

Why Bangkok cops nearly arrested Krista

March 2, 2009

Categories: Film and TV

[Why Bangkok cops nearly arrested Krista](#) – *Philippine Star*, March 2, 2009

...While filming some scenes for Marino near a temple last week in Bangkok, Krista Ranillo was surprised when a cop nearly arrested her: It turned out that Krista was in a sexy dress and it was not allowed in that area. The cop didn't know that a shooting was in progress because the camera was hardly visible...

Spring break Thailand, worst ever

March 2, 2009

Categories: Thailand in the International Media

[Spring break Thailand, worst ever](#) – Examiner, March, 2009

... "The scariest part about Bangkok was not the taxi driver getting me a hooker," said Luke. "It was how drunk this other guy got me in the bar, and me jumping out of the tuk-tuk on the way back to his apartment..."

Briton faces up to two years in Thai jail after ‘passport mix-up’

March 3, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Briton faces up to two years in Thai jail after ‘passport mix-up’](#) – Guardian, March, 2009

A British man holidaying in Thailand claimed he was beaten, handcuffed and jailed after Foreign Office diplomats mistakenly told Phuket immigration officials he was travelling on a false passport...

Thai Railroads/SRT News 2003-2009

March 4, 2009

Categories: Thai Railroads

Cross-border trains – March 4, 2009

Wisarut reports: *I just got the information about train numbers for cross border service between Nong Khai-Tha Nalaeng section along with the schedule.*

1. **Express 69** Depart Nong Khai at 10:00 (10AM) and Arrive Tha Nalaeng at 10:15 (10:15 AM)
2. **Special Train 913** Depart Nong Khai 16:20 (4:20 PM) and Arrive Tha Nalaeng 16:35 (4:35 PM)
3. **Special Train 914** Depart Tha Nalaeng 10:45 (10:45 AM) and Arrive at Nong Khai at 11:00 (11 AM)
3. **Express 70** Depart Tha Nalaeng 17:06 (5:06 PM) and Arrive Nong Khai 17:20 (5:20 PM)

The ticket for cross border service 913/914 will be as follows:

1. Third Class – 20 baht
2. Second Class Aircon – 80 baht (50 baht for those who take Express 69/70)

Note: The extra 30 Baht is for Lao Railway Authority

The Thai government has made a clear policy to grant 900 million baht aids with 30% as grant and 70% as loan with 1.5% annual interest rate to construct the Tha Nalaeng-Viengchan railway with total distance of 9 km to allow both cargo service between Laem Chabang Port and Lao-China Industrial estate near Bueng That Luang (Viengchan Station) along with passenger services – which will shorten the distance from 28 km to 13-14 km.

LPDR politburo and People Armed Forces of LPDR are going to force all the existing duty free shops to move to Tha Nalaeng station where they have already purchase the land for leasing. Only a casino are allowed to be at Friendship Bridge (on the Lao side).

[SRT must pull its weight as an engine of growth](#) – The Nation, November 24, 2008

[At last, big plans for SRT](#) – Bangkok Post, May 6, 2008

...The rail network in this country covers some 4,043km, less than in neighbouring Burma, which has around 5,500km. Worse, only 280km of the Thai rail is the double-track system, compared with 200km in Malaysia and 600km in Burma.

Thus it is not difficult to imagine why delays are very common for passengers due to that traffic bottleneck. To arrive at a railway station only to find that the train taking them to their destination will come two hours late, is still possible.

The single track limits the driver to run the train at a maximum speed of 120km per hour. Thus it is understandable for railway officials to envy those working at the Highways Department because roads always come first when policy-makers talk about transport infrastructure...



(Photo: Dick van der Spek)

March, 1972 at Non Pladuk

A few random railroad photos from the past – October 16, 2008



(Photo: Dick van der Spek)

March, 1972 at Non Pladuk



(Photo: Dick van der Spek)

Wan Po on July 17, 1979



(Photo: Dick van der Spek)

Engine 513 – Date and location unknown

[SRT should mimic Indian Railways](#) – Bangkok Post, May 1, 2008

...From a loss-making operation that was near bankruptcy due to high debt, Indian Railways turned to make a profit of 70 billion baht over the past two years, Dr Surapong said. At the same time, passenger tariffs fell by 18%.

The SRT has long been one of the country's worst-performing state enterprises, with accumulated losses of more than 40 billion baht and losses in 2007 alone of 6.27 billion baht.

Of Thailand's nearly five dozen state enterprises, four accounted for 95% of all losses: the SRT, the Bangkok Mass Transit Authority, the SME Bank and the National Housing Authority...

[Thai Cabinet OKs 2 SRT Rail Projects Worth THB18.8 Billion](#) – Nasdaq, May 22, 2007

[Go-ahead given for B13bn city train line](#) – Bangkok Post, May 23, 2007

...The Bang Sue-Taling Chan railway is part of Bangkok's new Red Line, which also includes a much more expensive section, estimated at 52 billion baht, which will stretch for 26km all the way from Bang Sue to Rangsit.

...In addition, the Transport Ministry is preparing details of the Purple Line from Bang Sue to Bang Yai...

[ASEAN hopes railway will be done by 2015](#) – AP, August 25, 2006

Southeast Asian nations hope a proposed major railway project linking Singapore to southern China will be ready by 2015 to facilitate the flow of goods and people across the region, officials said Saturday...

[ASEAN hopes to revitalize rail project](#) – AP, August 27, 2006

[Railways on track for B1.33-trillion shunt](#) – Bangkok Post, August 18, 2006

New investments totalling 1.33 trillion baht will be made in rail networks over the next five years to help overhaul logistics and transport networks...

The restructuring plan calls for the procurement of 200 new train engines, new installations of double-track rail and extensions of rail networks to commercial areas to facilitate the use of railways for commercial shipping and transport...

President Chirac says "Vientiane would be reached by trains very soon"

– translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager*

Daily, February 19, 2006

French President Jacques Chirac told the press during a press conference at Oriental Hotel after the meeting with PM Thaksin on February 18 that the French government would cooperate with Thailand to push the railway from Nongkhai to Vientiane.

The French government would agree to grant cheap loans (lower interest rates) to the Lao government so they can construct a new railway from Tha Nalaeng to Vientiane (the capital city).

The section from Tha Nalaeng to Vientiane is about 10 km while the section from the Thai border pole to Tha Nalaeng is 3.5 km.

Note: The Thai government would have to donate either old GEK locos or ALSTHOM loco class 41xx to the Lao Railway Authority so they can launch railway services without delay. That would be possible after getting the new locos from China.

[Thailand:](#)

[SRT should extend railways into South China](#) –

Bernama, February 6, 2006

The State Railway of Thailand (SRT) should extend railways into South China in a bid to increase its revenue and promote Thailand as a regional transport hub, the Thai News Agency (TNA) reported Tuesday, quoting Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI) ...

SRT debt clearing by setting up three subsidiaries

– translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi

from *Manager Daily*, November 15, 2005

The SRT Board is coming up with debt clearing plan by setting up three subsidiaries.

- 1) SRT Asset Management Co. Ltd. to maximize the asset management benefit
- 2) SRT Maintenance Management to handle both track maintenance and loco and rolling stock maintenance
- 3) SRT Service Management to handle the SRT services at stations and inside the trains

The SRT Asset Management would transfer the areas at Bangsue Railway Yard, Chong Nonsee and Makkasan to Treasury Department to clear 40 billion baht debt.

SRT Maintenance management would integrate those loco drivers who are under the jurisdiction of

the SRT Mechanic Department and ticket sellers who are under the jurisdiction of the SRT Commercial Department. Furthermore, private participation would be allowed so they can invest in the railway services with the concession fee paid to SRT Service Management.

SRT Service Management would function to allow AOT to run the services inside the stations and turn the stations into shopping malls for the commercial viable sections.

Deputy Minister of Finance Chaiyot Sasomsab said they would consider the proposal of the SRT Board who are asking to handle the three major SRT land holdings at Makkasan, Bangsue and Mae Nam instead of selling the land out to the Treasury Department. However the Ministry has to investigate if the SRT Board is able to handle commercial management and development of SRT land at three significant places.

The SRT Board would give the answer to the Ministry of Finance in the next two weeks.

Explanation of Minister Pheng's double tracking

projects – translated and summarized by Wisarut

Bholsithi from *Than Setthakij*, November 10-12, 2005

Transport Minister Pheng called for a public-private joint venture on the following projects during a talk with students at Rajabhat University of Udon Thani on November 8, 2005:

- 1) Khon Kaen – Kalasin – Mukdaharn – Nakhon Phanom
- 2) Khon kaen – Bua Yai double tracking
- 3) Nong Khai – Khon Kaen double tracking
- 4) Kaeng Khoi – Lum Narai – Bua Yai double tracking
- 5) Ban Phachi – Wiharn Daeng
- 6) Chachongsao – Klong 19 – Wiharn Daeng double tracking
- 7) Chachongsao – Sri Racha – Laem Chabang double tracking
- 8) Nakhon Pathom – Nong Pladuk – Suphanburi double tracking
- 9) Suphanburi – Ang Thong – Ban Phachi line
- 10) Khorat (Thanon Jira) – Ubon double tracking
- 11) Map Krabao – Nakhonratchasima – Khorat (Thanon Jira) double tracking
- 12) Railway Bridge across Mekhong heading to Danang Port in Vietnam

This would include the mixed gauge (1.000 & 1.435 meter) in the same way as the track from Hanoi to the Dong Dang checkpoint to China.

Minister Pheng's mass transit

plan – translated and summarized by Wisarut

Bholsithi from *Thairath* and *Manager Daily*, November 2, 2005

Minister Pheng has come up with the following plan for the mass transit system:

- 1) Mixed gauge (meter gauge/standard gauge) for the following sections
 - 1.1) Rangsit – Ayutthaya – Ban Phachi
 - 1.2) Lad Krabang – Chachongsao – Chonburi

- 1.3) Talingchan – Nakhon Pathom
- 2) Double tracking for the following routes
- 2.1) Nakhon Pathom – Nong Pladuk – Suphanburi
- 2.2) Chachongsao – Klong 19 – Wiharn Daeng
- 3) New line for Suphanburi – Ban Phachi – Wiharn Daeng as a new cargo route

Comments about the plan are in [this thread on the forum](#).

Minister Pheng insisting that

Khonkaen – Kalasin – Mukdaharn is better than Bua Yai Roy Ed – Mukdaharn – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Bangkok Biznews*, November 3, 2005

During the "Future Thai Economic and Commerce in Indochina region" seminar set up by the Nation Multimedia Group at Rajabhat Udorn Thani University on November 2, 2005, Transport Minister Pheng stated that the government prefers the Khonkaen – Kalasin – Mukdaharn route over Bua Yai – Roy Ed – Mukdaharn proposed by SRT since the Bua Yai route is not economically worthy.

Minister Pheng even lambastes governments from 1969 to 1994 that originally proposed the Bua Yai route along with the who prefer truck routes over the railway route.

Minister Pheng also insisted that this Khonkaen – Mukdaharn line would start construction to support the East-West Economic Corridor after the East -West Corridor highway projects are done in 2006.

The new container yard at Namphong along with the Khon Kaen ICD would boost usage of the Khonkaen – Kalasin – Mukdaharn line.

Khon kaen – Kalasin – Mukdaharn line will go though the following districts:

- 1) Muang District of Khon Kaen
- 2) Chiang yuen district of Mahasarakham
- 3) Yang Talad district of Kalasin (major district of Kalasin)
- 4) Phon Thong district of Kalasin
- 5) Nikhom Kham Soy district of Mukdaharn
- 6) Muang district of Mukdaharn

This Khonkaen to Mukdaharn line would be extended to Nakhon Pathom and go across Mekhong at Tha Khaek since the bridge across Mekhong at Mukdaharn has not been designed for railway-trucks in the same way as the Friendship Bridge at Nong Khai.

SRT needs to speed up major rehab of the track along with double tracking and private participation in the construction of stations and loco purchasing while SRT would work on the schedule allocation for cargo lines.

Note: Wisarut notes that the routing of lines such as this mentioned above is almost always associated with vested interests who want traffic routes to go buy their land holdings.

Minister Pheng forcing SRT to extract more revenue

from the private sector – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Bangkok Business News* and *Manager Daily*, November 3, 2005

Minister Pheng has asked SRT to do the following things:

- 1) Speed up the Airport Link after STECON has worked three months behind schedule. STECON is supposed to install 7782 supporting pillars of 10,094 by now. However, the actual number of support pillars erected by STECON so far is 1510 pillars (15% progress).

The construction of foundations is only 0.9% in progress. STECON is supposed to erect 1363 pillars of 2388 pillars by now. The actual number of erected pillars is 21 pillars.

The SRT Board has admitted that the delay on the land transfer and that contractors are not ready to install heavy machines along with construction materials and this has caused a by 2-3 delay.

However, Minister Pheng is asking contractors to explain the delays along with the construction plans to MOTC while asking SRT to find a private sector entity to run the Airport Link before the construction is done since the private sector would have to take part in laying tracks and signal and system installations.

- 2) Extract more revenue from the private sectors who lease SRT land from extra rent as well as profit sharing to boost revenue for SRT.

This is the way to deal with 100 billion baht debts of SRT which consists of accumulated debts of 42 billion baht and 50 billion baht for pensions which are supposed to be solved in five years.

The debt restructuring for SRT will consist of SRT Asset Management Co. Ltd. to take of SRT land as well as a mass transit system in Bangkok and vicinity after the creation of MTA.

Furthermore, the revenue sharing extracted from those who rent SRT land is needed to cover the low rent rates.

The 47.22 rai of land leased by Central Pattana at Phaholyothin will be expire in December 2008. Therefore, SRT and financial consultants have to make asset assessments along with the trend of leasing rate to calculate the appropriate leasing rate. After that, SRT would negotiate with Central Pattana about the new rate of leasing along with revenue sharing to cover the low rate rent. If Central Pattana refuses to negotiate with SRT, SRT would call new companies willing to accept the new rates along with revenue sharing.

More rumors on SRT issues

– translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Transport Journal*, October 10-16, 2005

After the Cabinet shuffle from Suriya to Phongsak (Pheng), more rumours on SRT emerge:

Sacking SRT Governor Jittisen since he could not get along with both Minister Pheng and Premier Thaksin.

This is due to the fact that Minister Pheng has sent men from the Highway Department to run OTP as well as the SRT Board despite the fact that those from the Highway Department know nothing about the railway and subway at all. They are cronies of Minister Pheng.

This kind of political patronage by promoting unqualified persons to run SRT and OTP frustrates both Transport Journal correspondents as well as the SRT Board.

For the case of Mr Suthon, he only has law knowledge. Mr. Suthone only knows about procurements without any knowledge of engineers or even administration.

Mr Suthone just wants to become a new governor by accusing Governor Jittisen as "an unqualified and inefficient SRT Governor"

despite the fact that Governor Jittisen knows how to drive locomotives as well as having other railway engineering knowledge. This kind of accusation would doom SRT if Minister Pheng has agreed with Mr Suthone.

The insider has admitted to TJ correspondents that it is impossible to finish Suvarnabhumi Airport Link by the end of 2008. This delay is due to the Hopewell debacle as well as modifying the structure.

Even double-tracking from Chachongsao to Sri Racha is delayed due to the delay on the payment which compels SRT to return part of its budget to the Budget Bureau.

The reasons for Minister Pheng's meddling with the mass transit system can be shown as follows:

1) Discrediting Minister Suriya by the order from Premier Thaksin's group to ruin the Wang Bua Ban faction. This is an internal struggle within TRT.

2) Discrediting Mr Khamrobluk before kicking Mr Khamrobluk out so Minister Pheng can nominate Mr. Maitree Srinanawat (another crony of Minister Pheng) to run OTP.

3) The government may run out of budget for a mass transit system so they just meddle and delay the projects. They do not want to tell the truth to the public despite of the fact that the meddling and delay on the projects have already ruined TRT.

4) It is the way for the new minister to show that "He has his own brain" so he does not have to follow Suriya's plan. The same mentality as those who construct stone castles—no one wants to continue his predecessor's projects.

The suggestion to move the transport hub from Bangsue to Chiang Rak would only ignite more chaos because it goes against the principal of mass transit systems which require a transportation center within the city.

Konkaen – Kalasin – Mukdaharn railway approved

– translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager* and *Bangkok Biznews*, October 3, 2005

Premier Thaksin and the cabinet have approved the 250 km railway project from Khon Kaen – Chaing Yuen –

Yang Talad – – Phon Thong – Mukdaharn with a price tag of 12 billion baht.

The study will be done in six months even though the actual studies would take two years to be done. It would take three years to construct the route and complete it.

However, the Kalasin Chamber of Commerce said they want a double track route not just a single track. They claim that they are cheaper than the route from Bua Yai to Mukdaharn via Roy Ed .

After finishing this line, they will ask for a route from Phisanuloke to Khonkaen via Phechabun and complete the project for the route from Phisanuloke to Maesod via Sukhothai and Tak. This would ensure Khonkaen supremacy over Udonthani and Nakhon Ratchasima.

Scrambling for Isan railway to Nakhon Phanom

– translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager Daily*, September 22, 2005

Kalasin Chamber of Commerce has come up with the new route proposal from Khon Kaen to Nakhon Phanom via Kalasin:

1) Shorter route (250 km vs. 396 km of Bua Yai – Roi Et – Mukdaharn – Nakhon Phanom)

The same budget of Bua Yai – Roy Ed – Nakhon Phanom can even double track Khon Kaen – Kalasin – Nakhon Phanom

2) Ready customers (6 rice mills, 2 cassava factories, and other agribusiness)

3) Following East – West corridor

4) Support tourism in Isan

5) Those who live in Roi Et could use the Kalasin route as a substitute.

However, the Roi Et Chamber of Commerce have booed the Kalasin Chamber of Commerce by pointing out that:

1) Kalasin Route has to pass through Phoo Phan range which needs a TMB drilling machine.

2) Too few passengers along Phoo Phan range, compared to Roi Et with ready passengers to compel SRT to revitalize the passenger carriage assembly line.

3) Cheaper to construct with ready passengers along Thung Kula (the

jasmine rice harvest area) with no steep track.

4) Ready market from jasmine rice cultivated and harvested at Roi Et heading to Laem Chabang in no time.

5) Those who live in Mahasarak, Hamand, Kalasin can use the route to Nakhon Phanom via Roi Et.

SRT Privatization – translated

and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Than Setthakij*, September 22-24, 2005

SRT has come up with the final plan to clear 42

billion baht debt to be executed in October 2005-2006.

1) Transferring Phaholyothin (300 rai), Makkasan (400 rai), Chong Nonsee along with the area leased by BMA to Treasury to clear 27 billion baht debt

2) Set up three subsidiaries to allow the Ministry of Finance to clear 15 billion baht debt

2.1) SRT Asset Management Co. Ltd. to deal with Phaholyothin, Central Plaza, Chatuchak Weekend Market along with the following stations: Stations (including Yard) Area (Sq-m)

1) Thonburi 204,417.15

2) Bangsue – Klong Tan (Ratchadaphisek) 1,318,304.00

3) Kanchaburi 33,792.66

4) Chachongsao Junction 55,000.00

5) Aranyaprathet – Klong Luek 4,520,208.80

6) Phitsanuloke 218,289.39

7) Uttaradit 9,796.84

8) Chiang Mai 294,049.20

9) Surat Thani 123,091.20

10) Thungsong Junction 490,117.53

11) Hat Yai Junction 30,109.50

12) Songkla 263,220.39

13) Sugei Golok 429,813.46 -> Duty free

14) Nakhon Ratchasima 217,290.26

15) Khon Kaen 190,510.50

16) Udorn Thani 162,604.76

17) Buriram 61,517.77

18) Sisaket 50,490.00

19) Nakhon Lampang 91,865.81

20) Hua Hin 947,753.10

21) Chumporn 1,009,670.57 -> container yards

22) Yala 97,600.00

2.2) SRT Passenger Transportation Co. Ltd. to run passengers services with fair prices and full efficiency.

