

# Phuket Air in Holland

May 2, 2005

Phuket Air in Holland –

May 2, 2005

Koen writes: *I was going to fly to Amsterdam with Phuket Air when my sister in Holland alerted me to this [news](#).*

*Briefly it explains that Phuket Air no longer has permission to land at Schiphol Airport and 100s of passengers are stranded. I've checked the Bangkok Post, Nation & Phuket Air website, absolutely nothing about this...*

**19:15, May 2, 2005** – The story appears on

TNA: [Netherlands](#)

[bans Phuket Air from flying Bangkok-Amsterdam route](#)

# Annual Thai-US military exercise begins

May 2, 2005

Categories: Thai Military

[Annual](#)

[Thai-US military exercise begins](#) – TNA, May

2, 2005

*Thailand and the US have officially begun their annual joint military exercise at an army base in the northern city of Chiang Mai...*

# Bridging the communications divide

May 2, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

## [Bridging the communications](#)

[divide](#) – Bangkok Post, May 2, 2005

*The Non-Formal Education Commission is expanding a plan to create a written language for the Pwo Karen by using a Thai-based script, despite doubts over its worthiness expressed by an expert working with the ethnic group.*

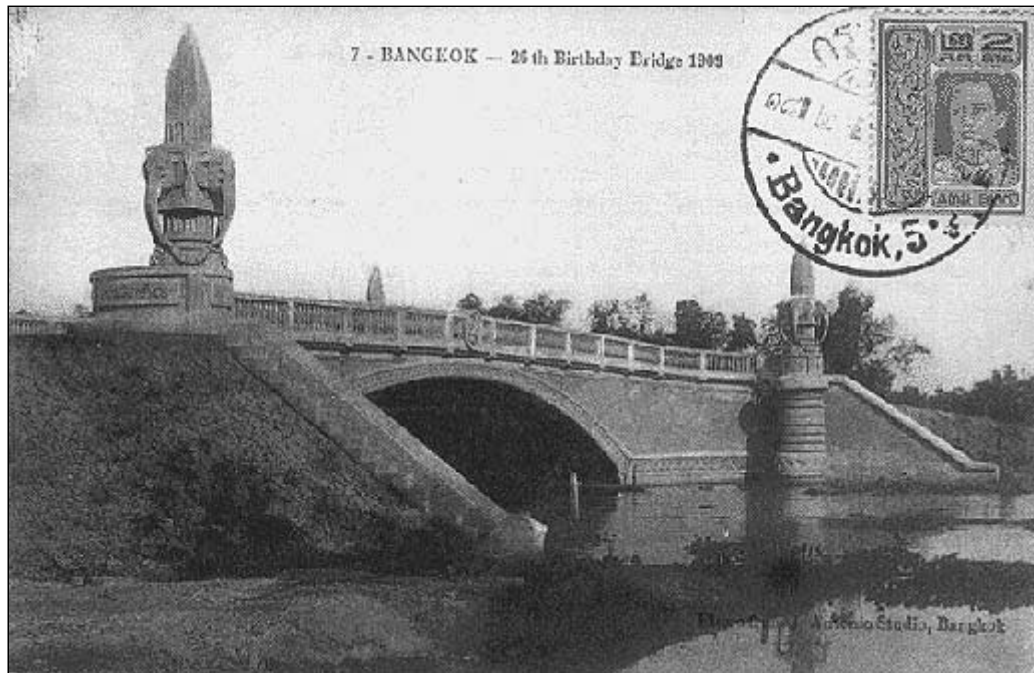
*...The scheme has already turned out 200 charts of transcribed letters and instructions on pronunciation, 100 copies of a dictionary containing 288 entries with descriptions in Thai and English, and language curricula for school-aged Pwo Karens, according to Anong Chuanont, another commission staff member working on the project.*

*... "In fact, written languages that most Karen use to communicate globally are the Burmese and Mon," Mr Surapol said, noting that a similar attempt at Khao Lek village in Si Sawat district of Kanchanaburi 20 years ago failed.*

*"We should not create a new linguistic culture for ethnic minorities. It will stop them communicating with one another. It will not help preserve their language and instead pose problems for them," Mr Surapol said...*

## '26th birthday bridge 1909'

May 3, 2005



'26th birthday bridge 1909'

– May 3, 2005

This is the bridge on Phaya Thai Road near Sra Paduma Palace (now under the Skytrain route). Photos of the bridge statues being moved for the recent bridge widening are [here](#).

# Thai cardinal proud to have helped choose Pope

May 3, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thai cardinal proud to have helped choose Pope](#) –

TNA, May 3, 2005

*The head of Thailand's 300,000-strong Roman Catholic community has expressed his pride of being among the cardinals who helped choose the latest pope.*

*In an interview to Thailand's Catholic media, Cardinal Michael Meechai Kitbunchu said that helping participate in the Catholic history by being among the 115 cardinals who elected Pope Benedict XVI was a personal experience of great value...*

# Thai prostitution displaces students – Thailand campus cancels housing

May 5, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thai prostitution displaces students – Thailand campus cancels housing](#)

– *The Journal*, May 5, 2005

*The Style Club and Karaoke, part of the [Hin](#)*

*[Nam Sai Suay hotel](#), is a haven for prostitutes. Some Webster-Thailand students are housed in the hotel.*

*Prostitution is pushing students out of one of the two official housing complexes utilized by Webster Thailand (WUT) students.*

*John Maxwell, director of operations, said the school has officially cancelled its contract with the Hin Nam Sai Suay hotel where it housed students for four years due to the blatant prostitution which takes place in the "Style Club and Karaoke," located in front of the hotel.*

*"The karaoke situation at Hin Nam has always been a problem," Maxwell said...*

# Elevated signal house

May 6, 2005

Categories: Thai Railroads



Elevated signal house  
– May 6, 2005

Here are some photos of an elevated signal house by the rail tracks and expressway south of Rama IV Road.

(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Opposite the signal house is the  
expressway with various businesses operating underneath.  
Above is an storage area for old vehicle parts.





(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Looking towards the elevated building  
(in the distance on the right).



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Looking away from the elevated signal  
house with shanties on either side of the track.





(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

[Back to the main  
Thai Railways/SRT page](#)

# Google's proxy defeats Thai web censorship

May 6, 2005

Categories: Censorship

Google's proxy defeats Thai web censorship

– May 6, 2005

Google's new [Web Accelerator](#)

is also a proxy that appears to defeat [Thai ISP blocking of various websites](#). At least for now...

# Thai military plane leaves to evacuate Thais from Myanmar following bomb blasts

May 7, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

[Thai military plane leaves to evacuate Thais from Myanmar following bomb blasts](#) – AP, May 7, 2005

*A military cargo plane was on its way Sunday to evacuate Thai citizens from Myanmar's capital after three bomb blasts—one at a Thai trade fair—killed 11 people and wounded 162 others, officials said...*

**Earlier:** [Three](#)

[killed, More Than A Dozen Wounded in Rangoon Bomb Blasts](#) – AP,

May 7, 2005

**Also:** [Dreams](#)

[of a Rat Hole](#) – *The Irrawaddy*, April 2005

# Phahonyothin-Wiphawadirangsit Road intersection work

May 10, 2005

Categories: Highways and Roads

**โครงการก่อสร้างสะพานข้ามทางแยกลาดพร้าว**



สัญญาซื้อขายเลขที่ สนย. 17/2547 ลงวันที่ 2 กรกฎาคม 2547  
วันเริ่มต้นสัญญา : 1 ธันวาคม 2547  
วันสิ้นสุดสัญญา : 25 พฤศจิกายน 2548  
รวมระยะเวลาก่อสร้าง 360 วัน  
ขอบเขตงานในโครงการ

1. งานก่อสร้างสะพานจำนวน 3 สะพาน
  - ด้านถนนวิภาวดี-รังสิต ซอย 2 สะพาน
  - ด้านถนนวิภาวดี-รังสิต ซอย 1 สะพาน
2. งานรื้อย้ายสาธารณูปโภคและปรับปรุงขยายผิวจราจรบริเวณจุดตัดทางขึ้น-ลง สะพาน รวมถึงจุดกลับรถบนถนนวิภาวดี-รังสิต
3. งานวางท่อประปาใต้ดิน ของการประปานครหลวง
4. งานก่อสร้างอุโมงค์ และท่อร้อยสายไฟฟ้าใต้ดินของการไฟฟ้านครหลวง แผนการดำเนินงาน

ระยะที่ 1 ขยายผิวจราจรเพื่อรองรับการจราจรระหว่างงานก่อสร้างสะพาน  
ระยะเวลาดำเนินการตั้งแต่ 1 ธ.ค. 47 - 30 เม.ย. 48  
ระยะที่ 2 งานก่อสร้างสะพานข้ามทางแยก  
ระยะเวลาดำเนินการตั้งแต่ 1 พ.ค. 48 - 25 พ.ย. 48

สำนักงานโยธา กรุงเทพมหานคร บริษัท ยูนิค เอ็นจิเนียริ่ง แอนด์ คอนสตรัคชั่น จำกัด

(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Phahonyothin-Wiphawadirangsit

Road intersection work – May 10, 2005

More flyovers for the intersection near Central Lat Phrae. It appears this project may even correct the traffic flow and once again allow traffic to travel straight through on Phahonyothin Road.

# Bathroom sign

May 10, 2005

Categories: Signs and Billboards



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Bathroom sign

– May 10, 2005

Restroom placard near Kanchanaburi at one of the outdoor gas station bathrooms.

# Bangkok Plastic Surgery

May 10, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

[Bangkok](#)

[Plastic Surgery](#) – May 10, 2005

Where else but Bangkok can one find a row of shophouses with noodle restaurants and then a clinic advertising ‘sex change.’

Their [website](#) is interesting.



# A tale of two newspapers: Dengue fever

May 10, 2005

Categories: A Tale of Two Newspapers

## Thailand

has no new dengue fever strain – TNA, May 10, 2005

*...However the health minister Dr. Suchai Charoenratanakul dismissed public fears that a new stronger strain of the disease has hit Thailand. ... "We have more people infected than two years ago, but there is no need to be alarmed. It is just a normal cycle of the endemic," the Thai health minister told journalists on Tuesday. ... "The Health Ministry has closely followed the outbreaks, and I insist there is no new strain," he said. Health officials are setting up surveillance teams, dubbed "Mr. Dengue Fever", to monitor dengue fever outbreaks, house-to-house across the country. "Local health officials are on the alert so the public should trust the measures the government has taken against the disease," he said...*

**Also:** 'A tale of two newspapers' archives

## Dengue

fever spreading as virus mutates

– *The Nation*, May 10, 2005

*Changes in the genetic makeup of the dengue virus are suspected of being the main reason why the disease is more virulent this year, with at least 10 deaths reported in the past five months. The Disease Control Department is waiting for results from tests on virus samples taken from dengue patients to confirm the theory... After an urgent meeting yesterday the Public Health Ministry issued a nationwide dengue epidemic alert. A so-called war room is being set up to fight the epidemic... If virus tests currently being conducted showed a significant genetic change in the dengue virus, urgent "maximum measures" would have to be carried out in the epidemic area, at the source of the infection, said Dr Kitti Pramattol, head of the department's dengue fever control division. ... "Only small genetic changes to the virus have a significant effect on an epidemic pattern and the virulence of the disease," Kitti told *The Nation*...*

# PM suggests cabinet members to read ‘Time Traps’ book

May 11, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[PM](#)

[suggests cabinet members to read ‘Time Traps’ book](#) –

TNA, May 11, 2005

*To ensure his cabinet understand and realize how to manage time efficiently, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has suggested its members to read a book titled “Time Traps: Proven Strategies for Swamped Salespeople” written by Todd Duncan...*

# Thailand most 'car-indulgent' in Asia-poll

May 11, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thailand most 'car-indulgent'](#)

[in Asia-poll](#) – Bangkok Post, May 11, 2005

*... "Thailand was among the highest in the AI which was further evidenced by the fact that a quarter of Thai consumers indicated that their plans to buy an additional car, making the country one of the most 'car-indulgent' in the region," said Chantira Luesakul, the managing director of ACNielsen Thailand...*

# Confused by my nationalism? You're a traitor!

May 11, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Confused by my nationalism? You're a traitor!](#) –

*The Nation*, May 11, 2005

*...Adviser: Very true, sir. Thanks to you, the Thai people now understand their patriotism better. That you will open the door to cheap foreign products will help our nation's strength in the long run. Your penchant for international brandnames will also inspire our local manufacturers.*

*There might be just one little problem, though, sir. Some people are asking why you have not been similarly open when it comes to foreign competition in the telecom market.*

*Prime minister: People who say things like that don't love the country, and should hang their heads in shame. Do they really want a big, solid local firm that is the core of our economy to be threatened by foreign competition?...*

# AIS billboard

May 11, 2005

Categories: Signs and Billboards



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

**Above:** Billboard with a rather Orwellian slogan for Thaksin's AIS on Sathorn Road

# Thai-language newspapers – May 12, 2005

May 12, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

*Matichon*

– May 12, 2005

Thaksin is upset and cries out that the media are dishonoring the government by quoting World Bank statistics that Thailand is getting more corrupt. He confirms that he is serious to quash corruption. When he finds organizations that are corrupt, he will tackle the cause right up to the head, even if it is a Minister. Whoever do not use the e-auction process will be punished. He pleads with the media to be calm and wait for the result of the Nong-ngoo Hao bribery investigation.

*Thairath*

– May 12, 2005

\* **Bloody**

**news** – Samut Prakarn: A 23-year-old female worker at a plastic factory was killed in her room. She was hit on the head and her neck is tied up with electric cable. The supervisor of the apartment said there were four male friends that visited her. The police suspect that the murderer tried to rape and rob her. They are looking for the four who visited her as well as her ex-boyfriend. Police are sure that the murder is person familiar to her.



# **‘How we defeated a boiler room’**

May 12, 2005

Categories: Scams

‘How we defeated a boiler room’ – May 12, 2005

*Australian-Thai Chamber of Commerce Topic: "HOW WE DEFEATED A BOILER ROOM"*

*Guest Speaker: Khun Sutham Siribunyawat, Managing Director of Sukhothai Inter Law and Business...*

*The BCCT and Austcham are delighted to welcome Khun Sutham Siribunyawat, LL.M., Barrister-At-Law, Managing Director of Sukhothai Inter Law, as guest speaker at this Special Luncheon...*

*The following is a brief summary of an article that appeared in the 14th March 2005 issue of the Bangkok Post.*

*Sukhothai Inter Law and Business first filed a THB 33.08 million claim against International Asset Management (IAM) in August 2002 with the Southern Bangkok Civil Court. The court ruled against IAM in December 2002 and in March 2003 directed that THB 11.7 million held by IAM in a Thai bank account be remitted to the court and ultimately to the plaintiffs (12 Australian investors). Although only 30% of the investors original investments were recovered the case represents a precedent for the Thai legal system...*

# **‘Nationalism’ trumps unions**

May 12, 2005

Categories: Labor

## [‘Nationalism’](#)

[trumps unions](#) – *The Nation*,

May 12, 2005

*A labour journal article has outlined the main issues preventing Thai workers from forming labour unions, chief among them that nation’s image supersedes their needs for better working conditions.*

*Labour Focus, a quarterly labour journal published by the non-governmental organisation Campaign for Thai Labour Programme, also cited other factors such as rhetoric that factories are extended families and that "Thai-ness" is being held up as an antithesis to collective bargaining. The article is the result of a survey of union leaders and workers over recent years.*

*Other perceived obstacles are threats of factory relocation abroad, especially to countries with cheaper labour like Vietnam, China and Indonesia, the slow and costly process of labour court hearings, and claims by employees that they already have adequate ethical standards...*

*‘Nationalism’ trumps unions*

*Published on May 12 , 2005*

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*Labour Focus, a quarterly labour journal published by the non-governmental organisation Campaign for Thai Labour Programme, also cited other factors such as rhetoric that factories are extended families and that “Thai-ness” is being held up as an antithesis to collective bargaining. The article is the result of a survey of union leaders and workers over recent years.*

*Other perceived obstacles are threats of factory relocation abroad, especially to countries with cheaper labour like Vietnam, China and Indonesia, the slow and costly process of labour court hearings, and claims by employees that they already have adequate ethical standards.*

*The findings, compiled by labour activist and editor of the journal, Janya Yimprasert, state that employers often advise their workers – with considerable success – to think about the nation’s image before organising or staging a strike for better working conditions.*

*“Employers also use the word ‘family’ when abuse of workers’ rights takes place, or when they want to persuade employees against fighting for their rights under the law,” the journal says.*

*Another grey area is reference to “Thai-ness” as being essentially incompatible with collective bargaining through unionism and strikes, the journal states, and argues: “When trading is already borderless, labour rights deserve to be recognised through universal standards as well. Employers willingly compete in world markets by insisting on ‘Asian values’ to suppress their workforce.”*

*Another rhetorical issue that gains widespread acceptance in a country where only 3 per cent of the workforce is unionised is that fighting for labour rights may lead to factory relocation, the journal says.*

*“Some members of Parliament, even some members of the National Human Rights Commission and union leaders themselves, still believe that when Thai workers demand their legal rights, employers will simply shift their production to China or Vietnam. Thus they reason that workers should just ‘cope with whatever work conditions exist’.”*

*With low minimum wages of Bt135 to Bt175 a day, the journal argues that many Thai workers end up having to work overtime for an average of three to 10 hours a day just to make ends meet.*

*This, it states, runs contrary to the ideal of eight hours of work, eight hours of recreation and eight hours of sleep enjoyed by many workers in the West,” the journal noted.*

# Performance Artists Arrested in Rangoon

May 12, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

## [Performance](#)

[Artists Arrested in Rangoon](#) – *The Irrawaddy*,

May 12, 2005

*Three Burmese performance artists were arrested on May 6 and went on to spend four days in police custody after putting on a public show in the capital, Rangoon.*

*According to sources, Chaw Ei Thein, one of Burma's leading woman artists, Htein Lin, an experimental artist regarded as a performance art pioneer and a third unnamed artist were arrested on suspicion of their work being politically motivated. Their performance is understood to have involved setting up a stall and selling traditional medicines priced according an obsolete monetary system...*

*Mainly concentrated in the two largest cities of Rangoon and Mandalay, the modern Burmese art scene is notable not only for its almost unrivalled creativity, but also its ability to confuse and unsettle traditionally minded government departments...*

# **‘Oddball rodent’ in Laos takes scientists by surprise**

May 12, 2005

Categories: Laos, Wildlife and Nature

[‘Oddball rodent’ in Laos takes scientists by surprise](#) –

NYT, May 12, 2005

*...They are definitely not rats or squirrels, only vaguely like a guinea pig or a chinchilla. And they often show up in Laotian outdoor markets being sold for food. There, visiting scientists came upon the animals and determined that they represented a rare find: an entire new family of wildlife...*

# Thai-language newspapers – May 13, 2005

May 13, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

*Matichon*

– May 13, 2005

Dengue fever has taken 14 people's lives and made 7215 ill. Recently, one female villager in Chaingrai and an 8-year-old in Rayong died. Apirak, Bangkok governor, will be responsible to take care Nong Poom's family .

*Thairath*

– May 13, 2005

The southern thieves became aggravated and bombed three important places in Yala yesterday and two districts in Songkhla. This injures innocent people and government officials. They also placed a bomb in a famous fried chicken shop in Amphur Tapa, Songkhla province.



# Who could be behind Rangoon bomb attacks?

May 13, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

## [Who](#)

[could be behind Rangoon bomb attacks?](#) – *The*

*Irrawaddy*, May 13, 2005

*...A former explosives expert who planted bombs for a Karen rebel group told The Irrawaddy that although a network of operatives existed they didn't have the ability to plant bombs in busy Rangoon supermarkets. For a start, they didn't have the bombs, he said. Karen, Shan, Karenni and other groups based along the Thailand-Burma border are anyway in disarray. They lack not only organizational and operational sophistication but also co-ordination. It is hard to imagine that they could plan a coordinated attack in Rangoon without being detected by a watchful regime.*

*In Rangoon, the most commonly accepted theory is that former military intelligence officials could be behind the attacks. Yet the entire intelligence apparatus has been dismantled, intelligence chief Gen Khin Nyunt is under house arrest and his subordinates are in jail—"I don't believe former MI agents are a significant force," said a senior Rangoon diplomat...*

# Democrat Party faces collapse as businesses withdraw support after huge Thaksin win

May 13, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

## DEMOCRATS

### AT A CROSSROADS: Party mulls membership fees –

*The Nation*, May 13, 2005

*...The party is rumoured to be facing financial problems due to the withdrawal of support from business leaders following their election defeat in February...*

### *DEMOCRATS AT A CROSSROADS: Party mulls membership fees*

*Published on May 13, 2005*

*Organisation rumoured to be facing financial problems after businesses withdraw support*

*More than four million members of the Democrat Party may have to pay membership fees in the near future if party executives approve a fund-raising proposal, the party's director said yesterday.*

*If the executive board agrees with the plan, the party would then fix a sum, between Bt100 and Bt500, that members would pay monthly to secure their membership. But, local party leaders have voted against the plan, saying it will backfire and drive current members away.*

*"If we ask them to pay, they all will all leave because it was us who invited them to become members," said Adisak Kulawong, former branch director of Ubon Ratchathani's Constituency 6. He said none of the approximately 53,000 Democrat members in his area would agree to pay for their loyalty.*

*No date has been set for considering the plan, but it will be on the agenda shortly, according to Pusadee Tarmthai, the Democrat Party director.*

*"The plan will urge members to take part in our activities," Pusadee said. "When they pay for something, they will feel they own it."*

*Currently party members pay no membership fees. Many of them rarely or never participate in the party's activities.*

*The party is rumoured to be facing financial problems due to the withdrawal of support from business leaders following their election defeat in February.*

*Thaweesak Kamolvej, Bangkok councillor of Bang Phlat district, said that he could not see any way of achieving success with the plan.*

*"We've campaigned so hard to convince our members to join us," he said. "But a membership fee will drive them away."*

*Around 6,000 people in Bang Phlat are Democrat party members, he said.*

*Phongmanu Thongnak, a former branch director of Phitsanulok's Constituency 6, said that asking local members to pay fees is unthinkable.*

*"It doesn't matter how much money a local member has to pay – Bt100 or Bt500 – they won't pay anyway," he insisted.*

*The Democrat Party currently relies on grants from the Election Commission and donations from leading party members for financial support.*

*Democrat MPs, local councillors and executives also pay the party a fixed amount of money that is deducted from their monthly wages.*

*Pusadee said the party would urge all 195 party branches around the country to hold local activities, such as debates and seminars, to increase membership numbers.*

*The Democrat headquarters would continue to support local branches, despite financial difficulties, by covering employee's payrolls and utility bills, she said.*

*Weerayut Chokchaimadon*

# Police investigate abduction of seven

May 13, 2005

Categories: Crime

[Police](#)

[investigate abduction of seven](#) – *The Nation*,

May 13, 2005

# A tale of two newspapers: Bhokin and the new parliament building

May 13, 2005

Categories: Buildings

A tale of two newspapers: Bhokin  
and the new parliament building – May 13,  
2005

Compare and contrast the articles about the parliament building location in the English-language and Thai-language press. Note that Wisarut has also preserved the way these articles are written in Thai, beginning with a summation and then the summation expanded upon with many details.

## Bhokin

land row – *The Nation*, May 13, 2005

*House Speaker Bhokin Bhalakula was slammed yesterday for taking it upon himself to decide where the new Parliament building should be without waiting for the committee responsible to reach its conclusions. He said the best place for the Parliament building was the site of a bankrupt textile factory in Pathum Thani province. The land belonged to Thai Melon Textile Co on Rangsit Road, in Klong Luang district. Democrat Party deputy leader Jurin Laksanawisit, a committee adviser, said Bhokin should not have voiced his opinion before the panel came up with its conclusion.*

*He said that land was no more suitable than the plot in Kiak Kai in Dusit district or Ordnance Department land in Nonthaburi.*

*"Why would we buy that land and build the new Parliament there? It has no dignity. The land was seized by a bank because the business created non-performing loans," he said.*

*Bhokin said he asked Transport Minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit about extending the Skytrain to that location, and linking with the Chiang Rak expressway. The land would cost Bt3 billion and construction another Bt5 billion.*

**Bhokin insisting that the new parliament building will be at Thai Melon land** – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager Daily*, May 12, 2005

Speaker Bhokin said he agrees with Premier Thaksin that the new National Assembly will be on land which is used to house the now-defunct Thai Melon Textile factory. The budget for the new National Assembly will be at 15 billion baht and completed in 3 1/2 years. The next step is to get approval from the Parliament Committee before bidding by the end of this year.

However, Democrat Deputy Head Jurin strongly opposes the proposal by both Bhokin and Premier Thaksin to relocate the National Assembly to the former Thai Melon Textile in Rangsit since it costs too much and it is within a factory area which is totally unfit for a National Assembly. Even the researchers from both Mahidol University and Chulalongkorn University prefer the Kiakkai area.

House Speaker Bhokin told the press that he agrees with Premier Thaksin's proposal to relocate the National Assembly to the land belonged to the defunct Thai Melon textile. It would take 10 billion baht for construction and 4-5 billion baht for landscaping on 600 rai of land. He will wait for the final decision from the Parliament committee about this issue so they can call a new bid by the end of 2005 and

construction can start in 2006—after the laying corner stone in early 2006—an auspicious year of the Diamond Jubilee .

After opening the new parliament, they will return the former Parliament building to the Royal Household Agency. House Speaker Bhokin also discussed with MOTC about the extension of the red line commuter to the new national assembly and the new ramp linking the National Assembly to Chaing Rak Expressway. They will set up new offices for 500 MPs and 200 senators at the same complex while inviting the Supreme Court and Constitution Court to work in the same place as the National Assembly. However, Deputy Head of the Democrat Party (MP Jurin) strongly opposes this plan since they found that it costs too much—3.4-3.5 billion baht land purchase is just the tip of the iceberg. Furthermore, the Thai Melon Textile land has a very bad history. It is the land of bankrupt firm and a flood-prone area.

