at the restaurant and were injured.*

Update *The Nation* is now carrying this story as well with slightly different details: [Blast razes police-owned eatery; six hurt](#) – *The Nation*, August 10, 2005

Almost like being there: Pattani – August 6, 2005

Mr. John reports: *Raising the level of Songkhla Nakarin University (Pattani branch) – On August 6 in Pattani, the representative of students of Songkhla Nakarin, Pattani branch, came to thank Mr. Jaturon Chaisaeng, Education Minister; who confirmed he would support Pattani Branch to be independent and have it be declared 'Pattani University.' He will present this issue at the next House of Representatives meeting.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Chang Noi's translation of the State of Emergency Decree – [Chang Noi](#), August 6, 2005
[State of Emergency Decree, English translation \(pdf\)](#)

.....

Almost like being there: Pattani – August 5, 2005

Mr. John reports: *August 5-7 – Mr. Anand Panyarachun, Chairperson of the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC) and his team had a big meeting in Pattani following up on 14 principles to solve the unrest problem in the southern border province. He also visited people in the area (left). He specified that the government should give a chance for the leaders of two religions to have a role in solving the problems. He said that after appearing on TV with the PM he feels less pressure from his work than before.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Pattani – August 9, 2005

Mr. John reports: *Mr. Jaturon Chaisaeng, Education Minister and on the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC), speaks in Pattani. He comments that setting up the center for missing people in the three southern border provinces should be under the Justice Ministry. Because if it is under control of the National Police Office, it will not be trusted since the police have been involved with people who disappeared in the area.*



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

[Bt10,000 reward for tip-off on leaflet distributors in Pattani](#) -TNA, August 5, 2005

Local authorities in Thailand's southern border province of Pattani have offered a cash reward of Bt10,000 for a tip-off leading to the arrest of persons involved in distributing leaflets threatening local traders with reprisals if they do not stop selling on Fridays... Only some shops have stopped working on Friday because they are confused with rumours spread by ill-intentioned people...



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Mr. John for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Pattani – August 3, 2005

Mr. John reports: *The Reporter's Association of Thailand cooperated with the Southern Newspaper Association of Thailand and Network of Southern Newspaper Editors to start the "Project of Peace Media: Southern Desk." The target is to help people in the three southern border provinces by allowing reporters to have more prestige from working as a team. This will prevent them from being blamed by the government under the new emergency decree. To do this they will set up a "front-line editor" at Songkhlanakarin University, Pattani branch so as to continue to present news in a variety of opinions and maintaining rights and freedom for the newspaper professionals under the emergency decree.*

Left: Mr. Chaoyong Maneerungsakun, President of the Southern Newspaper Association of Thailand



(Photo: Dr. Has for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: Dr. Has for
2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Yala – August 1, 2005

Dr. Has reports: *The violence in the deep south makes teachers in the three southern border provinces transfer out of the region and results in a shortage of teachers. The government solves the problem by offering jobs to part-time teachers to replace them. The photos show teachers applying at one school in Amphur Raman, Yala.*

Also: [Schools in far South fight for teachers – Move to cut shortages leads to new headache](#) – Bangkok Post, July 28, 2005

Teachers at private Islamic religious schools have resigned en masse to apply for vacant posts at state-run educational institutes in the restive deep South, giving the Education Ministry a new headache...

[Exodus of non-Muslims from South Thailand](#) – soc.culture.singapore, August 2, 2005

Wisarat points out this rather inflammatory newsgroup post: *...Effectively, these south most villages are now under the rule of Islamic clergy. Outside the township like Hat Yai, the local Muslims obey the new rule by Islamic clergy and Shariah laws, and they completely ignore the authorities from Bangkok. The police, many of whom are non-Muslims, fear for their own life. They are not capable of protecting the life and property of non-Muslim. Southern Thailand(south of Hat Yai) for all intent and purposes, is a defacto Islamic State, independent of Thailand.*

[Troubles in the South index page](#)

Handle our Thai relations carefully

August 30, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Handle](#)

[our Thai relations carefully](#) – Taipei Times,

August 30, 2005

...Nonetheless, the Thai are a people who really care about face.

As long as you give them face, they are sure to reciprocate accordingly.