2.3) SRT Cargo Transportation Co. Ltd. will run cargo service with fair prices, full efficiency

3) Laying off/early retirement for 100 SRT officers while accepting only 5 officers at the top to ensure fewer officers while guaranteeing no shortage of manpower.

Note: The SRT Union has strongly opposed privatization... They have pointed out the more expensive services after privatization of PTT, TOT, and EGAT while the profits have allegedly been siphoned to Swiss Bank accounts of politicians.

Transfer of SRT land and SRT pension to Treasury

not settled – translated and summarized by

Wisarut Bholsithi from *Matichon*, August 24, 2005

The SRT debt of 42.7 billion baht and the 50.2 billion baht pension for 12,000 SRT workers as well as the exorbitant SRT land price are to be transferred to Treasury. However there is a 30-day delay since both SRT and Treasury could not settle on the land transfer.

Treasury said the price of SRT land at Makkasan, Bangsue and Mae Nam of 30 billion baht plus 10 billion baht infrastructure removal is too high.

At best, Treasury Department said SRT land at Makkasan, Bangsue and Mae Nam should be at 20 billion baht. The trespass of squatters on SRT land is another headache for both SRT and Treasury to handle.

Treasury Department asking SRT for long term lease

of Makkasan-Phaholyothin to pay off debts –

translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Thaipost*, August 15, 2005

The Treasury Department is asking SRT to allow a 60-year lease of the 500-rai [Makkasan Maintenance](#)

[Center](#) and 600-rai Phaholyothin Yard through the Treasury Asset Management Co. Ltd. so the Ministry of Finance could pay off the debts for SRT.

The Treasury Department is also asking SRT to set up a subsidiary to run Chatuchak Weekend Market, Or Tor Kor Market and Central Plaza for SRT to realize the potential 60-70 billion baht/year revenue instead of the current 2 billion baht/year.

Treasury may have to apply pressure on the SRT board to comply with the Treasury Department plan.

There are currently 47 billion baht in debts for SRT and 50 billion baht pensions for 12,000 SRT workers.

Steam engines! – August 1, 2005

Rob Dickinson writes: *As a long time (southeast) Asia freak dating from my time in Malaysia in the 70s which saw me in Thailand on the trains pretty often, I very much enjoyed discovering your website and have added a link to it on my own steam locomotive site. Under your trains forum section I have posted a request for information on stationary steam engines to be found in Thai rice mills (definitely exist) and Thai sugar mills (no information available)...*

Over the weekend [2B forumers were buzzing](#) over Rob's truly interesting sites: [A guide to the crusher/mill engines in Java's sugar mills](#) – [Temples of Steam – International Working Steam 2005](#) – [Steam in Java, Indonesia, July 2005](#)

Chanthaburi Chamber of Commerce pushing further extension of the Eastern Railway despite strong opposition – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager Daily*, July 21, 2005

The Chanthaburi Chamber of Commerce has set up a seminar on "Does the new railway really boost the economy of the eastern region?" and has invited SRT, the provincial administration office from Rayong, Chanthaburi and Trat as well as TAT Central Region 4 office, Chanthaburi Tourist Association and local people to participate.

SRT representatives told the local people that the study results from 1998 show that the proposed 160 km railway track from Map ta Put to Trat Viarayong and Chanthaburi has a price tag for land expropriation of 8.4 billion baht and the construction cost of 16 billion baht for single track and 28 billion baht for double track (100 million baht/km for single track and 175 million baht/km for double track).

SRT said this route has little industrial value and is only good for transporting agriculture products (including fruit) which has a much smaller value than industrial products and thus little payoff. IT would take at least 100 years to break even.

However, the TAT office retorts that this line is good for a tourist boom along the eastern coast and TAT is pushing family tourism forward to boost revenue for the nation. Furthermore, local people have made a loud voice that "This Eastern Line to Chanthaburi-Trat must be built immediately!" "SRT is biased towards industrial estates against the will of the people!" "We'll fight tooth to nail to realize this project at all costs!"

Floating diesel forcing SRT to make another ticket hike – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager Daily*, July 13, 2003
SRT found that the rate of 4 baht for the first 10 km is not enough after floating diesel to 24-25 baht/litre. Therefore, SRT is asking for the new rate of 5 baht for the first 10 km instead of the current 2 baht for the first 10 km. The new review would come out by the end of this month to cover the extra expense of 80 million baht a month.

Four choices for high speed train route – Bangkok-Korat – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Than Setthakij*, July 7, 2005

Mr Somsak Yangpreeda, SRT Chief Construction Engineer, told the press that after the cabinet has asked SRT about the studies on the high speed train on March 29, 2005 so as to cut travel time from more than 2-3 hours to 90 minutes or less. The final result would come up by the end of August 2005.

There are 4 routes to be chosen from:

- 1) New tracks parallel with the existing northern and northeastern lines up to Thanonchira Junction – 250 km with a price tag of 119.352 billion baht
- 2) New track parallel with the existing Eastern Railway, Kaeng Khoi – Klong 19 bypass and Northeastern line – up to Thanonchira Junction – 293 km with a price tag of 127.137 billion baht
- 3) Bangsue – Bang Pa In – new shortcut to Kaeng Khoi – Klong 19 Bypass – New Motorway – Thanon Chira route – 254 km with a price tag of 110.183 billion baht
- 4) Makkasan – Lad Krabang – new route to Rangsit Klong 14 (Ongkharak) – Banna – Kaeng Khoi – New Motorway – Thanon Chira route – 276 km with a price tag of 118.077 billion baht

EDITORIAL:
[Logistics fiasco will prove costly](#) – *The Nation*, July 06, 2005

....A recent study on Thailand's logistics sector commissioned by Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) indicated the cost of logistics in Thailand was around 25-30 per cent of its gross domestic product, compared with 10 per cent in the US, 7 per cent in the EU, 11 per cent in Japan and 20 per cent in China...

Logistics plan – 40 billion baht for 39 project in 5 years – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Thairath*, June 22, 2005
There will be 39 logistic projects with a price tag of 40.239 billion

baht which are part of the following investment plan:

Year – Investment (billion baht)

2005 – 2.013

2006 – 7.329

2007 – 10.917

2008 – 11.736

2009 – 8.245

This investment includes the following critical projects:

1) Kaeng Khoi – Klong 19 – Chachoengsao Double Tracking – 5.920 billion baht

2) Chachoengsao – Sri Racha – Laem Chabang Double Tracking – 5.233 billion baht

3) The 2nd Lad Krabang ICD – 6.066 billion baht

4) Pak Bara Deep Sea Port – 5.494 billion baht – definitely need railway track

5) Connecting road for Chaing Saen 2 Port – 5.645 billion baht

6) Chaing Saen 2 Port – 1.107 billion baht

7) 100 km Eastern Coastal Route (Rayong – Changthaburi -Trat) – 1.5 billion baht

The goals are to cut logistic costs from 19% of the product price in 2005 to 15% of the product price in 2009, cutting down the production cost by 15-20% by cutting fuel bills.

Single window e-logistics would cut logistic costs by 0.5% of EXIM prices and speed up the EXIM process from 8-10 days to 1-3 days.

Commentary by Wisarut: If they really want to further cut logistic costs, the Denchai – Phayao – Chaing rai, Surat Thani – Phang Nga – Thanun, and Bua Yai – Mukdahan – Nakhon Phanom routes as well as nationwide double tracking along with massive electrification and modern signal/telecom installation on the trunk lines. These have been waiting to become a reality for more than 60 years–some nearly 90 years.

SRT paying 140 million baht compensation

for NASA Spacedrome – translated and summarized

by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Prachachat Thurakij*, June 19-21, 2005

SRT is asking the SRT Board to pay 141 million baht for compensation according to the assessment from CB Richard Ellis (Thailand) from June 21, 2005. The negotiation with Excaliber that asked for 200 million baht compensation (158 million from the assessment by the consultant hired by Excaliber plus extra compensation) for removing Nasa Spacedrome as well as a new lease on SRT land outside the construction area that will be done in the next 2 weeks.

Furthermore, SRT is asking another 100 million baht to pay STECON for removing NASA Spacedrome as well as the abandoned Hopewell pillars. Most of the SRT land for the Airport Link has been transferred to STECON. Only the troublesome NASA Spacedrome and Hopewell pillars are the serious issues to be tackled.

Laos, Thailand cooperate in railway construction

– VNA-Vietnam News Agency, June 15, 2005

Laos and Thailand have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the construction of a railway connecting Vientiane with Thailand's Nong Kai province, according to a Lao senior officer.

Under the MoU, the first 3.5 km-long section of the project will be built in Laos at a cost of 197 million baht, 30 percent of which will come from non-refundable aid and the rest from Thailand.

The second 9 km-long section will also be built in Laos with French grants worth 150 million Euros – to purchase Second hand Alstom Locos and Diesel Railcars as well as the construction of Viangchan Railway Station and railway tracks.

The construction of the railway will be started in September this year and is expected to go through March, 2007, the MoU stated, adding that three Thai companies will be in charge of the construction.

SRT raising ticket prices for survival starting at

4.50 baht – translated and summarized by Wisarut

Bholsithi from *Manager Daily*, June 1, 2005

SRT Governor said they have to raise the railway ticket prices from the minimum 2 baht to minimum 4.50 baht to cover fuel hikes. This ticket hike is to be done along with service improvement which will be finalized in the next three months. SRT would ensure that the local people would not suffer from ticket hike as much as they fear since SRT is trying to give very fair prices.

SRT starting high speed train to Korat in 2006

– translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from [*Manager Daily*](#), May 31, 2005

SRT Director expects to start the high speed train from Bangkok to Korat (200 km) in 2006 and ready to open the system in 2009 with the ticket price of about 200 baht.

SRT has hired Apsicon and Citech (joint-venture companies) to design the high speed train route with a price tag of 35 million baht. The price tag for the construction of the high speed railway is 200 million baht/km (total 40 billion baht for construction and another 10-20 billion baht for high speed rolling stock).

The extension of the high speed train to the north and south are under consideration. The section from Denchai to Chiang Mai has so many mountains to pass it needs TBM drilling to construct very long tunnels. The demand for the southern route seems to have stabilized so it may not be worthy to construct.

Summaries on SRT ticket hike

– translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager Daily*, June 1, 2005

	Old	New
The first 10 km for 3rd class	2.00 baht	4.50 baht
The rate for each km after 10 km	Old rates	Old rate x (1.05 -1.07)
The 3rd class rate for each km (11-100 km)	Old rates	0.21 baht/km
The 2nd class rate for each km (11-100 km)	Old rates	0.48 baht/km
The 1st class rate for each km (11-100 km)	Old rates	0.93 baht/km

This plan is to be submitted to MOTC by July, 2005.

SRT suffers from fuel hikes since 25-30% of operating costs come from fuel expenditures raising the operating cost by 400 million baht/year.

The rate of 2 baht for the first 10 km has been used since 1985 and it deserves to be raised. Even though the new rates can cover only 50-60% of the fuel prices SRT has raised the railway cargo rates by 6%–effective in the next week.

Goals set by MOF for SRT rehab

– translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Transport Journal*, May 16-22, 2005

SRT has failed to keep up with passenger demand for available and comfortable seats, so they get fewer passengers. SRT also failed to haul cargo in a speedy manner and at massive volumes to keep up with market demand, so they cannot reap the profits from lucrative cargo transportation.

SRT also failed to improve the quality of the human resources and mishandles the organizational management so they cannot increase output from the existing workers.

SRT has 75.087 billion baht assets and 56.182 billion baht liability and 44 billion baht in debts so stringent measures from MOF have to be applied.

After splitting SRT into three companies (SRT Passenger Service, SRT Cargo Service, and SRT Asset Management), MOF has set goals for three SRT subsidiaries as follows to obtain government loans:

- 1) SRT Cargo must increase the container transport from 525,600 units in 2004 to more than 800,000 units in 2009.
- 2) SRT Passenger must increase annual passengers from 15 million passengers in 2004 to more than 20 million passengers in 2009.
- 3) SRT Asset Management must hire the private sector to help them boost revenue at least doubling revenue from leasing from the current 2004 level. This means a rent hike for Central Pattana, Central Market Organization, Chatuchak Weekend Market, and the entertainment venues along Ratchada Road and RCA.

These measures also force SRT to speed up Makkasan CAT and Makkasan Center, Energy Complex at Chatuchak, Phaholyothin Center and Phaholyothin CAT, Mae Nam Station development after removing fuel reserve tanks.

The consequence of this rush are irregularities on the Suvarnabhumi Airport Link which only had 15 days for a feasibility study and blueprints in three months after starting even though the committee has not finished inspecting the blueprints yet. This can become a potential Hopewell 2.

List of complaints on Lad Krabang ICD

– translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Transport Journal*, May 16-22, 2005

Even after SRT have been correcting the problems listed in the complaints from TIFFA ICD Co. Ltd. (the company that runs Lad Krabang ICD for SRT), some are still waiting for a resolution such as:

- 1) Overtime payment for custom officers. It is a real big burden for enterprises that have to pay overtime due to custom officers after 5:30pm and they need to pay three times for each officer who has three overtime shifts from 5:30pm to 8:30am next day. If there is a way to reduce or even eliminate this overtime payment, they would welcome the measure.
- 2) SRT has to speed up the nationwide double tracking and track rehab projects along with the installation of modern signals and telecom networks to facilitate both cargo and passenger traffic which now has reached conflict levels since passenger and cargo lines are competing for the schedule suited to their needs (e.g. both want to get the morning schedule, but the single track would not allow them to get what they want).

New sets of standard locos for cargo trains as well as new sets of BCF (30 BCFs for each set) along with container boxes for rent since SRT can not supply container boxes which compels railway cargo customers to buy their own container boxes—a burden to the companies.

SRT balance sheet

– translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Transportation Journal*, May 16-22, 2005

SRT has 75.087 billion baht assets and 56.182 billion baht liabilities with 18.905 billion baht in capital. 44 billion baht in debts with 2 billion baht pensions and employs 18,000 workers.

Officials stunned: SRT land returns only 2% of potential revenue

– translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager Daily*, May 10, 2005

Minister Somkid and Minister Suriya are inspecting SRT and asking MOF and SRT to set up a joint committee to handle the SRT land development in one month which has the main purpose to make a joint venture with the private sector to boost more revenue from land development to pay off debts, accumulate interest and money for pension funds.

SRT governor said the targets are at Makkasan Center, Phaholyothin Railway Yard, Mae Nam Station and the Agriculture Market Organization. These are to boost the revenue to 10-20 billion baht a year.

The MOF Minister said that SRT must focus on debt reduction, financial empowerment, better business strategy, and higher service efficiency—especially national logistics which has high profit potential (up to 40% profit).

So far, SRT failed to realize the potential due to 44 billion baht debt, 2 billion baht annual interest payment, and 2 billion baht annual pension payments. Therefore, the SRT Governor is asking for help from the Treasury Department, Department of Comptroller General, and State Enterprise Policy Committee to find a plan to handle debt, accumulate interest, and pension funds as well as SRT land development.

MOF said pension funds and accumulated interest from SRT debts are not a big deal and the government will ensure that all retired SRT officers and workers would get pension payments in full and creditors would get steady interest payment on time.

However, SRT must come up with a working plan to boost revenue at full efficiency to pay off debts and other expenses instead of asking for an annual bailout from the government budget.

MOF would give 30 days to finish the plan for SRT revenue from SRT assets and debt payments to be submitted to MOF and MOTC. MOF feel stunned that the 60 billion baht potential of SRT assets has yielded only 2 billion baht annual revenue from rent—less than 2% of potential—too ridiculously low revenue for MOF to bail out SRT.

MOTC also feel that SRT failed to fulfill the obligation to handle national transport. For example,

1) Sugar mills in Khon Kaen are asking SRT to transport 1 million tons of sugar to Laem Chabang but SRT can carry only 120,000 tons of sugar to Laem Chabang.

2) The tapioca mills in Isan are asking SRT to transport 600,000 tons of tapioca flour to Bangkok and Laem Chabang, but SRT could only carry 80,000 tons of tapioca flour.

SRT governor said SRT and MOF have come up with the plan for SRT asset management,

1) Asking Treasury Department to handle SRT potential assets

2) Making a joint venture with SRT and the private sector

3) SRT subsidiary to handle SRT assets

The potential SRT land for 10-20 billion baht annual revenue are:

1) 500 rai of [Makkasan](#)

[Center](#)

2) Market Organization for Farmers at Kamphaengphet 2 Road (lease expires in October 2005)

3) Mae Nam Station

4) Phaholyothin Railway yard

The Treasury Department and SRT are also waiting for the expiration of leases on the following areas:

1) Central Lad Phrao (expires in December 2008)

2) Chatuchak Weekend Market (expires in 2012)

3) Hotel and Massage Parlors along Ratchadaphisek Ring road

4) Land in major stations (e.g. Bangsue, Donmuang, Laksi, Ayutthaya, Lopburi, Sila At, Denchai, Chiang Mai, Nakhon Ratchasima, Ubon, Udon, Khon Kaen, Yala, Sugei Golok, Nakhon Sri Thammarat, Chachoengsao, etc.)

There is 233,862 rai of SRT land. 186,639 rai for route areas which are not to be sold at any price. 3107 rai is for SRT worker housing and SRT apartments. Makkasan Center and Phaholyothin Railway have 1815 rai of potential land.

There is also 36,793 rai of SRT land not developed yet, with 2160 rai of undeveloped land in Bangkok. The net loss of SRT in 2004 was 6.569 billion baht.

MOF bailing SRT out of the 44

billion baht debts – translated and summarized

by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Thairath*, *Dailynews*, *Matichon*,

May 10, 2005

Minister Somkid told the SRT Board after the visiting SRT that SRT has three main tasks to handle SRT assets and SRT debts.

1) Increasing financial potential to pay off debts

2) Introducing new business strategies and service management

3) Rehabilitating by reorganizing SRT

MOF would approve the budget and underwrite the loan for SRT to increase the logistic potential if SRT has followed all the three recommendations.

Currently, there is 44 billion baht of SRT debt with 2 billion baht for annual interest payment, 2 billion baht for pension funds for 12,000-13,000 retired SRT officers.

Therefore, MOF is asking for a new plan to cut debt while boosting the efficiency so that SRT would cut the annual interest payment to 1 billion baht a year or less.

MOF has set up a committee headed by the Director of Comptroller General Department and Director of Treasury Department to handle SRT debt and revenue boosting by increasing potential from SRT assets of 100 billion baht. So far, SRT could manage to reap the revenue of 2 billion baht from potential SRT assets of 60-70 billion baht which is too little to pay off the debt and handle pension funds.

Furthermore, poor management of SRT assets have resulted in the ridiculous rates on the high potential assets such as the annual rate on SRT land at Central Ladphrao of 2.75 million baht/rai (6.875 million baht/acre in 1 year).