Democrat Deputy said that while Kiakkai has only 120 rai of land and the Pakkret ordinance has only 265 rai of land, they are much superior to the Thai Melon textile land. The land expropriation at Pakkret ordinance is nearly complete. Chula Researchers also said Kiakkai land is the best while Mahidol said Kiakkai area and Pakkret Ordinance area are second only to Pasak Jolasit Dam (proposed by former speaker Uthai). Even MP Jurin has to agree with the results from Chula and Mahidol.

**Also:** ['A tale of two newspapers' archives](#)



# Whisky giants slammed over sales in sleazy Thai bars

May 14, 2005

Categories: Food and Drink

[Whisky](#)

[giants slammed over sales in sleazy Thai bars](#) –

*Sunday Mail*, May 14, 2005

*Scotch whisky giants Chivas Regal and Johnnie Walker were yesterday accused of cashing in on the sleazy sex trade in Thailand. The global brands are raking in cash from sales in brothels and their brands are even used to advertise the sex clubs...*

*SCOTCH AND VICE; Whisky giants slammed over sales in sleazy Thai bars.*

*Byline: By BRIAN LIRONI*

*SCOTCH whisky giants Chivas Regal and Johnnie Walker were yesterday accused of cashing in on the sleazy sex trade in Thailand. The global brands are raking in cash from sales in brothels and their brands are even used to advertise the sex clubs.*

*Campaigners have warned bosses the sex industry in Thailand is fuelling child prostitution and lining the pockets of Asian crime barons.*

*The warning comes days after Chivas Regal boasted of record growth in Asia.*

*But their slogan 'This is the Chivas life' features in giant billboard adverts for licensed brothels.*

*One in Bangkok, bearing an image of Marilyn Monroe with a rose clinched between her teeth, encourages punters to head for the Pasaya 'party massage' parlour.*

*Another advert for the same sex club shows a hostess naked from behind. The Pasaya, run by owner Khun Jum, is a landmark on the notorious Ratchadapisek, one of Bangkok's major thoroughfares and known for its 'mega-brothels'.*

*Inside the club, girls – many of whom look younger than 16 – gyrate naked on tables for cash and offer 'extras' for just a few pounds.*

*Typically punters have 20 to 30 girls to choose from each night.*

*The system in Bangkok is that the customer picks out a girl in the bar area, pays a one-hour fee of 600 baht (about pounds 8.50) for a 'massage', then negotiates the extras with the girl in an upstairs room.*

*Empty boxes of Chivas are put out with the rubbish every morning, showing the popularity of the brand with Pasaya punters. Chivas and Johnnie Walker are the most popular whiskies in Asia and earn their owners – Chivas Brothers and Diageo – tens of millions of pounds profit every year.*

*Campaigners believe the tie-up between the brothels and the booze brands attracts wealthy western sex tourists.*

*Chris Beddoe, director of anti-child-prostitution pressure group ECPAT UK, said: 'Multinational companies should not be selling their products within bars and saunas where sex is sold.'*

*'They should be paying closer attention to where their products are and ensure they are not supporting the sex industry.'*

*'These brothels are forcing young women and girls into prostitution and no globally successful firm which claims to have a social conscience should be encouraging that.'*

*ECPAT is also appealing to the conscience of western holiday firms who unwittingly provide cheap deals for sex tourists.*

*Chris added: 'We have asked the major holiday companies to be aware of their responsibilities to Thai women and children.'*

*'We have asked that they do not promote districts where there is a risk that children are being exploited for sex. It is our hope that if these areas are less accessible, the problem can be brought under control.'*

*The campaigners' call comes in the week that Chivas Regal was voted the only whisky 'superbrand' in a Reader's Digest survey of rich Asian consumers. Bosses have seen an annual world-wide sales growth for the brand of 12 per cent last year, selling 3.3 million nine-litre cases.*

*A Chivas Brothers spokeswoman said: 'In common with other international spirit brands, Chivas Regal does provide legally licensed bars and outlets selling its brands with point-of-sale material for display. This may have led to some confusion.'*

*A Johnnie Walker spokeswoman said: 'We sell to our wholesalers in good faith and all of our activities, wherever we operate, are within the letter of the law locally.'*

*'But once the wholesalers have our products and promotional materials, we do not have control over how they are used.'*

*'While most outlets are operating legitimately, there may be some outlets where materials are being used inappropriately.'*

*Unicef spokeswoman Kathryn Irwin said: 'In south-east Asia, at least one million children are thought to be working in the sex industry where they are exploited at the hands of adults, both the brothel owners and customers.'*

*SNP deputy leader Nicola Sturgeon, said: 'I would hope neither company is doing anything that could be seen to be condoning or encouraging child prostitution.'*

*'If so, I am sure they would both want to take action to rectify this situation.'*

*Independent MSP Campbell Martin said: 'The flashy advertising hoardings they are putting their names to make it look as though these clubs are mainstream and acceptable.'*

*'They are clearly not*

# Govt targets activists as it is accused of secretly distributing GMO seeds to farmers

May 15, 2005

Categories: Food and Drink

## [Thailand](#)

[in midst of bio-tech crop battle](#) – AFP,

May 15, 2005

*...Last year Greenpeace announced it had uncovered the illegal spread of the papaya seeds to Thai farms, some of them hundreds of kilometres (miles) from Khon Kaen.*

*It believes Thailand's department of agriculture was complicit in the contamination.*

*The government, caught in a media glare, scrapped the station field trials. But it also quietly took two Greenpeace activists to court on charges of trespassing, theft and destruction of property after a media stunt at the Khon Kaen research centre. They face five years in prison.*

*"This is the opening of the GMO door in Thailand," defendant Patwajee Srisuwan warned in an interview with AFP at the Khon Kaen court...*

*...Such criticism is unfair, says Vilai Prasartsee, director of the Khon Kaen research centre.*

*The papaya ringspot virus (PRSV) caused huge losses in 1994 to one of Thailand's key crops, and still wreaks havoc.*

*"We have been trying to help papaya farmers control PRSV, but we cannot control it. The severity is increasing every year," she tells AFP...*

*"After Greenpeace came and attacked our site, other NGOs came every two days," an exasperated Vilai says as she walks through the empty field.*

*Amid the protests, the Department of Agriculture scrapped the field trial, setting back research by years.*

*Vilai says the centre did nothing wrong, and she feels personally stung by the attacks.*

*"I have devoted 30 years to helping these poor farmers, then one day NGOs come here and accuse me of being a slave to Monsanto. It's very sad."...*

## *Thailand in midst of bio-tech crop battle*

*KHON KAEN, Thailand (AFP) May 16, 2005*

*Here in Thailand's bread basket, behind a barbed wire fence with a padlocked gate in a government-run research centre, lies the most controversial plot of cropland in the kingdom.*

*The half-hectare (1.5-acre) area in northeastern Thailand is fallow. The centre's authorities argue they were nurturing hope for thousands of papaya farmers, but activists saw a dangerous and failed experiment, and last year took action that led to the plot's plants being yanked out by their roots.*

*The trees in question were genetically modified (GM) papaya, and for some they represented the future of Thai agriculture.*

*Thailand is under pressure to resume field trials of genetically altered crops, sometimes known as GMOs, as it seeks to maintain its role as the region's agricultural power.*

*Environmental watchdogs such as Greenpeace, as well as consumer and rights groups, are vehemently opposed, fearing unknown environmental and health risks.*

*Thailand has conducted greenhouse and station field trials of modified papaya since the late 1990s.*

*Last year Greenpeace announced it had uncovered the illegal spread of the papaya seeds to Thai farms, some of them hundreds of kilometres (miles) from Khon Kaen.*

*It believes Thailand's department of agriculture was complicit in the contamination.*

*The government, caught in a media glare, scrapped the station field trials. But it also quietly took two Greenpeace activists to court on charges of trespassing, theft and destruction of property after a media stunt at the Khon Kaen research centre. They face five years in prison.*

*"This is the opening of the GMO door in Thailand," defendant Patwajee Srisuwan warned in an interview with AFP at the Khon Kaen court.*

*"They are trying to stop us from exposing more information about what they're doing with GMO papaya, because the department has tried to push for its commercialisation."*

*Thailand's cabinet four years ago banned GMO farm field trials, but debate rages over the research's future.*

*GMO crops — developed to produce higher yields, or to be resistant to viruses or pesticides — are booming worldwide, reaching 81 million hectares (200 million acres) in 2004, a 20 percent year-on-year growth, according to the pro-GMO group ISAAA.*

*Most GM crops are grown in the United States, but five percent are now grown in China other developing countries are making the switch.*

*The crops consist mainly of soybeans, but include corn, tomatoes, cotton and papaya.*

*US multinational Monsanto, which owns several patents for genetically modified organisms and has funded research in Thailand, insists biotech crops are safe, having undergone "more extensive testing than any other plants in the history of agriculture".*

*Thai activists are not swayed.*

*"The government must not put Thai consumers at risk and must ensure GMOs do not enter the food chain," says Sairung Thongploon, head of the Confederation of Consumer Organisations of Thailand.*

*Amnesty International Thailand says the Greenpeace-GMO scandal has undermined confidence in the Thai government, and has called for the immediate dismissal of the court case.*

*Activists say not enough research is being done.*

*Such criticism is unfair, says Vilai Prasartsee, director of the Khon Kaen research centre.*

*The papaya ringspot virus (PRSV) caused huge losses in 1994 to one of Thailand's key crops, and still wreaks havoc.*

*"We have been trying to help papaya farmers control PRSV, but we cannot control it. The severity is increasing every year," she tells AFP.*

*The answer, Vilai insists, is genetic modification. After extensive research with Cornell University, indoor trials began under international guidelines.*

*Gradually the plants were moved outdoors to the centre's small plot.*

*"After Greenpeace came and attacked our site, other NGOs came every two days," an exasperated Vilai says as she walks through the empty field.*

*Amid the protests, the Department of Agriculture scrapped the field trial, setting back research by years.*

*Vilai says the centre did nothing wrong, and she feels personally stung by the attacks.*

*“I have devoted 30 years to helping these poor farmers, then one day NGOs come here and accuse me of being a slave to Monsanto. It’s very sad.”*

*She also bristles at accusations that her centre was the source of the contamination.*

*“We never distributed a single (modified) seed to anyone. That’s illegal,” Vilai says.*

*Even if Thailand approved biocrops tomorrow, Vilai says it would take at four years of safety research before GMO papaya could be grown commercially.*

*In the meantime, agricultural competitiveness would slip, particularly against emerging superpower China, argues Darunee Edwards, deputy director of the National Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, a government agency.*

*“We need to be competitive,” she says. “In previous years, Thailand enjoyed being number one, but we can’t always enjoy that if we don’t improve our crops. At the moment, China is more advanced.”*

*The Thai government may have a biotech agriculture policy ready this year, she says.*

*“We don’t want to wait for too long, because globalisation is here and we need to be competing with our neighbours.”*

# The Pattaya interchange

May 15, 2005

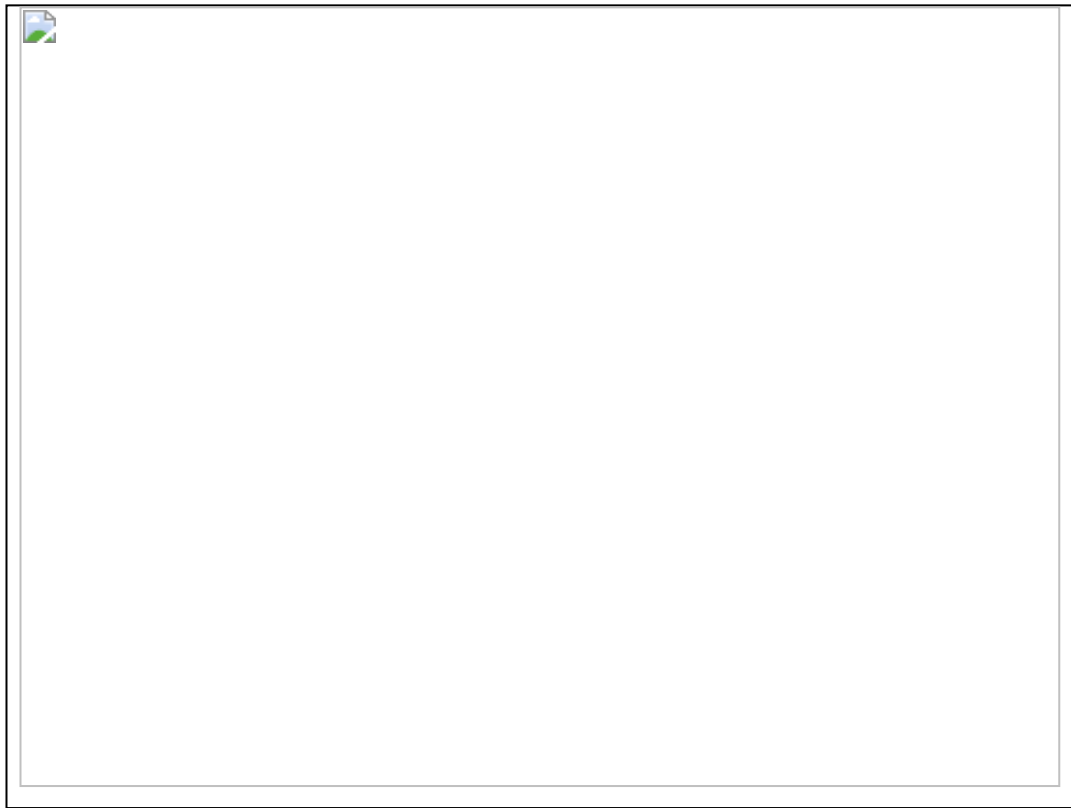
Categories: 2Bangkok News



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

The  
Pattaya interchange – May 15, 2005  
Two years ago we asked: *This simple Highway 7/Highway 36 interchange at the Pattaya turn-off has been under construction for years (six years?). Now that it is done, it is still closed and grass is growing between the cracks of the finished highway. Anyone know what's going on with this project?*

Thawatchai Wongrach explains: *I solved your question about closed Highway 7 at Pattaya. If you see the [motorway map](#) from the [Highway Department website](#) you can see Highway 7 that connects from the Bangkok-Chonburi Motorway. Actually the Motorway and Highway 7 are the same line and some parts of Highway 36 are changed to Highway 7 because of the Highway Department has a [plan to do the project little by little](#). In the near future Highway 7 will change to be a motorway (tollway) and Highway 7 is being prepared to be a motorway project. This closed road is waiting for the motorway to be extended to Rayong (completed in 2015).*



(Photo: Tom)

The  
Pattaya interchange – January 3, 2008  
Tom writes: *Reference is made to the closed intersection near Pattaya you asked about earlier.... Actually the extension from this intersection to Pattaya North is in full swing and expected to be done at the end of 2008. Please see a [map](#) from the [DOH's website](#) showing the route of the extension as well as some pictures I took of the actual construction works last weekend (picture 658 is at this [Google Earth Placemark](#)). 662 is basically the same intersection on your photo from the side which has not been opened yet. I also found this [interesting article](#). There is no word however on the extension from Pattaya to Map Ta Phut? Does anybody have an idea?*



(Photo: Tom)



# More on country names

May 16, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

More on country names

– May 16, 2005

Cormac writes to note the differences in the country names mentioned in the Post yesterday:

*Holland or the Netherlands – different things, Holland is a subset of the Netherlands.*

*America or the United States – different things, America is a continent, two continents in fact.*

*Britain or the United Kingdom – different things, Britain is a subset of the United Kingdom.*

*Switzerland or Helvetia – different languages, English and Latin.*

*Germany or Deutschland – different languages, English and German.*

*Sweden or Sverige – different languages, English and Swedish.*

*Japan or Nippon – different languages, English and Japanese.*

**Earlier:** [Siam](#)

[proposed as Thailand's 'second name'](#) – Bangkok Post,

May 13, 2005

*...He said many countries have two or more names, such as Holland or the Netherlands; America or the United States; Britain or the United Kingdom; Switzerland or Helvetia, Germany or Deutschland, Sweden or Sverige, and Japan or Nippon.*

*The campaign was aimed at reminding Thais of the auspicious name of Siam, which was granted by King Rama IV and means an ancient country of people of all races and religions.*

*Siam was renamed Thailand in 1939 on the order of former prime minister Field Marshal Plaek Piboonsongkhram who wanted this country to appear modern to the world, despite many objections to the change at the time.*

# Grantha – inspiration for the Thai script?

May 16, 2005

Categories: Language

Grantha – May 16, 2005

Something about [Grantha](#),

sometimes mentioned as the inspiration for the Thai script.

# **‘The Regime’s Bombing Theories-How Ridiculous Can They Get?’**

May 16, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

[‘The  
Regime’s Bombing Theories-How Ridiculous Can They Get?’](#) –

*The Irrawaddy*, May 16, 2005

*Are Burma’s military rulers going completely out of their minds?  
After their initial and completely unsubstantiated claim that four  
rebel groups were behind the Rangoon bombings they now come out  
with the even more outlandish claim that the bombers were trained  
‘in a neighboring country by an internationally known organization  
of a superpower’...*

[Thailand  
surprised at Myanmar fingerprinting over bomb blasts](#) –

AFP, May 16, 2005

*Thailand expressed surprise Monday over military-ruled Myanmar’s  
accusation that the kingdom may have supplied explosives used in  
Yangon bomb blasts that left at least 19 people dead...*

# Big Brother Shocks Thailand

May 17, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

## [Big Brother](#)

[`not Thai enough`](#) – Bangkok Post,

May 17, 2005

*...The programme has drawn criticism since it began, but became an even hotter issue over the weekend after some viewers complained to Khao Sod newspaper about the behaviour of the two contestants who “acted like lovers”. They were seen holding hands, touching and hugging each other and were often seen lying together on the sofa or sharing a blanket in bed.*

*...Dr Panpimol Lortrakul, a child psychiatrist, raised concern over scenes involving love relationships since it could cause copycat behaviour once the programme is broadcast to mass audiences.*

*...Ladda Thongsupachai, director of the Cultural Surveillance Centre under the Culture Ministry, said she has kept a close watch on the programme from the start.*

*"We realise the risk of the programme. Since it is a reality show, anything, including sex, could happen. And even though Toto has been voted out, we still need to be watchful of the contestants," she said.*

## [House panel shocked by `Big Brother`](#)

– Bangkok Post, May 18, 2005

*The House committee on religion, arts and culture will invite the producer of the reality TV game show Big Brother-Thailand to explain the “improper behaviour” of two contestants...*

*"I don't understand why they dared to express their love openly before the cameras, or if they were told by the producer to do such a thing in order to get the top TV audience rating," Lt Kuthep said.*

*... "Thai society can't accept a reality programme like this because it does more harm than good to society," he said. "Why did the Thai producer import the concept of the programme from a foreign country?" ...*

Update: [Big Brother will tone it down on air – Contestants told to mind their behaviour](#)

# **Bloody May victims deserve compensation, say activists**

May 17, 2005

Categories: Black May 1992

[Bloody](#)

[May victims deserve compensation, say activists](#) –

TNA, May 17, 2005

*Hundreds of Thai democracy activists gathered here Tuesday to mark the 13th anniversary of "Bloody May" when the military opened fire on unarmed demonstrators calling for the resignation of a general who had taken power in a bloodless coup...*

# “Haunted” Wong Amat closes for good

May 17, 2005

Categories: Buildings

[‘Haunted’](#)

[Wong Amat closes for good](#) – *The Nation*,

May 17, 2005

*The old-fashioned Central Wong Amat Beach Resort will be demolished next month, putting an end to a 45-year tradition of welcoming family vacationers and the creepy ghost stories that made the joint famous...*

*Haunted hotel tales will evaporate when the 18-storey, five-star Central Pattaya Beach Resort rises from the Wong Amat’s ashes in late in 2007 after three months of clearing and two years of construction. The Bt2.5-billion with a jungle-theme hotel is part of a Bt10-billion expansion Central Group’s has planned for the next five years...*

# Software violation cases in Thailand stand high

May 17, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Software](#)

[violation cases in Thailand stand high](#) –

TNA, May 17, 2005

*Intellectual property rights violations in Thailand stood at a high level last year, particularly those of computer softwares, according to international data released here today...*

# A tale of two newspapers: Black May 13 years later

May 18, 2005

Categories: Black May 1992

A tale of

two newspapers: Black May 13 years later

– May 18, 2005

The two papers start with different ages for the person quoted.

*The Nation* states "hundreds" of people disappeared

while the *Post* reports "missing could be as high as

50." *The Nation* article concludes with quotes that relates

Black May to the present day saying Thailand is now a "capitalist

dictatorship" and also has a separate editorial ([see](#)

[below](#)) accusing Thaksin of leading Thai democracy down a 'blind

alley" and even weaving in the airport scanner scandal. The

*Post* concludes its article with a call for an amnesty law

and cautiously notes that state officials were accomplices in most cases.

[BLACK MAY REMEMBERED: One woman's plea for justice](#) – *The Nation*, May 17, 2005

*...A 71-year-old woman yesterday pleaded with authorities*

*to determine the fate of her son, who disappeared after the*

*Black May incident in 1992.*

*Yesterday was the 13th anniversary of the incident.*

*"I am an old woman and I want to perform a funeral for*

*my son before I die," Sangwian Phomuang said.*

*Sangwian said she and scores of her son's surviving relatives*

*could not bring the incident to a close, because authorities*

*had still not concluded their reports on what had happened*

*to the hundreds of people who disappeared following the pro-democracy*

*uprising...*

*State Enterprise Labour Association general secretary Somsak*

*Kosaisuk said a dictatorship still existed in this country,*

*but had transformed itself into a "capitalist dictatorship".*

*In this system, he said, capitalists had taken absolute control*

*over the country.*

*"But money is used as a weapon instead of guns," he said...*

**More:** [A tale of two newspapers' archives](#)

[Mum](#)

[still hopes to see missing son](#)

– *Bangkok Post*, May 18, 2005

*...As a mother in her late 60s, Sangwian Phomuang says*

*her only hope is to find her son who disappeared in the 1992*

*Black May uprising, either dead or alive...*

*According to the Interior Ministry, a total of 38 people went*

*missing on that day on top of the 44 killed on the streets*

*of Bangkok. However, civic groups said the number of the missing*

*could be as high as 50. They believed the authorities at the*

*time had disposed of the bodies of some slain*

*protesters to*

*hide the real casualty figures...*

*"Although the number of missing people here is not large*

*compared to in other countries, the severity of the problem*

*is that none of them has ever been found." In other countries*

*some of the missing were found dead, he said, but that was*

*"better" than not finding them at all, Mr Jaran said...*

*Mr Jaran said in some other countries there was a law that*

*encouraged kidnappers to surrender in exchange for reduced*

*penalties. If Thailand had a law like that, it would be easier*

*to trace missing people.*



*Pibhop Thongchai, adviser to the Campaign for Popular Democracy, said disappearance cases here remained largely unsolved because state officials were either the culprits or their accomplices in most cases.*

### Coming

full circle from Black May – *The Nation*, May 17, 2005

*...Thaksin came to challenge Thais' clamouring for reform, defy the legitimacy of the Green Flag spirit and probably expose the nation's true identity. In the space of four years, the fight for political transparency and civil liberty has become, once again, a back-to-the-wall job. And Thaksin's great escape from the share-concealment scandal was not as significant as the empathy or even cheers that greeted it. All of a sudden, the belief that we need a good system in order to have good politicians was shattered by the ancient doctrine that a leader's survival and that of the country were inseparable...*

*Nothing is as damning as our political system's pathetic response to the Suvarnabhumi Airport bribery scandal. The government is blaming the media for "ruining" the country's reputation...*

# Fire

May 18, 2005



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Fire – 11:48am,  
May 18, 2005

From *The Nation*: Fire at community near Phaya Thai  
market Rd. on Chareon Krung Road, Bangkok More than 30 households  
were destroyed by the fire.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

# **Big Brother will tone it down on air – Contestants told to mind their behaviour**

May 19, 2005

Categories: Film and TV

['Big Brother'](#)

[will tone it down on air – Contestants told to mind their behaviour](#)

– *Bangkok Post*, May 19, 2005

*...Puwadol Jingsitri, known as Toto to viewers and one of the two contestants at the seat of the controversy, yesterday again apologised for any inappropriate show of physical affection between him and a female member of the show.*

*He said when they were holding hands and cuddling up on the sofa or on the bed it was not a put-on to get higher ratings. They actually fell in love...*

Earlier: [Big Brother Shocks Thailand](#)

# H5N1 Human to Human Transmission in Thailand?

May 19, 2005

Categories: Health

[H5N1](#)

[Human to Human Transmission in Thailand?](#) –

*Recombinomics*, May 19, 2005

*...The formation of a separate cluster of virus from northern Viet Nam and Thailand raises serious questions regarding Thailand's claim to have no human H5N1 infections in 2005... And a [discussion](#) about this.*

# Songs for protesting workers

May 20, 2005

Categories: Labor



Songs for protesting workers – May 20, 2005

Thanks to Asiper for the following: The idea of the album, Change, came from Somboon Srikumdokkare, chairperson of WEPT: *Everybody has a dream of having normal life, happy with family, and a prosperous future, but we couldn't get to that dream. Because our lives are suffering because of things we did not do. Many groups are facing the same problems—getting chronic diseases from pollution and toxins in the environment. This impacts our lives in the long term in ways we have not prepared for. This is a change that we do not desire. We want to reflect our story to society so they are aware and understand in order to find out how to protect and find a solution. We do not want others to have their dreams destroyed by other people. We should live peacefully in the world forever.*

## Songs:

### **Change** (*Kwam Plien Plaeng*)

Mountains, fields, villages and the original owners of agricultural land are harmed by government policies bringing grief and lost lives and assets.

### **Crying Lamtakong** (*Lamtakong Ronghai*)

Children lament the exploding mountain. A dam across Lam Takong reservoir causes people to be dispersed. Toxins from the dam's construction brings death to most families.

### **Yaitieng Mountain Bemoan** (*Khao Yaitieng Rampan*)

Yaitieng Mountain was rich with water for farming and livestock, but the land has been taken to be an electric plant that impact makes the village collapse. People are in debt. Some are sick and die. They protest to the government. Who will solve this problem?