For instance, although Academia Sinica President Lee Yuan-tseh could not hold bilateral talks with Thaksin when he attended an APEC summit in Bangkok as Taiwan's representative a few years ago, Thaksin still phoned the restaurant offering to pick up the tab after Lee wined and dined Taiwan's APEC delegation and some Taiwanese expatriates.

According to the Thai way of thinking, as long as you show the respect due to the host and observe the taboos and rules of their society, he or she will also react favorably to you...

Gasohol in Thailand

August 31, 2005
Categories: Energy

Gasohol in Thailand
– August 31, 2005



(Photo: Cormac Bracken)

Cormac writes: *Following the switch of the state-owned TPI to supplying gasohol only, Shell Thailand is now moving the same way. This in-your-face advertising*

campaign was seen while filling up on Sathorn Road. (The sign just reads "Shell Gasohol 95 – ensuring quality that everyone will be comfortable with".) Currently Thailand's gasohol is a blend of around 90% gasoline with alcohol produced from locally-grown sugarcane, replacing imported MTBE. It can be used by any vehicle without adjustment and reportedly gives slightly better performance.

Two on the death penalty

August 31, 2005

Two on the death penalty

[Thai
drunk driver's death penalty](#) – CNN, August 31, 2005

[American
can be extradited to face Thai death penalty](#) – *Washington
Post*, August 31, 2005

Thais increasingly dissolute

August 31, 2005

Categories: Culture and Society

Thais

increasingly dissolute: experts – The Nation,

August 31, 2005

...Thais tend to be greedy, ill-tempered, deceitful and aggressive, said Buddhist thinker Phra Paisal Visalo of Chaiyaphum's Wat Pa Sukhato.

...He faulted modern lifestyles, which prize materialism. As a result, more and more youngsters are turning to pornography, coveting expensive gadgets like flashy mobile phones, and engaging in gambling and one-night-stands, Somphong said.

The university lecturer said many female students went gaga over Japanese-style mini-skirts for their college uniforms, a practice that some universities tacitly endorse. Somphong added that Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was keenly aware of the erosion of morals in Thai society and supports a comprehensive initiative to tackle the problems...

Thais increasingly dissolute: experts

The Nation

August 31, 2005

Thai society has hit a nadir in immorality in which parents shower their children with money instead of care, thieves prey on people in broad daylight, and teens indulge in reckless hedonism.

These were some of the red flags that participants raised yesterday at a seminar on eroding social norms, hosted by the National Culture Commission.

Thais tend to be greedy, ill-tempered, deceitful and aggressive, said Buddhist thinker Phra Paisal Visalo of Chaiyaphum's Wat Pa Sukhato.

The monk cited findings by a recent ABAC poll that said a whopping 98 per cent of young Thais liked to cut class to go shopping; 60 per cent admitted to skipping classes for other reasons; and 45 per cent said they drank regularly.

Phra Paisal argued that such hedonism among Thai youths was the result of hands-off parents who tended to give their children ample pocket money in lieu of real parental care and affection.

He called on government officials to reintroduce the teaching of traditional morals in school curricula. As an example, he recommended that sex education not just focus on the mechanics of sex, but also on the sexual morals.

The monk stressed that such traditional attitudes as non-violence and loving kindness must be consistently fostered in children from the kindergarten level and even in young adults in university.

Somphong Chitladap, a lecturer at the Faculty of Education at Chulalongkorn, University, said that with each new generation traditional morals were noticeably eroding.

He faulted modern lifestyles, which prize materialism. As a result, more and more youngsters are turning to pornography, coveting expensive gadgets like flashy mobile phones, and engaging in gambling and one-night-stands, Somphong said.

The university lecturer said many female students went gaga over Japanese-style mini-skirts for their college uniforms, a practice that some universities tacitly endorse. Somphong added that Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was keenly aware of the erosion of morals in Thai society and supports a comprehensive initiative to tackle the problems.

Maj-General Jaramporn Suramane, deputy chief of the Metropolitan Police Bureau, said a social crisis was brewing.

The chief explained that road races, gang-style fights, and teenage prostitution were all on the increase.

Jaramporn added that criminals were growing bolder as well with thieves often operating in broad daylight.

Malefactors rob people and steal cars in shopping malls without bothering to try and hide under the cover of darkness any longer, he said.