MOF is asking SRT and Turnaround Co. Ltd. to make a joint study on SRT asset management of which there are three choices such as

1. Setting up an asset management company or asset funds.
2. Setting up SRT subsidiaries to handle asset management.
3. Hiring the profession to handle asset management or allowing private sector to handle SRT asset management.

Otherwise, SRT must transfer SRT assets to the Treasury Department and Treasury Department would set up the Treasury Asset management to handle SRT assets.

The new plan must be delivered to MOF 30 days after the MOF visits to SRT Board.

The Financial Statement of SRT in 2004 said that:

SRT loss: 5.82198 billion baht-> most due to indirect expenses such as 1.95932 billion baht on the annual interest payment, 2.29487 billion baht pension funds.

SRT debts: 44 billion baht with the burden from the annual pension expense of 2 billion baht

The future accumulated SRT pension expenses: 34.8 billion baht

The SRT land: 233,862 rai with the market price of 200 billion baht (60-70 billion baht of SRT land has commercial viability)

The revenue from SRT land: 2.4 billion baht a year (need to double this revenue immediately)

Even Minister Suriya said SRT cannot handle adequate amount of the cargo traffic to Laem Chabang Port which are a lucrative revenue making service subject to market prices. For example, sugar mills in Khon Kaen are asking SRT to handle transportation of 1 million tons of sugar to Laem Chabang, but SRT can carry only 120,000 tons of sugar from Khon Kaen to Laem Chabang.

Commentary by Wisarut: This could explain why the Khon Kaen Chamber of Commerce is desperate for Khon Kaen ICD, the double tracking from Kaeng Khoi to Bua Yai all the way up to Khon Kaen via the Lum Narai shortcut. As well as track rehab to allow 20 ton axle load and 120 kph max speed and signal modernization.

This could also explain the desperation of SRT to get a new class of powerful diesel locos to handle more cargo. Hitachi locos have the turbo charger problems which require horse power reduction from 2900 HP (MAN engines) to 2500 HP (Cummins Engine of GEA) while Traction Motors have frequent breakdowns due to heavy works requiring carbon brush replacement even before the due dates.

On other hand, the easygoing GEA locos are too few to fulfill both passenger services and cargo services so the good old GEK are still working despite being in service for 40 years. The standard ALSTHOM locos also have frequent breakdowns of traction motors and overheating due to overwork.

Even the KTM Class 24 leased from KTMB have experienced the same engine breakdown from overheating problems as the standard ALSTHOM locos due to the overloading with daily cargo between Bangsue and Padang Besar. Leasing the GE Blue Tigers from KTMB is out of question since the track from Padang Besar to Ipoh has not been rehabilitated to handle the heavy Blue Tiger locos.

Probably, SRT should consider leasing or purchasing at least 40 YDM4 locos from India Railway as the way to cope with loco shortages.

On the forum: [SRT](#)

[plan for logistic support – 160 billion baht in 8 years](#)

– Than Setthakij, March 6-9, 2005

SUBURBAN

[RAILWAY: SRT against proposal for electric train](#) –

The Nation, March 31, 2005

The State Railway of Thailand's goal of undertaking a suburban rail network could be side-tracked if the government agrees to a proposal to set up a new agency to handle the project...

The source said the SRT was opposed to the proposal. It has tried to lobby the office to stick using to diesel cars, which will require a comparatively lower investment...

Phase 2 double tracking with a price tag of 56 billion baht – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi

from *Matichon Daily*, March 9, 2005 and *Manager Daily*, March 9, 2005

SRT Governor said SRT is going to support national logistics by coming up with the following double track scheme after fierce negotiation between SRT regional directors.

1) Lad Krabang ICD – Chachoengsao – Sri Racha – Laem Chabang (78.86 km + 33.03 km = 111.89 km) with a price tag of 5.3 billion baht

After finishing the the first double track two years after starting the construction, SRT will start the double track of the following lines to complete the phase 2 double tracking.

2) Lopburi – Nakhon Sawan (112.97 km)

3) Chachoengsao – Klong 19 – Kaeng Khoi (107.45 km)

4) Prachuab Khirikhan – Surat Thani (332.69 km)

5) Kaeng Khoi – Pakchong – Nakhon Ratchasima (138.55 km)

Total (2-5): 691.66 km

Total (1-5 -> ICD – Chachongsao not included due to triple track): 770.52 km

The price tag for (2)-(6): 56.775 billion baht (75 million baht/km – total 757 km)

The axle load: 20 tons on meter gauge

This will effectively cut the cargo transportation from Nakhon Ratchasima to Bangkok to 2 1/2 hours from more than 3-4 hours. This also speed up the cargo transportation especially between Prachuab Khirikhan-Surat Thani during the night cargo transportation between Bangsue and Padang Besar.

SRT making more profit from cargo transport – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Thairath*, February 24, 2005

SRT Governor said after concentrating on cargo transport and passenger transports while cutting expenses, it has made a big profit–330.9 million baht profit before discounting depreciation, tax and interest. The revenue from the transportation between Laem Chabang and Ladkrabang ICD increased by 15% and the estimated revenue from cargo transport is 2.4 billion baht–up by 373 million baht–while the revenue from passenger service will be 4.437 billion baht–up by 272 million baht. Better fuel management also cuts down fuel expense by 10 million baht a month without reducing cargo and passenger services. The control on spare part procurement also cuts down expense by 11%.

However, SRT needs further improvement so that 60% of profit come from cargo and container transportation (780 million baht) from the current level of 28.50%.

SRT Financial Advisers say there is 30,000 rai of SRT land to be transferred to the Treasury Dept with a price tag of 60 billion baht and the loss of 40 billion baht which is going to be transferred to the Ministry of Finance.

However, SRT has reserved Makkasan and Phaholyothin for their own revenue making.

On the forum: [Double tracking project cut from 4000 km to 800 km](#)
– February 18, 2005

[Bid to revive coastal rail route](#) – *Bangkok Post*,
February 18, 2005

A senate panel will ask the new government to revive a 163-km Surat Thani-Phangnga rail route linking the Gulf coast to the Andaman coast...

Pinya Chuayplod, chairman of the senate panel, said the route was first conceived in 1938. A royal decree was subsequently issued for land expropriation to allow construction of the route stretching from Surat Thani's Phun Phin district to Ban Tha Nun in tambon Khok Loy of Phangnga's Takua Thung district opposite Phuket.

However, only 31km of the route was completed before construction was forced to a halt by budget limitations...

SRT threatens to seize Chatuchak Weekend Market
– translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from
Than Setthakij, February 13-16, 2005 and *Dailynews*, February 15, 2005

BMA Treasury told the press that the readjustment of leasing terms for Chatuchak Weekend Market from 32 baht/sq meter to 394-447 baht/sq meter which have been applied since 2001 is too much for BMA to digest since BMA has collected the leases of Chatuchak Weekend Market at the legal rate of about 100 baht/sq. meter .

The acceptable rates after 2012 for BMA should be 50-300 baht/sq-meter.

Furthermore, BMA also owes 154.4 million baht unpaid debt for the leasing of SRT land at Chatuchak Weekend Market despite the rate readjustment since 2001. The leasing of SRT land at Chatuchak Weekend Market is going to be expire in 2012 with the expected unpaid debts of 463.0 million baht and BMA is going to make another 30-year lease.

If BMA still refuses to pay the unpaid debts, SRT has to seize the control of Chatuchak Weekend Market and SRT has its own plan to upgrade Chatuchak Weekend Market to become an air-conditioned weekend market for Phaholyothin Transportation Center while they will ask those who lease the space within Chatuchak Weekend Market to pay the lease directly into SRT's coffers instead of paying via BMA.

Train link to Vientiane – January 29, 2005

Interesting [thread on the forum](#) about where the rail link from Thailand to Laos ends in the middle of the road as it enters Laos.



(Photo: Nils)

Sunflower train
– January 13, 2005

Regarding the [sunflower train thread](#), Nils made the trip last month and here are two of his photos.

Above: First stop in the sunflower fields. The farmers make a business of it, entry is 5 baht.

Below: 383-395 General Electric No. 4559 and the train on the viaduct. If you sit in the train, it really sort of feels like floating on the water.



(Photo: Nils)

Wisarat adds some links to Thai-language articles:

[Nikorn](#)
[telling a lie to the budget auditing bureau about corruption in BMTA – BMTA bosses applying mafia pressure to kick those who expose the corruption within BMTA](#) – *Siam Thurakij*, January 26-28, 2005

This libelous article seems to be deleted already...

[Anti-money](#)
[laundering going to seize assets of those who involved with the double tracking project scandal](#) – *Manager Daily*, January 27, 2005

[Premier](#)
[Thaksin telling the press that no TRT members were involved in the double tracking scandal as the Democrats and Mahachon claim](#)
– *Manager Daily*, January 27, 2005

[Railway](#)
[double tracking scandal of Democrats in 1993 has come back to haunt them](#) – *Manager Daily*, January 27, 2005

Also: More cynical view about exposing the double tracking scandals for political gain (from Thai Railfan) is [here](#).

Double tracking from Chachongsao to

Laem Chabang – translated and summarized by Wisarut

Bholsithi from *Dailynews*, December 24, 2004

SRT is going to ask for the approval of double tracking from Chachongsao to Laem Chabang since there is a surging demand for cargo transportation which is going to saturate the capacity of the railway track from Chachongsao to Laem Chabang very soon – jamming the traffic of the northern cargo train to Laem Chabang and Laem Chabang Port that is undergoing the 2nd phase expansion.

The Plan for Chachongsao – Sri Racha – Laem Chabang Double tracking can be described as follows:

Laem Chabang Double tracking project

Price Tag: 5.235 billion baht

Specifications: 20 ton axle load with maximum speed of 120 kph

Distance: 78 km (Chachongsao – Sri Racha – Laem Chabang)

Bidding form making + Blueprint: 0.089 billion baht

Control of the Construction Project: 0.160 billion baht

Construction + Signal Installation + Telecommunication system: 4.986 billion baht

Targets:

1) 30 minutes faster than the current schedule defined for the route to Laem Chabang

2) Facilitate the cargo transportation at Laem Chabang for 3.9 million units of containers (2006 target)

3) Improve the cargo capacity at ICD to handle more than 1 million containers a year

4) Enable SRT to run the daily passenger service to Pattaya and beyond – not just the weekday

5) Maximize the utility of Cargo route (Klong 19 – Kaeng Khoi).

6) Support the industrial expansion at Map Ta Phut

The benefits: 12.40% Economic benefit, 4.61% Financial benefit

The Progressive: Environmental Assessment form Chachongsao – Laem Chabang done in November 2004.

Schedule Plan:

April 2005: Bidding

July 2005: Construction started

December 2005: Signal and telecom installation

October 2007: Open the double track (with incomplete signal installation)

Jan 2008: Signal + telecom installation done (to replace the radio communication)

Expenditure Plan:

2005: 1 billion baht

Bidding + Blueprint – 0.089 billion baht

Control of the Contract – 0.121 billion baht

Construction and Signal + Telecom Installation – 0.890 billion baht

2006: 2.95 billion baht

Control of the Contract – 0.070 billion baht

Construction and Signal + Telecom Installation – 2.880 billion baht

2007: 1.247 billion baht

Control of the Contract – 0.064 billion baht

Construction and Signal + Telecom Installation – 1.183 billion baht

2008: 0.038 billion baht

Control of the Contract – 0.005 billion baht

Construction and Signal + Telecom Installation – 0.033 billion baht

What SRT workers are saying

– December 17, 2004

The State Railway of Thailand (SRT) workers are a proud group working for an antiquated state agency considered in great need of reform. Their union is packed with non-railway workers and used as a political football.

Purchasing scandals are continuous. However, respectful of their long heritage of service and resentful they were not given the chance to run the Skytrain, SRT workers ride the rails from one corner of the country to the other, fixing decades-old railcars with ingenious homegrown technology.

With the upcoming removal of the historic heart of SRT at [Makkasan](#)

for the [Airport Link](#), Wisarut listened

in to scuttlebutt from the rank-and-file SRT workers and files the following report on the talk going around:

Overdue railway cars

SRT has erected a block on the railway track beyond Sugei Golok Station which prevents any railway transportation across Golok River due to the worsening situation as well as the resentment against KTMB by SRT workers. KTMB has borrowed cargo carriages from SRT and they keep them along the eastern coast from Tumpat to Singapore and they have used and abused them and kept them past the return date.

When KTMB did return the cargo carriages, they just simply dump them at Padang Besar, and SRT workers have to haul them back to Makkasan for major repair and maintenance without being paid anything for late return. Even worse, some of them are so damaged that they are beyond repair. So decommissioned cargo carriages are dumped into the sea around Pattani and Narathiwat to make artificial coral reefs.

When SRT workers are just few days late in returning flat wagons for container

transportation, KTMB workers act like a 'bunch of crybabies with mustaches' and then they impose a steep fine on SRT.

Anti-dumping

Another strain is about the anti dumping. Malaysia imposed anti-dumping on Thai steel and they allow only Thai Steel products without trademarks to go across the border by train or truck. Once the Thai steel is in Malaysia, they just simply stamp them with Malaysian barcodes and trademarks.

E & O Train

The following are the signs of the strained relationship between Thailand and Singapore

DBS Bank from Singapore is the actual owner of the luxurious E & O Train. They just pay 30,000 baht for using Thai Railway networks to Chaingmai and Kanchanaburi while they reap the handsome profit of 60,000 baht/passenger and they can pay off the debt including the interest for the project in only three years, thanks to strong demand.

Therefore, DBS Bank (the true owner of E & O) should pay for the fuel as well as the extra bonus to SRT railwaymen.

Furthermore, DBS Bank wants to start the Singapore-Kunming cargo train along with the E & O extension to Kunming and they found that it would cut lots time if the route goes up north instead of going east to use Vietnam Railway, Cambodian Railway, and Eastern Railway. However, they will ask Thailand to borrow from World Bank/ADB first and even the creditors from the mainland China and then DBS will finance the debts (and reap the profit from interests and fee) for the Thai government.

However, the Thai government said It is not a very fair deal even though the route from Denchai to Chaingrai is a part of this project since the government has to borrow the money, but other countries will reap the benefits.

Revival of Songkal-Hat Yai rail link

Thus Premier Thaksin has come up with the revival of Songkal-Hat Yai and the cargo line to Satul after Pak Bara Deep Sea port becomes a reality.

This will include a pipeline which angers Singapore to such an extent that DBS Bank refuses to help Thailand to finance Denchai-Chiang Rai projects unless Singapore reaps the benefits of the project instead of Thailand.

SRT is making money – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager Daily*, December 5, 2004

SRT is planning to purchase 17 locos (90 million baht/loco) from China with a price tag of 1.53 billion baht to replace the decommissioned ones and to handle the ICD-Laem Chabang Route. In 2004, SRT managed to make a 200 million baht profit.

After getting cabinet approval, SRT is going to purchase 17 new locomotives from China to replace the old and decommissioned ones and to handle the ICD – Laem Chabang route.

The first seven Chinese loco will come to Thailand in 2005 while the other 10 will follow in 2006. The Port Authority also said they will pay SRT for two new sets of cargo trains (30 bogeys/set) to serve the Laem Chabang route.

So far, SRT had made 500 million baht profit, but it needs to pay salary hike of 300 million baht to SRT workers. The cost cutting measures and the new revenue sources along with the utility maximization on railway services are the main contributors to SRT profit.

BANG

[SUE LINK: 'Best option is a private operator'](#) –

The Nation, November 24, 2004

...The partially elevated 60-kilometre rail route would cost about Bt38.3 billion to build. The private sector would foot Bt10.4 billion of the cost, while the government would cough up Bt27.9 billion. The 18-kilometre road, with seven exits, would cost Bt24.15 billion, which would be paid for with Bt9.2 billion in loans, Bt8.7 billion in land acquisition subsidies, Bt4.86 billion from private investors, and Bt1.4 billion in the form of investment subsidies. The route would pass through Talingchan, Bang Bamru and Bang Son to Bang Sue...

SRT

[land assets may be developed](#) – Bangkok

Post, November 15, 2004

...Annual losses for the SRT stand at about five billion baht, with accumulated losses as of the end of June totaling 18 billion. The SRT has total assets of 75 billion baht and liabilities of 45 billion.

...The vast majority of the land represents core assets used to support the SRT's operations, such as train stations, depots as well as the 40-metre wide trackbed that lies under the agency's rail network across the country.

But the agency also holds some 36,000 rai of non-core property, including several prime spots such as the current site of the Central Lat Phrao shopping complex.

...For the Bangkok Mass Transit Authority, authorities want the bus service to restructure its routes to act as a feeder system linked with the skytrain and subway systems.

Dr Areepong said BMTA routes would become shorter, but would have buses run with greater frequency to help accommodate traffic.

Under the agency's restructuring plan, its bus fleet would be cut to 4,000 from 7,000 to help cut costs.

Railway

extensions fast-tracked – *The Nation*,

October 22, 2003

...On September 28, the Cabinet approved part of the development, the 23-kilometre elevated Bang Sue-Bang Yai route, which is scheduled for completion in August 2008.

The remaining 71 kilometres are divided among three routes. The blue line covers 27 km from Hua Lamphong to Bang Khae, and Bang Sue to Tha Phra, while the 24-km orange line will run from Bang Kapi to Bang Bamru and the 20-km purple line will stretch from Bang Sue to Rat Burana....

Electrified rail from Chiang Mai to Mae Hongson

via Mae Sariang – translated and summarized

by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager Daily*, October 17, 2004

Mae Hongson Tourist Association is appealing to Deputy PM Wisanu about the the new railway track from Chiang Mai to Mae Hongson after the Thai Inter flight schedule from Chiang Mai to Mae Hongson has become irregular, creating lots of trouble with arrangements for tourism in Mae Hongson. The main revenue for Mae Hongson is tourism and border trade—11 billion baht in 2003.

They even ask for a new tunnel for the railway line in addition to the permanent border checkpoint at Ban Huay Phuen (Huay Pha Commune, Muang District of Mae Hongson) which has been delayed for too long. So far, only the rehabilitation of Highway 108 and Highway 1095 have been undertaken. It depends upon the mood of the government as to whether they will grant the budget with the commitment to complete the project.

Note: Comment on this project is [here](#).

Thianthong family and SRT concessions

– September 28, 2004

Wisarut reports on more 'lucky' families: *The nationwide concession for railway tickets won by the Thianthong family has raised [very angry voices against TRT](#). The company that got the concession for the advertising on SRT tickets is owned by children of Saoh Thianthong (the main political broker in Thai Rak Thai). That has upset lots of people since they think that only the children of the Prime Minister as well as the children of prominent politicians in the government can get such sweet deals while the rest will get nothing at all. It is also rumored that the children of Sanoh Thianthong will get another deal—advertising on the railway bogies...*

Consultants competing for high speed train project

– translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager Daily*, September 28, 2004

There are two consultants competing for the high speed train with the payment to consultants of 38 million baht. SRT will hire the consultant by the end of October 2004 and then they will take 4 months to study the high speed railway before submitting the plan to the government. Nakhon Ratchasima provincial hall has pushed this project so hard that they have come up with two committees to handle the feasibility. They even came up with the plan to handle the operation once the high speed train has become a reality.

This is a 100 billion baht high speed train project to solve the bottleneck of Mittraphab Highway (highway that links Isan with the rest of the country) which causes too many fatal and tragic accidents during festival times.