### **Call from Vienglakon** (*Siengpriek Jak Vienglakon*)

In the past Lampang city is a rich and beautiful place. Now a huge power plant has been built, dust comes from a lignite mine, and sulfur dioxide settles over the fields, destroying the land. Come on youth, unite to build up our city to be happy again.

### **Standup again with the brave heart** (*Luk yuoen khuen krangmai Duoi Jai toe toeb kla*)

The poem told us "capitalism robs the nation." The capitalists make a huge of profit from taking advantage of the workers' wages. People lives become worthless.

### **For a better life** (*Per Cheewit ti dee kwa*)

Although a broken wing prevents flight, this should not halt the dream of flight. One who loses assets loses nothing. Losing health is bad, but losing mental health is worse. Fly as you strive for a better life.

### **Inspiration** (*Raeng Bundan Jai*)

Although our body is not 100% perfect , we have power to succeed. Obstacles are our teachers. There is a dusk and a dawn, a cold and a hot. We can help ourselves be fortunate. Fight without retreat. One day we will achieve our goal.

### **Struggle for breath** (*Per ther poo Haijai hob*)

Poverty leads female workers to work in a factory. It is like walking to death because they have to inhale dust and toxic fumes. Finally they get sick and cannot be cured. The gasping voices ask who is responsible. This song is says that the victims will have our moral support.

**Someday** (*Sak Wan Nueng*)

There are many roads that meander in the world. Nobody knows how our walk will be, but by our path we choose by our hopes and desires. Someday it will be our day.

**Network of dreams** (*Kruakhai Haeng Fun*)

A wide world is full of peoples' dreams. If we weave our dreams and walk forward together to a better day, and also give love and concern to each other. A brighter world is coming.

# Tambon with no electricity or proper roads revealed

May 20, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Tambon](#)

[with no electricity or proper roads revealed](#) –

TNA, May 20, 2005

*...The scandal of tambon Khai Jao, home to 2,016, has been compounded by the fact that repeated requests for infrastructure development have fallen on deaf ears.*

*Mr. Boonma Khuaykreua, the tambon clerk, told reporters today that the small tambon did not have a single asphalt road, and that all electricity was provided by roof-top solar panels which were constantly breaking down...*



# Govt considers a two-baht coin

May 20, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Govt](#)

[considers a two-baht coin](#) – TNA, May 20, 2005

# Bloody Events Have Mixed Legacy

May 20, 2005

Categories: 1991 Coup, Black May 1992

[Bloody events have mixed legacy](#) – Bangkok Post, May 20, 2005

*...For the relatives of May 1992 victims killed by government-initiated gunfire, those days will never be closed. Those responsible for their loved ones' deaths have never faced justice.*

*...Moot as it may seem, Gen Suchinda's true intentions from the outset remain a subject of debate for historians. What if he had kept his word and ushered in a newly elected government under the caretaker cabinet of Anand Panyarachun before returning to the barracks? In the event, Gen Suchinda was engulfed by the forces and demands around him, ultimately succumbing to his corruptibility of power when he accepted the premiership after the March 1992 election.*

*...The genesis of May 1992, lest we forget, was the blatant and unmanageable corruption of the elected government of Gen Chatichai Choonhavan. Its manner of corruption led to the damning description "buffet cabinet".*

*...Mr Thaksin has apparently learned from Gen Chatichai. Appearances of corruption have been actively managed for public consumption, and conflicts of interest involving the personal business interests of those elected to power may have replaced the crude corruption involving the budget. Corruption, in short, has become nuanced and sophisticated.*

*...The 1997 constitution has not worked out as intended. It has perhaps produced too much of a good thing: an elected government so stable and effective that it has ruled by fiat at times.*

*...The constitution already has designed an eclectic set of institutions. It is best to leave more time for these institutions to work themselves out. That these institutions have not functioned as envisaged may be less due to their design than to the intentions and interests of the people who man them...*

## ANALYSIS / REMEMBERING MAY 1992

*Bloody events have mixed legacy*

*The price paid was heavy in terms of loss of life, but there were positive results derived from May 1992*

*By THITINAN PONGSUDHIRAK*

*The domination of newspaper headlines this week by the bomb scanner procurement scandal and the world beauty pageantry has made it difficult to put into perspective the solemn events of May 17-20, 1992.*

*Although those critical days of 13 years ago changed the face of Thai politics indelibly, they have since come and passed year in and year out without much fanfare. It is as if May 1992 is destined to become a neglected chapter in Thai political annals. Its commemoration pales in comparison to the political crises of Octobers 1973 and 1976, even though the impact of May 1992 may be much greater.*

*A closer look at what May 1992 has wrought for Thailand reveals a mixed legacy of closures and continuities in Thai politics.*

*For the relatives of May 1992 victims killed by government-initiated gunfire, those days will never be closed. Those responsible for their loved ones' deaths have never faced justice.*

*As part of the royally sponsored settlement on the night of May 20 between Maj-Gen Chamlong Srimuang, on the side of the demonstrators, and Gen Suchinda Kraprayoon, for the government, a royal decree was immediately promulgated absolving all involved of any legal wrongdoing in the death of the scores of protesters. The closest semblance to justice has been the ostracism from society of Gen Suchinda and his cohorts, although Gen Suchinda does still celebrate his birthday each year with much fanfare in traditional strongman fashion.*

*Closure did come, however, for the military's role in Thai politics. While it is always unwise to rule out military coups in Thailand, May 1992 unmistakably drew the curtain on the military's involvement as we had known it.*

*The event was the end of a long continuum from the 1940s to 1980s during which the military lorded over the political landscape. It gradually yielded to the inexorable tide of democratisation in the 1980s, but came back for one last hurrah in the February 1991 putsch against the government of Chatichai Choonhavan.*

*Moot as it may seem, Gen Suchinda's true intentions from the outset remain a subject of debate for historians. What if he had kept his word and ushered in a newly elected government under the caretaker cabinet of Anand Panyarachun before returning to the barracks? In the event, Gen Suchinda was engulfed by the forces and demands around him, ultimately succumbing to his corruptibility of power when he accepted the premiership after the March 1992 election.*

*Yet one by-product of Gen Suchinda's rise and fall was the two terms of government headed by Mr Anand. Thailand had its cleanest and most effective cabinet of professionals and bureaucrats steeped in their respective technical expertise. It was the paradox of Thai democracy that such a government had to be appointed by coup-makers in uniform instead of being elected at the ballot box.*

*Mr Anand's two short tenures accomplished more in policy terms than each of the previous elected governments. Initiatives well-known today, such as the Asean Free Trade Area, hark back to the Anand period.*

*The Thai media today have much to learn from the months of junta (also known as the National Peace-keeping Council) rule. At the height of the confrontation, when hundreds of thousands of protesters moved from Sanam Luang to Ratchadamnoen avenue for what turned out to be a violent showdown with armed soldiers, the media were divided.*

*The state-owned electronic media became government mouthpieces, spouting outrageous distortions. Local viewers had to rely on foreign news broadcasts to know what was going on at home. The print media kept to their pens, and became a galvanising force for the protest movement.*

*During this time, the international broadcast and print media played a crucial role in factual reporting. When the domestic media cannot be relied upon for factual accuracy, especially when television channels are still largely controlled by the state, the international media have an important obligation to carry out their duty. It was that way then as it is today.*

*The genesis of May 1992, lest we forget, was the blatant and unmanageable corruption of the elected government of Gen Chatichai Choonhavan. Its manner of corruption led to the damning description "buffet cabinet".*

*The Chatichai period coincided with the launch of mega-infrastructure and telecommunication projects, not dissimilar to what we are seeing today under the government of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. Gen Chatichai, however, could not keep the public perception of corruption at bay. The corruption led to the erosion of his political legitimacy, paving the way for the February 1991 coup.*

*With corruption as the underlying cause of public criticism, Gen Chatichai was also accused of presiding over a parliamentary dictatorship. Mr Thaksin has apparently learned from Gen Chatichai. Appearances of corruption have been actively managed for public consumption, and conflicts of interest involving the personal business interests of those elected to power may have replaced the crude corruption involving the budget. Corruption, in short, has become nuanced and sophisticated.*

*The singular most important outcome of May 1992 was the political reform process. It led to the drafting of a new constitution over five years before promulgated in October 1997. This process began from the ground up and drew on a pool of experts and an inclusive set of provincial representatives.*

*Foremost in the minds of the constitution drafters was the ills and defects of the political system that gave rise to the February 1991 coup and its aftermath, leading to the May 1992 violence. Every effort was made*

*to rid Thai politics of corruption, to promote stability and an effective political system, and to foster transparency and accountability of government.*

*The 1997 constitution has not worked out as intended. It has perhaps produced too much of a good thing: an elected government so stable and effective that it has ruled by fiat at times. Other institutions set out by the constitution to ensure accountability and checks and balances, such as the Senate, the Constitution Court, and the National Counter Corruption Commission, have been politicised and divided. Not surprisingly, many have called for constitutional amendments to restore the balance of power and political forces.*

*Amending the constitution, however, is tricky. It is akin to opening a can of worms. All kinds of legitimate grievances as well as wicked ploys and manipulative moves are bound to emerge.*

*The constitution already has designed an eclectic set of institutions. It is best to leave more time for these institutions to work themselves out. That these institutions have not functioned as envisaged may be less due to their design than to the intentions and interests of the people who man them. Dealing with these people and prompting them to mend their ways and operate in accordance with constitutional objectives hold the key to Thailand's democratic future.*

*Thitinan Pongsudhirak is a lecturer with the Department of International Relations, Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University*

# **Bar owners dismayed as closing times remain unchanged – No special privileges for Pattaya**

May 20, 2005

Categories: Pattaya, The Thaksin Years

[Bar](#)

[owners dismayed as closing times remain unchanged – No special privileges for Pattaya](#) – *Pattaya Mail*,

May 20-26, 2005

*...Somchai responded by calling for cooperation from businesses in following the current regulations and strictly adhering to the zoning laws, operating times, not allowing patrons under the age of 20 to enter venues, keeping weapons and drugs out of their venues, not providing lewd shows, and having correct licenses. Many bar owners were dismayed over the response and walked out of the meeting...*

# Buddhist authorities in Thailand challenged by breakaway group

May 20, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Buddhist](#)

[authorities in Thailand challenged by breakaway group](#) –

Channel NewsAsia, May 20, 2005

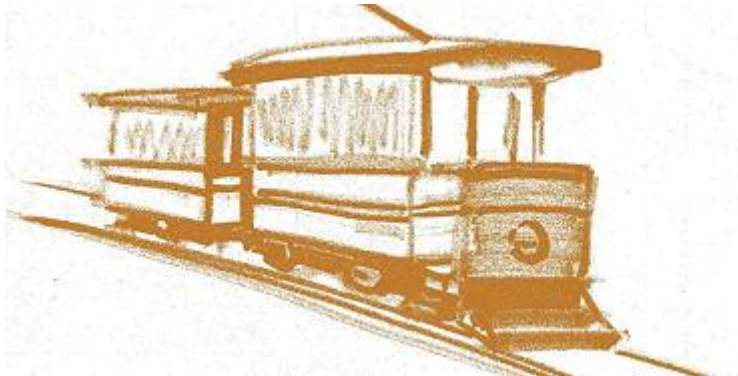
*...The community was formed by Phra Pothirak, a TV star turned Buddhist monk who dismayed religious authorities when he declared himself to have attained "enlightenment".*

*...But excommunication only made the group more popular among Thais who see their lifestyle as the antidote to rank consumerism.*

# Remembering the trams and the Paknam Railway

May 21, 2005

Categories: Trams



[Return to the Bangkok Tramways main page](#)



(Photo: Wally Higgins)

Remembering the trams  
and the Paknam Railway  
– December 17, 2005  
Ric Francis writes: *Here  
is Paknam Railway  
Station with three  
Nippon Sharyo cars  
(below) and a tram at  
Bangsue Terminus  
(above).*  
*I note in previous maps  
no one mentions the great*



(Photo: Wally Higgins)

*number of loops  
on each branch...* These  
photos were taken by  
Wally Higgins  
in 1959.

**Right:** Close-up of the  
tram's front bumper with  
a date:

"26-11-2501"

Thread on the forum  
about the trams are [here](#).



(Photo: Wally Higgins)



# Bart Simpson and the Kader fire

May 21, 2005

Categories: Labor, The Simpsons in Thailand



(Photo: Dorepo)

Bart Simpson and the Kader fire commemoration – May 21, 2005

Asiper writes: *The photo above is from May 10 – Safety day. Workers, labour organizations, and NGOs gather in front of the Ministry Labour to commemorate of 12th anniversary of the Kader fire. On the left is a model of the Kader memorial statue. Next are photos of Kader victims and then a wreath made of dolls produced at the factory which reads "12nd anniversary of Kader fire." On the right is a large Bart Simpson effigy that reads "How many people will die, how many people will have disabilities so we will get the Institute of Occupational Health Safety and Environment at the workplace?" And Thaksin's name is at the bottom.*

Melted Bart – May 4, 2003

On May 10, 1993 a fire broke out in the Kader Toy Factory in Thailand and 189 workers died.

It was the height of the Simpsons craze and the factory was producing Simpsons toys. After the fire, labor activists collected discarded toys and a melted Bart became a symbol of the tragedy.

Malaysian labor activist Tian Chua writes: *...The bodies of Bart Simpson scattered all over the ground – some half burned, some without heads or limbs, some half completed. There were many other toys too. But the bright yellow color of the Simpsons stood up most vividly on the black ashes. Kader was one of the largest toy manufacturers in Asia. It was also a typical multinational company which moved around for cheap labour. Kader was jointly owned by Thai and Hong Kong capitalists. It mainly produced toys for European & American*



(Photo: ANROAV.org)

markets. The doll of the Simpsons was the latest hot item for kids that year.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

**Above:** The [Thai Labor Museum](#) salvaged some of the toys from the ruined factory.

**Right:** Poster lamenting the lack of a Occupational Health and Safety Authority in Thailand. (Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Kader fire anniversary – May 10, 2003

Today is the 10th anniversary of the Kader fire disaster. There will be demonstrations in front of the former factory site in Nakhon Pratom province and stones for a memorial will be laid. On Sunday, May 11, seminars on the disaster will be held in the Tubtim Room at the Royal Hotel (across from Sanam Luang).

We have been informed that the Labour Minister has agreed to attend and open the ceremonies at the Kader factory site this morning.

*The toy industry is a sector which produces fun and joy. Toys bring laughter to children and parents. However, the tragedy of Kader fire revealed the sorrows and suffering behind toy manufacturing. Kader made us aware that workers use their sweat, tear and blood to exchange happiness for children around the world... (Tian Chua wrote this from prison. He has been detained in a Malaysian prison since April 10, 2001 [without charge](#) for attempting to organize Malaysian workers without government permission.)*

The Asian Network for the Rights of Occupational Accident Victims ([Anroav.org](#)) has a special issue of their newsletter on the 10th anniversary of the tragedy that can be downloaded [here](#).

BTW: 1993 was not a good year for industrial accidents in Asia. In June, a cage elevator in Hong Kong fell and killed 12 workers and in November the Zhili Toy Factory fire broke out in Shenzhen, China. It led to 87 deaths.



**[The Real Tragedy of the Kader Factory Fire](#)** – *The Irrawaddy*, May 9, 2003

*A decade after the worst industrial accident in Thai history, safety and health reform in the workplace has progressed at a glacial pace.*

BTW: *The Irrawaddy* has used a photo from 2Bangkok.com, but credited it "Thai Labour Museum."

#### ANROAV newsletter

The Asian Network for the Rights of Occupational Accident Victims ([Anroav.org](#)) has a special issue of their newsletter on the 10th anniversary of the tragedy that can be downloaded [here](#).



Left: Detail of a Kader fire remembrance t-shirt (Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

# A tale of two newspapers: Closing community radio

May 21, 2005

Categories: Community Radio

A tale of two newspapers: Closing community radio II – May 21, 2005

The *Post* article has 15 paragraphs explaining the government's reason for closing community radio stations before mentioning the allegations that the government targets stations that criticize it. It also adds a police denial that officers attempted to search the station in the TPI building. *The Nation* mentions the allegations in the second paragraph and restates the charges that police attempted to search the station. More on [Thai community radio stations](#)

[Govt puts the heat on local radio – Warning: Play by the rules or be shut down](#) – *Bangkok Post*, May 19, 2005

*...Pol Maj-Gen Kosin said an official of the Public Relations Department told him the station's powerful transmitter and high antenna caused interference. He then asked his staff to warn the station "gently". Pol Maj-Gen Kosin denied his officers harassed anyone. He admitted police had no authority to take the action because the authority rested with the NBC but he said a gentle request for cooperation should be acceptable.*

*He denied a report that two policemen had tried to search the radio station at the TPI building on Narathiwat Rachanakarin road. However, the Senate committee decided to ask the police force to investigate...*

[COMMUNITY RADIO: PRD orders closure of stations over legal limit](#) – *The Nation*, May 19, 2005

*...Radio FM 92.25 accused police of intimidation after two officers attempted to gain entry to the third floor of the TPI building, where the station is located, on Wednesday. Metropolitan Police Bureau 5 commissioner Maj-General Kosin Hinthao, who was accused of ordering Thung Mahamek police to search the TPI building, defended himself to the House committee on social development and human security against the allegation.*

*...He said police had no intention of intimidating the station, but he had received a complaint from a PRD official that the station was disrupting other frequencies...*

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

Also: [Broadcaster plans all-out govt attack](#) – *The Nation*, May 21, 2005

*A community radio station critical of the prime minister has announced plans to retaliate against a government threat to shut it down by broadcasting its anti-government programmes through other community radio stations around the country...*

Also: [Listen to FM 92.25's broadcasts](#)

# Myanmar capital tightens security in wake of bombings

May 21, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

[Myanmar](#)

[capital tightens security in wake of bombings](#) –

*The Nation*, May 21, 2005

*...The new security measures were announced Friday night over loudspeakers from military cars driving through the capital's main districts and suburbs.*

*Yangon residents will henceforth be subject to "serious action" if they are caught in public without their national security cards and face two weeks imprisonment if they fail to inform authorities in advance about guests visiting their homes...*



# Korat Post closing soon?

May 21, 2005

Categories: Thai Newspapers and Magazines

[\*Korat Post\*](#)

[closing soon?](#) – May 21, 2005

It started with some kind of controversy concerning [Wat Pa](#), but quickly became some kind of personal quarrel where the editor was personally affronted.

# “Sex capital Thailand upset over Miss Universe bikini babes”

May 21, 2005

Categories: Thailand in the International Media

Unflattering headline

– May 24, 2005

This Reuters article has a rather unflattering headline added

by CDNN: [Sex](#)

[capital Thailand upset over Miss Universe bikini babes](#) – Cyber

Diver News Network, May 21, 2005

*Miss Universe organisers scrambled on Thursday to calm a furore over photos of bikini-clad contestants posing near an ancient Buddhist temple in pageant host Thailand after the images infuriated religious leaders...*

*Sex capital Thailand upset over Miss Universe bikini babes*

*Powered by CYBER DIVER News Network*

*BANGKOK, Thailand (20 May 2005) — Miss Universe organisers scrambled on Thursday to calm a furore over photos of bikini-clad contestants posing near an ancient Buddhist temple in pageant host Thailand after the images infuriated religious leaders.*

*The photos, which showed beauty queens on a Bangkok river cruise with the famed Wat Arun, or “Temple of Dawn”, in the background, were swiftly removed from the pageant Web site.*

*But religious leaders and culture watchdogs are still upset, saying the episode violated traditional values and morality just days before a key Buddhist holiday.*

*“This is the time of Visakha Bucha when we are reminded of Lord Buddha’s teachings. But we have allowed this thing which will mark the country with sin for a long time,” Phra Thep Dilok, head of the National Center for Buddhism Promotion, said.*

*The chair of the Senate tourism committee, Suradech Yasawat, said the photos, which were splashed on the front pages of most Thai newspapers, had hurt the country’s image.*

*“It is completely inappropriate. When a contest is being held in Thailand, Thai traditions and culture should be respected,” he told the Thai News Agency.*

*About 90 percent of Thailand’s 63 million people are Buddhist and any slight against the religion can trigger a public outcry.*

*Last year, the director of the U.S. movie Hollywood Buddha apologised for offending Thais by sitting on the head of a Buddha image for an advertising poster. Thai Buddhists consider the head the most sacred part of the body and it is not to be touched.*

*And despite Bangkok’s hundreds of go-go bars and its racy reputation as the “anything goes” sex capital of Southeast Asia, many Thais are uncomfortable with public nudity.*

**FOOTAGE VETTED**

*Pageant president Paula Shugart said the temple incident was unfortunate and would not happen again.*

*“We knew that if we had any visits to the temple, we knew how the women had to dress. This happened to be out on the river and unfortunately it appeared in the background,” she said.*

*“We would never, ever do anything to intentionally offend anyone here”.*

*The Miss Universe franchise is a partnership between real-estate mogul Donald Trump and U.S. television network NBC.*

*Shugart said video footage of the 81 Miss Universe hopefuls — who have gone on elephant rides, toured temples and frolicked on beaches since arriving last week — would be vetted by the pageant's Thai partners before the May 31 grand finale is broadcast worldwide. It screens in the United States on May 30.*

*Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who hopes the pageant will give Thailand's tsunami-hit tourist industry a badly-needed boost, has urged Thais not to overreact.*

*Thailand has spent 265 million baht (\$6.7 million) on hosting the event and expects to earn 3.2 billion baht (\$80.4 million) in revenue from the pageant and other activities.*

*"I think they did not intend to insult Thai culture. They just wanted to shoot pictures of beautiful places but did not realise that the temple is sacred for Thais," he said.*

*Some Thais are also wondering what the fuss is all about.*

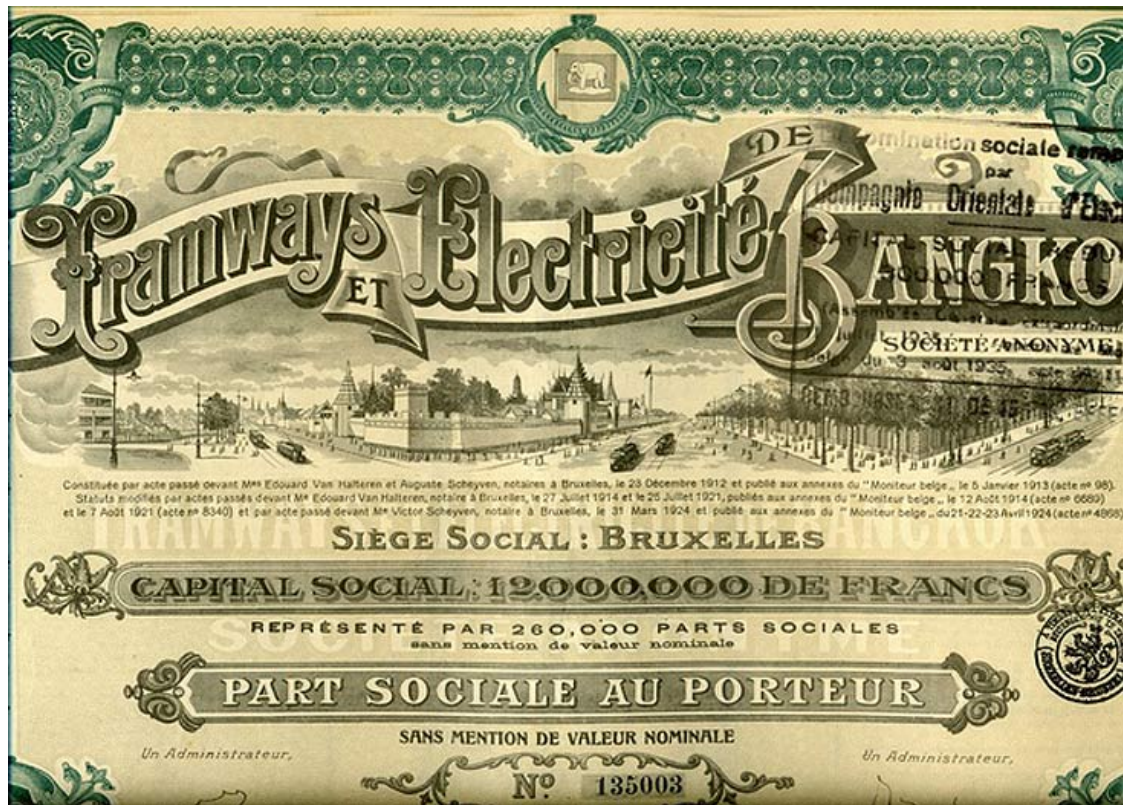
*"We wanted to promote our tourism industry, right? If we want tourists to come to Thailand, then let them see it," said a university student on an Internet chat site.*



# TRAMWAYS et ELECTRICITE de BANGKOK SOCIETE ANONYME

May 21, 2005

Categories: Trams



(Photo: The collection of B. Springsted)

TRAMWAYS et ELECTRICITE de BANGKOK SOCIETE ANONYME – May 21, 2005

B. Springsted writes: *Your page covering the Bangkok Tramways is of interest to me. I am a collector of old stocks and bonds. One piece of local interest in my collection is the following share issue: TRAMWAYS et ELECTRICITE de BANGKOK SOCIETE ANONYME.*

*The share certificate was issued in Bruxelles with a capital stock of 12,000,000 de Francs with details indicating that the share capital was arranged between 1912 and 1924. The attractive share issue is green and has a drawing of the route as it passed behind Wat Prakeo.*

*The Bangkok Tramways system had many facets but I have not been able to find much detail on the Belgium financed and construction system. If any one can advise where details of this system can be found will be appreciated.*



(Photo: The collection of B. Springsted)

**Above:** The back of the certificate. It appears on one of the cancellation stamps that some or all of the issue was retired as late as 1950.

# **Sanam Luang lit by 1 million candles**

May 22, 2005

[Sanam](#)

[Luang lit by 1 million candles](#) – TNA,

May 22, 2005

# The US Embassy's invisible man

May 22, 2005

Categories: Airports and Airlines, The Thaksin Years

[US embassy under flak for media meet](#) – Bangkok Post, May 22, 2005

*The Democrat party yesterday lambasted the United States embassy in Bangkok for its "disgraceful" action regarding the controversy over the CTX bomb detection equipment to be installed at Suvarnabhumi airport. Kiat Sitthi-amorn, one of the party's economic team, was referring to Friday's press conference at the US embassy, in which an embassy official who addressed the media asked that his identity not be revealed. Nor did he allow his picture to be taken.*

*"I don't want to criticise him. As far as I know he is in charge of trade and commerce and his job is to sell. But I cannot accept it when he made himself an 'invisible man' like that," he said.*

*The embassy official affirmed that the US investigation did not find any Thai officials had received kickbacks in the baggage screening equipment scandal.*

*...Mr Ong-art also urged the embassy to clarify a report that the official in question was close to certain Thai cabinet ministers.*

*The Democrat MP also said that the contents of the press conference remained ambiguous and urged the public to make a distinction between "no corruption was found" and "there was no corruption"...*

[SCANNER SCANDAL: Kraisak wants official's name](#) – The Nation, May 23, 2005

*The Senate committee on foreign affairs will urge the United States Embassy to disclose the identity of the official who called a press conference to clear bribery allegations against Thai officials involved in the explosives-detection machines scandal, the panel's chairman said yesterday...*

# **‘She can tell the world we exist’**

May 22, 2005

Categories: Uncategorized

[‘She](#)

[can tell the world we exist’](#) – *The Jakarta*

*Post*, May 22, 2005

*For the first time in two decades, Indonesia has sent a contestant to the prestigious Miss Universe contest, being held in Thailand, despite some loud protests here...*

# Thai-language newspapers, May 23, 2005

May 23, 2005

Categories: Thai Newspapers and Magazines

*Matichon* – May 23, 2005

\* A man on a motorcycle shot the vice president of the thambol administrative organization in Narathiwat and seriously injured him. The provincial police of Region 9 and the chief of the Muslims make a VCD of the correct religious doctrine to distribute to pornor schools. Meanwhile Manoch Kraiwong, the commander in chief of region 9 said the way to solve the southern problem is to focus on thinking. The chief of the Muslims also said the media that presents bad images of the unrest is one of causes of extending the southern problem.

*Thairath* – May 23, 2005

\* The famous monk, Luang Por Pool Attarakkho, the 94-year-old abbot of Wat Phailom, Nakornprathom, died on May 22 at 3:00pm. His followers, including some movie stars, are shocked. His body will be kept in a crystal coffin for 100 days for people to come and pay respects.

\* The director of the Tsunami Victims Center says there are 15,747 tsunami victims that have mental problems especially in Pang-nga which has 7000 persons. They ask the government to care and are afraid others may kill themselves like the 18-year-old who hung himself on May 20. Meanwhile, Mrs. Sunee Chaiyaros, of the Nation Human Rights Commission, is discouraged and also asks the government give a helping hand. Do not leave victims to fight with the capitalists by fate.

\* On May 22, Ms. Jennifer Hawkin, Miss Universe of 2004, joins the Money Expo Fair at the Queen Sirikit Convention Center to visit the booth of Krungsri Ayuthaya Bank, one of the supporters of the pageant. She gives an interview to say that this is her third time coming to Thailand. She likes Krabi province the most and wants to go to Chaingmai, but this time she has lots of things she must do (for the pageant). After finishing, she will be a presenter on Channel 7 in Australia and will broadcast about Thailand tourism on the program also.

# Social realism in Laos

May 23, 2005

Categories: Laos

A [fantastic](#)  
[series of government posters from Laos](#)

# **‘Burma has the fastest growing economy in the world’**

May 23, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

‘Burma has the fastest growing economy in the world’ – May 23, 2005

From [Burma’s](#)

[April Fools](#) – *The Irrawaddy*, May 2005: ...*Outside the ethereal world of the SPDC, Burma’s economy is not growing at all. The latest estimates of the International Monetary Fund suggest that Burma’s economic growth in 2005-2006 will be zero.*

*...It is the lack of these ‘fundamental institutions’—such as private property rights, security of contract, and at least the elements of the rule of law—that is by far the most important of the woes facing Burma’s economy today. Without the fundamental institutions of the sort noted above, however, no economy can enjoy, or ever has enjoyed, success for very long...*



# Rape cases jump in Thailand, while arrest rates decline

May 23, 2005

Categories: Crime

[Rape cases jump in Thailand, while arrest rates decline](#)

– AP, May 23, 2005

*Rape and other kinds of sexual abuse of females in Thailand are increasing rapidly, but police are arresting a smaller percentage of assailants, a prominent researcher said...*

# Thailand promotes 'transparency' to meet 'Asian values'

May 23, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thailand promotes 'transparency' to meet 'Asian values'](#) –

TNA, May 23, 2005

*Thailand has utilized modern technologies, including information technology (IT), to promote transparency in both the public and private sectors to meet the 'Asian values', Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has said...*

# Thailand trip will save 11,000GBP on teeth op

May 23, 2005

Categories: Health

[Thailand](#)

[trip will save 11,000GBP on teeth op](#) – *Huddersfield*

*Daily Examiner*, May 23, 2005

*A Dalton man is preparing to fly 6,000 miles – to get his teeth fixed. Colin Walder, 55, flies out to Thailand on June 10 to undergo dental implant surgery...*

# Thaksin's reading list for the nation

May 24, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

Latest from Chang Noi: [Homework assignment for the nation](#) – May 24, 2005

*About two years ago, quite a few bookshops arranged two special display shelves: one for books about Thaksin, the other for books recommended by Thaksin. Now there is a new book leaping off the shelves with the title “109 Books That Should Be Read, from Prime Minister Thaksin” ...*

# Museum opening faces opposition – Conservation panel unhappy with plans

May 24, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

## [Museum](#)

### [opening faces opposition – Conservation panel unhappy with plans](#)

– *The Nation*, May 24, 2005

*The National Discovery Museum project, the brainchild of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, has hit its first hurdle with opposition from the Committee for the Conservation of Rattanakosin and Old Towns.*

*Unless the conflict is resolved, the opening of the museum, scheduled for December next year, will have to be postponed, said Phuthorn Bhumadhon, director of the museum for the National Discovery Museum Institute (NDMI).*

*The museum is to be housed in the old Commerce Ministry building in Tha Tian. However, since the three-storey building is very old, only the 1,200-square-metre first floor can be used as exhibition space, while the second and third floors would be museum offices...*

# More ceasefire groups expected to break with Rangoon

May 24, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

[More](#)

[ceasefire groups expected to break with Rangoon](#) –

*The Irrawaddy*, May 24, 2005

*More ethnic groups are expected to follow the lead of the Shan State National Army and abrogate their ceasefire agreements with the Rangoon junta...*

# Government proposes six different national anthems

May 24, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Govt](#)

[wants a national anthem for every occasion](#) –

*The Nation*, May 24, 2005

*...According to GMM Grammy, the first version is for official use and sung by popular singer Seksan Sukpimai. The second version – sung by young vocalists would be played at formal and semi-formal events.*

*The third version, sung by the popular singers Thongchai McIntyre and Nantida Kaewbuasai, is recommended for ballroom dances. The fourth version, also sung by young vocalists, would be used in secondary schools and universities.*

*The fifth version is aimed at children, with famous child singer Chatupatr Laothamatas, aka Nong Plub, providing the vocals. The sixth version, performed by a traditional Thai orchestra, is aimed at the elderly.*

*Govt wants a national anthem for every occasion*

*Published on May 24, 2005*

*The National Culture Commission (NCC) and music experts will review six new versions of the national anthem before they are tabled before the Cabinet.*

*In response to opposition to the newly arranged versions, NCC secretary-general Prissana Pongtadsirikul yesterday said the re-mixed editions would be appraised by her commission. “Only after the reviews will they be forwarded to the Cabinet,” she said.*

*According to Prissana, Culture Minister Uraiwan Thienthong had already approved the six versions, which combine the original lyrics with new melodies. “While retaining the same values as the original version, the new melodies will allow the national anthem to be played on more occasions,” Uraiwan was quoted as saying.*

*“We also have a regulation by the Office of the Prime Minister that governs when the anthem can be played,” she said.*

*Last year, the Defence Ministry asked GMM Grammy Pcl to create new versions of the national anthem so that it could be played more often.*

*The ministry said the move is necessary, because the anthem lacks appeal for many younger Thais. Also, some children cannot remember the lyrics, the ministry said.*

*According to GMM Grammy, the first version is for official use and sung by popular singer Seksan Sukpimai. The second version – sung by young vocalists would be played at formal and semi-formal events.*

*The third version, sung by the popular singers Thongchai McIntyre and Nantida Kaewbuasai, is recommended for ballroom dances. The fourth version, also sung by young vocalists, would be used in secondary schools and universities.*

*The fifth version is aimed at children, with famous child singer Chatupatr Laothamatas, aka Nong Plub, providing the vocals. The sixth version, performed by a traditional Thai orchestra, is aimed at the elderly.*

# Piyamane – May 25, 2005

May 25, 2005

Categories: Gem Scam



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Piyamane – May 25, 2005

A victim's story: I feel the need to warn others about my experience with these gem-scam artists, and hope that my warnings will at least save some potential tourists the painful and exasperating experience that I had to go through.

I was on a business trip for my company, and I was booked in meetings and conferences for almost the entire stay in Bangkok. My itinerary had me leaving the U.S. on May 7 and returning on the morning of May 13, 2005. I had only 1 day free (it was the last day on May 12) and I used it to go sightseeing and to buy some gifts for my wife and kids back home in the United States. Little did I know that I was about to be swindled out of over **\$3000** dollars.

The day (May 12) started with me taking the water taxi from my hotel (Royal Orchid Sheraton) at pier #3. The boat dropped me off at pier #9 (Wat Phra Kaew—the Emerald Buddha). As I was making my way towards the Emerald Buddha and then to the Grand Palace, I was approached by a friendly tuk tuk driver, who told me that today was a religious holiday and that the temple would be opened later in the day. It was 9:40am at that time. He said he would gladly take me to the other temples for only 40 baht, and that I would be back in time to see the Emerald Buddha. I decided to go ahead, as I've never been in a tuk tuk before, and it seemed like an adventurous thing to do at the spur of the moment.

The tuk tuk driver first took me to the Golden Mount, parked the tuk tuk, told me to take my time and that he'd wait for me. I proceeded up the climb to the top. I took a number of pictures, and after about 40 minutes came back to the tuk tuk where I was approached by an older Thai gentleman who was about 50 years old. His Toyota Corolla was parked next to the tuk tuk, but my driver was nowhere in sight. We struck up a conversation, and he seemed genuinely friendly and helpful. He asked if I bought anything for my family, and I showed him a bag of little porcelain toys I bought at the top of the Golden Mount. These were for my kids, I told him. He asked if I bought anything for my wife, and I told him no, but that I was thinking of buying her something nice since I had missed Mother's Day. He told me about a very good jewelry shop named **Leela Export Center**, and that I should ask my driver to take me there. He told me that rubies and sapphires from Thailand are the best in the world, and that Leela sells at 50% to 80% off the prices I'd pay if I were to buy them in the U.S. My tuk tuk driver reappeared, and the Thai gentleman said something in Thai, and then pointed to me. My driver came over and



nodded, and he told me that he can take me there if I want. I told him sure. I thanked the gentleman as the tuk tuk driver and I left the parking lot.

The tuk tuk driver dropped me off at Leela. I was approached by the store manager, and he proceeded to show me a number of rubies. After asking for some prices, I decided that the rubies were a bit expensive, and not worth the savings. I told the manager that I had bought my wife a ruby ring a few years ago, and that I didn't remember rubies being that expensive. He told me that these rubies are of the best qualities, and that the prices are actually much lower than if I were to buy them back home. I thanked him and left, not realizing at the time that I had unknowingly steered clear of the first of many traps.

The tuk tuk driver took me to another temple. At this temple, there were 2 guys sitting by the bench. One was an older Thai of about 40 years old, who said he now lives in the U.K, and the other was a younger man about 30 years old from England. The English guy is named Steve Allen. Both were friends, and they told me they came here together once a year between May 5 and May 12 for their special functions. We struck up a friendly conversation. They asked me what I was carrying, and I showed them the porcelain toys I got at the Golden Mount. The Thai then asked me if I got something for my wife, and when I told him no, he proceeded to come closer and told me about this special function that only a few people knew about. Apparently the Thai government allows the wholesales of gems to tourists only one week out of the year. And since today was the 12<sup>th</sup>, I was in luck since it was the last day that this offer was available. That was the reason these guys were here. Steve Allen told me that he was able to come to Bangkok every year 'free' because the gems he brought back and resold in England for profits essentially paid for the trip. Steve told me that he's able to resell the gems at 180% to 195% of what he paid for here. Twelve hundred pounds, he said, can easily fetch 2500 pounds at a minimum. I had some doubts, but both of them were insistent. However, sensing my uneasiness, the pressure was suddenly lifted. Both of them became cordial again. In fact, the conversation veered towards an earlier conversation we had—Steve and I were discussing Muai Thai fighting, Pride fighting, UFC, etc. They brought me back at ease. With the pressure gone, it seemed they were genuine. When I told them I am still a bit skeptical, Steve proceeded to give me his email address: [steve\\_allen84@hotmail.com](mailto:steve_allen84@hotmail.com)

He told me that I didn't have to buy the gems, but perhaps I should just look. In fact, the store will only sell me a maximum of 3 pieces. I can buy small, or I can spend more like they did and buy bigger pieces. It was really up to me. The store they told me to go to is **PIYAMANEE**. I told them that I was already told of the **Leela Export Center**, and they both told me that that place is a tourist trap, and that it was not backed by the Thai government. PIYAMANEE is backed by the Thailand government (TAT). I trusted these guys a bit more after hearing them giving me their warning about Leela as a tourist trap, and to stay clear of Leela as the prices are very high.

I had my camera, and was about to take a picture of the two of them, thanking them for their help. The Thai quickly told me to put the camera away, as it was considered very bad luck to take pictures in the temple. I was very surprised, but did as they requested. Right after this the driver came into view. The Thai called the driver over, and told the driver something in Thai. The driver approached me and apologized, telling me that he should have told me not to take pictures in this particular temple as it was considered bad luck. To make up for it, he will take me to PIYAMANEE as the other Thai and Steve had recommended.

The driver took me to PIYAMANEE. As an aside, the store's front is exactly the same as the picture you have posted on your website! My heart sunk when I got back to the US and did a search on PIYAMANEE on Google and your website turned up. Anyway, I digress.

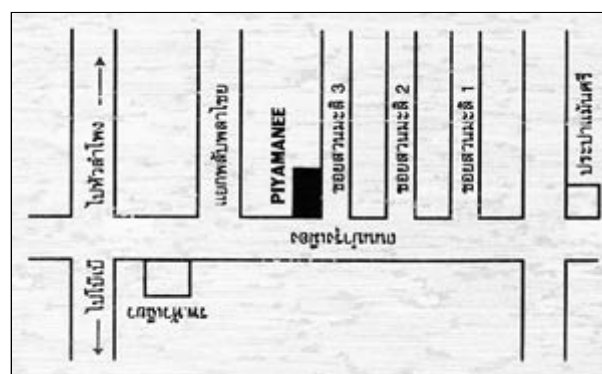
Once I stepped inside PIYAMANEE, I noticed something out of the ordinary. The place was not very well lit, and most of the sales people were very young female (ages around 16 to 25). I was approached by an older woman (around 40 years old) and she proceeded to show me Thai Sapphires. I had considered buying my wife something in the \$300 range, but what they told me

was that Thai Sapphires are worth a lot more than that. I thanked them and left. Little did I know that I just stepped out of the 2<sup>nd</sup> trap.

Front:



Back:



The tuk tuk driver then took me to the temple of the Black Buddha. I felt bad for my driver, as he's been chauffeuring me around for the past 3 hours. He told me it was okay, and that I should take some pictures of the Black Buddha. I went in and was approached by a young Thai. He showed me around, and seemed very friendly. In fact, he was reciting history lessons for me. There was no mention of jewels, and the thought of buying gems had finally left my mind. As we were kneeling in front of the Black Buddha (he gave me some incense to pray with — although I am not Buddhist, I thought it was the polite thing to do), two tourists came in. We struck up a conversation. They asked me my nationality and where I work. I told them. One of the guys was an American from San Jose. He said he worked for Cisco and had a Vietnamese girlfriend. Although back in the United States our companies are competitors, he told me that over here, we 'Americans must stick with each'. The other guy was from England. He looked Indian. They proceeded to tell me about them hurrying this morning to buy some gems, as today is the last day that tourist could buy gems at a huge discount. I told them I thought it was funny that they mentioned that, since I was already told of this story earlier in the day. Both of them told me that it was serious business, and that Brad (the guy from Cisco) is able to purchase these gems to bring back to the US and resell them to high profile places like Biddle Banks & Bailey, or Tiffany, or any other high end stores. I recognized these names, and my interest peaked again. Brad was the consummate salesman. He told me he's been doing this for 3 years. He started out like me, an unbeliever. However, he took the first step and bought small 3 years ago (around \$1000). Today, he just bought a complete set (pendant, earrings, and ring) for over \$4000 at PIYAMANEE. He said that he could resell this easily for over \$8000 back in the US. In fact, if I make a purchase and could not sell it, he will buy it off for me at double what I paid. He even gave me his email address: [bradhammer@cisco.com](mailto:bradhammer@cisco.com)

The only reason why Brad couldn't buy more is because the Thai government limits his purchase to just 3 items. However, if I were to buy it, when I get back to the United States I

should contact him and if I want, he will buy it back from me for double what I paid. He insisted that it was such a good deal that I would be stupid to just let it slip away. They poured on the sales antics fast and furious. When I mentioned Leela Export, they both warned me to stay clear of that place, as it was actually a tourist trap. They told me that I should only go to a government backed place like PIYAMANEE.

At this point, I started to seriously waiver. Here was an American (Brad), working for a well known company, who actually spoke a few words in my native tongue, trying to tell me that he's only looking out for a fellow American. As we walked back to my tuk tuk, these two guys climbed into their own tuk tuk, leaving me with the impression that they were indeed tourists. As my tuk tuk driver was backing out, Brad jumped out of his tuk tuk and came over to me. He told me that I should go and look at PIYAMANEE, and to please send him an email regardless of whether or not I make a purchase. He's just happy to find a friend in a competing high-tech company.

Needless to say, I was totally swayed by Brad. His story is consistent with the story from the 1<sup>st</sup> two guys (the Thai and English guys) I met at the temple, and backed by the story from the sales lady at PIYAMANEE. I decided to go back to PIYAMANEE for a final look.

When I came into the store the second time, the original sales lady came up to me again. She showed me some Thai Sapphires. I was still skeptical, as the prices seemed extraordinarily high. I asked why the prices were so high, and she told me that these were the best qualities. In fact, she asked a girl to bring out a display case showing the different colors and cuts of sapphires, and asked me to rate them. I chose what I thought was the clearest and most brilliant sapphire, and she told me that it was fake, that I chose wrongly. In fact, she told me, the best ones were the ones she had in the store, the ones I was looking at. They were a bit dull, but that was to be expected from true sapphires, she said. The others were fake, she re-emphasized, and I should not be fooled so easily. I have never bought sapphires before, so I didn't know if what she was telling me was truth.

I looked for less expensive sapphire sets, as the price for the set I was given was 150,000 baht. However, I was told that today there was a discount of 20%, making the total price 120,000 baht. There was also no government tax, so this was the best price they will do. However, they wanted full payment in cash. When I told them that I never carry that kind of cash, they asked how much I did have in my wallet. I pulled out my wallet and showed them that I had only \$400. However, they noticed my family picture and my credit cards. The sales lady complimented me on my wife and kids, and told me how my wife would love this special surprise. In fact, almost all of the sales girls in the shop came over to look at my family picture, and they all chimed in that it was the best deal I could make. (In the back of my mind, I was being swayed to buy the complete set for my wife, since I had left the US before Mother's Day, leaving her behind with our two young kids). The fact was, I did not have that kind of cash with me. They called the sales manager over and he proposed a deal for me.

The sales manager was an older Thai gentleman around 55+ years. He took kindly to my situation, telling me that he understands how much this gift would mean to my wife. He told me that there was a bank close by, and that he would send a security person to accompany me to the bank to withdraw 60,000 baht, charging it against my credit card in the form of a cash advance. The remaining 60,000 baht would be charged normally to my credit card. The bank, apparently, was in full support of their operations, as this business was government approved. He pointed me to a corner of the room where a TAT official was sitting in the TAT booth. He called one of the sales girls over. She brought me some water to drink, and after a few more indecisive minutes, I decided to go ahead with the purchase. The security person turned out to be one of the sales girls. She and I got into the tuk tuk and the driver took us to the nearby bank. It was only about 2 city blocks away. At the bank, I was able to easily withdraw 60,000 baht with simply my credit card and passport.

Back at PIYAMANEE, I handed the 60,000 baht to the sales manager, who proceeded to close the sale. At the end of the sale, the general manager of the store came over to congratulate me on

a wise purchase. I was given an official looking Certificate of Guarantee. He warned me that there are good people in Bangkok, and bad people in Bangkok. He told me to guard the sapphire set very carefully. In fact, he said, he would like to send along one of the sales girls to accompany me for the duration of the day, just to keep me safe. He told me to go out and dismiss the tuk tuk driver, as he should not be trusted. I obliged, went outside and paid the tuk tuk driver 200 baht (the original deal we had was 40 baht, but I felt bad for the guy as he had driven me around for about 4 hours). When I went back inside, the manager restated that he would like to send me on an all expense paid tour of the Thai Village, with 500 baht to spend, and with one of the sales girls to keep me safe. I declined the offer and told him that I would prefer to go back to my hotel, rest up, and get ready for my 6am flight the next day. Since it was about 2pm, he told me that he would call me a taxi to take me back to the hotel, and if I want, he could send one of the girls over to pick me up at 3pm to go to the Thai Village. I thanked him for the taxi, but respectfully declined the tour. He sent a girl out to flag a taxi for me, and I left.

Here is a picture of my 'official' Certificate of Guarantee.

**Certificate of Guarantee**  
**PIYAMANEE**

468-470 Bamroonmuang Rd., Thapsirin, Pomapsatlupai, Bangkok 10100 Thailand.  
Tel. 0-2621-6341, 0-2621-6342 Fax. 0-2621-6184

Customer Name.....  
Date of Purchase..... 12/5/05  
Series No..... 8163

DESCRIPTION  
1 SET BLUE SAPPHIRE WITH DIAMONDS RING, EARRINGS  
AND PENDANT WITH YELLOW GOLD CHAIN  
YELLOW GOLD SETTING

UNREAL PRODUCT REFUNDABLE  
MANAGER

When I went back to the Royal Orchid Sheraton hotel, I immediately sent an email to Brad to tell him that I made a \$3100+ purchase (120,000 baht is around \$3150) and that we should talk back in the US. I wanted to thank him. I locked the jewelry set in my hotel safe, went downstairs to grab some food and relax on the river. I felt good about the purchase, thinking that my wife would be very happy once she sees the great deal I got for these sapphires.

My flight back to the US left at 6am local time on May 13. I didn't get a chance to log in to check email again until I had landed in the US. My final flight to JFK landed on May 13 at 3:10pm. I declared on my entry form that I purchased some jewels. The customs official pulled me aside, and after checking out the jewels, forced me to pay \$180 in taxes. He told me that any jewelry from Thailand is hit with a 6% tax. I was not happy, but there was nothing I could do. So I paid the tax.

When I arrived home, I showed my wife the gift set. She was happy, but she told me that the sapphires didn't look right. I told her it was the best quality from Thailand, but that we will have a quick check of its real value the next day.

On Saturday (May 14), I logged into [Bailey Banks & Biddle](#) to do a quick comparison check for sapphires.

Even on the computer screen, the pictures of the stones shown by Bailey Banks & Biddle far outshone the stones I bought from Thailand. A lump formed in my throat when I noticed that the

email I sent to Brad the day before was returned with an invalid user ID. In other words, the email server returned the email I sent to Brad, stating that the user does not exist. I immediately sent another email to Brad, and followed up with one to Steve. I also went onto Google to search for PIYAMANEE. My blood turned cold when the search came up with your 2Bangkok.com site, warning tourists of the gem scam.

Later that day, my wife and I went to a jewelry store in Philadelphia where we had purchased previous items in the past (engagement ring, anniversary items, etc), and asked the owner to give us an estimate of the complete set. She valued the entire set at no more than \$700, that's less than 1/4 of the price I paid. The reason, she said, was that these sapphires are commercial grade, i.e. they are of poor quality. The final nail in the coffin, so to speak, came on my computer screen when I arrived back home from Philadelphia on Saturday night. Both emails I had sent to Brad and Steve bounced, as those email addresses were invalid.

I feel like a complete fool. I was manipulated. The person whom I trusted the most was the American imposter named Brad. I didn't purchase these sapphires to turn around and make a profit. I honestly thought I was getting a good deal. I don't fit the profile of the rich tourist who wants to make a quick buck, and who "deserves whatever he gets". I purchased these items for my wife. I had wanted to give her something special for our 8<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. I wanted to have something that reminds me warmly of Thailand. Instead of remembering the sweetness of the Thai culture and the friendliness of the people, I now have a bitter bile taste of the corruption and manipulation that seems to be running rampant in this country. I no longer feel the urge to one day go back and partake in the many beautiful offerings that Bangkok has. The only good news is that, unless we can somehow return these commercial grade sapphires and get back our full refund, my wife will continue to keep these items as gifts from her loving husband who didn't know any better.

The PIYAMANEE address and contact information is

468-470 Bamroonmuang Rd

Thapsirin, Pompapsattupai,

Bangkok, 10100 Thailand

Tel 0-2621-6341, 0-2621-6342

Fax 0-2621-6184

More on the [Gem Scam](#) & [maps to the scam stores](#)



# Prang Puthorn/Phraeng Phoothon

May 25, 2005

Categories: Uncategorized

Prang Puthorn/Phraeng Phoothon

– May 25, 2005

On Sunday, a *Nation* [article](#) mentioned "Prang Puthorn."