So far, the two consultants competing for this project are:

1. AEC (the consortium of Asia Engineering Consultant Co. Ltd., Thai Engineering Consultant Co. Ltd., Pacific Consultant International Co. Ltd., Pacific Consultant International (Thailand) Co.Ltd.)
2. SEA TEC (the consortium of Southeast Asia Technology Co. Ltd., Epsilon Co.Ltd., AMP Consultant Co.Ltd., and Scott Wilson Patrick (Thailand) Co.Ltd.)

SRT Board is asking both companies to show their vision as well as the details on the feasibility studies so as to mark the score on technical issues. After that, SRT Board will send and invite bids. The winner who bids at the price lower than 38 million will get the contract signed immediately. However, if the quoted price of the winner is still too high, SRT will negotiate with the company to cut the budget.

The feasibility studies will consist of five main objectives:

1. Route
2. Related engineering affairs
3. Environmental impact assessment on each route
4. Feasibility of the investment and suitable ticket prices
5. Economic and social benefit assessment and other suggestion on the way to start and finish the project.

The winning company will have to finish all this job in four months before submitting the final plan to SRT and then SRT will submit the plan to the government so as to get cabinet approval.

If the government approves the project, SRT will ask for the budget the studies on the construction and the capitalization plan – either

joint venture or private investment.

Nakhon Ratchasima has set up two committees to handle this High Speed Train project.

First is the committee for supporting the feasibility studies – such as the choices for routes, the station at Pakchong District and the new Nakhon Ratchasima Station. The Provincial Hall also tries to get the ideas from the public and private section in all 19 Isan provinces after SRT could get the consultant to handle this project.

The 1st committee is also planning the urban expansion of Nakhon Ratchasima with support from JICA (JICA: Japan International Cooperation Agency) along with the preparation of becoming the center of Logistic Organic Agriculture Hub, the double tracking of the Railway in Nakhon Ratchasima, the New ICD (ICD: Inland Container Depot) as the way to boost Nakhon Ratchasima into a Logistics Center and meet the cabinet resolution of February 22, 2004.

The second committee is handling the preparation of economic growth and industrial investment so as to boost foreign investment in Nakhon Ratchasima after the high speed train to Nakhon Ratchasima has become a reality. It will cover the labor, the basic structure, environment, and quality of life for the local people.

Nakhon Ratchasima has set the first choice for the route:

Makkasan – Banna (New City) – Pakchong (Phoom Muang Isan) – Nakhon Ratchasima with total distance of 223 km and the travel time of 56 minutes. This will fit into the government strategy as well as helping Thai-foreign travelers, businessmen, bureaucrats, and the common man in all 19 provinces within Isan region.

Commentary by Wisarut: Debates on the merits of this HST project from Makkasan to Nakhon Ratchasima can be seen at the following websites ([here](#) and [here](#)).

Many Thai railfans feel very skeptical of this project as well as opposite the plan unless Nakhon Ratchasima Provincial Hall comes up with a better plan for the route which has to pass Khao Yai National Park.

Special DMU Commuter train Bangkok-Ayudhaya

– translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Matichon*, September 11, 2004

Ayudhaya City Hall is asking SRT to introduce a special DMU commuter service from Bangkok to Ayudhaya at the price of 41 baht/trip to cut down the traffic between Bangkok and Ayudhaya and promote energy savings. The DMU used for this route is the air-conditioned sprinter DMU. There would be 4 daily trips between Bangkok and Ayudhaya for this special DMU–2 inbound (1 morning and 1 evening) and 2 outbounds (1 morning and 1 evening) with total distance of 71 km and 65 minutes from one terminal to another.

There will be seven stations along the routes: Bangkok, Bangsue, Bangkok, Laksi, Donmuang, Rangsit, Bang Pa In, and Ayudhaya. New park and ride at Ayudhaya will be able to handle 300 cars as a way to attract those who live in Singburi and Ang Thong to use this service instead of driving all the way to Bangkok.

Commentary by Wisarut: Due to the DMU shortage, SRT has been using the GEK loco and JR West DMU bogies (without engines) for commuter services (up to Lopburi in the north and to Chachoingsao to the East). I hope that there will be serviceable DMUs since they have been heavily used (such as the 1000-km route from Bangkok to Yala to please those who live in Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat—at the expense of infrequent maintenance and broken down engines).

Loco overhaul/SRT park and rides

– translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager Daily*, August 19, 2004

SRT said they will modify existing locos (especially the familiar Alstom locos—the loco that Thai railwaymen love to drive) to enable the locos to use NGV instead of diesel since diesel costs SRT 14.59 baht/litre while NGV costs SRT only 6-7 baht/litre ([Manager Daily: August 19, 2004](#)).

SRT is going to set up three park and rides for the Subway and Skytrain which is close to SRT land:

- 1) Hua Lamphong (set up a permanent P & R building in addition to the existing parking lot)
- 2) Phayathai
- 3) Kamphaeng Phet (opposite to Or Tor Kor Market)

Khorat high-speed train opinions –

August 11, 2004

Wisarut reports on goings on in Thai-language forums: *When Khorat People ask for a High Speed Rail, those people from Chiangmai, Hatyai and Eastern Seaboard yell back to Khorat people since they consider themselves much better than those bumpkins who have political connections in Khorat.*

Earlier: Khorat people urging Thaksin to start the high speed rail system – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from [Manager](#).

August 5, 2004

The Nakhon Ratchasima governor said they are in the process of hiring the consultant to handle the feasibility study for the project. Khorat

Provincial Hall is urging Premier Thaksin (who is going to visit Khorat) to push this project hard for the benefit of Isan people. Furthermore, Khorat Provincial Hall is lobbying to become the SEAGAMES host for Thailand—competing with Hatyai-Songkla—after the successful Chaingmai Games in 1995 has set the precedent for other major provinces to compete tooth and nail to become a host.

Spare part shortage forcing SRT to negotiate with Railway Authority of Malaysia (KTMB) about locomotive leasing – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager Daily & Matichon Daily*, July 26, 2004

SRT is in trouble because of a shortage of spare parts due to the restriction from Minister Suriya after the inspection at Makkasan. Minister Suriya complained that Makkasan maintenance center has stocked too many spare parts creating inventory cost, so the SRT Board refuses to approve any more spare part procurement. Only the absolutely necessary cases will be rare exceptions. There are more than 10 locos waiting for new spare parts to keep them serviceable at Makkasan. Cargo transportation is a money making service which SRT has to boost up as much as possible. Therefore, the SRT Board has to come up with special procurement. for spare parts to keep the locos running to make more revenue. Furthermore, SRT is going to rent locos from KTMB (Railway Authority of Malaysia) as a temporary solution. Regular procurement. will take about eight months to be completed. However, the procurement. of spare parts has caused lots of trouble since SRT has to stock too many spare parts. After the restrictions on spare part procurement, many locos lie idle due to the lack of spare parts to keep them serviceable. Presently, the procurement. of spare parts has to pass direct inspection from the SRT Governor since those who run Makkasan Maintenance Depot have purchased and stocked many poor quality spare parts which caused the Ministry's complaints. This direct inspection will help SRT to cut procurement. costs by 20% while getting much higher quality spare parts to keep the good old GEK, the familiar ALSTOM, the powerful Hitachi, and the comfortable GEA locos running well since many SRT railwaymen complained that now many locos have been overworked and desperate for spare parts to keep them running.

Laem Chabang/Ladkrabang rail scheme – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Matichon Daily*, July 26, 2004

The Port Authority is asking SRT to set up a joint venture company to run the direct cargo service from Ladkrabang ICD to Laem Chabang while Port Authority is going to lend SRT 1.2 billion baht to purchase new locos and new cargo bogeys so as to enable SRT to run cargo service between Laem Chabang and Ladkrabang ICD with 30 bogeys at each time, 4-6 times a day, 7 days a week. The joint venture also help both enterprises to cut down red tape and enables both to speed up the logistic procedures.

Government approves funds for Laem Chabang double tracking – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager Daily*, July 24, 2004
The government has approved 10 billion baht to restructure agricultural sector so as to compete with Australia and other countries after the FTA treaty becomes effective. The starting funds for restructuring agriculture are 1 billion baht.

Furthermore, the government has approved funds (5 billion baht) for Laem Chabang Double Tracking (Chachoengsao – Sri Racha – Laem Chabang) to cut down road damage by trucks and save fuel bills.

SRT showing 500 million baht profit in 2004 balance sheet – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager Daily*, July 23, 2004
SRT director said SRT has received the Year 2005 budget allocation of 8.026772 billion baht which can be separated into 2 sections
1) Land Transportation – 7.617726 billion baht
1.1) Salary – 5.470036 billion baht
1.2) Double Tracking – 2.006940 billion baht
1.3) Suvannabhumi Airport Link – 0.140750 billion baht
2) Debt Payments – 0.409046 billion baht
2.1) Diesel electric Loco Loan – 0.013467 billion baht
2.2) Sri Racha – Laem Chabang, Sri Racha – Sattahip Loan – 0.009199 billion baht
2.3) Kaengkhoi – Klong Sip Kao Loan – 0.182734 billion baht
2.4) Double Tracking Loan – 0.203646 billion baht
For the year of 2004 (May 31, 2004), SRT has 5.935 billion baht revenue and 5.362 billion baht expense. Before paying interest and pension (EBITDA) 0.573 billion baht net profit. This marginal profit is due to the cutting of expenses and revenue boosting especially from cargo service. The expected revenue from cargo service is 1.7 billion baht – up from 1.5 billion baht in 2003 by 15%. The passenger revenue is about 3.1 billion baht – not up that much since they cannot raise ticket prices and fees. So, more cargo trips and more cargos for each trip boosts revenue. Even the cargo service adds 23 million baht revenue for each month in 2004 – compared with a 21 million baht revenue hike in 2003. However, fuel bill hikes have also caused lots of trouble since each cargo trip

need 360 liters of diesel fuel (5,000 baht/trip if diesel is at 14 baht/liter). Now, the cabinet has approved the plan to buy 7 diesel locos (700 million baht) and 112 passenger bogies from Indonesia (now Indonesia can produce both locos and passenger bogies) by bartering with rice. The 20 renovated aircon passenger bogies from JR West also boosts revenue through the new aircon fees.

SRT is going to revise leasing contracts to add more revenue from leasing along Ratchadaphisek Road. SRT is also going to hire the private sector to collect the parking fees at Chatuchak Park with a contract to pay minimum revenue sharing. If the parking revenue is lower than the minimum level, the company has to pay a fine to cover the missing revenue. The private parking collectors will minimize mafia harassment at the parking lot.

Commentary by Wisarut: SRT officers complained that the CK5 Diesel Hydraulic shunter as well as TPI cement cargo trains imported from Meishan Loco factory (mainland China) have very shoddy quality compared to European versions. They usually turnover or break down during transportation. Therefore, the proposed plan to import 30 Diesel-Electric Locos (CKD7F) from China (the same type used in Vietnam) is not a good deal at all. Even the proposed NGV locos import from Russia may not be suitable for Thai weather.

Thus the 7 diesel electric locos and 112 aircon passenger cars from Indonesia are a good deal.

Railroad construction in Laos – route to China and Vietnam under serious consideration – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from [*Manager Online*](#) – June 20, 2004

The Lao government is finding the contractor to handle the historical railway line from the Friendship Bridge to Ban Dong Phossee (AKA Nongkhai – Tha Nalaeng in Thai with a total distance of 3.5 km) by using 200 million baht friendship aid and loans from Thai EXIM Bank (139 million baht for a cheap loan with a 30-year payment period and about 60 million baht in aid).

The Korean Consultant (MRTC) is working on a feasibility study for a 2nd rail link from downtown Viangchan to Danang via Tha Khaek (Khammuan province). This will support the transportation from Malawmaeng sea port to Danang deep sea port.

The 3rd rail line will link with Mainland Chinese Railway System which requires mixed gauge track (meter/standard gauge).

The discussion with the Thai Custom Office about customs procedures to create free land transportation is nearly done and ready for negotiation in early July in Viangchan. This is after both sides agreed to pursue free land transportation with a preliminary agreement on March 1.

High Speed Train! 100-billion baht BKK-Khorat train close to reality – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from [*Manager Daily*](#), June 21, 2004.

SRT is going to speed up the BKK-Khorat High Speed Rail Project (BKK (Makkasan) – Suvannabhumi – New City at Banna – Khorat). The TOR is done and pay 37 million baht for the consultant to handle the feasibility study. The study will be done in 1 year and ready to submit the cabinet. There will be private joint venture since the price tag is 100 billion baht.

The TOR will consist of

1. Route studies
2. Studies on relating engineers
3. Environmental assessment along with the route choices
4. Investment assessment, and the suitable ticket prices
5. Social and Economic benefits and further suggestion

There will be two preliminary options for the route from Bangkok (Makkasan) to Khorat which will not go along the existing SRT rail routes – using the shortest routes which require in tunneling.

1. Makkasan – NBIA – Nongchok – Banna – Pakchong – Nakhon Ratchasima (233 km)
2. Makkasan – NBIA – Chachoengsao – New City at Banna – Pakchong – Nakhon Ratchasima (247 km)

The highest speed will be 300 km/hr while the average speed will be 250 km/hr, to reach Khorat in 1 hour – fast and compete with airlines, intercity buses or so. The public sector will invest in the infrastructure while the private sector invest on services and rolling stocks.

The concession is another issue since it is going to be subject to the Joint Venture Act of 1992.

After the preliminary studies are done in the next 4 months, Korat Provincial Hall will submit the plan to the cabinet to get 100 million baht for surveying the areas before coming up with the final report to be submit to the cabinet next year.

The construction of this system will be done in 4 years with 5 main stations at the following places:

1. Makkasan
2. NBIA
3. Banna
4. Pakchong – the place where Nakhon Ratchasima City Hall will set up Muang Phoom Isan (New City at Pakchong) as the center for history of Isan as well as trade center and commercial transports for 19 Isan provinces which require a hundred million baht of investment. Pakchong is the gate to Khao Yai National Park.

5. Nakhon Ratchasima

Commentary by Wisarut: Better clear with Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment as well as the Traffic Policy office which is going to come up with an electrified railway from Phayathai to Suvannabhumi. This requires a new and gigantic Makkasan station to handle the Airport Link and Airport Express with the option to go to Nakhon Ratchasima.

Trucking interests sabotage the

rails – translated and summarized by Wisarut

Bholsithi from *Matichon Daily*, June 12, 2004

Even though the railway from Bangkok to Laem Chabang is constructed to cut down the usage of trucks, corruption and poor management at SRT has boosted the cost for transporting by rail in such a way that few companies use railways to transport their products to Laem Chabang or carry the raw materials from Laem Chabang to feed their factories.

Furthermore, the trains from Bangkok to Pattaya are very few and only run on the weekdays even though the trains are supposed to support the tourism in the same way as the trains to Hua Hin and Suan Son Padiphat Beach.

Even worse, truck companies (such as Sor. Thianthong—the company owned by the Thiangthong family) have lobbied the government and paid billions baht to both the Government and the opposition. Also common bribery is paid to the police so that the rail transport can never compete against their truck companies.

Even the government measures to cut down energy bills have shown both hypocrisy and insincerity. They have not applied the energy saving measures (e.g the cut to opening hours) of department and discount stores even though everybody knows very well that department stores and the discount stores are twin transportation magnets. The replacement of the government will not help this since the department and discount stores have pay billions in bribery so that any government will not cut working hours to save energy.

The increasing sales of automobiles have pleased the minister whose business is related to automobiles, but it increases energy bills.

Fuel hike pushing Laem Chabang double

tracking – translated and summarized by Wisarut

Bholsithi from *Thaipost*, June 10, 2004

The budget for double tracking of the Laem Chabang Section (Chachoengsao – Sri Racha – Laem Chabang) with a total distance of 78 km and a price tag of 5.235 billion baht has been approved thanks to the pressure from high fuel prices. This is after waiting for 8 years after getting cabinet approval in 1996. This double tracking will be done in 3 years.

The project has been delayed since the Environment Committee rejected the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) done by SRT and consultants. SRT has to cooperate with MOF and Budget Bureau to deal with EIA matters.

Furthermore, the expressway from Ram Indra – Eastern Kanchanaphisek Outer Ring Road via Or Nguen (9.5 km – 13.708 billion baht) has been approved. 7.011 billion baht for land expropriation and the other 6.697 billion baht for construction. This will be shouldered by the government 58%. However the NESDB and Budget Bureau have opposed the plan to subsidize expressway fees for this section. Therefore the Expressway Authority has to come up with a better scheme to fund this necessary project.

Commentary by Wisarut: It actually takes 10 years to implement the Chachoengsao – Sattahip Line with a branch to Laem Chabang even though it is supposed to be done in 5 years. Another 10 years for finishing the double tracking of the Bangkok suburban lines despite the plan to be done in 5 years. Even worse, the section from Bangsue to Bang Bumru is not up to the Specifications. Therefore, SRT cannot run the inbound to Bangsue and outbound to Nakhon Pathom at the same time.

Rama 6 Bridge is not strong enough to handle very dense traffic. Inbound and outbound cannot use Rama 6 Bridge at the same time despite of double tracking of the bridge.

Ambitious plan for high-speed rail

connecting Ayutthaya-Paet Riew-Nakhon Pathom-Samut Prakarn – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Matichon*, May 30, 2004

Khumroblux Suratsawade made a special speech at "Real Estate Lifestyle:

Getting the Bangkokians' heart" held at Chaophraya Park hotel on May 29. He said "We spend 20% of GDP for transportation—a very high cost compared with 10% of GDP in developed countries. High speed rail to decongest Bangkok and vicinity is a must especially the route to Samut Prakarn, Ayutthaya, Chachoengsao and Nakhon Pathom."

More news that came of the event: There will be three new transportation centers at Bangsue, Makkasan and Taksin. The design by Traffic Policy Office for the Red line commuter will be done in six months. There are also expressways every 25 sq-km outside Kanchanaphisek Outer Ring road.

Toll for those drivers who want to enter the CBD area will be applied.

There will be 2 parts for funding the projects—from profitable section and from the public services—through fuel taxes. Local authorities (BMA, Provincial Hall, City Hall) will also fund these projects as well.

Bombardier

[Transportation wins US\\$70M order from Thailand state railway](#) –

Canadian Press, May 10, 2004

Bombardier Transportation has won a \$70-million US order from Thailand's

state railway to supply and install a computer-based communication system on four new commuter rail routes in the Bangkok region...

Strangely enough this was announced over a month ago in the Thai-language press: [Bombadier wins SRT signal and telecommunication system contract for double track lines at 2.799 billion baht](#) – *Matichon Daily*, March 29, 2000

Nationwide double tracking – Long way to get started – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Than Setthakij*, May 13 – 15, 2004
The 2,429km nationwide double tracking for the main trunk lines will be allocated in the following form:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) Northern Lines | 3) Southern Lines |
| 1.1) Lopburi – Sila At – 355 km | 3.1) Nakhon Pathom – Hua Hin – 165 km |
| 1.2) Sila At – Chiangmai – 212 km | 3.2) Hua Hin – Surat Thane – 422 km |
| 2) Northeastern Lines | 3.3) Surat Thani – Hatyai – 294 km |
| 2.1) Map Krabao – Nakhon Ratchasima – 130 km | 4) Eastern Lines |
| 2.2) Nakhon Ratchasima – Ubon Ratchathane – 310 km | 4.1) Kaengkhoei – Klong Sip Kao – Chachoengsao – 108 km |
| 2.3) Thanon Chira – Nong Khai – 355 km | 4.2) Chachoengsao – Sri Racha – 67 km |
| | 4.3) Sri Racha – Laem Chabang Port – 9 km |

There are three ways to implement double tracking:

- 1) Laying the new track along with the rehabilitation for the existing tracks to allow a maximum speed of 120 km/hr
 - 2) Laying the new track along with the rehabilitation for the existing tracks to allow a maximum speed of 160 km/hr
 - 3) Laying the new high-speed rail track (standard gauge) for some sections while the rest will be meter gauge double tracks
- However, the following routes will be a high-speed rail system:
- 1) Bangkok – Chiang Mai with route modifications to increase the curve radius to 1500-2000 m -> either at Uttaradit – Chiang Mai or Lampang – Chiang Mai
 - 2) Bangkok – Nakhon Ratchasima with route modification from Kaeng Khoi to Pakchong
 - 3) Bangkok – Surat Thani – the rest will be meter gauge double tracks.
 - 4) Kaengkhoei – Klong Sip Kao – Chachoengsao -> the space constraints from Hua Mark to Chachoengsao and the track to ICD has prevented SRT from ripping the double track in meter gauge to create standard gauge double track.