Asiper writes: **Prang Phuthorn** was built in the King Rama V era. It housed the famous Thai sweet shop, Kor. Panich and is near the Interior Ministry. It was the palace of King Rama IV's son. He worked for as a government official in King Rama V era. More [on Phraeng Phoothon](#).

And Wisarut adds: Prang Puthorn? That's Phraeng Phoothon, one of three Phraeng (Phraeng Phoothon, Phraeng Naram, Phraeng Sapphasart). **Phraeng Phoothon** used to be the palace of Krommamuen Phuthaset Thamrongsak (children of King Mongkut and Chaochom Marnda Talap). After Krommamuen Phootharet Thamrongsak passed away at the age of 42, the children of that prince sold the palace to King Chulalongkorn and the King decided to turn that palace into commercial area with the new road within City Wall. The road was named "Phraeng Phoothon."

Phraeng Phuuthon is in between Thanon Tanao and Thanon Assadang near Saphan Changrongsee (near the Ministry of the Interior).

**Phraeng Nara** used to be a palace of Krommamuen Narathip Praphanphongse (children of King Mongkut and Chaochom Marnda khian), the founder of Siamese Tramway Co.Ltd., the Phraphutthabat Railway, and the Naruemit Theater. His palace had been expropriated to construct Phraeng Nara Road.

**Phraeng Sapphasart** used to be a palace of Kroommamuen Sapphasart Supphakit until the prince passed away. After that, the palace became another commercial area and a red light area before Pat Pong (Pat Pong Road was opened in 1950).

More Info can be seen here at Sanook.com: [Phraeng](#)

[Nara](#) – [Red](#)

[light district at Phraeng Saphasart's by Master Rong Wongsawan](#)

**Earlier: Old-town**

[eye opener – Students get to see life in an embattled historic community](#) – Bangkok Post, May 22, 2005

As a student at a prestigious university, Chalermopol Pattayakul's everyday life has nothing to do with the poor community behind ancient Mahakan Fort in Phra Nakhon district.

That was until the 19-year-old student of Thammasat University's political science faculty made a visit to the community this month to learn of householders' long fight against eviction, forced by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA)...

# **Thai security forces operate in a “climate of impunity,” Amnesty says**

May 25, 2005

Categories: The Thai Deep South

[Thai security forces operate in a “climate of impunity,” Amnesty says](#) – AP, May 25, 2005

# **‘Taxi Channel’**

May 26, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

‘Taxi Channel’ – May 26,  
2005

Taxi with a mini TV screen in the visor that plays advertisements.



# **‘Dhamma lessons from the beauty queens’**

May 26, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[‘Dhamma](#)

[lessons from the beauty queens’](#) – *The*

*Nation*, May 26, 2005

# Thai Rak Thai rocked by rebellion over Thaksin removal of Auditor General

May 26, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[SPLIT](#)

[OVER AUDITOR-GENERAL : TRT rocked by rebellion](#) – *The Nation*,

May 26, 2005

*...About 60 Thai Rak Thai MPs, most of them belonging to Snoh's Wang Nam Yen faction, signed the strongly-worded petition that states that Visut's nomination is unconstitutional and could even be regarded as a breach of the King's constitutional power...*

# Thai-language newspapers – May 24-27, 2005

May 27, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

*Matichon* – May 24, 2005

\* Thaksin is confident the events at Khao Praviharn at the border will not continue. The Sri Saket governor and the Cambodian officers have talked and understand the situation and informed Hun Sen, the PM of Cambodia, already. This area is developed to be a tourism point. Meanwhile, the Thai envoy has checked and there is no pessimistic news in the Phnom Penh media. He is confused how the news that a Thai soldier shot Cambodian people came out.

\* May 23 – The heavy rain on May 22 made hundreds of thousands tons of stone from a mountain collapse on Wat Tam Khao Jeen Theerapradit in Satun Province. Only trees and one monk's house was damaged and no one was there, but the monks had to move away from the area. Meanwhile the Satun governor ordered the officers to survey the caves and mountain where there are communities to check for safety as it may happen again during the rainy season.

*Thairath* – May 24, 2005

\* The news that Luangpor Pool, the abbot of Wat Phailom, died on May 22 or Visakhabucha day, made all the lottery tickets in the temple sell well—especially the number of his age 94 and the time of his birth and death—11, 55 and 14.

\* May 23 – The Thai Health Promotion Foundation revealed the the Thai Health report for 2005. One of the surveys is “Thai Society and Rape.” It found that the index of sex crimes against women increases 35% in 8 years compared to 1997 when there were 3,741 cases. In 2004 were 5,052 cases. It is expected that only 5% of incidents are reported. There are lots of crimes not reported to the police.

*Matichon* – May 26, 2005

\* Dr. Suchai Charoenrattanakul, Public Health Minister, pointed that cigarettes cause 36 harmful diseases and killed 130,000 people per day. Smoking causes death to Thai people which averages 142 people per day or 6 people per hour. It planned to extend the control area in schools, public parks, and temples. Meanwhile, Dr. Thawat Suntraporn, Director General of Disease Control Department, warns that the shops selling cigarettes with no warning pictures to remove the packs and put the new ones with warning pictures instead.

*Thairath* – May 26, 2005

\* Bloody news – May 25, Tak province – Mrs. Payao Ruamsuk opened her daughter 's wedding parcel sent by post. Wondering, she put batteries inside the gift, a cat doll, and it exploded and killed her. The same day the police arrested Mr. Jumrieng, a 24-year-old salesman and found that he sent the parcel to kill Ms. Khanitha, his ex-girlfriend who just got married to another man. However the mother had bad luck and got the package.

More on Thaksin at Wat Phra Kaew – May 27, 2005

Many readers wanted more details about the "controversial actions" at Wat Phrakeo during Visakhapucha [as reported in \*Manager\*](#) so here they are:

Sian Sao Long's column in *Manager* reports that Thaksin is too bold in being the chairperson of Visakhabucha day in Wat Prakaew (a type of role usually reserved for The King). Siang Sao Long shows a letter from Rapee Sakrik, a famous professor, that says he does not like Thaksin to act like that. It also mentions Thaksin's picture in the [national anthem](#) and other complaints about the government. It is likely that anti-TRT media will be quick to dish out tough criticism like this as Thaksin's leadership is apparently showing cracks amid scandals and MP revolts.

# Marilyn 'Pasaya'

May 27, 2005

Categories: Signs and Billboards



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

'Pasaya' – A Marilyn Monroe-themed "entertainment" venue on Ratchadapiesek Road.

# TV commercials: Shaved polar bear and Siamese cat

May 28, 2005

Categories: Advertising and Commercials



Siamese cat promoting Siamese  
Magma Roof Tiles



Polar bear shaves itself with  
an electric razor...



"Coming soon" –  
The polar bear is ready for a new kind of 'hot' tasting  
candy.

[More](#)  
[Thai-language TV commercials](#)

# Horse on the expressway

May 28, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Horse on the expressway – May 28, 2005



# Thai-language newspapers – May 30, 2005

May 30, 2005

Categories: Thai-language Newspaper Headlines

*Matichon*

– May 30, 2005

Mr. Sophon Petchsawang, Buriram MP of TRT party, Chairperson on a committee of the House of Representative revealed on May 26 that the appropriate place for the new parliament is Thai Melon Factory which the good point for convenient travel to Suwanapoom Airport. It takes 20 minutes and is a big place at 600 rai. If the government agrees, it can be used for construction. There is no environment pollution. But the bad point is they must pay a lot for the land. The committee will propose the case study to Mr. Pokin Polkul, House of Representative Chairperson on June 2.

*Thairath*

– May 30, 2005

\* Bloody news – Mrs.

Siriporn Phanmalee, 31-years-old seamstress, cut her husband's penis off while he was sleeping. She got upset when her husband said he might leave her after they just made love. After her husband went to the hospital, she felt guilty and surrendered to the police. Meanwhile the doctor said it takes 7 days to check her husband's reattachment operation to determine whether it can work again.

# Krabi: Wookie Home World

May 30, 2005

Categories: Film and TV



(Photo: starwars.com)

Krabi:

Wookie home planet – May 30, 2005

Above is a still from *Revenge of the Sith* showing a section of the film that was partially shot in Thailand.

**Also interesting:** Episode III Easter Egg Hunt – [Ships](#)

[Aplenty](#) – [Opera](#)

[Cameos](#) – [Battleground](#)

[Bits](#)

*Revenge of the Sith* in Thailand

– May 11, 2005

Apparently ‘additional photography’ on *Revenge of the Sith* was filmed in Phuket: ...*Shooting on soundstages in Australia and Britain with additional photography in China, Thailand, Switzerland, Italy and Tunisia, Lucas thrusts viewers into pitched battles in looming caverns...* ([Hollywood Reporter](#), May 6, 2005)

From [Episode](#)

[III Cast & Crew:](#)

*THAILAND SHOOT*

*Production Services Provided by Santa International Film Productions Co., Ltd.*

*Production Manager – Piya Pestonji*

*Location Manager – Somchai Santitharangkul*

*Director of Photography – Ron Fricke*

*Camera Assistant – Teera Boonsri*

*Key Grip – Surat Thongwang*

Does anyone know what was shot and what the footage is used for in the film?

On the forum: [Phuket](#)

[is the Wookie home planet? and a planet called ‘Utapau’](#)

– May 12, 2005

Star

Wars grips the nation – *The Nation*,

May 17 , 2005

*All tickets for the opening day of the year's most anticipated movie have already been snapped up through bookings...*

*An informed source said that some of the background shots for scenes in the movie were filmed in Thailand.*

*Shots of mysterious tree-covered peaks jutting from a lagoon might appear very familiar to people in Thailand, he said.*

# Red light areas in Bangkok in olden days

May 31, 2005

Categories: History

From the Thai-language press: Red light areas in Bangkok in olden days – May 31, 2005

This article was written by Mr. Jaroon Wattanasin who picked up some part from two books, *Cheewit Jak Ngao Vela* and *Sanim Dokmai, Cheewit Jing Nai Mum Mued Khong Ying Thai*.

Prostitution originated in Mesopotamia, but in Thailand some part of the law in the U-thong era 628 years ago mentioned prostitutes. They lived in a market outside of the palace wall and included Chinese.

At the end of the King Rama IV, Rattanakosin Era, some part of the bill for protection from diseases mentioned “there should be a lamp for the symbol in front of the house ,” but it did not specify the color. It is assumed that green was used because it is associated with officers. That was the first law controlling prostitutes to follow the law. After that people called brothels a “green lamp place” and called the prostitute a “lady of the green lamp.”

Sumpeng was not only a neighborhood for Chinese at the beginning of the Rattanakosin era, but also a prostitute area which is why we have the abusive word calling a bad woman *e Sumpeng*. The Chinese called Chinese prostitutes *yumsha*.

The prostitute areas in the Rama IV Road area—before WWII—were at Tao Lane, Rong Yai Fang, Rong Mae Kleeb, and Rong Mae Tao. Yai Fang was a kind procuress. She donated money to build Wat Kanikaphon and Mae Kleeb built Wat Kunmatuyaram.

Prostitutes were at Yan Sumpeng, Suanien Lane, Vegkhi Lane, Rong Kome Lane, Poe Lane, Yuan Lane or Annam Lane (for Cambodians and Annams), Sapan Lek, Sapan Than, Mor Lane, Vorrajak, Tanon Dinsor (Dinsor Road), 22 July Circus, Rongmuang Road, Mahanak intersection, Bobae, Sapan Khao, Nang Loeng, Banglampoo. Chinese, foreign, and hi-class Japanese were at hotels in Sipraya and Sruang.

Before 1957, there were lots of brothels built of which the most famous were at Praeng Supprasart, Brahman monastery, Giant Swing, Brothel Khai lane, brothel in front of Huayrong, Sapanthan, Brothel Banglumpoo, Brothel Sapanyao, Nangloeng, Sukhumvit Soi Klang and Soi Ruamrudee. Besides, there were many prostitutes who paddled around in boats at Chaloemlok Bridge, Pratoonam.

# Around the World in 80 Days movie location

May 31, 2005

Categories: Film and TV, Thai Railroads



(Photo:  
Reiner)

*Around  
the World in 80 Days*  
movie location

In case

you forgot: In April of  
2003 Thonburi Station was  
transformed into 'Agra Station'  
for the filming of Jackie  
Chan's *Around the World  
in 80 Days*.

More photos and news about  
Thonburi Station is [here](#).

# The origins of our national anthem

May 31, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[The origins of our national anthem](#) – *The Nation*,  
May 31, 2005

*...The national anthem was created following the June 1932 coup that introduced the current system of constitutional monarchy. There was no national anthem during the Sukhothai and Ayutthaya periods, nor even in the early days of the Rattanakosin dynasty.*

*...In 1939, when the country's name was changed from Siam to Thailand, Field Marshal Plaek Phibunsongkhram's government held a competition for new lyrics. Luang Saranuprapan won a Bt1,000 prize for writing the words still used today...*

# Almost like being there: Songkhla

June 1, 2005

Categories: Thai Railroads



(Photo: Asiper for 2Bangkok.com)

Almost like being there: Songkhla

– June 1, 2005

Asiper writes: *The [Songkhla Train Station](#) is now a weekend market. At the front, food is sold and at the back clothes are sold.*



(Photo: Asiper for 2Bangkok.com)

**Below:** *The owner at a grocery near the market in Songkhla said those who come to buy cigarettes will buy only buy them one by one and will not buy the pack. They do not like the [warning photos](#) and they feel like they do not want to smoke when they see it.*





(Photo: Asiper for 2Bangkok.com)



# A tale of two newspapers: Scanner probe extended

June 1, 2005

A tale of two newspapers: Scanner probe extended – June 1, 2005

Slightly different info in the *Post* and *Nation* articles.

The main difference is that *The Nation* adds Thirayuth Boonmee's direct implication of Thaksin and a prediction of the demise of Thaksin's government in the main article. The *Post* has Thirayuth Boonmee's comments in a separate article and does not include the accusations against Thaksin.

[Govt](#)

[inquiry still missing evidence – Visanu: Extended deadline till](#)

[Friday](#) – *Bangkok Post*, May 31, 2005

...Patriot was the distributor of the machines for InVision

Technologies in the original contract. The machines were quoted

by the United States manufacturer at 1.504 billion baht (US\$35.8

million). But the price shot up to 2.608 billion baht when ITO

Joint Venture sold them to New Bangkok International Airport

Co...

The inquiry had tried in vain to get information from the US

Securities and Exchange Commission, the US Department of Justice

and the California district court, as well as from Worapoj Yasadatt,

managing director of Patriot. Mr Worapoj only sent his lawyers

to a meeting on Friday and they did not reply to all questions.

"As he did not answer, we must apply other methods that

I won't elaborate. I understand that it can be checked in the

next few days," Mr Visanu said...

EIT is an engineering society that provides building service

inspections and promotes professional ethics and academic research.

The institute played an important role in scrutinising the initial

bidding process for construction of the airport during the Democrat-led

government. NBIA was placed under Airports of Thailand (AoT)

last December...

[Govt](#)

[airport probes extended until Friday](#)

– *The Nation*, May 30, 2005

...Vishanu said the statement by Patriot's owner, Worapoj

Yosadatt, that the Bt800 million was spent on decorative plants

at the airport was unlikely – and intended to be a joke.

To get straight answers from Worapoj, the government planned

to impose "a type of state authority" on him, Vishanu

said.

He said Worapoj had previously been represented by more than

10 lawyers and answered only questions of his choosing.

The final matter of inquiry was detailed information that

needed to be obtained from three US organisations – the District

Court in San Francisco, the US Department of Justice, and

the US Securities and Stock Exchange Commission (US SEC) –

which has yet to arrive.

Meanwhile, government critic and academic Thirayuth Boonmee

said he felt the airport scandal was likely to shorten Thaksin's

reign and may prevent him completing his second term – far

from original speculation that Thaksin may stay in power for

12 years.

Thirayuth alleged Thaksin was involved in the scanner scandal

from the beginning, claiming the premier gave his own recommendation

on the CTX machines' reliability in a meeting of the

*Senator Pratin Santiprabhob, chairman of the Senate special committee on graft, said he he had no trust in the government's investigation. It would come up with the conclusion that it could not find a bribe taker or a witness, he said. His panel would keep investigating the issue. Irregularity was obvious in the unusually high price of the machines.*

*airport's policy board on October 15, 2003. After an inspection tour of the airport yesterday, Thirayuth described the widespread corruption in Thai society as "chaos"...*

**Also:** ['A tale of two newspapers' archives](#)

# Thai-language newspapers – June 2-3, 2005

June 3, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

*Matichon*

June 1, 2005

\* Thai Rak Thai's people counter that Thirayuth is only a marketing man who uses the CTX 9000 scanner scandal to abuse Thaksin. He is not a real academic. He just strikes an attitude by wearing a hard hat for three hours while checking bomb detectors at [Suwanapoom Airport](#) and then says there was cheating. He is just the "regular" critic.

June 2, 2005

\* Mr. Niwat Sawatkaew, Pathumthani Governor, said on June 1 that he agreed in principle to build the new parliament at Thai Melon Textile factory on 616 rai. He also said that this is an appropriate place because of the mass transportation system, convenient to go to the new airport by two ways including the BTS extension. He believes that the new parliament building will improve investment and business in Pathumthani.

\* Maew sympathizes with Rerngchai who accepts the guilt alone. The senators said that is not fair for him to pay 1.8 billion baht damage. They prepare to investigate others involved in the case.

June 3, 2005

\* Thaksin is ready to take off his suit coat and drive lower than 90 km/hr to be an example for saving energy. The MPs also follow him taking off their suit coats off to help the nation. Thaksin said if the energy saving campaign does not work within three months, they will have to increase more ways to decrease luxury use, but will not force people.

*Thairath*

June 1, 2005

\* Bloody news – Mr. Sanit Pimpanich, a taxi driver, was killed by being stabbed in the throat. His body was hidden in the taxi left at Sukhapiban 5, Saimai district, Bangkok. Police suspected that he was deceived and robbed and it may be the same old gang that robbed taxi drivers in this area three months ago.

June 2, 2005

\* The two numbers from the government lottery on June 1, "9" and "3," make the followers of Lung Por Pool, the abbot of Wat Pailom who died last month, get rich. These are the numbers of his age.

\* Nakornnayok – Mrs. Watcharaporn Pangsa-ard, a nurse from Nakornnayok Hospital, was arrested at her house. The police found that she is an agent and has sold drugs for a long time. Although she denied it, the police have evidence from the buyer who was arrested on February 16.

June 3, 2005

\* Nontaburi – Police arrested Mrs. Somlak Sakoed, 37-years-old, for stealing 500 baht from Ms. Kunnika Poe-urai at Tesco Lotus, Tiwannon branch. She said she needed money for buying milk for her youngest children. She has six kids and cannot earn enough. She and her husband, a construction worker, stay on temple land and have to move from this place in next four months.

# Nam Theun 2 project in Laos

June 6, 2005

Categories: Laos



(Photo:  
Anonymous)

Almost like being there: Nam Theun 2 project in Laos – June 6, 2005  
A 2B reader sent in these photos of the Nam Theun 2 project in Laos.

**Earlier:** [International workshop for Nam Theun 2 concludes in Bangkok](#) – ADB, September 02, 2004

This is about the Nam Theun 2 hydroelectric project in Laos.

A website for the project is [here](#).

Particularly interesting are the posters in the photo gallery to show people their resettlement options. Unfortunately they do not have large-sized versions of them.

**Earlier:** From the forum: [Nam Theun II Dam](#) – April 8, 2005

.. '3-D map' showing the location of the planned/recently approved Nam Theun II Dam project in Khammouan



(Photo:  
Anonymous)



Province: [www.namtheun2.com](http://www.namtheun2.com)  
(click image to enlarge)

**Earlier:** [Nam](#)

[Thuen II dam consultations by World Bank](#)

– PR Web via Yahoo! News, September 10, 2004

*Citing a deeply biased and flawed decision-making process by the World Bank and the Lao government, as well as mounting*

*evidence of an increase in ethnic cleansing operations and military*

*attacks against Hmong and Laotian civilians and rebels encircled*

*in Laos, a coalition of rights organizations seeking political and economic reform in Laos will boycott consultations in Washington,*

*D.C. today regarding potential World Bank financial backing*

*of the Nam Thuen II ‘Super Dam’ project...*



(Photo:  
Anonymous)



(Photo:  
Anonymous)



(Photo:  
Anonymous)

# Thai-language newspapers – June 6-7, 2005

June 6, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

## *Matichon*

June 6, 2005

\* On June 5, an ABAC poll surveyed 1,996 people in Bangkok about who would be dream members of the counter corruption committee. 42.1% of people want Prem Tinlasoolanon, the privy councilor and former PM, and 36.2% want Purachai Piemsomboon.

June 7, 2005

\* A resource at the Ministry of Agriculture informs that on June 7, 100 farm leaders from Esarn provinces will meet Agriculture Minister Sudarat Keyuraphan to submit letters to support GMO papaya experiments in the fields. This is opposite the demands from NGOs.

\* June 6 – At 20:00pm, Mr. Suchon Chaleekrua, senator chairperson and 200 other senators went to see the movie *Tin Mine* or *Mahalai Muangrae* at Grand EGV, Siam Discovery in order to support a good quality Thai film. He said he will talk about this film in parliament also.

## *Thairath*

June 6, 2005

\* Bloody news – Prajinburi – Mr. Nikom Butrsri, the manager unit of Singer, Prajinburi branch, was shot dead at his house. The police suspect that it is related to a lover case because his wife disappeared mysteriously. She also had a new boyfriend who is a policeman.

June 7, 2005

\* June 6 – Mrs. Areesuang Nilwan or Jubjaeng, the 27-year-old movie star went with her husband to inform police at Nonthaburi province that Mr. Patcharapong Tumthong, electric appliance salesman at Tesco Lotus, Bangyai branch, used a mobile phone to take a photo under her skirt.

\* Meyo Hospital – Ms Atima Thanaseni, a 20-year-old movie star from Channel 7, was sent to the hospital in the same room with her brother. She has a high



fever and is being checked whether it is hemorrhagic fever.

# Road gets green light after 32-year delay

June 6, 2005

Categories: Highways and Roads

[Road](#)

[gets green light after 32-year delay](#) – TNA,

June 6, 2005

*...Involving the demolition of 32 houses, construction on the Siriammat Road, which will run parallel to Atsadang Road behind the Rattanakosin Hotel, will begin next month...*

# All about Quatrotec

June 6, 2005

Categories: Airports and Airlines, The Thaksin Years

*The Nation* [points](#)

[out](#) a [Pantip](#)

[thread](#) about another mysterious company involved in the new airport purchasing. It is an interesting twist in investigative journalism when newspapers begin citing internet forum posts as sources of information.

Another *Nation* article about Quatrotec: [AIRPORT SCANDAL: Heat is now on Quatrotec](#), *The Nation*, June 6, 2005

Whatever the truth of Quatrotec, the alleged details of its size and location does fit the classic Thai style of contract corruption. 2Bangkok.com worked on a previous example of this, exposing the incorporation papers of [Phuket Pass Project Limited](#), a hastily formed company created to handle money for the Kra Canal study.

# TV commercials: Mosquitoes electrocute people

June 7, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News



A lady zaps mosquitoes with an [electric racket](#).



For some reason she is standing in a bathtub. A man taking a bath gives her the thumbs

up.



Behind her mosquitoes are flying  
a lamp over the tub.



They drop the lamp into the  
tub.





And the people are electrocuted.





Eventually turning into skeletons.



Better use a mosquito  
coil to keep the mosquitos away instead.



# Degree of farce belies gravity of situation

June 7, 2005

Categories: Airports and Airlines

[Degree](#)

[of farce belies gravity of situation](#) – *The*

*Nation*, June 7, 2005

*A well-respected graft investigator who rings an alarm bell over a potentially massive airport corruption scandal faces expulsion from office by a group of judges and lawmakers who quote an apparently illegal rule.*

*Fighting for her is a notorious politician wanting to turn over a new leaf. She is investigated by anti-money laundering authorities who refuse to take any initiative on the airport allegations.*

*Meanwhile, members of other anti-graft bodies who have done absolutely nothing somehow get the opposite idea about their performance, give themselves major pay rises and are being hounded out of office or are busy trying to cover up their sins. It reads like a bad script for a messy political comedy...*

*As Thailand's anti-graft, justice and constitutional mechanisms crumble around him, or at least appear irrelevant, Thaksin has seemed unfazed. He has vowed that any remaining agencies (which one?) would keep combating corruption...*

# Thai-language newspapers – June 8, 2005

June 8, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

## *Matichon*

– June 8, 2005

\* On June 7, 50 representatives of central and Esarn farmers met Khunying Sudarat, Agriculture Minister, to discuss the GMOs papaya experiment in Thailand and asked for the return of feeding cows for 1 million families project.

\* Mr. Saneh Jamarik, Chairperson of National Human Rights Commission, declared on June 7 that NHRC will send a letter to PM Thaksin to give orders within 60 days for the Investigation and Protection for Children and Youth Department to return 204,785 baht that an officer embezzled from Ms. Dararat Chaloemchaicharn whose mother died in a truck accident in 1989.

## *Thairath*

– June 8, 2005

\* Bloody news – Ayuthaya

– Mr. Thananya Sansuk, a student of Rajabhat University of Pranakornsri Ayuthaya died in her room. Her mouth was full of water. The police suspect that she tried to kill herself by eating noodles mixed with poison, but there was no bottle of poison near her body. The leftovers of the noodles were sent to be analyzed and her body was sent to Thammasart, Rangsit Center for autopsy.

\* A Surathani MP's 7-year-old son died of dengue fever on June 6. He was the second case in Surathani. The first one was a woman, 24-years-old, from Amphur Kanjanadit. Meanwhile, the Public Health Minister said dengue control is effective and people should not panic.

# Foundation sues over Warhol copies by Thai artists

June 8, 2005

Categories: Art

[Foundation](#)

[sues over Warhol copies by Thai artists](#) –

*Reuters*, June 8, 2005

*... Warhol, known for his renderings of Marilyn Monroe and Campbell's soup cans, died in 1987. His foundation licenses images for everything from posters to handbags, using the proceeds to make charitable donations to aspiring artists and other groups.*

**Via Google:** [Reproduction](#)

[art – oil paintings of Andy Warhol](#) – [Arts](#)

[Studio.com](#)

*We are an American owned and operated company.*

*All our paintings are re-created in our Studio in Thailand by our team of highly skilled and talented artists utilizing their many years of experience. In order to maintain a high quality product, all paintings are shipped directly from the Studio using DHL/UPS, or other air courier...*

# Singapore's new budget terminal

June 8, 2005

Singapore's new budget terminal

– June 8, 2005

As seen [on](#)

[the forum](#) : [Name](#)

[Singapore's low-cost airport terminal](#) – [Low-cost](#)

[terminal FAQ](#) – Is Singapore leading the way once again in the future of terminal construction?

# Thai-language newspapers – June 9, 2005

June 9, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

*Matichon*

– June 9, 2005

\* Assistant professor Nutchtip Por. Bunjonsilp, Chairperson of Law project, National Women's Council, said the leading cause that makes teachers punish students is tension. For training teachers all over the country in 10 years, she found that teachers have lots of problems such as family, economic, debt, etc. Teachers have many burdens and do not get the appropriate salary making them earn extra income or having debts. When they are stressed, they vent it on their students.

*Thairath*

– June 9, 2005

\* Malaria still spreads seriously in many places. Recently three patients are in coma who were infected in Khao Yai National Park. Two are Khao Yai officers who stay at Apaipoobet Hospital in Prajinburi Province while the other is a soldier who came back from visit his relatives at Khao Yai. The head of disease control protection office warned people, especially tourists, to be careful of the anopheles mosquito and sleep under mosquito nets.

\* Meanwhile, in Pang-nga the situation of malaria is still worrying. So far they are 450 infected and 1 died. Some got infected from migrants. However, the public health office in Pang-nga is ready with labor, medicine, and 4000 public health volunteers to educate people at the local level.

\* **Bloody news** – On

June 8, Mrs. Bumphen Saengkaewpanao, 37-years-old, was beaten to death by her husband, a taxi driver, because she came back home late. He confessed that he did because he was jealous. Kunnayao District police will investigate if he might have killed other people.

# TV commercials: Two white-skinned girls

June 9, 2005

Categories: Advertising and Commercials



Two girls are stranded on an island.





While arranging an SOS on  
the beach they spot a ship.



But cannot signal it.





So they put on Shokubutsu  
face cream.



Then by covering and...





uncovering their faces...



They are able to signal the  
ship.



# Thai-language newspapers, June 10, 2005

June 10, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

## *Matichon*

– June 10, 2005

\* Revealed: The senators who do not accept the government draft.

Most of the senators at this time have Thai Rak Thai in their hearts so it is not surprising to find that they show the hands to vote for the government draft to accept the first agenda of constitution draft.

There are only 20 senators who do not accept the government draft. They are Karun Saingam from Buriram, Kasem Malaisri from Roi-et, Kaesun Atipoti from Bangkok, Kraisak Chankavan from Korat, Jon Ungpakorn from Bangkok, Tawin Praisorn from Nakhonsirithammarat, Nipon Visityuthasart from Angthong, Nirun Pitakwatchara from Ubonratchathani, Pratin Suntiprapob from Bangkok, Pramote Maikad from Bangkok, Panat Tassaniyanon from Tak, Pichet Pattanachot from Korat, Montri Sriwichai from Samutsongkarn, Mrs. Malinee Sukvetchavoradit from Nakhonsawan, Wongphan Na Takuatung from Pang-nga, Wallop Tungkananurak from Bangkok, Wichai Krongyut from Ubonratchatani, Weera Anandtakoon from Chonburi, Somkiet Onvimon from Suphanburi and Sunthorn Jindain from Kumpaeangpetch.

## *Thairath*

– June 10, 2005

\* Mr. Pakdi Posiri, secretary of the Food and Drug Administration, warns of the danger of using fake sex enhancing medicines that were smuggled into Thailand. The big source of these drugs are from neighbor countries such as Pakistan, India and China. Consumers should consult a doctor before using Sildenafil, Tadalafil or Vardenafil. Otherwise they could cause death.



# TV commercials: Fat baby diapers/Spicy squid

June 11, 2005

Categories: Advertising and Commercials



Big babies need big diapers.



XL size is not big enough.



Mamy Poko XXL lets the baby move  
around better.



XXXL!



A boy sees a pretty girl.



He checks his breath.



But since he has been eating Bento  
Squid, he burns his hand.



# Seed of extinct date palm sprouts after 2,000 years

June 12, 2005

Categories: Uncategorized

[Seed](#)

[of extinct date palm sprouts after 2,000 years](#) –

*SF Gate*, June 12, 2005

*...Planted on Jan. 25, the seedling growing in the black pot in Solowey's nursery on this kibbutz in Israel's Arava desert is 2,000 years old — more than twice as old as the 900-year-old biblical character who lent his name to the young tree. It is the oldest seed ever known to produce a viable young tree...*

# Keeping an eye on TV's influence

June 12, 2005

Categories: Film and TV

[Keeping](#)

[an eye on TV's influence](#) – *The Nation*,

June 12, 2005

*... "The show is offensive to Thai culture in terms of improper dress, bad language and infringement of individual privacy. We don't want such programmes, because they have too much of an influence on children. They'll think that living together without the benefit of marriage is now acceptable in Thai society. This Western-style reality show is immoral in a Thai cultural context," says Ladda...*



# **CULTURE CONTROVERSY: ‘I cannot stand up for the republican anthem’**

June 13, 2005

Categories: Uncategorized

[CULTURE](#)

[CONTROVERSY: ‘I cannot stand up for the republican anthem’](#)

– *The Nation*, June 13, 2005

# Latest from Chang Noi: Tales from a notorious swamp

June 13, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

Latest from Chang Noi: [Tales from a notorious swamp](#) – *The Nation*, June 13, 2005

*...One company, ItalThai Holdings, was given the contract to build the airport. There was no competitive bidding. The same company was to research, design and manage the construction. Critics felt that this was tantamount to a licence to print money. The controversy became so heated that when Sarit died in 1963, the project immediately fell apart.*

*But great ideas don't die easily. Sarit's successors kept trying to kick-start it, and finally succeeded in 1968.*

*Again they selected a company without competitive bidding, this time the US aviation giant Northrop won the day. Again they commissioned the company to both design and construct the airport, and threw in a concession to operate it for 20 years, as well.*

*Again ItalThai (renamed Italian-Thai) popped up as Northrop's local partner...*

2Bangkok.com's [history of the new Bangkok airport](#)

*Tales from a notorious swamp.*

*Published on Jun 13, 2005 The Nation*

*Khunying Jaruvan Maintaka has said that almost every procurement contract for the new airport is problematic. For the past 50 years, the tales emerging from this swamp have all involved authoritarian rule and funny deals.*

*Almost half a century ago, American advisers suggested the country should have a new commercial airport. Military dictator Sarit Thanarat decided it should be located in Nong Ngu Hao – Cobra Swamp. Nobody seems to know why Sarit made this choice. There was no study of the site's suitability, no consideration of alternatives. The choice set off a minor orgy of land speculation.*

*One company, ItalThai Holdings, was given the contract to build the airport. There was no competitive bidding. The same company was to research, design and manage the construction. Critics felt that this was tantamount to a licence to print money. The controversy became so heated that when Sarit died in 1963, the project immediately fell apart.*

*But great ideas don't die easily. Sarit's successors kept trying to kick-start it, and finally succeeded in 1968. Again they selected a company without competitive bidding, this time the US aviation giant Northrop won the day. Again they commissioned the company to both design and construct the airport, and threw in a concession to operate it for 20 years, as well. Again ItalThai (renamed Italian-Thai) popped up as Northrop's local partner.*

*Again controversy surged. The press argued that the deal was a scam. Parliament rejected the project three times. The deal was finalised only after the military strongmen abolished Parliament and went back to dictatorial rule in 1971. And again, it fell apart when dictatorial rule was brought down, this time by the student revolt of 1973. The successor government walked away from the deal. For good measure, Northrop's banker was accused of improperly financing Nixon's presidential re-election campaign, and Northrop had to pull out of the deal.*

*But when military rule returned in the late 1970s, so too did the airport at Cobra Swamp. By 1984 there was a master plan. But there was also an oil crisis and a big budget deficit, so the project was put on ice. When generals returned to power by coup in 1991, the project finally took off. But times had changed. The generals*

could no longer pick a site and a company at will. From this point on the process involved four main parties or groups of parties, each of which was wreathed in controversy.

First, control of the project was relocated to an independent authority. This idea was conceived in 1991-1992, and finally evolved into the New Bangkok International Airport company (NBIA) in 1995-1996. Although this put some distance between the project and the politicians, the distance was small. A battle royal between the air force and the civilian ministers of Anand Panyarachun's government ensued over who would appoint and control the authority's members. From then on, almost every change of Cabinet (and even some reshuffles) was promptly followed by a total revision of the key positions.

Second, design work was allocated to strings of consultant companies. How they wrote the specs was often critical in determining which companies would get the resulting contracts. Although the basic design was put together in the early 1990s, each successive government found reasons to adjust the project so that a new set of consultants could be appointed, and a new set of specs written. Under Chuan I, the project was re-imagined as a hub for the Southeast Asian region. Under Chuan II, grandiose plans were scaled back because of the economic crisis. Under Thaksin Shinawatra, the project was reconceived in a bigger form than ever.

Third, construction and supply contracts have been allocated by competitive bidding, but often this process has been cleverly managed. A ring of major contractors was suspected of sharing out contracts; they formed a queue, predetermined who would win and compensated one another through subcontracts. But sometimes problems could occur.

Italian-Thai won a big contract to build a landfill. Thirteen other companies complained they had been disqualified from the bidding because of the way the specs had been written. The associations of architects and engineers estimated the amount of what they describe as padding in the Bt11.6-billion price submitted by Italian-Thai added up to a cool Bt3.5 billion. The aggrieved companies petitioned the Communications Ministry, the Counter Corruption Commission, and the Council of State.

Eventually the Council of State ruled that the bidding had been improper. But Italian-Thai kept the contract, under which much work had already been done. Only the scale and cost were renegotiated in the downsizing dictated by the economic crisis.

Fourth, financiers also maintained influence. The major battle over the last decade has involved the design and construction of the passenger terminal, for which the Japan Bank for International Cooperation was a major financier. In one bidding round, the five consortiums with no Japanese members all withdrew, leaving the four with Japanese members to fight it out.

But this was a mere skirmish. The struggle over the construction of the terminal became a major war in which all four elements of this new era came into play. Through a tortuous process, two designs were put forward, each backed by its own coalition of politicians, executives of the NBIA, consultant companies, contractors and financiers. The battle raged back and forth for years amid a blizzard of corruption charges and counter-charges. Eventually, the contract went to ITO, a consortium that includes Italian-Thai as a major partner. This decision was promptly challenged on the grounds that the specs had been biased, the bidding process had skipped several important steps and the level of scrutiny had been inadequate, and because Italian-Thai had a case in the bankruptcy court, which should have disqualified it. Also, the contract seemed full of loopholes, including provisions to reduce the scope of work without reducing the cost.

What kept the project afloat despite all the opposition was the one factor that has marked every significant stage in the airport's long history: a revival of authoritarian rule. The decline of media freedom, and the general decline of public and institutional scrutiny under Thaksin, made the scandal disappear from sight – but not, of course, from the real world.

# Melbourne rail

June 13, 2005

Melbourne rail – June  
13, 2005

Danny writes: *Rail has been run down for years in Australia with little investment in new infrastructure, Alice Springs to Darwin line aside, and stock. Past state governments have closed down lines and privatized services especially in Melbourne and Victoria. So it was with some excitement that a newly elected state government in Victoria in 1999 promised to introduce fast trains services for regional cities to/from Melbourne. Unfortunately, the project has suffered huge cost over runs and is nearly two years behind schedule. There is a [website](#) on the project.*

*A few articles in today's Melbourne paper, The Age, prove that even in a professionally planning and well-managed construction environment, 'mega-projects' can go off the rails (pun intended) due to political interference: [Long, slow, wait for a faster train](#) – ['Farce rail' angers rural voters](#) – [Fast train safety called 'B-class'](#)*

*No allegations of corruption here, but lots of political ineptitude and bad project management. Perhaps a few lessons for some in Thailand.*

# Thai-language newspapers – June 14, 2005

June 14, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

*Matichon*

– June 14, 2005

\* Mr. Samart Rachapolasit, Deputy Bangkok Governor, spoke after the committee meeting considering the effect of the construction of [Suwanapoom Airport](#). He said that Bangkok does not agree to divide the area of Kwaeng Ladkrabang and Kwaeng Tapyao in Ladkrabang district to merge with Suwanapoom Airport City as proposed by the Interior Ministry. This is because the tax income collecting will be decreased and there is an international rule not to build 3-5 kilometers from an airport to protect people from pollution. He is confident that Bangkok has ability to supervise the two areas. However the Office of Town and Country Planning was assigned to summarize the good and weak points and the different choices that could be made before the next meeting this month.

*Thairath*

– June 14, 2005

\* Suhanburi – Wat Tapkradan, Amphur Songpinong is where the statue of “Pumpuang Duangjan” is located. On June 13 it was the site of the 13th anniversary memorial of the country singer’s death. Lots of people come to make merit and salute the statue which made a big traffic jam in front of the entrance to the wat. People also hoped to get lucky numbers for buying lottery tickets.

# TV commercials: Noodle convulsions/Hair clinic

June 14, 2005

Categories: Advertising and Commercials



A young lady is about to eat a bowl of noodles.



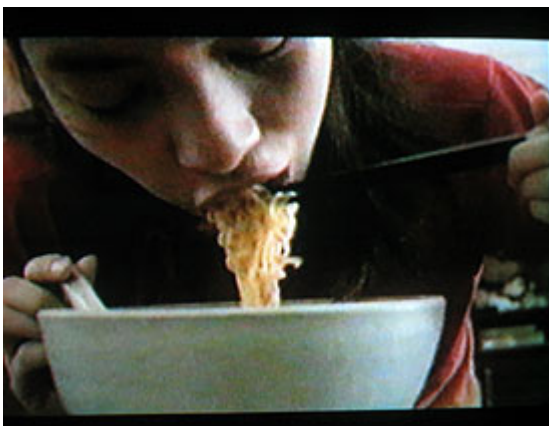
Her friend wants the noodles so she eats a bite and then pretends to be sick.



She falls to the floor and has convulsions.



Her worried friend runs to get help.



One her friend leaves, the 'sick' girl jumps up and eats the noodles.



The friend returns and the noodles are eaten.





Two women with bad hair think a woman with good hair has just received treatment from a hair clinic.



But she tells them she just uses Rejoice shampoo.



This kind of commercial is a classic Thai commercial: shampoo is always heavily promoted and shows a young woman with impossibly black and shiny long hair.



# Thailand Likely to Help Build Elevated Expressway in Dhaka

June 14, 2005

Categories: Uncategorized

[Thailand](#)

[Likely to Help Build Elevated Expressway in Dhaka](#)

– *Asia Pulse*, June 14, 2005

*The government is expected to go ahead with the Elevated Express Way project in Dhaka at a cost of Tk 1.2 billion (US\$18.8 million) with technical and financial assistance of Thailand...*

# Thailand offers to help secure Malacca Strait

June 14, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thailand](#)

[offers to help secure Malacca Strait](#) –

*Channel NewsAsia*, June 14, 2005

*Thailand says that it is keen to lend a hand in securing the pirate-infested Malacca Strait. Thai Foreign Minister Kantathi Suphamongkhon revealed this during an exclusive interview with Channel NewsAsia during his trip to Malaysia recently...*

# Thailand to upgrade road for further trade

June 14, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thailand to upgrade road for further trade](#) – *AngolaPress*,

June 14, 2005

*... "The Rural Roads Department plans to spend 48 billion baht (1.2 billion dollars) over the next four years to create a new rural road network covering 15,000 kilometers across the country," said Suriya Jungrunreangkit.*

*At present, Thailand has 64,600 kilometers of regular highways and 140,800 kilometers of rural roads...*

# Union critical of Goodyear's labour practices in Thailand

June 14, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Union critical of Goodyear's labour practices in Thailand](#) – Rubber World, June 14, 2005

*...According to ICEM, local management at the 600-worker factory in Bangkok has systematically denied basic trade union rights to members and officers of ICEM affiliate Petroleum and Chemical Workers' Federation of Thailand.*

*In March, managers fired the chairman of the Goodyear Thailand branch of the PCFT, Anan Pol-ung, for carrying out his lawful responsibilities in attempting to achieve social benefits for workers in the factory's rubber stock division. Many of these employees have worked at the plant for over ten years, but are employed under one-year, fixed-term contracts that deny them the same benefits as permanent employees...*

# More government ministries and media to leave Rangoon

June 14, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

[More government ministries and media to leave Rangoon](#) –

*The Irrawaddy*, June 14, 2005

*The Burmese government will move at least five government ministries to Pyinmana, in Mandalay Division, the site of its new army headquarters, sources in Rangoon say...*

# Who is Wissanu?

June 14, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

Who is Wissanu? – June 14, 2005

Today's *Nation* mentions a person called Wissanu Krea-ngam

([A piece of intrigue to make Machiavelli proud?](#), *The Nation*, June 15, 2005). After further examination, it seems the person

being referred to is the Deputy Prime Minister. Oddly enough,

last week his name was spelled 'Vishanu Krua-ngam': [Need a scandal to go away? Just put Vishanu in charge of the investigation](#) – *The Nation*, June 10, 2005

*Perhaps the only thing that has kept Vishanu Krua-ngam from*

*supervising more panels probing government scandals was the “independent” tag attached to some of them...*

# Thai-language newspapers – June 15-17, 2005

June 15, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

*Matichon*

June 15, 2005

\* Narathiwat – Police and soldiers check a fake bomb and a flag that the bandits left near an effigy of Thaksin along with a message criticizing him near Waeng-Sukirin Road. The message also provokes Thais and Muslims to be disunited.

June 16, 2005

\* Udon Thani – Luangta Bua or Pratham Visuttimongkon said community radio Suan Sangtham 103.25 MHz never caused trouble to anyone. He wonder why this government obstructs the religious and bans many things although Thailand is Buddhist.

\* Mr. Samart Rachapolasit, Deputy Bangkok Governor, reveals the progress of extending BTS 2 Project. Two lines – Silom line (Petchkasem-Taksin, 2.2 kms) and Sukhumvit Line (Onnut-Sumrong, 8.9 kms). He will submit the plans to the Bangkok Governor and forward to the Interior Minister to consider and approve. He also said most people agree to extend the line because it can solve the traffic problem. It can also be controversial because some people are afraid to surrender land to the government.

June 17, 2005

\* Pattalung – On June 16, the police raid a lathe mill in the municipality. They are stunned to find a war weapon storehouse including TNT bombs, chemo bombs, M 9 bombs, bullet machines, 13 knives, and 2 axes. Mr. Itthi Wongsuwankhed, the 35-year-old owner, claimed that he likes collecting old things, but the police do not believe him. They continue to seriously investigate whether this is related the unrest in the three southern provinces.

*Thairath*

June 15, 2005

\* On June 14, the source said somebody left a leaflet attacking Sanoh Tienthong in the main toilet at the Parliament building. It has a cartoon of Sanoh standing in front of parliament officials, the mass



media, signatures by people who are not charmed  
his eloquence.

June 16, 2005

\* Pathumthani – The police raid the second story townhouse at Thanyapruk Village that Mr. Chaisit Donchooprai is renting. He used to be a police officer and is now accused of being a drug dealer. The police found 20,000 drugs, 4 million baht in cash, 2 guns, and 5 mobile phones. This arrest follows a single complaint with the Satun police. It is believed that the drugs came from Burma and were stored in the townhouse before being distributed to the retailer.

June 17, 2005

\* Suphanburi – Wat Tapkradan, Amphur Songpinong – People bought lottery tickets bring leis of flowers to respect the statue of “Pumpouang Duangjan” after they won with number 44—the age of Pumpouang. Also number 70 that her son got from consulting a "stick oracle." Meanwhile, Mr. Prai Pattano, the Lord Mayor of Haddyai, Songkhla won on four lottery tickets and won 32 million baht. He said his wife bought these at Tesco Lotus in Haddyai.

# **AirAsia reduced fares to Vietnam postponed**

June 15, 2005

AirAsia reduced fares to Vietnam postponed

– June 15, 2005

Loren Johnson points out that AirAsia has apparently postponed their drastically reduced fares to Vietnam (supposed to start today) for six more weeks.

# Myanmar: Life sentences for Democracy activists

June 15, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

Myanmar: [Life sentences for Democracy activists](#) –

*The Irrawaddy*, June 15, 2005

*Five democracy activists were sentenced to life imprisonment on Monday for distributing material deemed illegal by the Burmese authorities, a Thai-Burma border-based advocacy group has said. The trial was held in secret at Insein prison, Rangoon...*

# 'Dear Malaysian friend'

June 15, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

['Dear](#)

[Malaysian friend'](#) – June 15, 2005

We keep getting this spam (*What we do is to help Malaysians DEVELOP A NEW revolutionary business in a new industry...*), but the [website](#)

(right) it leads to is amusing—"Your Brilliant Help using Our Proven Business Model." It says a lot, but ultimately very little: *Learn More About Me – If I could only share one thing with you about me it would be my interest in you and your present situation.*

It seems to be a variation on American-style scams that teach people to place classified ads for success.



# PM makes appeal for patriotism

June 16, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[PM makes appeal for patriotism](#) – TNA, June 16, 2005

*Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra yesterday joined a long tradition of Thai premiers by appealing to the public to show a spirit of patriotism, saying that democracy could only fully develop if people set aside their own personal interests...*

*"The weak spot in the Thai society lies within the system of news and information—in the system of news analysis", Mr. Thaksin said.*

*"Where there is insufficient knowledge, there is little intelligence", he noted...*

*PM makes appeal for patriotism*

*BANGKOK, June 16 (TNA) – Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra yesterday joined a long tradition of Thai premiers by appealing to the public to show a spirit of patriotism, saying that democracy could only fully develop if people set aside their own personal interests.*

*Addressing radio performers and presenters who are particularly in a national security programme, the prime minister said that no country could progress if its people looked out for their own personal benefits, rather than for the good of the nation as a whole.*

*But while Thailand is a democratic society, social problems could never be solved if the ill-informed were debating with the ill-informed. "The weak spot in the Thai society lies within the system of news and information—in the system of news analysis", Mr. Thaksin said. "Where there is insufficient knowledge, there is little intelligence", he noted.*

*Pointing out that the Thai public had often argued with their emotions, and on the basis of politics and their own personal interests, he said that people should "take into account what is for the national interests and what are the things we need to preserve. "This would considerably improve our understanding of events", he said.*

*The Thai leader also noted that the nation is more important than the government, and that it is legitimate to disagree for the government when it is not acting for the good of the nation. The role of the government, he said, is to make sacrifices for the national good.*

*Promising to create new political rules and a political culture in which politicians no longer look out for their own interests, Mr. Thaksin, nonetheless, warned that this would take time due to the entrenched nature of the Thai political system.*

*"The public don't know who to elect; so they elect people who give them money", he noted. "We are currently in a period of transition", he said, calling on the public to take action.*

*"This will lead to us taking a new step, which will lower the cost of politics. Once there are better systems of investigation within the political system, it will become more difficult to cheat the nation, and the politics will start to become cleaner", he said.*

*The prime minister, who admitted to being exhausted by the task ahead of him, said that he, nonetheless, has no problems with his rivals as long as they are acting for the national good. (TNA)*

# World's tallest wave

June 16, 2005

Categories: 2004 Tsunami

[World's](#)

[tallest wave](#) – Slashdot, June 16, 2005

*...With all the talk of December's tsunami, it's easy to lose sight of the larger waves often found in mid-ocean. The three components for building a huge wave are wind speed, duration and fetch. All three were in play for a massive record breaker. As reported by The Times (UK), "It happened on September 16 last year when Hurricane Ivan stormed across the Gulf of Mexico and tore into the coast of Alabama, accompanied by 130mph winds and storm surges 8ft high. While still out at sea, oceanographers report, the hurricane also produced a series of giant waves, one of which stood 91ft (27m) from crest to trough, the height of a ten-story building and a new world record for a wave recorded by instruments."*

# Kanchanaburi's WWII cave a fake

June 16, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Kanchanaburi's WWII cave a fake](#) – *The Nation*, June 16, 2005

*...The cave owner, Udom Chantakul, who has dubbed it “The Underground Army Cave”, told reporters that the items on display were intended to attract tourists. He said he did this to fund exploration of the site because he believed the cave had historical value, adding that he had not intended to mislead people.*

*Udom also said he would change the name of the site as suggested by Chainant to avoid any further misunderstandings.*



# Thai police say man commits suicide by sealing mouth, nose with super glue

June 16, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thai](#)

[police say man commits suicide by sealing mouth, nose with super glue](#) – AP, June 16, 2005

*...Komkrit's family told police he had a history of moodiness...*

# Phuket looks gloomily to the future – tourist chief

June 16, 2005

Categories: Tourism

## INTERVIEW

– Phuket looks gloomily to the future – tourist chief

– Reuters, June 16, 2005

*... "Everyone has been hit very hard and we don't see a future yet," Pattanapong told Reuters in an interview.*

*"Phuket can barely survive now. We all are dying as every hotel is running losses of millions of baht each month,"*

*Pattanapong said six months after the giant waves crashed ashore at the height of the tourist season on Dec. 26...*

## **On the forum: Singapore Downtown Extension (DTE)**

June 17, 2005

Categories: Singapore

On the forum: [Singapore Downtown Extension \(DTE\)](#) – June 17, 2005

# TRT popularity slumps over infighting

June 17, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[TRT](#)

[popularity slumps over infighting](#) – TNA,

June 17, 2005

*...Interestingly, another 14.5 percent said that the wives of the two men should be the ones to sort out the spat...*

# TV commercials: Getting your skin its whitest

June 18, 2005

Categories: Advertising and Commercials



Asiper explains about the model in this commercial: *The lady in this commercial is a famous movie star. She won the award of the sexiest women for the last two years. Her name is Patcharapha Chichua or "Aum."*

*At present she is on a soap opera on Channel 7 called "Ploengpayu" (Ploeng=fire and Payu=storm) on Monday and Tuesday. This is the show that Thaksin mentioned 3-4 days ago. He watches this drama because his daughter watches it. He talked about this drama when he was interviewed and compared it to the situation in Thai Rak Thai party. Thaksin said it will be happy at the end when everything is clear.*



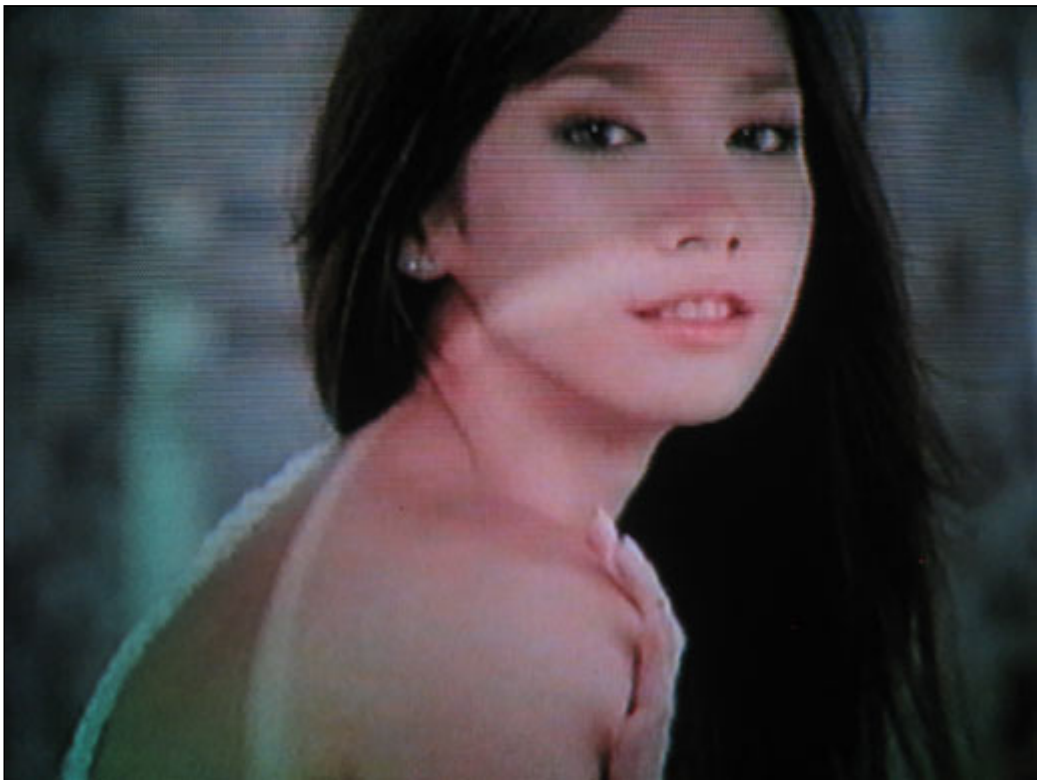
This commercial is about  
whiteness. She gestures and make a white swish.