The estimation show that (in Billion Baht)

	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice
Northern Lines	118.0	127.6	155.2
Northeastern Lines	121.6	126.9	48.5
Southern Lines	148.9	148.7	163.5
Eastern Lines	11.1	11.1	31.3
Total	399.6	414.3	398.6

The Traffic Policy Office said that the third choice is the best deal.

They also said SRT needs to acquire more land to come up with the high speed rail tracks. The level crossings must be eliminated or largely reduced.

This means a new bridge in every 3 km. The system would be electrified in the way as BTSC Skytrain.

- Commentary by Wisarut:**
- 1) The northern line with high-speed rail will please Premier Thaksin.
 - 2) The northeastern line with double tracking is to please Khorat people even though the high cost to modify the steep track from Map Krabao to Nakhon Ratchasima is a must.
 - 3) The Traffic Policy Office seems never to be aware of the gauge braking problem. Even though the new mixed gauge track some the gauge braking problems, it creates another problem—the slower speed of the high speed rail system since they did not use a dedicated system. The half-baked Acela and Akita line of Shinkansen should give the Traffic Policy Office an example of a very hard lesson for this type of problem.
 - 4) If SRT wants to run an electrified railway, 25 KV Ac is a good choice for them—not 750 V DC.
 - 5) In my opinion the first choice is the optimal deal—at least the gauge braking problem is eliminated.

Latest on the high-speed rail to

Khorat – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager Daily*, April 23, 2004

Governor Sunthorn Riawlueng is pushing forward the new multibillion baht High Speed Rail linking Bangkok with Khorat and Khorat Inland Container Depot (ICD) with the rail link at Soong Noen district of Khorat in addition to the 3 billion baht Isan waterworks solution during Premier Thaksin's Isan tour.

The High Speed Rail from Bangkok to Khorat is a must due to the perennial fatal road accidents in Khorat during Songkran and New Year. Khorat has 24 hour intercity buses to Bangkok since it is the gateway to Isan. This High speed rail will shorten travel time from 3-4 hours by intercity bus to 1-1.5 hours by high speed rail system and boost more tourists

to Isan. The initial capital for this system will be 10 billion baht with more to follow.
The new ICD at Soong Noen district as well as Khon Kaen will enable the factories in Isan area to ship their products to Klong Toei Port and Laem Chabang Deep Sea Port with lower costs and cut down transportation by dangerous trucks.
Governor Sunthorn also shows organic Jasmine rice from Phimai Co-op rice mills and 5-star OTOP products along with Khorat Noodle.
Commentary by Wisarut: To support the new ICD at Soong Noen and Khon Kaen, the following sections of railway must become double track with rehabilitation by using 100 Lb/yd (aka 50 kg/m) welded steel rails and the new modern signal installation to replace good old semaphores.
1) Kaengkhohi – Lum Naria – Pasak Jolasit dam – Bua Yai – Khon Kaen
2) Map Krabao – Pakchong – Soong Noen – Nakhon Ratchasima – Thanonchira
3) Laem Chabang – Si Racha – Chachonegsao – Klong Sip Kao – Kaeng Khoi

However, the workers must pay respect to the Lord of Pha Sadej, the spirit that protects Dong Phaya Yen. Dong Phaya Yen is the mountain range and forest that caused difficulties in travel between Nakhon Ratchasima and Saraburi in the past until King Chulalongkorn and worker of Nakhon Ratchasima set up a shrine to keep the spirits calm and smooth the construction of Nakhon Ratchasima Railway and finish the line in 1900 at Pha Sadej Station.
The estimated cost for this new high speed rail system will be about 50 billion baht and it will be 100 billion baht if the new rail system from Bang Sue to Rayong has been pushed forward as well.
Therefore, the new company to handle the high speed rail system is a must. However, the settlement with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has to be done first since the route will definitely go through Kao Iai National Park.

No latest news on the Prachuab Khirikhan high-speed train – April 27, 2004
Wisarut reports: *The proposed high speed rail to Prachuab Khirikhan seems to be died down due to heavy opposition from local people since Toed Damri could not answer the public well enough on various concerns.*
Earlier: [Ko Lak Chamber of Commerce opposing the high speed rail system](#) – *Matichon Daily*, April 2, 2004 & *Thai News Agency*, April 1, 2004
Earlier: [Details of the high-speed train and cable car projects for Prachuab Khirikhan](#) – *Manager Daily*, March 21, 2004 & *Matichon Daily*, March 23, 2004
Earlier: [High-speed train, cable car project for Prachuab Khirikhan](#) – *Matichon*, March 29, 2004
Earlier: [Companies explaining the High-speed train to Prachuab Khirikhan](#) – *Matichon Daily*, March 31, 2004

Bombardier wins SRT signal and telecommunication system contract for double track lines at 2.799 billion baht – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Matichon Daily*, March 29, 2004
SRT said SRT and Bombardier Co.Ltd are going to sign the contract for signal and telecommunication system installation for the double track lines at a price of 2.799 billion baht. This is lower than the mean price of 3.3772 billion baht and it will be completed in two years. With the new signal and telecommunication system, the double track lines will be fully functional. The installation will be at the following routes:
1) Ban Phachi – Lopburi (43 km)
2) Ban Phachi – Map Krabao (44 km)
3) Talingchan – Nakhon Pathom (42 km) – total 2.02321 billion baht compared to the mean price of 2.48633 billion baht
4) Hua Mark – Chachoengsao (45 km) – 0.77613 billion baht compared to the mean price of 0.89098 billion baht
The signal will be an electro-mechanic signal controllable by remote computer system and traffic light with a relative token system and remote control system from the central station.
For the nationwide double tracking with the budget of 500 billion baht, the Traffic Policy Office is going to study which form of investment is the most optimal plan—nationwide double tracking, double tracking with electrification (in the same way KTMB has done to the KL Kommuter system as well as the route from Rawang to Ipoh), and the routes which deserve high speed rail systems with standard gauge tracks.
Commentary by Wisarut: The government better lower the cost of the system implementation by encouraging foreign investors to make a series of joint ventures such as:
1) Steel mills which could produce high quality steel for 50 km/m and UIC60 tracks
2) Traffic lights and signals for both automobile traffic and railway traffic
3) The local assembly which could handle the diesel-electric and electric locomotives as well as DMUs and EMUs without having to wait for new spare parts. Many DMUs and locomotives are still waiting for the maintenance and repair after being hit by vehicles, other trains, or being burnt.

4) The new maintenance center to handle rolling stock made from both steel and aluminum (aluminum rolling stock are much harder to weld together than the steel version) to replace the good old SRT Maintenance Center at Makkasan.

Opinions on the PTT Energy Complex

– translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from

Siamturakij, March 21-28, 2004

Minister Suriya said he has not received the details on the project yet.

Nevertheless, if the project is worthy to invest and boost revenue, it will be very good for SRT.

Most of SRT workers in that area acknowledge that there will be a big project in that area, but those workers ask the SRT Board of Director to find the temporary shelters for them.

SRT workers also ask the Board to move the Railway Police HQ from Nopphawong Bridge (near Hua Lamphong) to be within the PTT Energy Complex since those police have complained that the Railway Police HQ at Hua Lamphong is too congested and this new HQ will enable railway police from Donmuang, Laksi and Ladkrabang to reach HQ in a shorter time.

Even the families of Railway Police have asked for temporary shelters.

Also 500 food hawkers who are families of Railway Police also beg SRT for the space to set up the new food stalls for PTT employees to replace the old ones are 10 years old. Otherwise, their children will go hungry.

Those hawkers said they can never hope to compete in bidding for the commercial areas after the PTT Energy Complex becomes a reality. New food stalls outside the new condominium and apartments are necessary since there will be very narrow space to set up stalls in the apartments and condominiums. Some merchants who complain about this project are not locals but come other places.

Motorcycle taxis say if the energy complex becomes a reality, they will be out of business since there will be not longer a market for them.

PTT employees said the new PTT Energy complex is very good plan for them since the old office is too tight and narrow. Every time PTT has set up a festival, traffic around the PTT Office is chaotic due to the inadequate parking areas. However, they feel very sympathy to those hawkers who will lose their working space.

Trade and double-tracking –

translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Transportation Journal*, March 15-21, 2004

The Traffic Policy Office has a policy on Multimodal Transportation. One example is for the policy on SRT. SRT has a duty to handle transportation of containers and cargo as well as raw materials (oil, gas cement, gravel, sand or so).

Therefore, the nationwide double tracking of 2000 km with the price tag of 400 billion baht is a worthy investment since one set of railway cars could carry 30 containers while 1 truck could carry only one container. SRT is working hard to speed up the cargo rails to prevent the late arrivals to the port.

If SRT is to construct and run the new track in standard gauge for High Speed Rail, the budget for the same 2000 km truck lines will balloon up to 800 billion baht.

So far, no cargo line systems have use standard gauge (except in the countries which used the standard gauge or broad gauge as the main type of railways). The issue on gauge breaking should be handled by Vietnam which has meter gauge for national lines, standard gauge for the line from Haiphong Port, and mixed gauged (1.000m/1.435m) for the line connecting with the China Railway system.

To support trade with China, Denchai-Chiangrai-Chiang Saen (with a branch line to Chiang Khong) must become a reality since there is an international port at Chiang Saen and Chiang Khong. After that, the extension across Mekhong to Khunming via Luang Namtha will be under consideration. To help Burma to get on its feet, the rail link from Namtok to Tavoy via Bong Tee Checkpoint (100 km) is a must. This will reinvigorate Tavoy Port through Thai exports to India, Europe, Middle East, and Africa via Tavoy Port and allow Thai tourists to see pristine beaches and coral islands around the Mergui-Tavoy coast with convenience. This would also speed up delivery of oil from Middle East and fishery products from the Andaman Sea.

To support Laem Chabang Deep Sea Port, the section from Chachongsao to Laem Chabang deep sea port must become double track. This double track line will triple or even quadruple the number of trips to/from Laem Chabang within a few years after becoming a reality.

Commentary by Wisarut: This nationwide double tracking is a logical investment indeed. However, the steel rails used by cargo trains must use 100 lb/yard rail with concrete sleepers to ensure that the steel rail will not be cracked due to overloading.

To further support Laem Chabang the following projects must be followed:

- 1) Triangle tracks in the same way as Chitlada Triangle at Ban Phachee Junction, Kaeng Khoi Junction, Klong Sip Kao Junction, and Chachongsao Junction are one of the critical elements to speed up cargo lines since the cargo lines are usually slow due to the heavy loads they are carrying.
- 2) Double tracking of Kaengkhoei-Klong Sip Kao-Chachongsao will also speed up the cargo lines to the Isan region while it allows adequate time to run commuter services to serve those students from Sri Nakharintharawiroj University, cadets from Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy, and precadet students from Cadet Preparing School, and even farmers

around Ongkharak and Wiharn Daeng to export their products to Laem Chabang Port.

3) North-South link from Suphanburi to Lopburi to help Army to move the troops and roll heavy tanks, antiaircraft guns and missiles, howitzers from Lopburi to the South if the insurgency turn worse.

New lines to Chaingsaen and Tavoy are a very good idea since the Burmese Railway has been extended from Ye to Tavoy with very controversial means. However, the line across the Merkhong to Tha Nalaeng must be done first. After that, inject more funds to complete the first section of Lao Railway from Tha Nalaeng to Viangchan and then help to rebuild the track from Aranyaprathet to Poipet and then the line to Si Sophon. After that, the line to Burma should be constructed after waiting for more than 70 years.

SRT pushing forward the 5.235 billion baht approved double tracking – translated and summarized by

Wisarat Bholsithi from *Manager Daily*, March 8, 2004

SRT is pushing forward the double tracking of Chachongsao – Sri Racha – Laem Chabang line with a total distance of 72 km and price tag of 5.235 billion baht. This will be started from 2004 and be done in 2007. It will boost more revenue by 435 million baht/year.

There are 5 sections to be done:

1. 5 million baht for Environmental Assessment from Sri Racha – Laem Chabang
2. 7 million baht for the bidding process
3. Construction
4. Signal Installation -> with total cost for construction and installation of 4.982 billion baht
5. Controls on the construction and installation process – 241 million baht

The double racking will save on road reconstruction cost, cut down accidents and energy bills as well as facilitate the movement of products to and from Laem Chabang.

After the double tracking is done, SRT will be able to carry more containers from the currently 7200 bogeys/year (432,000 TEU) in 2004 to 22,500 bogeys (1,350,000 TEU) a year in 2007. The revenue from this section after double tracking will be 780 million baht in 2007 and 1.2 billion baht in 2012, compared with 285 million baht revenue in 2003 and expected revenue of 345 million baht in 2004.

Note: The delay on the double track implementation has generated a [furious response](#) from Thai netters.

Multimillion baht new PTT energy complex

– **2000 families of SRT workers to be moved** – translated

and summarized by Wisarat Bholsithi from *Siamturakij*, March 7-13, 2004

To clear up the 50 billion baht of debt, SRT has decided to turn 200 rai of SRT land to create the a 30-rai of Ministry of Energy complex. The other 170 rai will be a residential area for sale and rent. However, 2000 families of SRT worker must be evicted.

This energy complex will have a park and ride facility to hold 1000 cars. This will allow PTT and the Ministry of Energy to expand to meet surging demand and integrate all agencies within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Energy together. The oil business firms could set up their Thai offices in the complex. The completed section (Energy Complex and residential area) will require tens of millions of baht to complete.

The 1160 families of SRT workers who live in the old and dilapidated SRT wooden houses (built just before WWII in 1940-41) and the other 985 families of SRT workers who live in the run-down SRT apartments were built during the 1960s-1970s have to be evicted and moved to Chiang Rak, Ban Phachee and Lopburi. This will create a burden on 6000 SRT workers and their families who will have to rely on SRT commuters to be able to reach Bangsue Maintenance Center, Phaholyothin Warehouse as well as Hor Wang Highschool and Samsen Highschool. Those who want to stay at the same place will need to pay a very high rent to PTT, because PTT will set up new condominium and residential areas.

Commentary by Wisarat: PTT PCL is another major creditor to SRT since it is the main supplier of diesel and lubrication products. Therefore the energy complex is a way to write off the oil-lubrication debt SRT owes to PTT PCL as well as a way to get uninterrupted fuel supplies since PTT is likely to pay SRT rent as oil-lubrication credits at bargain prices (cheaper than the market prices) and a little cash. PTT PCL is also a main supplier of oil and lubrication to the Armed Forces and Bureaucrat offices due to their duty as the National Oil Supplier—even after privatization.

Electric railway to Nakhon Pathom –

translated and summarized by Wisarat Bholsithi from *Bangkok Biznew*, March 9, 2004

After Premier Thaksin asked the Traffic Policy Office to come up with an electrified railway for intercity service, the Traffic Policy Office has decided to put this project into the special priority service. The double tracks from Bangsue to Nakhon Pathum must be improved in such a way to allow 160 km/hr maximum speed from Nakhon Pathom to Bang Sue (50 km).

The ticket price will be 10 baht+ (1 baht/km x distance)—the same as the commuter rate. This is cheaper than intercity buses and will turn Nakhon Pathom into another satellite city and cutting congestion in Bangkok.

Traffic Policy Office pushing high speed rail – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Than Setthakij*, February 12-14, 2004
Traffic Policy Office is pushing a high speed rail of 160 km/hr with four connecting station -> Taksin Center, Bangsue, Makkasan, and Talingchan with a station 10 times larger than Hua Lamphong. The Blue Ring Line will also connect the system together. There would be no cars allowed to enter into the Ratchadaphisek Ring without special licenses and permission. This rail also could go to NBIA and extend further to reach the Thai-Cambodian border at Aranyaprathet and perhaps reach Phnom Penh in 12 hours from Makkasan.

The government will allow private investment on the rolling stock and systems while SRT would invest in the rails. SRT also has to reorganize to separate the revenue making section out of the infrastructure so as to be a good regional rail hub. The 2400-km nationwide double track is also a part of the plan. Low cost airline has the maximum speed of 800 km/hr while the commuter rail in urban area has the maximum speed of 80 km/hr. A faster rail system will boost the value of Makkasan and Bangsue stations to fund more rail projects.

[Proposal for rail link goes to SRT board](#) – *Bangkok Post*, February 8, 2004

Preliminary plans on a rail link between central Bangkok and Suvarnabhumi Airport will be forwarded to the State Railway of Thailand board for approval this month. A preliminary study, conducted by Pacific Consultants International, found the project would require a budget of 29 billion baht, three billion baht more than previously estimated. The link would comprise 28 kilometres of track, from Makkasan to the airport. The SRT plans to offer non-stop express trains, with journey times of 14 minutes, and a slower link stopping at six stations of 28 minutes.

Nationwide double tracking expected to start by the end of 2006 – *Than Setthakij*, February 1-4 2004

SRT is drafting TOR to deal with nationwide double tracking with a price tag of 410 billion baht. The plan will be submitted to the cabinet on February 9. SRT is expecting to start nationwide double tracking by the end of 2006.

The budget will be as follows:

Northern Line – 661.47 km (Ayutthaya – Chiang Mai) – 127.602 billion baht which consists of

Construction Cost – 115.833 billion baht

Consultant Cost – 2.317 billion baht

Reserve 9.052 – billion baht

Southern Line – 880.46 km (Nakhon Pathom – Hat Yai) – 184.727 billion baht which consists of

Construction Cost – 138.010 billion baht

Consultant Cost – 2.700 billion baht

Reserve 11.017 – billion baht

Northeastern Line – 718.88 km – (Bua Yai – Nongkhai -> 278.08 km and Map Krabao – Khorat – Ubon 440.8 km) – 126.889 billion baht which consists of

Construction Cost – 115.186 billion baht

Consultant Cost – 2.304 billion baht

Reserve 9.399 – billion baht

Eastern – 82.84 km (Kaeng Khoi – Klong Sip Kao) – 11.113 billion baht which consists of

Construction Cost – 10.088 billion baht

Consultant Cost – 0.202 billion baht

Reserve 0.823 – billion baht

Total – 2343.65 km with budget of 414.3 billion baht

For existing double tracks (the commuter lines), there will be interchanges to BTSC Skytrain and BMCL Subway to facilitate movement.

The consultant for this double track project will be local Thai consultants.

If the government approves the project, the construction of new double tracks will be started by the end of 2006 and done by the end of 2010.

Commentary by Wisarut: Expect delays even if project is approved.

It is too bad the section from Chacheongsao – Sattahip Naval Base, Chachoengsao – Klong Sip Kao has not been approved to become double track lines. It seems to me that Kaeng Koi – Klong Sip kao has been approved to become double track lines to feed both the [New City](#) as well as cargo tracks which is another money making business in addition to tourist lines.

New tunnels are needed for both Northern and Southern lines—especially the Khun Tan tunnel.

The section from Map Krabao to Khorat should have been improved to cut the grading from the current 26 in 1000 (26 m height per 1 km track) to allow faster trains.

Hope that new lines will come after finishing the nationwide double tracking because local people as well as people from other regions ask the government to fulfill wish-list lines (Denchai – Chiang Rai – Chiang Khong, Surat Thani – Tha Nun – Phuket, Lang Suan – Ranong, Nong Khai – Wiangchan, etc.)

Calls to electrify the double track from Hua Lamphong to Ban Phachi – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Matichon*, February 1,

2004

The governor of Ayutthya is asking SRT to electrify the double tracks from Hua Lamphong to Ban Phachi (89.95 km) to carry 200,000 workers as well as local people and the bulk of products from four industrial estates in Ayutthya (Bang Pa In Industrial Estate, Ban Wah Industrial Estate, Rotjana Industrial Estate and Saharat Nakhon Industrial Estate) to relieve the factories and local people from traffic jams.

Therefore, SRT should include this extension (Rangsit – Ayutthaya – Ban Phachi) in the 2nd phase of the red line commuter. This extension also help to pick up students from Bangkok University, Thammasart University (Rangsit Campus) and AIT as well as workers in Nawanakhorn Industrial Estate and researchers in Science Park via regular feeder bus lines. With demands like this, SRT should be restructured or even privatized to enable the enterprise to response to growing demands for commuter lines since the commuter may have to be extended further to Chachoengsao, Nakhon Pathom, Lopburi, and Kaeng Khoy to fulfill the proposal of Prince Purachat Jaiyakorn (the first Siamese RSR director).

[Bidding](#)

[epic to end today](#) – *Bangkok Post*, January

26, 2004

The board of the State Railway of Thailand is expected to select a contractor to develop a 17.64-rai block of railway land in Chatuchak today. SRT governor Chitsanti Dhanasobhon said the board is likely to pick one of three contenders for the 30-year contract to develop and operate a plaza on the land which is now a dirt parking lot on Kamphaeng Phet 2 road...

SRT going to build condominiums

around Vibhavadee – translated and summarized by Wisarut Bholsithi from *Manager Weekly*, January 13, 2004

There is 2600 rai of SRT vacant land behind PTT PCL -> km 11 SRT community. To add more revenue, SRT has decided to build condos with a 30 year concession – able to carry 240 families. It will have 12 floors with 20 rooms on each floor. These condos are for low income people as well as SRT workers to have a residential place on their own instead of paying rent for an apartment.

Education levels of SRT employees –

January 20, 2004

Wisarut reports: *SRT needs to overhaul human resource since only 10% of SRT officers have a Bachelor's degree . Most of the are vocational students who graduated from Railway Vocational School or those who have only a primary school degree . Modernization requires a major overhaul of workers to handle state-of-the-art machinery. The money-maker state enterprises such as EGAT have many workers with BS, MS, or even Ph.Ds.*

[High speed rail](#)

[implementation for Bangkok-Padangbesar, and Surattani-Phangha \(Tha Nun\)](#)

– SRT website

[All about](#)

[traveling by train in Thailand](#) – October

23, 2003

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

End of an era for Bangkok's Oriental Hotel

March 4, 2009

[End of an era for Bangkok's Oriental Hotel](#) – *The Associated Press*, March 4, 2009

Kurt Wachtveitl, the general manager at Bangkok's famed Oriental hotel for more than four decades, announced his retirement at a dinner he was hosting for the wine critic Robert Parker...

Thailand: Alleged arms smuggler calls Thai trial ‘theater’

March 5, 2009

Categories: Uncategorized

[Thailand: Alleged arms smuggler calls Thai trial ‘theater’](#) – AP, March 5, 2009

...Dressed in an orange prison uniform, Bout yelled at guards who tried to quiet him at several points during a 10-minute exchange with reporters in French, English and Russian.

“Enough! You’ve had one year!” he snapped at a guard. “You can’t deprive me of my freedom of speech...”

Swiss TV reporter Christoph Muller arrested

March 5, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[THAILAND: Swiss TV reporter Christoph Muller arrested, later released but not allowed to leave country](#) – RSF/IFEX, March 5, 2009

...The authorities have not told Muller exactly why he was arrested but it appears to be the result of a 2006 complaint about a 2002 report by Muller on a bogus Swiss doctor based in Thailand who was raising funds for a suspect charity...

Under the skin: Thailand's tattoo festival

March 6, 2009

Categories: Local Beliefs

[Under the skin: Thailand's tattoo festival](#) – *The Guardian*, March, 2009

Ancient Hindu sun god bead stolen from Thai museum

March 6, 2009

Categories: Uncategorized

[Ancient Hindu sun god bead stolen from Thai museum](#) – *Thailandnews.net*, March 6, 2009

An ancient bead featuring the Hindu sun god Surya Dev was stolen while on display at Thailand's National Discovery Museum Institute...

Excerpts from Dubai interview with Thaksin Shinawatra

March 6, 2009

Categories: Thai Politics

[Excerpts from Dubai interview with Thaksin Shinawatra](#) – FEER, March 6, 2009

...You talk about this reconciliation. What shape would that take? For example, what about a government of national reconciliation? Is that something you could support?

I think it depends on both sides. If it were to be national reconciliation government it means that there would be no opposition. When there's no opposition it is not good for democracy. But sometimes you need it for a short period of time to amend the constitution. This constitution is not working for Thailand. It's really the product of the military junta, so it's not going to work for Thailand, and the political process must be reformed to improve to a more mature democracy...

Chinese journalist stranded in Thailand

March 7, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Chinese journalist stranded in Thailand](#) – Radio Free Asia, March, 2009

...Zeng said unidentified men had paid him visits beginning Jan. 7 and tried to intimidate him.

“This made me think that perhaps the Chinese government was putting pressure on the UNHCR in Thailand, and causing problems for my asylum application.”

“On Jan. 7 I got a threatening phone call. The caller said I would have to suffer the consequences if I wrote articles criticizing China,” Zeng said.

“The second incident happened one evening when I went out for a walk. I had just got to a bridge at the mouth of the alleyway where I was living, and two small vans drove recklessly towards me, brushing past me very close. Why didn’t they use headlights? It was already dark,” he said.

“The third incident was in the last few days. Somebody started banging on my door in the middle of the night. I asked who it was, but there was no reply...”

Ugandan ivory seized in Thailand

March 8, 2009

Categories: Wildlife and Nature

[Ugandan ivory seized in Thailand](#) – *New Vision*, March, 2009

A tonne of Ugandan ivory has been impounded in Bangkok, Thailand, the biggest seizure of illegal animal products from the country in recent times...

Bangkok in Black and White

March 9, 2009
Categories: Art

[Bangkok in Black and White](#) – cysewski.com, March, 2009

Guinea Bissau: The Thai link in killings

March 9, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Guinea Bissau: The Thai link in killings](#) – AllAfrica.com, March 8, 2009

Lagos — Fresh facts on the killing of the Guinea-Bissau Army Chief, Brig. Gen. Batiste Tagme na Waie, which later triggered the assassination of President Joao Bernardo “Nino” Vieira.

Waie was killed last Sunday when a bomb planted by unknown persons exploded in his office. A reprisal attack less than 24 hours later by elements within the army led to the tragic killing of Vieira.

In compliance with the constitution, the former Speaker of the parliament (the Assembleia Nacional Popular), Raimundo Pereira, was last Tuesday sworn-in as Interim President.

But the bomb that terminated the life of Waie has been linked to the Southeast Asian country of Thailand. The Prime Minister of Guinea-Bissau, Carlos Gomes, Junior, and Minister of Defence, Marciano Silva Barbeiro, made the revelation at separate meetings with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Ministerial delegation to the former Portuguese colony.

President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua had on Tuesday despatched a delegation comprising the foreign ministers of Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, The Gambia, and Senegal, accompanied by the President of ECOWAS Commission, to Guinea-Bissau where they engaged all Guinean stakeholders in an effort to restore confidence among the political actors, civil society and security services, and return the country to constitutional normalcy.

“It is very important to find out who made and bought this bomb (that killed the Army Chief) in Thailand,” Gomes had told the delegation led by Nigeria’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chief Ojo Maduekwe.

The Defence Minister and his service chiefs were in no doubt as to where the bomb came from: Thailand. In fact, the Minister of Defence showed what seemed to be a component of the bomb to the ECOWAS delegation. “The debris from the blast was so much that it took us about one hour to get the corpse of Waie out of the rubble that was his own office wing of the army building,” Barbeiro said.

Although, Guinea-Bissau has been hailed for its smooth transition to an interim government, the situation in this land of Amilcar Cabra remains tenuous. “Ours is still a very fragile country and the international community knows that. I am not safe myself because there is no guarantee that there are no hidden bombs in my office,” Gomes said, adding, “Gambia, Senegal, Guinea Conakry,” and, indeed, the sub-region, “will not be safe if bombs are here.”

Analysts say that Guinea-Bissau has become the soft underbelly of the sub-region. An admixture of factors has made Guinea-Bissau an attractive transit point for hard drugs bound for Europe and other parts of the world: pervasive poverty, unemployment, and \$3 billion budget deficit compounded by \$30 million in salary arrears.

There is a near absence of infrastructure to sustain any form of economic development. There is hardly any public power, with generators having to run round the clock, no potable water, and the few roads that have asphalt overlay have had them washed away over time. Ironically, the road bearing the name of the legendary Amilcar Cabra, the man who gave his all to wage a liberation struggle against the Portuguese, has never seen coal tar: it is an earth road.

The nation’s economy is minute and driven largely by cashew, fish, and peanut exports. What this means is that even a small influx of drug money can have a major impact.

That is exactly what has happened.

Drug money is now the driver of the Guinea-Bissau economy. Last month, the United States State Department warned that the “degeneration of Guinea-Bissau into a narco-state is a real possibility.”

The United Nations estimates that the cocaine transiting through Guinea-Bissau is worth more than a billion dollars a year, which is several times higher than the paltry national budget.

It is, perhaps, no coincidence that the bomb is being linked to Thailand. The Southeast Asian country has become a major hub for the production and shipment of hard drugs, especially cocaine.

The question on the minds of many after last week’s killings of Waie and Vieira is, could it be fifth columnists (drug barons) are at work to create further divisions between the military and civilian authorities while they continue with their illicit trade unabated or it is a battle for the control of the spoils of the trade?

This is not the first time that Guinea-Bissau’s Army Chief will be assassinated. In 2004, not long after elections had been successfully conducted, the then Armed Forces Chief of Staff was eliminated in similar Gestapo style.

Indeed, the killings of Vieira and Waie have been linked to a battle over the control of the illicit trade in drugs. The top military brass have been accused of taking bribes to allow drug planes to land and to turn a blind eye to drug activity.

Meanwhile, the Judicial Police, responsible for investigating the narcotics trade, are unarmed, equipped with mere typewriters, and the targets of anonymous death threats.

THISDAY observed parked at the Aeroporto International Osvaldo Vieira Airport, Bissau, a seized plane said to be linked to the trade in narcotics. Such seizures, it is gathered, are something of a rarity.

“What we have in our hands is a time bomb akin to the conflagration in Mexico. ECOWAS has to do something about this situation, else we will all be consumed in the impending inferno,” Foreign Minister of The Gambia, Dr. Omar Touray, told THISDAY shortly after the ECOWAS delegation had visited the bombed-out office wing of the Army Chief on Wednesday.

Gomes was, perhaps, echoing the position of Touray when he said that the tragic killing of the President and Army Chief were “an attempt against ECOWAS, African Union, and all organisations and structures in the sub-region.” He also told the delegation that the country did not have the wherewithal to wage a successful war against the drug traffickers.

The fear is that drug warlords operating out of Guinea-Bissau will accelerate the failure of the state. With a foothold in the former Portuguese colony, these mercenaries could unleash a war of attrition in other countries and pose serious security risk to the sub-region. It was in recognition of this that ECOWAS planned to work with the Guinean authorities and development partners to get to the bottom of the killings.

“You are not alone; we will stand by you all the way and provide experts that will work with you to find the culprits in this dastardly act,” President of the ECOWAS Commission, Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas, assured the Guinea-Bissau leadership. But it remains to be seen how this could be achieved, given the complicity of the

military and other high-ranking state officials in the narcotic trade.

Nonetheless, one of the issues that the extra-ordinary summit of Foreign Ministers of ECOWAS and the International Contact Group will be focusing on when it convenes in the next one or two weeks in Bissau, is defence and security reform, which is related to the fight against drug trafficking. Training and retraining of soldiers, especially of the top echelon of the military, is key to sustaining peace and security in the country and the sub-region, Air Vice Marshall Bala Golgak Danbaba, Chief of Policy and Plans at the Defence Headquarters and member of the Nigerian delegation to the solidarity visit, said.

The interim government of Pereira has limited powers and only 60 days to conduct fresh election. In a normal situation, this will present some challenge, but in a broken country like Guinea-Bissau, it would be a near-miracle if the feat is achieved.

ECOWAS and the International Contact Group on Guinea-Bissau, comprising the European Union, Africa Union, United Nations, CPLP (group of Portuguese speaking nations), and other stakeholders have pledged assistance to the country. But Cuban Ambassador to Guinea-Bissau, Pedro Dona Santana, said the pledge to offer assistance is an old refrain. "There have been efforts to bring aid and development to Guinea-Bissau. Most of these projects and programmes did not produce results, as the financial pledges were not redeemed," he said.

But the Dean of Ambassadors in Guinea-Bissau warned that not keeping to pledges to help the country through its trying times is an invitation to anarchy. "The priority here is the 60 days for the election. If we don't give support for this effort, it will be an invitation to further crisis," he said.

Going by the constitution, the interim presidency of Pereira has just 53 days, as at tomorrow, to conduct the election.

Shinawatra-less Manchester City pull out of Thailand

March 9, 2009

Categories: Sports, Thai Politics

[Shinawatra-less Manchester City pull out of Thailand](#) – *Goal.com*, March, 2009

Manchester City had high hopes of becoming 'Asia's Premier League team' when former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra took over the club, but a domestic scandal and severe legal trouble forced him to sell to the Abu Dhabi-based ADUG firm...

Kiss Thailand's tolerance for gays goodbye

March 9, 2009

Categories: Local Beliefs

[Kiss Thailand's tolerance for gays goodbye](#) – CounterPunch, March 9, 2009

More than two hundred red-shirted followers of ousted former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra introduced homophobia for the first time into Thailand's festering political scene when on Saturday, February 21, they forced cancellation of a lawful and peaceful gay pride parade and rally in Chiang Mai. The disruption was organized by Rak Chiang Mai 51, the local faction of Thaksin-supported United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD)...

Two days before the event, warnings had already circulated in the area telling tourists to stay away from the planned parade route. In addition, for several days local radio stations controlled by the Thaksin clique urged its followers to disrupt the event. The logistical complexity of the disruption, which also included a fleet of sound trucks blaring homophobic epithets and threats of violence, indicated a significant level of planning and financing...

Passover travel warnings issued for Sinai, Turkey, Thailand

March 9, 2009

Categories: Uncategorized

[Passover travel warnings issued for Sinai, Turkey, Thailand](#) – Ynetnews, March 9, 2009

Bureau calls on Israelis not to visit Sinai, issues terrorism warnings for Turkey, Thailand – Just before the Passover holiday, the Counter Terrorism Bureau...

A day later

this article's title was changed to [Passover travel warnings issued for Sinai](#) and the Thai mention in the subheading was gone.

Another article that references the original Thai warning: [Pessah warning: Stay away from Sinai](#) – jpost, March 9, 2009

...It also warned against visiting northern Nigeria, several spots in Thailand and the Malaysian border; and said there was a “basic concrete threat” on the Kenyan coast.

Regarding Turkey, the Philippines, Thailand and Uzbekistan, the National Security Council said there were risks of “chance terror attacks” and advised Israelis there to take special precautions.

‘Merchant of Death’ or simple tango lover?

March 9, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[“Merchant of Death” or simple tango lover?](#) – *New York Times*, March, 2009

...Last week a Bangkok newspaper, The Nation, reported that the judge, Jitakorn Patanasiri, “half-jokingly said he would be denied a visa to either the United States or Russia following the verdict.” The Nation said the judge told a Thai prosecutor: “I am in a tough position. Bilateral ties with Russia and the United States could be at stake...”

Thai pirate murder – the aftermath

March 11, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thai pirate murder – the aftermath](#) – *Sail World* March, 2009

The ragged teenagers who bludgeoned a cruising sailor to death in Thailand may never be tried, and British sailors with the dream of sailing the world are thinking again...

Monkeys show young how to floss

March 11, 2009

[Monkeys show young how to floss](#) – *Herald Sun*, March 11, 2009

Thai monkeys have been observed showing their young how to floss – proof that primates teach offspring to use tools, a Japanese researcher says...

Thieves targeting outbound passengers at Bangkok airport

March 11, 2009

Categories: Airports and Airlines, Scams

[Thieves targeting outbound passengers at Bangkok airport](#) – *Car Rentals*, March, 2009

Preah Vihear temple has access roads from all directions

March 12, 2009

Categories: Preah Vihear

[Preah Vihear temple has access roads from all directions](#) – *KI*, March 12, 2009

Chinese dissident lawyer's family defects

March 12, 2009

Categories: China

[Chinese dissident lawyer's family defects](#) – *The Nation*, March 12, 2009

...The wife and children of a top civil rights lawyer under close surveillance by the Chinese authorities have arrived in the United States after walking across the border to Thailand, Gao Zhisheng's wife Geng He said.

Geng said her daughter, 15, and son, 5, had suffered "great hardship" in China from living under virtual house arrest in their Beijing home...

Tagines, hookahs in Bangkok's "hidden" Arab quarter

March 12, 2009

Categories: Communities

[Tagines, hookahs in Bangkok's "hidden" Arab quarter](#) – *Reuters*, March, 2009

Repentant thief sends back Sun God bead

March 13, 2009

[Repentant thief sends back Sun God bead](#) – *The Nation*, March 13, 2009

Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand support call for global currency

March 14, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand support call for global currency](#) – Bloomberg, March, 2009

China's call for a global reserve currency to take the place of the dollar has won the support of central bank chiefs in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, who argue it would help curb volatility and foster trade...

Containers full of bodies reported to have been discovered off the coast of Sattahip

March 15, 2009

Categories: Crime

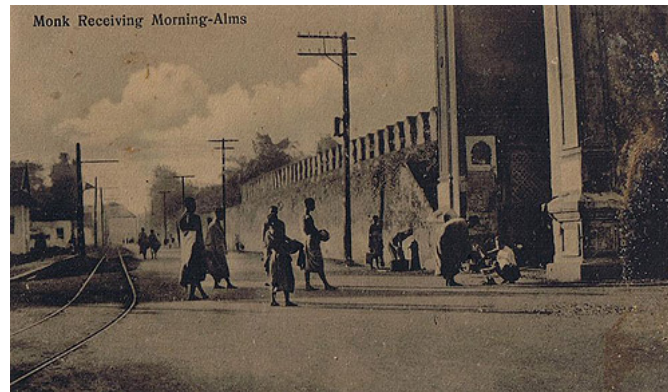
[No containers in Sattahip sea](#) – *Bangkok Post*, May 15, 2009

Earlier: [Containers full of bodies reported to have been discovered off the coast of Sattahip](#) – *PattayaOne*, May 6, 2009

And on YouTube [here](#) and [here](#).