She puts the lotion on her  
skin and the whiteness spreads...



and spreads...



and spreads...

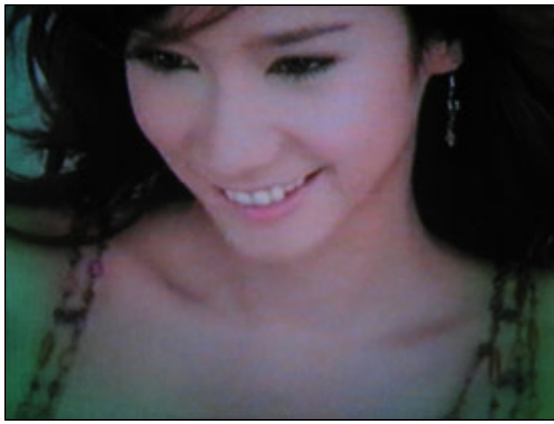




until she's much whiter.



Then she enters a party with  
some foreigners and hi-so people and begins to dance.



She's white all over.



She sees a white candelabra  
and smashes it with her hand...





sending white droplets over  
everyone.



White Spa for 39 baht (about  
one US dollar)



# On the forum: Thai Sky Airlines

June 18, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

On the forum: [Thai](#)

[Sky Airlines](#) – June 18, 2005

You've got to love the [website](#)

(right). Also: [‘Get](#)

[Good Profit So Easy’](#) and [‘URGENTRY](#)

[REQUIRED Thai Nationality Pilots’](#)

# Dwarf Siamese cats

June 18, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Dwarf](#)

[Siamese cats](#) – June 18, 2005

# The end of a dayweekly

June 19, 2005

Categories: High Tension in Thailand 2004-2008, Thai Newspapers and Magazines

*a dayweekly*

More on the end of

*a dayweekly* – July 21, 2005

*a dayweekly*

was a left-leaning magazine for young people.

It had made

inroads into Thailand's vibrant, but normally  
vacuous, youth

culture with an interesting visual style and  
provocative

articles that captured the interest of readers.

Thus, some

readers saw a hidden motive when the  
magazine suddenly was  
suddenly discontinued.

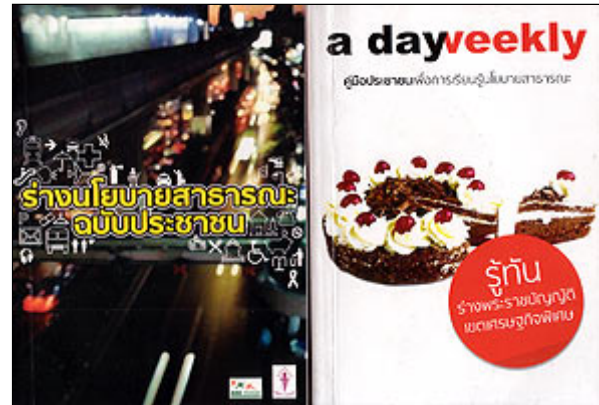
Immediately after the magazine closed,

2Bangkok.com spoke

to someone on the staff and got the [story  
of the magazine's last day](#).

Since that time there has been sniping in the  
media between

the magazine's editor and publisher.



**Above:** Covers of two of the popular mini-books often included in the magazine

## Athikom Kunawutr's reasons

– translated and summarized from “Judprakai Wannakum,”

*Krungtep Biz* newspaper, June 19, 2005

Athikom Kunawutr, Executive Editor of *a dayweekly*, gave  
an interview to counter accusations made by publisher Wongtanong  
Chainarongsing over the discontinuation of the magazine.

**Wongtanong:** The content of *a dayweekly* is a  
problem  
because it is quite serious. Some columns are out-of-  
date  
making a low sales volume.

**Athikom:** Athikom said he thinks that it is not a  
problem because they have a team to contact the  
writers,  
but the point is they all have a common agreement for  
the  
magazine's direction. It is better to share dreams with  
others and make agreement and move forward in a  
direction  
together and after that all should be responsible for the  
success or failure.





**Wongtanong:** The structure of the magazine was a problem and the design was not easy to change. Also it was too costly to adjust for a minor change if the executive editor and news editor were not happy with the news content.

**Athikom:** This involves the idea of job description. Athikom responds that to manage content direction is not involved with business, price, PR, or art direction. After sales there are some critics so they have to adjust. They just adjust some columns, but not change much of the core content. This did not change or touch the core structure of the magazine.

**Wongtanong:** There are different qualifications for book maker who works alone and those who do a tabloid distributed with a daily newspaper. And if someone does the last type, it means they cannot understand publishing business .

**Athikom:** Athikom said the reason that Wongtanong invited him to do *a dayweekly* was because he worked for the tabloid magazine of *Bangkok Biz*–‘Sao Sawaddee.’ And he said they agreed on the content conditions and business facts when the magazine started. There was no need to have hidden ads or ads on the cover because he wanted to maintain the credibility of the magazine. He was involved with the content only, but thinks seriously that the book should follow the common agreement they made. And for the accusation that editor team did not understand the business of making the mini books that the readers like, Athikom said that he and his team ran all the processes (meetings, distributing assignments to columnists, editing the design, and printing) and produced many successful mini books such as *Sapatista*, [Thaksin Dictionary](#), *100 years of Kulab Saipradit*, *The truth at Takbai-Kruse*. Although marketing promotion initiated the idea, the editor team was involved to completely bring the idea to fruition.

**Wongtanong:** The reason for closing the magazine: first is because of the attitude of the executive editor that cannot stay with even for one day and the second is for business reasons.

**Athikom:** For the business reason–Athikom is not sure if this is a reasonable explanation or not because the sale volume is quite good. Most issues sell 70%–only one issue sold about 20%. There may be another reason that Wongtanong does not want to mention. But this could be that he did not want to work with Athikom.

Athikom think for this conflict there are many choices to solve problems such as laying off or canceling employment, but it is not necessary to leave the readers by closing the magazine and including laying off all 16 staff.

If it is like this, this is not the problem of a book maker, but is a problem of belief and living in the status of one person.

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The end of *a dayweekly*  
– June 17, 2005



2Bangkok.com spoke to a source, who wished to remain anonymous, about the circumstances surrounding the end of *a dayweekly* magazine. After the last edition was published on Monday, staff went to their Wednesday meeting to plan the magazine as usual. By the time the meeting was over, they were out of a job. They were informed that the decision to close the magazine was an executive decision due to economic reasons only. Our source feels that there may have been a small amount of politics in the decision, but it was mainly about profit and loss.



Although the staff had no idea that a sudden closure was coming, they were aware that many changes had been made over the last year to make the magazine less expensive to produce. The magazine was adjusted many times to save money—the size was reduced, printing was done differently, and many internal elements were changed. It takes about a year to see if a magazine will be able to break even and the publisher had waited and tried to make it work. The publisher had experience doing monthly magazines and seemed less comfortable with a weekly format.

The owner of the publishing company that produced *a dayweekly* and the editors had different political views. However, they had always worked together to ‘find common ground.’

Our source feels that the idea that it was closed by disgruntled politicians (Sanoh was on the cover of last issue) is "romantic" and a typical conspiracy theory. Our source further noted that there were people on Thai webboards, purporting to be somehow connected to the magazine, who were claiming the closure was due to ‘internal conflicts between the editors.’ This is also not true at all—there were no ‘internal conflicts’ that brought the magazine down.

**Also:** *a dayweekly* homepage on the [daypoets website](#)

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*a dayweekly* is gone?  
– June 15, 2005

Asiper reports: *a dayweekly* is no more. It has stopped production. I don't know why... The last issue had Sanoh Tienthong on the cover and I saw some MPs show this issue in parliament. (Perhaps) they

*may have a money problem. The paper quality is very good and it is printed in four colors. I just heard Khun Nattakorn, presenter from the Newslime program talk about it. He said this magazine is quite different from the Nation and Matichon weeklies. It is quite trendy for new young group of people. He said "what a pity that it stops producing" and said if he had money, he would buy a franchise of it... it has lots of interesting columns.*

*a dayweekly was a colorful, youth-oriented magazine that often focused on political issues. An example of its content is [here](#).*

2B will try to find out what happened to this widely read Thai-language magazine.

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### **Example of articles from *a dayweekly***

[A](#)

[look at Thaksin's cabinet 2/1 – "Where we want to go"](#)

and [a dayweekly](#) [Thaksin Dictionary: Thaksin Shinawatra version – Vocabulary in Thaksin government era](#)

# Fish to celebrate birth of Royal baby

June 20, 2005

Categories: The Monarchy

[Fish  
to celebrate birth of Royal baby](#)

– TNA, June 20, 2005

*They are traditionally hung above a baby's cradle,  
but soon mobiles woven into the shape of carp may be  
hanging outside every home in the capital to celebrate  
the birth of Thailand's new Prince.*

*Today Bangkok Governor Apirak Kosayodhin invited Bangkokians  
to make the fish mobiles in preparation for capital-wide  
celebrations to be held on 24-25 June, saying that instructions  
for making the traditional toys could be requested from  
each of the capital's 50 district offices...*

# Bird flu: A nightmare scenario

June 20, 2005

Categories: Health

[Bird](#)

[flu: A nightmare scenario](#) – *New York*

*Daily News*, June 20, 2005

*...Should it develop certain genetic changes, international health experts warn, bird flu could spark a global pandemic, infecting as much of a quarter of the world's population and killing as many as 180 million to 360 million people – at least seven times the number of AIDS deaths, all within a matter of weeks...*

# **Monks calls for Buddhism to be made national religion**

June 20, 2005

Categories: Local Beliefs

[Monks](#)

[calls for Buddhism to be made national religion](#) –

TNA, June 20, 2005

# Junta marks Suu Kyi's birthday with criticism

June 20, 2005

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

[Junta](#)

[marks Suu Kyi's birthday with criticism](#) –

*The Irrawaddy*, June 20, 2005

*The Burmese government made a thinly-veiled criticism of Aung San Suu Kyi in the state-owned New Light of Myanmar at the weekend. No other media in Burma was able to mark the National League for Democracy leader's 60th birthday, but the state newspaper used the occasion to warn of "women who are sharp but anxious to be popular misusing their abilities and qualifications." Aung San Suu Kyi has routinely been accused of seeking popularity at the expense of the nation by Burma's state-run press.*

*"Such Myanmar women should not place too much reliance on their strong qualities lest they may be put on record in the list of the women who destroy the motherland," the article noted.*

*Prior to Suu Kyi's birthday, the paper on Saturday ran another article for Burma Women's Day, two weeks before the event is due to take place, this time noting Burma's women who "have been able to bring honour to the nation."*

*There was no mention of Burma's only Nobel Peace Prize winner in the extensive list. Instead the article warned of Burmese women who marry foreigners, a reference to Aung San Suu Kyi's marriage to Michael Aris, a Briton with whom she had two sons before he died of cancer in March 1999.*



## TV commercials: Excellent vision

June 21, 2005

Categories: Advertising and Commercials



A woman is sitting in a car  
with her boyfriend.



She says "where did that  
hair (on your shirt) come from?"



The man looks at his shirt,  
but says he does not see anything.



The lady points out that is  
it "right here!"





Now we see the view from her  
eyeglasses and can see a giant, rope-sized hair over his  
shoulder.



Her vision is so good because  
she got her glasses from Top Charoen Optical.  
This is the latest in a series of oddball and sometimes  
[controversial ads](#) from Top Charoen  
Optical.

# Banned Nepali radio station transmits via megaphone

June 21, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Banned](#)

[Nepali radio station transmits via megaphone](#)

– Reuters, June 21, 2005

*Banned from broadcasting news since February's royal coup, Nepali radio reporters have found a new way to get their bulletins out: loudspeaker...*

*Nepal's dozens of independent FM stations — wildly popular as the only alternative on the air to state radio's staid and vetted bulletins — were banned from broadcasting news when King Gyanendra fired the government and imposed strict censorship on February 1...*

# Rebel with a cause or last-gasp blackmailer?

June 21, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Rebel](#)

[with a cause or last-gasp blackmailer?](#)

– *The Nation*, June 21, 2005

*...The 1997 charter was designed to deal with people like him – those who switch political allegiance like we change shoes and claiming to do so for national interests. The veteran has been imprisoned by his own greed and selfishness. The Constitution's requirement that election candidates be members of the party they represent for at least 90 days does not prohibit any politician from acting on his or her conscience. Nothing prevents Snoh and his faction members from, say, voting against Transport Minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit in next week's censure debate...*

# On the forum: Lumphini Stadium

June 21, 2005

On the forum: [Lumphini Stadium](#) – June 21, 2005

# SAMET UPGRADE: Overhaul plan may be scrapped after outcry

June 21, 2005

Categories: Uncategorized

[KOH](#)

[SAMET UPGRADE: Overhaul plan may be scrapped after outcry](#)

– *The Nation*, June 21, 2005

[Plan](#)

[to take Koh Samet upmarket upsets locals](#)

– *The Nation*, June 20, 2005

... “We are concerned that the plan will take this island away from lower-budget vacationers who have long sustained tourism here,” said Dujhatai Nawapanich, secretary-general of Network for Koh Samet-Conservation Community Organisation.

...The plan covers 117,185 rai at Khao Laemya and Koh Samet National Park and includes laying water pipes, building piers, roads and a sewage treatment system and beautifying the landscape. Dujhatai said her network was worried that the organisation might use the plan to take over land from local entrepreneurs...



# Handi Ghandi logo

June 21, 2005

Handi Ghandi logo – June 21, 2005

Check out the [before](#)  
[and after logos...](#)

# Interview with Dr. Wan Kadir

June 21, 2005

Interview with Dr. Wan Kadir –

June 21, 2005

Wisarut points out: *The interview with Dr. Wan Kadir, leader of Bersatu, by Dr. Farish A. Noor at [Malaysia-Today](#) is very different from the interview with Thai media...*

# Koh Samui to be first island 'free of drugs'

June 22, 2005

Categories: Uncategorized

[Koh](#)

[Samui to be first island 'free of drugs'](#)

– Bangkok Post, June 22, 2005

*Drug authorities plan to make Koh Samui the country's first drug-free island before moving on to do the same at other tourist spots.*

*...Koh Phangan's full moon party, which was visited by Mr Suwat and drug authorities last night, is notorious among foreign and local visitors for drugs...*

*Koh Samui to be first island 'free of drugs'*

*SURAT THANI: — Drug authorities plan to make Koh Samui the country's first drug-free island before moving on to do the same at other tourist spots.*

*Justice Minister Suwat Liptapanlop and Narcotics Control Board secretary-general Pol Lt-Gen Krissana Pholanant were on Koh Samui yesterday to launch the "No-Drugs Island" campaign ahead of United Nations Anti-Drugs Day on June 26.*

*The three-day nationwide campaign will kick off on Saturday.*

*"This is a pilot project. After that we will expand it to other islands in the country such as Koh Samet in Rayong province," said Mr Suwat.*

*The problems were intensifying as local and foreign tourists who chose to travel there after the Dec 26 tsunami hit resorts on the Andaman Sea had attracted drug dealers, the minister said.*

*Under the campaign, restaurant operators, public bus drivers and motorcycle taxi drivers will carry the message across the island. Anti-drug campaign stickers and flags are also being put up.*

*Local villagers will be recruited as volunteers to monitor drug movements and report to drug officials.*

*Koh Samui is one of three districts in the southern province facing a rapid spread of drugs, especially methamphetamines, said Mr Suwat. The other two districts are the provincial capital and Koh Phangan.*

*Koh Phangan's full moon party, which was visited by Mr Suwat and drug authorities last night, is notorious among foreign and local visitors for drugs.*

*Authorities have been keeping a close watch on the visitors to see if they bring drugs along with them to the party.*

–Bangkok Post 2005-06-22

# ADB approves \$1 mnl for project of Southern Coastal Corridor

June 22, 2005

Categories: Uncategorized

[ADB](#)

[approves \\$1 mnl for project of Southern Coastal Corridor](#)

– Xinhuanet, June 22, 2005

*The Asian Development Bank (ADB) Wednesday said that it has approved a technical assistance grant of 1 million US dollars for a project that will complete the Southern Coastal Corridor linking Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam...*

# Bangkok street scene

June 23, 2005

Categories: Old photos and films



Bangkok street scene

– June 23, 2005

Anyone know the location or date of these photos?

**Left:** Photo from an undated postcard of a "Bangkok Street Scene"

**Below:** Photo from the same undated postcard of a "Bangkok Khlong Scene"

# Singaporean firm to build highest condo

June 23, 2005

Categories: Buildings

[Singaporean  
firm to build highest condo](#) – Bangkok

Post, June 23, 2005

*...Situated on the seven-rai former site of the United States Information Service, The Met will have six buildings and become the highest residential project in Bangkok, with 66 floors housing 370 units ranging from 92 sq m each to a 546 sq m-triplex penthouse and priced between 10 million and 60 million baht a unit or 120,000 baht per sq m.*

# Number's up for infamous den

June 23, 2005

Categories: Crime

## [Major city casino busted – Air-ground raid nets 353 gamblers, B56m](#)

– Bangkok Post, June 23, 2005

*The notorious Taopoon underground casino, bustling under the nose of police for 20 years, was raided early yesterday in an air-ground combined sting operation which netted 353 gamblers and 56 million baht in betting money...*

*Taopoon police superintendent Chuangsakda Buranasiri was transferred to an inactive post at the Metropolitan Police Bureau for 30 days pending a disciplinary inquiry. He was accused of negligence of duty by allowing the casino to stay in business.*

*Taopoon police station had searched the casino 15 times in the past but managed to make only one swoop, when 20 gamblers were apprehended.*

*Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra said the police did not crack down on any special order. It was part of a broad policy to suppress underground influence.*

## [Number's up for infamous den](#) – The Nation,

June 23, 2005

*... Local police and some of the arresting officers had not been informed of the operation, code-named "The Cat," for fear that one of them may have alerted the casino operators, a police source said.*

*Many of the policemen who took part in the raid had been told they were joining an unspecified operation in Phetchaburi province.*

*"They didn't know beforehand that they would be hitting the Taopoon casino," the source said.*

*The gambling den, covering nine shophouses and surrounded by rows of houses in Bang Sue district, provided gamblers with more than 30 full service tables for roulette, baccarat and craps, as well as standard casino card games and slot machines.*

*It was the second major police effort to raid the casino after an unsuccessful attempt a few years ago, not to mention several smaller unsuccessful raids. The den had long been operating under the protection of its influential owner, a prominent politician. ...*



# First two films chosen for restoration

June 23, 2005

Categories: Film and TV

## [First two films](#)

[chosen for restoration](#) – Bangkok Post,

June 23, 2005

*...The King of the White Elephant, a 1941 production, is the only pre-World War II Thai film to survive in its complete form. Pridi Banomyong, the film producer and then ambassador to France, used the film to demonstrate Thailand's neutral stance during the war.*

*The Boat House is a 1962 Thai-Hong Kong co-production, starring legendary actors Chaiya Suriyan and Sor Assanachinda. Its theme song, Reun Pae by Charin Nanthanakorn, is also well-known..*

# Human dignity under siege

June 23, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Human dignity under siege](#) – Bangkok Post, June 23, 2005

*...In an article published in Matichon yesterday, Dr Prawase said Mr Sanoh's outburst in parliament recently, when he said being in Thai Rak Thai was like being in a prison, showed he was suffering an ailment symptomatic of living under a dictatorship. He coined the phrase "Severe Human Dignity Deficiency Disease"...*

*At a parliamentary meeting yesterday, Mr Sanoh said Dr Prawase was right and that he was not the only victim. "A lot of people are suffering from this disease but no one dares to bring their misery into the open," Mr Sanoh said.*

# “Royal Procession, Siam”

June 24, 2005

Categories: Old photos and films, The Monarchy



"Royal Procession, Siam"

– June 24, 2005

A photo from an undated postcard. Is this Rama VII?

*Krasin: Judging from the older-styled uniforms of the royal pages and military officers, the "elephant" national flags decorating the building and the facial and physical appearance of the king, I trust this is King Rama VI (Vajiravudh), probably on his Coronation day. I could not remember the date of the occasion, but it should be between 1910-1912.*

[On the forum:](#) For some reason I think the king in the pictured featured on the 2B main page (06/24/05) is King Rama VI. On a somewhat related note, here is a link to an interesting website featuring [The Siamese Royalty, a personal fascination.](#)

Sukhum: Re the picture of Royal Procession on 2Bangkok.com dated 24 June 2005. The picture is of HM King Rama 6. The proof is Thai national flag. The flag in the pic is still of old design (White Elephant on red background) HM Rama 6 changed the national flag to present Tricolor (Trirong) design.