Old Bangkok

March 16, 2009



Old Bangkok – March 16, 2009



Other views: [Ratchadamneon-then and now](#)
Also: [Phan Phiphop Lila Bridge over the years](#)



Ning is happy with new life down on the farm

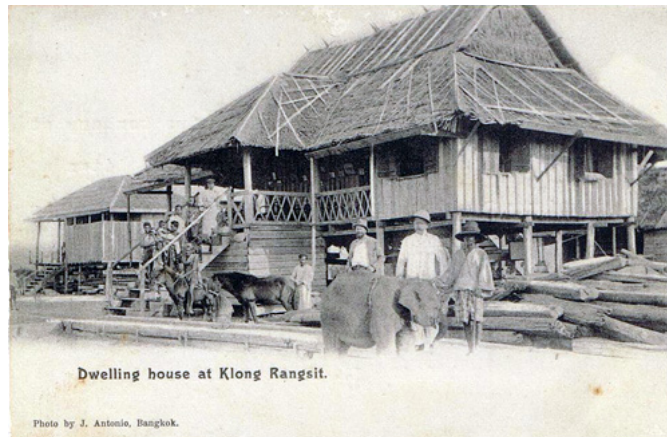
March 16, 2009

[Ning is happy with new life down on the farm](#) – *Berwickshire Today*, March 16, 2009

A Thai trainee farm worker has been uniquely rewarded for his hard work and enthusiasm – by having the first spring calf of the year named after him...

Dwelling house at Klong Rangsit

March 17, 2009



Dwelling house at Klong Rangsit – March 17, 2009
From an undated postcard.

Elderly fraudsters jailed for scam sale of Thai royal family's former land

March 17, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Elderly fraudsters jailed for scam sale of Thai royal family's former land](#) – *Telegraph*, March 17, 2009

Four elderly men have been jailed over an 8 million scam involving the sale of a plot of land that was formerly the home of the King and Queen of Thailand...

[Billionaire Candy brothers were duped by con men](#) – *Telegraph*, March 21, 2009

Nick and Christian Candy, the renowned billionaire property entrepreneurs, have been the victims of four elderly con men who forged paperwork...

Princesses of Siam

March 18, 2009



(Source: undated photo)

Princesses of Siam – March 18, 2009

A handwritten caption written in Thai on the back reads: The photograph shows the princesses of Siam, who were daughters of King Rama V the Great. Names of princesses from front line to rear 1. Sujitra 2. Adisai 3. Hem 4. Wapee 5. Sutathip 6. Walai 7. Chandra 8. Nipanoppadon 9. Malineenopdara 10. Ornpraphan 11. Jutarat 12. Worrarak 13. Beatrixpatra 14. Yaowaman 15. Chareonsri 16. Prapapanpilai 17. Atcharaphan 18. Yaowapa 19. Artorn 20. Pravesworasamai 21. Sasipong

Police view seriously Thailand's allegation bout Kelantan

March 18, 2009

Categories: Drugs

[Police view seriously Thailand's allegation about Kelantan](#) – *Bernama*, March 18, 2009

Malaysian police are taking seriously Thailand's allegation that Kelantan is a transit point for drugs distribution in Malaysia and say the matter had to be tackled urgently...

Old postcard

March 18, 2009



Old postcard – March 18, 2009

Captions read: Phya Thai Palace, Bangkok – Bedroom Suite de Luxe, Under the management of the Royal State Railways of Siam

Thai Media Project Main Page

March 19, 2009

Categories: Thai Media Project



Mind your ears! – by Arun, *Krungtepturakit*, March 19, 2009

Next to the plunger, it says: Censure debate

Chalerm, who is leading the censure motion, says: I'm going to push the button. Mind your ears.

The five faces represent the Democrat-led government's ministers facing censure debate: Foreign Minister Kasit Piromya, Finance Minister Mr. Korn Jatikavanij, Deputy Finance Minister Pradit Phatararasi, Interior Minister Chavarat Charnvirakul and his deputy Boonjong Wongtrairat.

2B's Thai Media Project is an attempt to survey what most of the population are reading in newspapers. Like the rest of 2Bangkok.com, we hope it will ideally be "Thai news you can't find anywhere else" (in English).

The English-language papers, *The Nation* and the *Bangkok Post* reach a very, very small audience. While they cover local news better than they did in the past, both are locked into narrow perspectives and edit news according to what is assumed to be interesting to their English-reading audience.

You can sniff at a sensational paper like *ThaiRath*, but compare the English-language papers' daily circulation of around 50,000 each with *ThaiRath*'s 1,000,000. Clearly *ThaiRath* is influencing a lot more people in the Thai world and 2Bangkok.com will document that.

Besides *ThaiRath*, we have picked the leading 'serious' daily *Matichon* (which has a circulation of around 400,000 daily and takes an anti-government line) and *Thaipost*, which sometimes has rabid, news-of-the-moment stories that reflect the public tone. I have put comments on the stories in brackets. – Ron Morris, 2Bangkok.com Editor

2009

[December](#)

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[April II](#)

[April I](#)

[March](#)

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[Pee Boon movement](#)

[New government – newspaper front pages](#)

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[Newspaper front pages from the cremation ceremony of Princess Galayani](#)

[October](#)

[Thai news from April-May](#)

[Thai news from March- April](#)

[Editorial cartoons/news – February-March](#)

[Police chief removed/Southern bomber?](#)

[January 2007](#)

["IRK" cartoons](#)

[Front pages after the bombings](#)

2006

["Catching the chicken to show the monkey"](#)

[Kaolao Ruammitr by Tin](#)

[More December 2006 editorial cartoons and end of iTV](#)

[December 2006 editorial cartoons](#)

[November 2006 editorial cartoons](#)

[More October 2006 editorial cartoons](#)

[Editorial cartoons: The death of TRT – October 2006](#)

[Editorial cartoons – September 2006](#)

[Front pages – September 17, 2006](#)

[More editorial cartoons – September 2006](#)

[Front pages – September 2006](#)

[The anti-drinking ad in popular culture](#)

[September](#)

[August](#)

[July](#)

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[January](#)

2007

[Sapa Samanachan](#)

[The rude book](#)

[Editorial cartoons/news – October](#)

[Editorial cartoons/news – August-September](#)

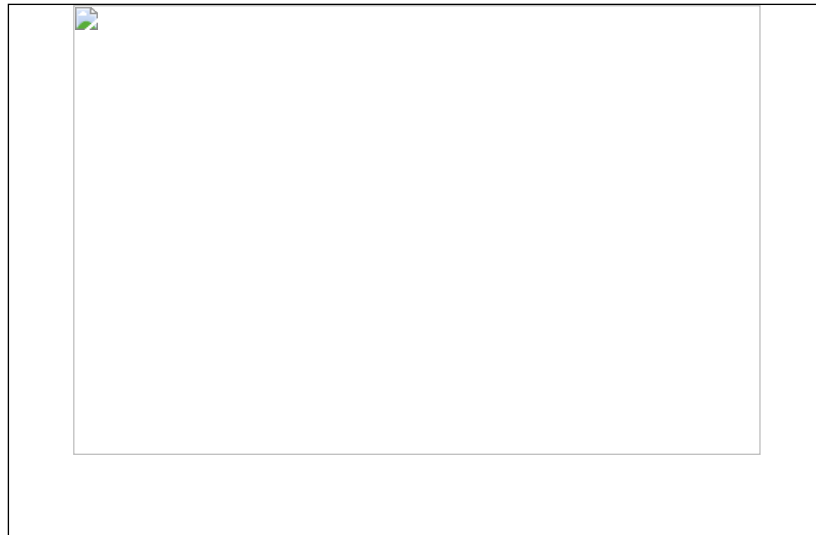
[Frozen asset headlines](#)

[Weekend front pages](#) – August-September, 2006

[How the Thai press covered the latest mass bombings](#) – August 6, 2006

[Headlines from the May 21, 2006 front page of *Thairath* newspaper](#)

2005



(Source: *Thai Post*)

Editorial cartoon: *Thai Post* – December 13, 2005

Editorial cartoon that says: *The foreigner investors smell the odor of being broke (having no money).* (*Thai Post* can be rabidly antigovernment.)

[Prachachatturakij editorial: What is the plan to protect flood that reoccur from North to South?](#) – December 2, 2005

[Komchadluek editorial: A question that has no answer](#) – December 1, 2005

[Book Review: The impurity of protest](#)

[Matichon editorial: Quality of a Minister](#) – November 17, 2005

[Thairath editorial: To solve or make problems?](#) – November 12, 2005

[Matichon editorial: Thai-style working](#) – November 14, 2005

[Khao Sod editorial: Following the right way](#) – November 11, 2005

[Matichon editorial: The accusation about a secret prison and criticism of *Matichon*](#) – November 8 2005

[Thairath editorial: Worry that the government is insolvent](#) – November 3, 2005

[Thairath editorial: The signal that warns the government](#) – November 2, 2005

[Survey of the Thai-language press: the by-elections](#) – November 1, 2005

[Thairath editorial: Freedom of the press "plummets into a gorge"](#) – October 28, 2005

[Thairath editorial: The gang to exploit poor people](#) – October 13, 2005

[Thairath editorial: Dialogue is not bad](#) – October 12, 2005

[Matichon editorial: Don't trade in one dimension](#) – October 5, 2005

[Matichon editorial: Must talk about "The Opportunity"](#) – October 3, 2005

[The constitution is dead?](#) – editorial of *Thairath*, September 28, 2005

[Thai media and the different truth – the unreported riot](#) – editorial translated from *Prachachat*, September 27, 2005

[Reactions to Thaksin's 'X'](#) – August 27, 2005

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

[Thaksin Dictionary](#) – June 21, 2005

[The end of a dayweekly](#) – June 17, 2005

[War and Peace at the Southern Border](#) – April 30, 2005

Chapter summaries from the Thai-language *War and Peace at the Southern Border* by Dr Rung Kaewdaeng, Deputy Education Minister. This is the book that Democrat leader Abisit Vejajiva suggested that PM Thaksin should read...

[The Poojadkuan columns in Manager](#)

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

2005

[Editorial: Quash corruption-not duty](#) – translated and summarized from *Matichon*, July 29, 2005

[Editorial: Prevent is better than mending](#) – translated and summarized from *Matichon*, July 27, 2005

[Editorial: 'Go to the right way'](#) – translated and summarized from *Thairath*, July 25, 2005

[July 4](#) – Baby drop daily/falling off the balcony

[June 15-17](#) – Mr. Prai Pattano, the Lord Mayor of Haddyai, Songkhla won on four lottery tickets and won 32 million baht.

[June 14](#) – Bangkok does not agree to divide the area of Kwaeng Ladkrabang and Kwaeng Tapyao

[June 10](#) – The senators who do not accept the government draft.

[June 9](#) – Malaria still spreads seriously in many places.

[June 8](#) – 204,785 baht that an officer embezzled

[June 6-7](#) – She also had a new boyfriend who is a policeman...

[June 1-3](#) – Followers of Lung Por Pool win the lottery with his age/Thai Rak Thai's people counter that Thirayuth is only a marketing man

[May 30](#) – ...cut her husband's penis off while he was sleeping.

[May 24-27](#) – When the abbot of Wat Phailom died on Visakhabucha day all the lottery tickets in the temple sold well/ "controversial actions" at Wat Phrakeo

[May 23](#) – Luang Por Pool Attarakkho, the 94-year-old abbot of Wat Phailom, Nakornprathom, died

[May 13](#) – Dengue fever has taken 14 people's lives and made 7215 ill.

[May 12](#) – Thaksin is upset and cries out that the media are dishonoring the government

[April 28](#) – Tesco Lotus allegedly the store ordered workers to work on holidays without getting payment.

[April 27](#) – He counters that it is not true that Muslims are second class citizens.

[April 26](#) – His friend said that day Mr. Aek had a 'black face.'

[April 25](#) – Banham failed because people lose the faith in him, not because of a 'big rain.'

[April 22](#) – Drug dealers shot dead

[April 21](#) – "Factors related to refraining from sex in female youth"

[April 20](#) – Special helmets/Songkran blessings

[April 19](#) – Replacing the Giant Swing

[April 13](#) – The new year: 'riding a donkey and eating milk and butter'

[April 8](#) – "Horoscope of the Nation: Year of the Rooster"

[April 7](#) – A look at Thaksin's cabinet 2/1 – "where we want to go"

[April 7](#) – Editorial: Government Efficiency

[April 6](#) – Stop the terrorists from expanding

[March 31](#) – Worms/runaway taxi driver/Kanjanaburi dam won't break

[March 30](#) – 50-year-old villager who eats the flesh of dead bodies burnt at the cemetery

[March 29](#) – On April 10, the government will organize a big merit ceremony for the country.

[March 25](#) – Man believes his family will steal his kidney

[March 23-24](#) – Hail storm and tornado/126 Esarn members of Parliament gather to be a 'group of sticky rice'

[March 22](#) – A bloody day

[March 21](#) – Ban Laem Tukkae, a tsunami-impacted fishermen's village, declared it would not permit tourists to visit.

[March 17](#) – Leech!

[March 15](#) – Who moved the date trees?

[March 14](#) – ...shot himself at his workplace because of losing his new mobile phone/ Feng Shui at the Ministry of Agriculture

[March 12](#) – 'Destroy world day'

[March 11](#) – 27 nauseous and vomiting students

[March 8-9](#) – People became diseased from a mercury toxin substance in a gold digging area

[March 2-3](#) – Degree curriculum based on local Intelligence/She put a necklace with a portrait of King Rama V on the girl

[March 1](#) – Two guys fight to win one charming widow/Headless farang ghost

[February 28](#) – She tried to fight, but was hit by an electric mosquito net and soda bottle

[February 25](#) – Resisting the concession of Pong Mountain to make a mine for Sintanan Company

[February 24](#) – Inappropriate behavior of students

[February 21](#) – Arab websites show the Takbai event video for the first time

[February 18](#) – The '9th Group' is actually is the arms and legs of Suriya and Somsak.

[February 16](#) – Danger from toxics in the sweets case

[February 14](#) – Military and police intimidate TRT voters in the South?

[February 8](#) – Astrologers foretell the future of Thaksin—it's not good

[February 7](#) – Party leaders react to the election

[February 3](#) – An officer and DJ were punched by a group of 20 drunken men

[February 1](#) – New sex drug/kidnapped new born

[January 28](#) – People whose ID cards are held by loan sharks get new ones made to vote

[January 27](#) – Gambling house raid

[January 25-26](#) – Protection requested for rape accuser

[January 24](#) – Between the devil and the deep blue sea!/computer game addict/*ThaiPost* front page

[January 21](#) – Taxi thieves crash

[January 20](#) – Gold thief stiff's taxi
[January 19](#) – Bullet delivery to Yala
[January 18](#) – Man slits throat in front of British Embassy/Newin accused in the south
[January 17](#) – Relay the execution of prisoners online
[January 13](#) – Property prices/Thaksinomics
[January 12](#) – Thaksin makes breakfast
[January 11](#) – Members of Wang Nam Yen are still at the end of the party list
[January 6](#) – Thaksin said Thai Rak Thai has no tsunami, but only Hanami which is rich with friends.
[January 4](#) – The legend of Khaolak
[January 2](#) – Rude letters to the Constitutional Court

[Survey of Fah Diaw Kan](#)

A survey of the Thai-language political quarterly *Fah Diaw Kan* and its main editorial.



2004

[Bangkok Biz News](#) – "Say goodbye to the cruel monkey year!" – Thai-language newspapers' December 31 editions
[December 27- December 31](#) – Feng shui and the Democrats
 December 26-January 1 – Tsunami-related headlines for these dates are contained in the [tsunami newsfeed](#)
[December 22](#) – Bahham neglected?
[December 21](#) – Cadmium contamination at Phadaeng Industry Mine company
[December 19](#) – Punched by a monk
[December 17](#) – More beer bar areas to be investigated/check the Donmuang TRT candidate/"hi-so junior"
[December 16](#) – Sirivipa Krajangsung, ex-moviestar, shot
[December 14-15](#) – A tale of two newspapers: Beer bar demolition/no crabs for *somtum boo*
[December 13](#) – The youth of Thailand are champions of whisky drinking
[December 10](#) – "Moei Khab" on the grass in Doi Intanon and Doi Angkhang
[December 9](#) – Where frost is front page news
[December 8](#) – Jobs for the southern provinces
[December 6-7](#) – Two die from smoke inhalation
[December 3](#) – Oke's mobile fun park
[December 2](#) – C.P. Company astrologer predicts the next government/Tom-Dee murder
[December 1](#) – *Matichon* punished for the sexual harassment news against Sanant
[November 29-30](#) – Skewered by a sharp iron
[November 26](#) – 200 illicit logs bob up to the surface/taxi driver gets slapped
[November 25](#) – Singapore uses Udon Thani airport for training
[November 23](#) – Candidates for the upcoming election
[November 22](#) – Monks with amphetamines in their rectums
[November 19](#) – Germany company J.K. Defense Industrial to set up weapon factory
[November 16-17](#) – Actors steal cars/Editorial: The Professional
[November 15](#) – New pickup truck stolen even though the steering wheel was removed and the brake was locked
[November 12](#) – Merit making not related to the victims killed in the south/Girl falls off bus
[November 11](#) – Yasotorn government to be monitored/Editorial: The manhandled and forgotten
[November 10](#) – Man falls off building/Worry over Christian booklet
[November 8-9](#) – Teacher shot in front of student/Chinese swordfight over dog meat
[November 5](#) – "Vake Malaengsab" showed how to eat live cockroaches
[November 4](#) – Editorial: Participation-Non-violence/Senate fight: "Strong bad smell around the world!"
[November 3](#) – Three sex-mad students drown girl/Teacher orders 49 students to hit one student on the head
[November 2](#) – Black magic flags buried with the names of TRT MPs
[November 1](#) – Editorial: Is it the right way?/Retort to Malaysia
[October 27-29](#) – TRT MPs smile happily because of extra money for the election/*Thai Post* editorial: The riot
[October 26](#) – A cruel monk shot three people/Lotus Superstore strip searches
[October 25](#) – After drinking whiskey and gambling and quarreling, the head of the gambling house was punched in the face [October 22](#) – It is assumed he was accidentally shocked at the construction site.
[October 21](#) – Terrorists in the South kill longan trees by cutting the stem and pouring gas into it to make it die.
[October 20](#) – Abortions average 1,000 per day/A new trend for Thai gays
[October 19](#) – The old lady who won 22 million baht in the lottery
[October 18](#) – Recently he felt affection for a beautiful widow in the village who is charming to other men also.
[October 15](#) – His tongue got a tetanus infection and he cannot taste anymore.

[October 14](#) & [The look of two newspapers](#) – comparing *Kom Chad Luek* and *The Nation*
[October 13](#) – The latest trend in youth behavior in Chaiyapoom province is to have a big penis/there is a group wanting to overthrow Thaksin
[October 12](#) – A young guy is addicted to computer games, but has no money so he robbed Bangkok Bank
[October 11](#) – Short, fat, and old caddies
[October 8](#) – Falling into a boiling pot of tuna
[October 7](#) – 'Oil smuggling mafia kills police in the south'
[October 5](#) – After making them take off their jeans, they gave the victim shorts to wear
[October 4](#) – The student who found a finger in minced pork is very upset.
[October 1](#) – Democrat Party raps the government drivel of talking about a coup
[September 30](#) – Thaksin is tense about the coup news/SMS sex
[September 29](#) – Woman gets 25 years for killing infant



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

[September 28](#) – Looking for sex with the telephone
[September 27](#) – A tale of two newspapers: The threatening billboard
[September 24](#) – Scalding at Oishi
[September 23](#) – Mother and daughter drink pesticide.
[September 22](#) – Attacking the Chamlong Foundation
[September 21](#) – Kroo Bala set up himself to be a god of mountains and a reborn person.