# Myanmar to release first ghost movie in 30 years

June 24, 2005

Categories: Film and TV, Myanmar/Burma

[Myanmar](#)

[to release first ghost movie in 30 years](#) –

*Hindustan Times*, June 24, 2005

*...Ghost movies were popular among Myanmar people, who are generally superstitious, before the genre was banned in the late 1960s by the late socialist dictator Gen. Ne Win...*

via [Friskodude](#)

# Thai Rak Thai's iron grip on power

June 24, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[EDITORIAL: Arrogance of power breeds discontent](#) – *The Nation*, June 24, 2005

*Thai Rak Thai's strict orders to its MPs show contempt for democracy; and the Senate isn't doing anything about it*

*How much worse can it get for Thai politics? Although we expected an impenetrable Thai Rak Thai fortress in the wake of the February general election, we could not have anticipated such arrogance. The decision by the ruling party to virtually order all of its MPs to vote in support of embattled Transport Minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit in Monday's censure debate without first listening to what the opposition has to say was an unprecedented show of contempt for Thailand's democratic system. It is salt on the wounds of the Thai people, who have watched helplessly as the country's checks-and-balances mechanisms have withered. And when we turned to the Senate as the last, though not very reliable, resort, the upper House said just what we had feared it would – "it's not our business".*

*This episode began with Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's promise that Suriya would be dealt with "in accordance with evidence" and that the minister would never be wrongly protected. That pledge fell through when government whips resolved to make all Thai Rak Thai MPs vote for Suriya, although, in the words of a senior party member, "some of them may feel coerced".*

*And then this sad state of affairs was compounded by the Senate's shocking ambivalence. After having let the Thai people down time and time again, the upper House let an opportunity to redeem itself slip by. A bid by a group of senators to open an extraordinary session to scrutinise the government's behaviour flopped after about half of the 200 members of the upper chamber refused to sign the motion.*

*Considering that this same Senate has gone to so much trouble to unseat the respected Auditor-General Jaruvan Maintaka and install the controversial Visut Montriwat as her replacement, the Thai people could be forgiven for slipping into despair. And just when it seemed the Senate's behaviour couldn't get any more baffling, some of its members suggested that it would be "redundant" for the Senate to censure the Thaksin administration given the no-confidence debate against Suriya set to take place in the House of Representatives on Monday. This from elected representatives who are supposed to at least know their basic duties before running, and whose salaries are paid with taxpayers' money.*

*Parliament goes into recess on July 1, and the next parliamentary season in the latter half of the year will be strictly for legislative affairs. The current term of the Senate ends next March, with incumbent senators prohibited constitutionally from standing to retain their seats. This all means that the country's first batch of elected senators has declined its chance to fulfil its constitutional role to act as a balancing force, and at a time when this is just what the country needs.*

*The Thai Rak Thai party's controversial resolution to oblige its MPs to blindly support Suriya in connection with the Suvarnabhumi Airport scandal is representative of the sad state of Thai politics.*

*The independent bodies created by the Constitution to enforce transparency, good governance and checks and balances have either been infiltrated by the powers that be or have disgraced themselves with scandals like the National Counter Corruption Commission did when its members gave themselves pay rises.*

*The House of Representatives is so dominated by the government that the opposition cannot muster enough signatures to launch a graft-related censure motion against Cabinet members. We have a ruling party that tramples on democratic and parliamentary principles and a Senate that cannot be relied upon to do its duty.*

*What's worse, there are signs that the Senate's inaction is the result of more than ignorance or incompetence. Chachaoengsaio Senator Boonlert Pairin claimed he had withdrawn his support for the censure motion*

*because he had been asked by a “senior person” in his province who had helped campaign for his election to do so.*

*“I’m ready to face public condemnation but I really had to do it,” he said. “In addition, I’m facing three lawsuits, and I fear I might be persecuted. I have to save myself before I can help society.”*

*At least he had the guts to say this much. Such statements show that there’s much more to the Senate’s apolitical character than meets the eye. This isn’t earth-shattering news, anyone could have expected the shadow of the Thaksin empire to eventually fall over the upper House. What’s disheartening is that at a time when the system is faltering and raw courage is so badly needed, all we see is cowardice.*

# Thai police sue forensic scientist

June 24, 2005

Categories: Thai Police

[Thai police sue forensic scientist](#) – *The Age*, June 24, 2005

*...Dr Porntip and Mr Manit suggested on television that foul play, not suicide, might be involved. Police Colonel Thirasak Surawong said his men did not kill Sunthorn and the comments cast them in a bad light. Dr Porntip is a celebrity in Thailand and has a reputation for speaking out against police and military brutality. She was the first to reveal the Tak Bai massacre, in which 78 men suffocated when they were stacked one on top of the other in army trucks in southern Thailand last year...*



# KSC gets new license, vows cheaper rates

June 24, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[KSC gets new license, vows cheaper rates](#) –

*The Nation*, June 24, 2005

*...Former Internet regulator CAT owns a 32 per cent share in all ISPs, including KSC, but has never had to cough up a baht for its stakes.*

# Giant chair

June 24, 2005

Giant chair – June  
24, 2005

From BoingBoing: *This 30-foot-tall sculpture, titled The  
Writer, is currently on display in London's Hampstead Heath.*

[BBC](#)  
[article](#), [press](#)  
[release](#) and this [great](#)  
[photo](#).

# A new dawn for Bangkok as a cultural hub?

June 25, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

## CULTURE

### SPHERE: A new dawn for Bangkok as a cultural hub?

– *The Nation*, June 25, 2005

*...Two art centres are planned. The Bangkok Art and Culture Centre will be on three rai of land on the corner of the Pathum Wan intersection, supported by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA). Also, a Bt5.8-billion cultural complex will be built on 35 rai by the Thailand Cultural Centre on Ratchadaphisek Road, a mega-project supported by the Culture Ministry...*

More on [Bangkok's Art Museum](#)

# Historian bemoans Thammasat decision

June 25, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Historian](#)

[bemoans Thammasat decision](#) – *The Nation*,

June 25, 2005

*Charnvit Kasetsiri, an historian and former lecturer in Thammasat University's Faculty of Liberal Arts, on Thursday called the university council's decision earlier this week to have the next entering class spend all of its undergraduate years on the Rangsit campus north of Bangkok a "tragedy, an embarrassment and ".*

*Charnvit said the council's focus was on education as a business. That was why undergraduate students were evicted from the old Tha Prachan campus to make room for graduate students, who pay higher tuition.*

*The decision was also in line with the government's plan to clear out the "old town" in the heart of the city, leaving only palaces and temples to promote tourism, Charnvit said.*

*"Now it's the end of Thammasat University. It's an up-country university without social or political roles. . . . It's no different from universities in dictatorial countries like Rangoon University in Burma," he said.*

*Historian bemoans Thammasat decision*

*Published on June 25, 2005*

*Charnvit Kasetsiri, an historian and former lecturer in Thammasat University's Faculty of Liberal Arts, on Thursday called the university council's decision earlier this week to have the next entering class spend all of its undergraduate years on the Rangsit campus north of Bangkok a "tragedy, an embarrassment and ".*

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*Kornchanok Raksaseri*

*The Nation*

# On the forum: Sarcastic editorials

June 25, 2005

On the forum: [Sarcastic editorials](#) – June 25, 2005

# Century-old pagoda found under trash

June 25, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Century-old](#)

[pagoda found under trash](#) – Bangkok

Post, June 25, 2005

*...Phra Khru Palad Sampatviriyajarn said the ancient pagoda was discovered by chance by temple staff who were investigating tree trimmers' complaints of mysterious incidents whenever they trimmed that bodhi tree. The temple staff removed a fence and a big pile of trash near the tree and found the pagoda, half-covered with garbage.*

*...Words engraved on the pagoda showed it was built in 1853 for about 640 baht and was opened the following year...*

# Sanoh cites Lord of the Rings

June 25, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Sanoh cites](#)

[Lord of the Rings](#) – Bangkok

Post, June 25, 2005

*Thai Rak Thai estranged list-MP Sanoh Thienthong yesterday likened the power given by the proposed charter amendments to that of a single ring in the hit movie Lord of the Rings...  
... "At the end of the day, the ring was destroyed and prevented the turning of an angel into a demon and a demon into a super-demon. What I'm saying is that the charter gives too much power to one man. Even a good person will be consumed (by power) and what will become of a bad one?" Mr Sanoh said in a telephone interview...*

*Sanoh cites Lord of the Rings*

*Thai Rak Thai estranged list-MP Sanoh Thienthong yesterday likened the power given by the proposed charter amendments to that of a single ring in the hit movie Lord of the Rings.*

*The ring could have given the Dark Lord Sauron the power to enslave the world.*

*"At the end of the day, the ring was destroyed and prevented the turning of an angel into a demon and a demon into a super-demon. What I'm saying is that the charter gives too much power to one man. Even a good person will be consumed (by power) and what will become of a bad one?" Mr Sanoh said in a telephone interview.*

*The leader of the Wang Nam Yen faction has become estranged with the party following his strong objections to the way the party wants the constitution amended.*

*Mr Sanoh also shrugged off his recent removal from the party's board of directors, saying it was rather a blessing and he would not accept an executive post if offered later. He noted that he was an MP, not a slave.*

*Mr Sanoh also criticised a decision on the upcoming censure debate made by the government whips, saying it was inappropriate to publicise it.*

*Phongthep Thepkanjana, chief of government whips, had told reporters that the government whips had concluded that they would all vote in favour of Transport Minister Suriya Jungrunreang-kit.*

*Mr Sanoh said he would show up when the House of Representatives meets to cast votes after the no-confidence debate against Mr Suriya. He said it was still too early to say if he would give the transport minister a vote of confidence.*



# Thaksin: Deserving of absolute loyalty—or else!

June 25, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Deserving of absolute loyalty—or else!](#) – Bangkok Post, June 25, 2005

Thirasant Mann

*By zapping critical websites for reasons of national security, the Thai Mai Rak Khrai government has in no uncertain terms told critics to zip it. So let me rush to say I worship our CEO, I kiss the ground beneath his feet—for reasons of personal security.*

*And who could be more secure personally? He is listed among the billionaires in Forbes (year 2003), is the owner of a business empire that puts Berlusconi's in the shade, has pockets so deep he can dole out shares worth millions to maids and chauffeurs, and a heart big enough to admit "honest mistakes" \_ such as when he promised, last century, to rid Bangkok of traffic congestion within six months. Of course we're all still sitting smugly in the jam eating bread and honey, and not daring to use the subway.*

*And did he not, at the height of the bird flu scare, bravely munch on flu-free fried chicken till he was ready to squawk?*

*His government's war on drugs has made the world sit up and take notice of our human rights record, which doubtless will go a long way towards securing the top UN job for our deputy prime minister responsible for foreign affairs.*

*The war on corruption has shown there are no corrupt politicians, only greedy graft busters. There has been nothing but the clearest transparency in the juicy longan deal, the airport scanners purchase, the rubber saplings project, the million cows scheme...*

*The state's handling of the situation down South is resulting in more and more people, bless their souls, resting in peace every day. And those who've so far managed to stay in one piece will soon have the pleasure of attending, possibly under threat of abduction, a new school (either in Narathiwat, Yala or Pattani, whichever presents the least likelihood of being burnt down), to learn how to bring about peace and tranquillity by folding paper cranes.*

*The poverty eradication scheme is achieving wonders, with beggars being rounded up off the streets just like the pre-Apec days of 2003, when destitute Cambodians were dispatched by the planeload to Phnom Penh free of charge.*

*Our relations with neighbouring countries couldn't be better \_ especially with Burma, whose generals haven't a clue where they're headed despite road maps and must be handled with kid gloves because the government hopes one day to get back the 5 billion baht it loaned the junta to link up its communications network with ShinSat.*

*The one tambon one product (Otop) campaign has been a great success, with people sitting atop piles of unsold products because the communities started competing with each other by making identical goods.*

*The attempt to reform education has been exemplary. We now have state-funded schools in which the French are teaching English \_ where's the harm in that? None (non?) whatsoever.*

*In fact, the reforms have been so successful that some 3,000 education officials are about to sue the education minister for lost career opportunities.*

*And what about the strenuous efforts being exerted to rehabilitate tsunami victims by relieving them of their lands?*

*Meantime, the energy-conservation campaign will surely save the country billions of baht as the PM keeps us happily in the dark while he himself gets lost in the fog on helicopter rides.*

*At great risk of being labelled unpatriotic one company has warned, though, that a midnight curfew on TV broadcasts might cause people to seek other forms of entertainment which would actually use up more energy. Indeed.*

*And who says our most cherished CEO doesn't listen to advice? Did he not take his chief adviser's advice and boot him out of the party's executive board \_prompting the adviser's wife to do a spot of meditation while inspecting a technical college to see whether those still in their salad days were being tossed to death in bizarre hazing activities?*

*So now our man from the North who calls himself South is in need of a new adviser, but social critics and academics need not apply. Sorry to say but yours truly, however sycophantic and grovelling, has not the skills required for such an important position, either.*

*Thirasant Mann is a sub-editor of Bangkok Post.*

# CTX girl

June 27, 2005

Categories: Uncategorized

[CTX](#)

[girl](#) – *The Nation*, June

27, 2005

For once, an amusing editorial cartoon from *The Nation*...

## On the forum: More photos of royalty

June 27, 2005

On the forum: [More photos of royalty](#) – June 27, 2005

*...here is a photo of [H.M.](#)*

*[King Chulalongkorn on his second coronation](#), 16 Oct 1873.*

*Also a photo of [H.M.](#)*

*[King Mongkut and Queen Debsirindra](#), 1856, a photo of [H.M.](#)*

*[King Chulalongkorn in 1881 Dressed in Western-Style Uniform](#)  
and a photo of a bust of [H.M.](#)*

*[King Mongkut](#).*

# A tale of two newspapers: Media unprofessional or under pressure?

June 27, 2005

Categories: A Tale of Two Newspapers

A tale of two newspapers:

The same event? – June 27, 2005

Was this the same event? *The Nation* reports on a "seminar on the state of Thai media freedom" at Chula while the *Post* reports on "an event to mark the 25th anniversary of the Confederation of Thai Journalists"—both occurring last Friday.

The *Post* article is about a deputy PM criticizing the professionalism of the Thai press. *The Nation* quotes government critics who lambaste state pressure on the media.

[Surakiart:](#)

[Thai press lacks professionalism – ‘Constructive news](#)

[always overlooked’](#) – Bangkok

*Post*, June 26, 2005

*The Thai press creates a bad image of Thailand for the rest of the world by focusing more on the negatives*

*rather than the positives, said Deputy Prime Minister*

*Surakiart Sathirathai.*

*Speaking at an event to mark the 25th anniversary of*

*the Confederation of Thai Journalists on Friday, Mr Surakiart said the press in general needed to promote*

*constructive activities rather than critical news and analysis. “Foreign newspapers carry news that projects*

*both the good and bad, but for Thai media the negatives*

*outweigh the positives,” said the former foreign affairs*

*minister.*

*Mr Surakiart said that throughout his time as foreign*

*minister Thailand was involved in various international*

*projects, held numerous seminars and acted as a mediator*

*for countries in conflict.*

*But, he said, the Thai media overlooked those accomplishments*

*and instead dwelled on rumours of the government’s failures*

*in organising the proceedings.*

*“In countries with press freedom like the Philippines,*

[Discontent](#)

[growing over media control](#)

– *The Nation*, June 25, 2005

*...Earlier yesterday, the Faculty of Communication Arts held its annual seminar on the state of Thai media*

*freedom, referring to the present era as a dark time for press freedom and urged media reforms to be put on the national agenda.*

*Prasong Lertrattanawisut, the deputy managing editor*

*of the Matichon newspaper, said Thaksin has become efficient*

*and systematic in controlling the Thai media.*

*“Everyone*

*will have to question*

*with reason,” he said, referring to the government’s alleged indirect control of media outlets through shareholders,*

*advertisements and other means.*

*“What we are facing now may best be described as ‘manufactured consent’,” said Pit Pongsawat, a political scientist from Chulalongkorn University.*

*“It makes us think of small issues as big issues and big issues as small issues.”*

*Chaiyan Chiyaporn, another Chulalongkorn political scientist,*

*alleged that the Thaksin administration hired a large*

*number of students to scrutinise various websites and*

*respond with counter attacks to those criticising the government.*

*Another method used to control the social agenda is manufacturing news to occupy the public’s imagination*

*and distract the public from important issues affecting*

*the US and countries in Europe, they all carry more constructive news than ours," he said. "Foreign media on some occasions praised Thailand*

*for a job well done but the Thai media did not even report on the events," he said.*

*Mr Surakiart, who is also running for the United Nations*

*secretary-general's post, said various embassies translate*

*Thai newspapers into their mother tongue and the negative*

*reporting hurt the country's image. The deputy prime*

*minister also accused the Thai media of being inaccurate*

*and sensational, and said there was a low level of professionalism*

*in Thai journalism.*

*"Facts need to be correct before an analysis is made," he said.*

*The Thai media, said Mr Surakiart, did not know what*

*"off the record" meant and therefore could not be trusted with some important tactical information.*

*the government, said Ruj Komolbutr, a lecturer in journalism at Thammasat University.*

['A tale of two newspapers' archives](#)

# Siam Intercontinental Hotel/Paragon news 2002-2005

June 28, 2005

Categories: Buildings

Siam Intercontinental Hotel/Paragon news

[Back to Siam Intercontinental Hotel/Paragon main page](#)

Note about the Paragon article – *The Nation*, June 28, 2005

A funny [letter](#) about the Paragon article below: *"Costs soar, but Siam Paragon on course for Nov 1 opening," Business, June 27. "All outlets have been carefully chosen. Siam Ocean World, for example, will be the largest aquarium in the southern hemisphere." Siam Paragon will be huge indeed if it stretches into the southern hemisphere!*

[Costs soar, but Siam Paragon on course for Nov 1 opening](#) – *The Nation*, June 27, 2005

*All traffic will lead to Siam Paragon when it opens on November 1, with the centre's world-class shopping and entertainment promising to make it the jewel in Bangkok's retail crown.*

*...Siam Paragon is located on a 52-rai property, which is part of the Sa Pathum Palace, owned by HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn. This has added to the project's distinction. The centre faces onto Rama I Road with Phya Thai Road to the west, Phetchaburi Road behind it and Rajprasong Road to the east. A road will be cleared so that the traffic can move from Siam Paragon to Phetchaburi Road...*

[Bangkok aquarium to be region's biggest](#) – *The Nation*, July 27, 2005

*Australia's Oceanis Group will open Southeast Asia's largest aquarium at Siam Paragon in November with an investment of Bt1 billion.*

*Siam Ocean World will occupy an area the size of two football fields and will be able to accommodate 20,000 visitors per day...*

*The centre will comprise a main "oceanarium" with an acrylic ocean tunnel, a 360-degree panoramic "fishbowl", touch pools for children, a 4D theatre, a rainforest area and many other features...*

**'Hi-so' party for the launch of the Paragon** – August 17, 2002

The area in front of the Siam Intercontinental Hotel hosted a huge water and light show to inaugurate the construction of the Siam Paragon. All the papers had articles on this—one of the [best was the \*Nation's\*](#). All the usual suspects were there touting how great the elegant project will be. After a quote by Supaluck Umpujh that the Paragon will be a "world-class destination because we will offer only the best to customers," William Heinecke explained that the Paragon would have outlets such as Burger King, The Pizza Company, and Dairy Queen. The Paragon sounds like just another big shopping center. However, the business community is excited because the management team that developed and runs the successful (and elegant) Emporium also is behind the Paragon.

The closure of the Siam Intercontinental Hotel has gone on with barely a whisper of protest. There was a sole sorrowful reader comment at the bottom of the *Nation* article ("It is very sad to see the destruction of Siam Hotel for the new shopping center that will only add to the pollution and congestion of Bangkok."). 2B was told by several sources about the fear of public protest over the removal of such a well-known landmark. However, no one seemed to care. 2B was asked by the Siam Intercontinental whether our webpage on the hotel would be "complimentary" before they would give us the hotel's press kit.

Here is an [article about the launch party](#) from earlier this week (the article also mentions that the Emporium will soon undergo a 200 million baht facelift). There are already huge billboards advertising Paragon around town. We have also noted from photos of models in the press that the Paragon will be built right up against the road (about as close as Siam Center is?) with a short bridge to the [Skytrain](#). Whatever happened to setback?





(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Never again – photo from June, 2002 showing the famous hotel roof lit up for the last time. The Baiyoke II, Amari Watergate, and Grand Diamond buildings can be seen in the background.

**Siam Inter-Continental to be Demolished** – *The Bangkok Post*, March 9, 2001

The Post reports that the 35-year old Siam Inter-Continental will be torn down early next year (This is the hotel next to Siam Center and across from Siam Square—the Siam Square Skytrain stations sits in front of it). "The 50-rai plot is owned by HM Private Property and the company has leased the land for 35 years. It has extended the contract for another 25 years." The new project would include a five-star hotel, an auditorium, "cultural and interactive museum, library and Thai heritage centre" and be completed in three and a half years. International marketing research firm Taylor Nelson Sofres is making the feasibility study.



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

June 30, 2002 – Last day at the pool

**Landmark to be torn down** – *The Bangkok Post*, June 30, 2002

*Khunying Chodchoy Sophonpanich, the hotel's first public relations manager when it opened in 1966, went through a baptism of fire. The hotel's design was controversial and drew great flak. "People were really angry at the design, which was inspired by a royal hat," she said. "The controversy made the hotel very hard to promote."*

**Hotel closes doors at 36** – *The Bangkok Post*, June 30, 2002

*When it was opened in June 1966, many people believed the design, said to resemble a hat worn by an early King of Ratansakosin, was inappropriate. The late M.R. Kukrit Pramoj thought building the hotel in the likeness of a royal accessory was scandalous.*

Some [reports](#) state that the hotel is fully booked until its last day. The [Bangkok Post](#) reports that no date has been set for demolition (we wonder if it will be made public before the building is torn down). The article also mentions the new shopping center will include a "museum" and *...the company will auction nearly 5,000 items including furniture and amenities from the 400 guest rooms, on July 10-11 at the hotel near Siam Square....*

[Back to Siam Intercontinental Hotel/Paragon main page](#)

# Ploenchit Fair website

June 28, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Ploenchit Fair website

– June 28, 2005

From an email notice: *The British Community in Thailand Foundation for the Needy* (BCTFN is delighted to announce the establishment of two new websites: BCTFN – [www.bctfn.com](http://www.bctfn.com) and Ploenchit Fair – [www.ploenchitfair.com](http://www.ploenchitfair.com)

# A tale of two newspapers: Jaruvan relieved

June 28, 2005

Categories: A Tale of Two Newspapers

A tale

of two newspapers: Jaruvan relieved

– June 28, 2005

The *Post* article has the government line showing everything was done legally. *The Nation* adds Jaruvan's insistence that only a Royal command can remove her.

[Jaruvan](#)

['relieved of duties'](#) – Bangkok

*Post*, June 27, 2005

*Jaruvan Maintaka has been relieved of her duties as auditor-general, the State Audit Commission said, adding it had abided by the law in selecting and nominating her replacement...*

*The commission said the statement was intended to end*

*public confusion over whether Khunying Jaruvan was still*

*auditor-general and performing her duties.*

*It said that since the Constitution Court's ruling on July 6 last year that the process for selecting her was*

*unconstitutional, Khunying Jaruvan had not performed her*

*duties as auditor-general.*

*The commission had suspended her salary and position allowance*

*from July 7.*

*The commission then told Khunying Jaruvan to hand over*

*her duties and any state property to the Office of the Auditor-General, and appointed Puangrat Vongpo, her deputy,*

*as acting auditor-general on July 8.*

*When Mrs Puangrat retired on Sept 30 last year, the commission*

*appointed Jerarat Noppawong na Ayutthaya as acting auditor-general, effective from Oct 1.*

*The commission later nominated Wisut Montriwat for the*

*auditor-general's post. The Senate approved the nomination*

*on May 10.*

[OAG](#)

[says Jaruvan no longer at the helm](#)

– *The Nation*, June 27, 2005

*After weeks of confusion about the status of the incumbent*

*auditor general, Khunying Jaruvan Maintaka, the Office*

*of the Auditor General (OAG) has announced that she is*

*no longer at the agency's helm...*

*The statement dated June 24 said that due to confusion*

*among members of the public and state agencies dealing*

*with the OAG, the agency saw the need to explain the facts*

*of the issue.*

*The agency said that the State Audit Commission, to which*

*the auditor general reports, stopped salary payments to*

*Jaruvan on July 7 last year, one day after the Constitution*

*Court ruled that her appointment process was unconstitutional.*

*Her most senior deputy, Puangrat Wongpho, was later appointed*

*to take over Jaruvan's responsibilities and serve as the acting auditor general, the statement said.*

*The statement insisted that the State Audit Commission's*

*nomination of Visut Montriwat as the new auditor general,*

*who was later endorsed by the Senate, was in line with*

*the relevant laws and regulations.*

*Jaruvan told *The Nation* last night that her status remained*

*unchanged without Royal command to replace her with a*

*new attorney general.*

['A tale of two newspapers'](#)  
[archives](#)

# Thai fishermen catch, eat record-sized catfish

June 29, 2005

Categories: Wildlife and Nature

[Thai fishermen catch, eat record-sized catfish](#) –

*Reuters*, June 29, 2005

*Fishermen in northern Thailand have caught the biggest catfish on record—a 646-pound (293-kg) giant the size of a grizzly...*

And here's the [photo](#)!

# NOBEL PEACE PRIZE: 43 women from region nominated

June 29, 2005

Categories: 2Bangkok News

## NOBEL

### PEACE PRIZE: 43 women from region nominated –

*The Nation*, June 29, 2005

*...The respected female Thai monk, Dhammananda, was also selected.*

*She has peacefully struggled for the rights of women to be ordained as female monks. She was ordained as a female monk in Sri Lanka two years ago.*

*Other Thai women selected for nomination include environmentalists Dawan Chantarahassadee, of the Klong Dan Local Conservation Group, Bhinand Chotirosseranee, of the Kanchanaburi Conservation Club; Thicha Na Nakorn, of the Network of Women and Constitution; Naulnoi Timkoon, founder of Baan Khru Noi Child Care Centre for poor children; Wilaiwan Saetia, from the Confederation of Labour; and Somboon Srikamdokkhae, from the Council of Work and Environment Related Patients' Network of Thailand.*

*"The work of these women is a that makes the world know that peace cannot prevail at once, but rather it will happen as a result of collective efforts," Supawadee said. The project's headquarters is in Bern, Switzerland.*



# Newspapers heap criticism

June 29, 2005

Categories: The Thaksin Years

[Newspapers](#)

[heap criticism](#) – *The Nation*, June

29, 2005

The Nation has a good rundown of all the newspaper headlines on the censure debate as well as their own [tale of two newspapers](#) comparing the *Post* and *Nation*.

*...The two national English-language newspapers also led with their takes on the censure debate. The Bangkok Post ran a non-committal headline “Suriya, Abhisit trade barbs.” This paper, meanwhile, ran the beleaguered transport minister’s picture next to Abhisit’s under the headline “Corrupt! A cover-up!” ...*

# Thai TV/reading/net habits

June 30, 2005

Thai TV/reading/net habits –

June 30, 2005

A reader notes: *According to a [poll](#)*

*[released yesterday](#). Thai people watch the most TV. This*

*was widely reported e.g. [BBC](#)*

*[News today](#), they were mostly emphasizing the fact that Indians*

*apparently read the most. Knowing how little Thais read, I had*

*to check.... Apparently, Thai people rank 2nd for time spent*

*reading books as well. Furthermore, Thai people rank 2nd worldwide*

*for time spent using Internet for non-work purposes. In total*

*these three activities add up to an average of over 40 hours*

*a week...*

*There ought to be a conclusion to this in the form of yet another*

*poll showing that Thai people are the least accurate in answering*

*opinion polls... (or alternatively, that they never do any work).*