[September 20](#) – Editorial: The death of the judge, the failure of the government/The owner of the rottweiler is defiant.

[September 19](#) – An elephant named “Kumpai” gives birth to a baby weighing 100 kgs.

[September 18](#) – Making women in Thailand lose their reputation/New structure of police force: “No belly”

U.S. Embassy in 1951

March 19, 2009



(Source: AP wire photo)

U.S. Embassy in 1951 – March 19, 2009

Caption on the back of this photo from 1951 reads: *June 30 – U.S Embassy which was hit in fighting in Bangkok – This is the U.S. Embassy in bangkok, Thailand, which was hit four times during an artillery duel between army and navy forces in Bangkok's streets today. Shells ripped through the building as navy and marine forces fought what appeared to be a losing battle to set up a rebel government replacing kidnapped Premier Pibulsonggram. (AP wire photo)*

Thai soldiers lay barbed wires deep inside Khmer territory

March 19, 2009

Categories: Preah Vihear

[Thai soldiers lay barbed wires deep inside Khmer territory](#) – *KI*, March 19, 2009

Your Holiness, meet the Condom King

March 19, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Your Holiness, meet the Condom King](#) – Dothan Eagle, March, 2009

...Mechai should request an audience with Pope Benedict XVI. It would promise to be an enlightening evening.

In a visit to Africa this week, the pope took a position against condom use as a tool in AIDS prevention. “You can’t resolve it with condoms,” the pope said. “On the contrary, it increases the problem.”

Mechai would take issue with that, and would have reams of data to support his position...

Too-tiny turtles from Thailand seized at DIA

March 20, 2009

Categories: Wildlife and Nature

[Too-tiny turtles from Thailand seized at DIA](#) – *Longmont Daily Times-Call*, March 20, 2009
A Denver-area aquarium shop and pet store illegally imported the turtles from Thailand...

Reasoned, intelligent debate? No way

March 22, 2009

[Reasoned, intelligent debate? No way](#) – Bangkok Post, March 22, 2009

Swear words, derisive phrases and sarcasm abounded, along with near brawls, challenges to swear oaths at Buddhist temples and Pheu Thai MP Surachet Chaikosol raising his middle finger to Puea Pandin MP Ron Rithichai. The following is a list of the abuse that Thailand's democratically elected representatives hurled at each other for two days...

Siamese women

March 23, 2009



Siamese women – March 23, 2009
Above: Undated postcard
Below: Postcard from 1899



Ratchadamneorn in 1950

March 24, 2009

Categories: Old photos and films



(Source: 1950 postcard)

Ratchadamneorn in 1950 – March 24, 2009

Earlier: [Ratchadamneorn-then](#)
[and now](#)

At the Red Shirt Rally – March 26, 2009

March 26, 2009

Categories: Red Shirt Protest 2009



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)

At the Red Shirt rally – March 26, 2009

Also: [January 31, 2009 Red Shirt rally](#)

Also: [April 3, 2009 Red Shirt rally](#)



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)

It reads: Moral support from the Bangkokyai residents



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)

The cursing words read: -The frog living inside the coconut shell
Prem's ass loses balance
Thep Tuag dirt pissing off man
The Army belongs to the people, not the belonging of someone



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)

The picture contains the mocking pictures of the Democrat Prime Minister and Ministers of his Cabinet and coalition.
The picture on the left side shows that Mr. Suthep Tuagsuban (with the caption “I am Thap”) riding on the back of Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva, in the form of monitor lizard (with the caption “I am Mark”)
The picture on the right side shows Democrat Chief Advisor Chuan Leekpai holding the banner with the word reading “Chuan – taking loans always.”
Behind Mr. Chuan’s sign is the face of “Win” or Newin with the snake on his head.
The picture of the man in the form of the dog sitting close to Mr. Chuan is PM’s Office Minister Sathit Wongnongtoey with the caption that reads “timorous (short-body) dog”



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)

The picture shows the PAD core leaders standing in front of the Central Jail “Bang Khwang” with a sign that says "Welcome the nation sellers."

From left to right are PAD coordinator Suriyasai Katasila, PAD leader Pipob Thongchai, Somsak Kosaisook, Maj-Gen Chamlong Srimuang and Sondhi Limthongkul.

Suriyasai says “Do not harm us, we are frightened”

Pipob says “Do you have an idea how long we are going to be in ?”

Somsak says “Let ask Ai Lim, he is the head.”

Chamlong says “Ha Ha Ha, I go nuts!”

Sondhi says “Go and have free rice in jail.”



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)

The letter on the banner says: Cock Fighter group against Dictatorship holding tight to national democracy.



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)

It reads: The dictatorial government of the CNS – Borrowing money from foreign countries for a trillion baht – The interest has been returned for 2 years and where the money has gone?



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)

It reads: The nation is destroyed as the Democrats lead the government



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)

It reads: Families of police come here by themselves. No one hires us we come here by ourselves.



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)

It reads: Abhisit “KU KU”



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)

Person with a Thaksin mask on waiting for Thaksin’s call in.



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)

Also: [January 31, 2009 Red Shirt rally](#)
 Also: [April 3, 2009 Red Shirt rally](#)

‘Gift’ lands man in Bangkok lock-up

March 26, 2009

[‘Gift’ lands man in Bangkok lock-up](#) – *The New Straits Times*, March 26, 2009

...After much persuasion from embassy officials and family members, the police gave him two options — either seek a lawyer to fight his case or pay an “administration fee” of 150,000 baht.

“The police officer who recorded the statement assured them it was legal.

“We left the matter to the family to decide, and they finally agreed to pay after the amount was reduced to 100,000 baht,” he said.

The official dismissed reports in some blogs that claimed the money was divided by several policemen in their presence, adding that the pensioner was taken to the court on the third day where he pleaded “guilty without intention” and was asked to pay a nominal fee of 2,000 baht...

Burma key to Thailand's drug problem: SSA-S

March 26, 2009

Categories: Drugs, Myanmar/Burma

[Burma key to Thailand's drug problem: SSA-S](#) – *The Irrawaddy*, March 26, 2009

Thai police misreport finding U.K. tourist's remains in sea

March 27, 2009

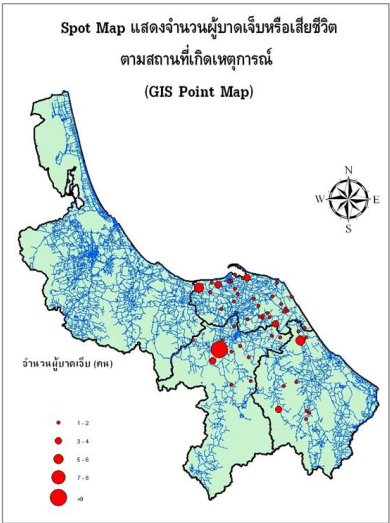
Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thai police misreport finding U.K. tourist's remains in sea](#) – Bloomberg, March 27, 2009

Thai police said they received a false report that the body of a U.K. tourist murdered with a hammer three days ago was found in the Andaman Sea near an island where he and his wife had stopped during a boating trip...

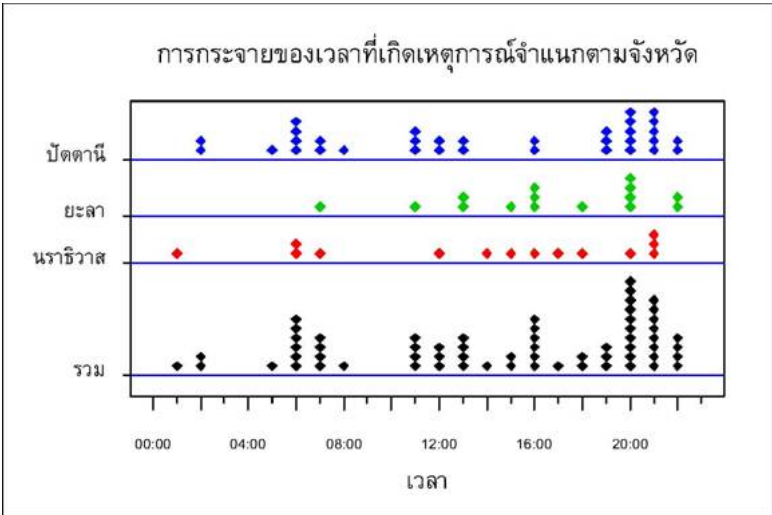
Southern Violence Statistics – March 2009

March 30, 2009
Categories: Deep South Violence Statistics

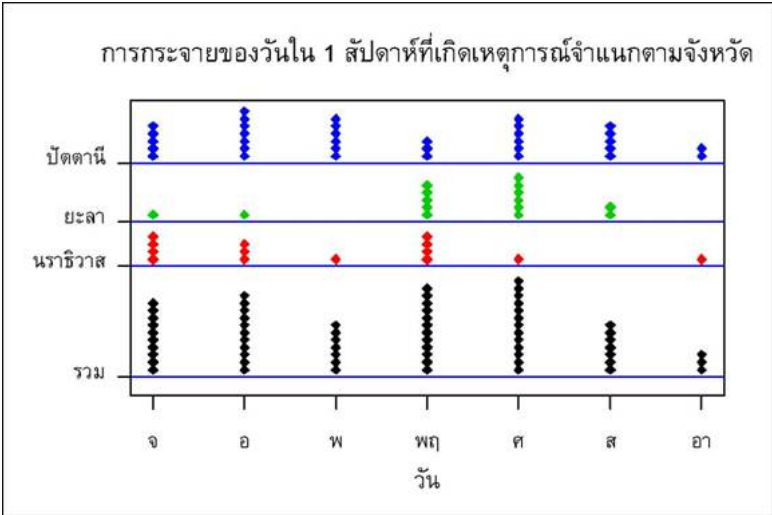


Map of four provinces in the deep south (Songkhla, Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat) showing numbers of the dead and injured by location.

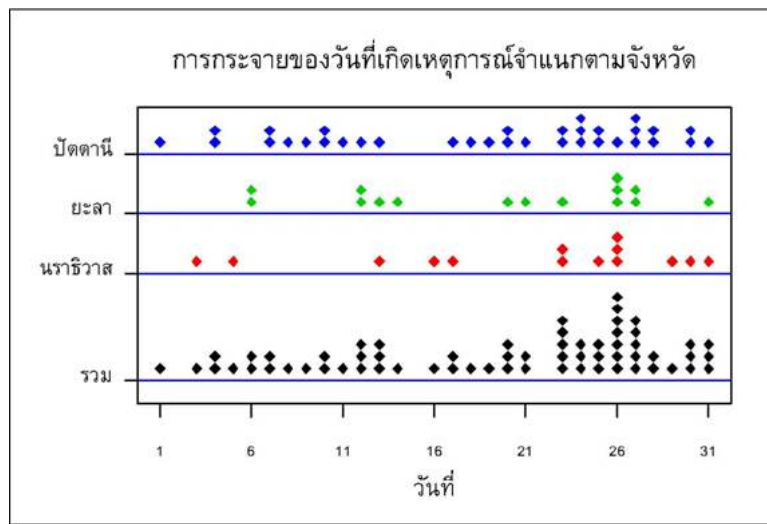
Southern Violence Statistics – March 2009
[Index of violence statistics for the Thai Deep South](#)



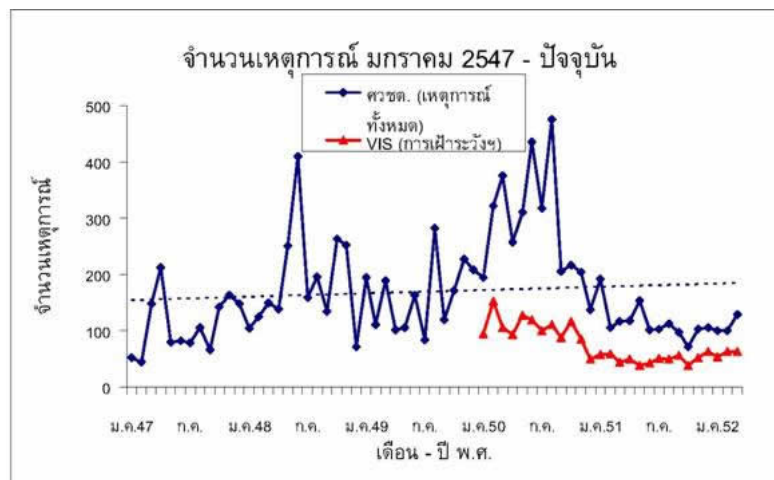
This chart shows violent incidents classified by the hour of the day (x-axis) and the province (y-axis). Songkhla=light blue, Pattani=blue, Yala=green, Narathiwat=red, total events=black



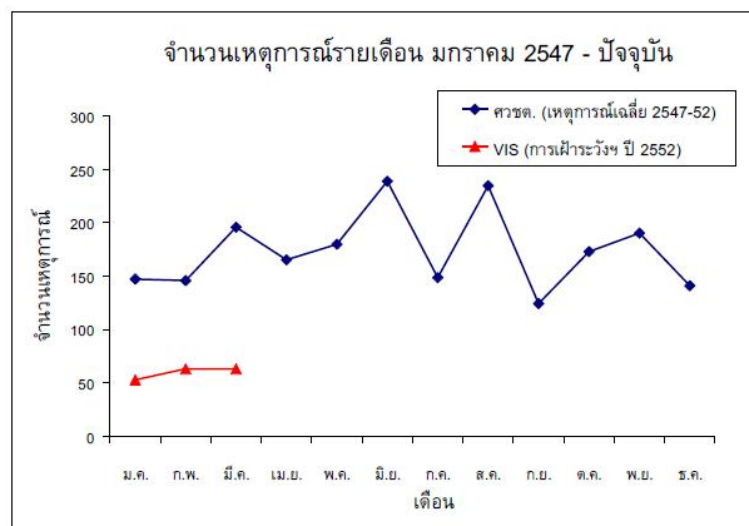
This chart shows violent incidents classified by day of the week (x-axis) and the province (y-axis). The days of the week start with Monday on the left. Songkhla=light blue, Pattani=blue, Yala=green, Narathiwat=red, total events=black



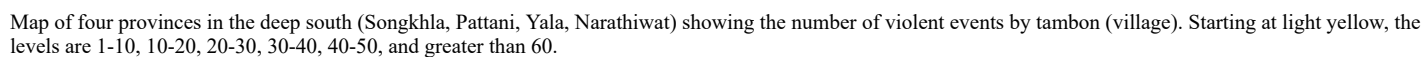
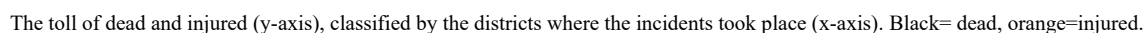
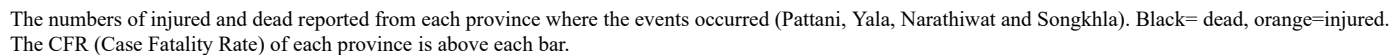
This chart shows violent incidents classified by day of the month (x-axis) and the province (y-axis). Songkhla=light blue, Pattani=blue, Yala=green, Narathiwat=red, total events=black

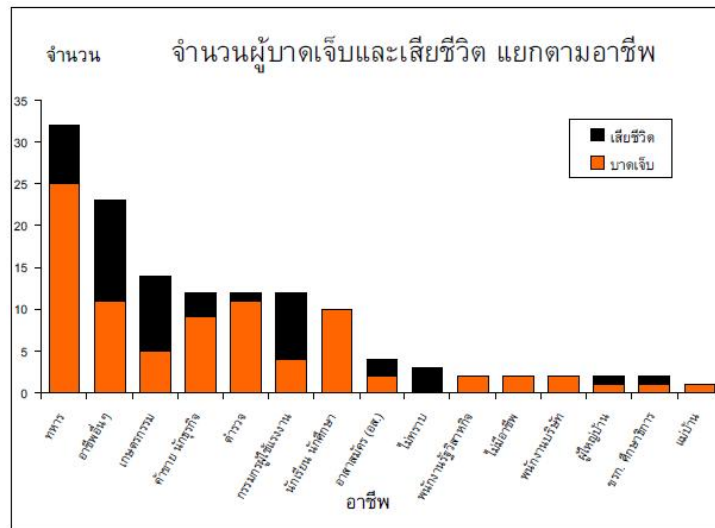


Numbers of violent incidents since January 2004. Across the bottom are the years (2547 is 2004, 2548 is 2005, 2549 is 2006, 2550 is 2007, 2551 is 2008, 2552 is 2009). The blue line shows the number of all violent incidents that took place as reported by the Deep South Coordination Center (counting all incidents both injury and non-injury). The red line shows data according to the Violence-related Injury Surveillance (a form that hospitals, doctors and clinics are supposed to fill out to report violent incidents).



The blue line shows the average monthly level of violent incidents from 2004 up to the present. The red line shows the information provided to the Violence-related Injury Surveillance in the present year. The y-axis shows the numbers of events from 0-300. The x-axis shows the months of the year from January to December (left to right).





The numbers of dead and injured, classified by the victims' profession. Black= dead, orange=injured. From left to right: army officers, others, agriculturists, businessmen, police officers, laborers, students and college students, volunteer defense guards, unknown, state enterprise employees, unemployed, company employees, village headmen, Education Ministry Officials, housewives, unknown (no data)

Source: Deep South Violence-related Injury Surveillance statistics

Thai Media Project – March 2009

March 30, 2009

Categories: Thai Media Project

More: [Unlocking the Thai world: Thai-language newspaper headlines](#)



As clear as it is! – *Kaolao Ruammit* by Tin, Matichon, March 29, 2009
The title is "As clear as it is!"

Top, left to right: It is clear who is the extra constitutional charismatic figure

It is clear that who gives the opposition party the information of the 258 million baht scandal.

It is clear that Death will work hard again during the Songkran Festival as the ban on selling alcohol fails.

Bottom, left to right: It is clear that the two children do not know how to work as they also do not have experience in distributing cheques.

It is clear that the problems in the unrest are not solved with clear policy from the government, therefore, the Army allocates guns to the people.

It is clear that this country has nothing more special than other countries if its chaos does not cease.



"Milk in the news" – *Thai Rath*, Chai Ratchawat, March 1, 2009

Milk in the news

Top left: Dairy farmers stage protest calling for the government's support by throwing away milk

Top middle: Students in many provinces drank spoiled milk – wow!

Top right: The hot VDO clip is the paparazzi snapshot of a superstar's breast.

Bottom left: Monks having breasts becomes hot news issue

Bottom middle: Family networks organization complains to the Ministry of Culture as piles of magazines on the newsstands contain images of breasts .

Bottom right: As children who drink milk become healthy, adults who "drink" milk become rich

Government encounters political opposition – the last bomb still left; interrogation war! – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; Column: Analysis; March 1, 2009

The Pheu Thai, as the opposition party, still continues to fight against the Democrat government, led by Abhisit Vejjajiva.

Its first bomb was the draft National Reconciliation Act, by Chalerm Yoobamrung, that did not work well as the coalition parties especially the Phum Jai Thai, led by Newin Chidchob, refused to support to draft act. Thai society also does not accept a proposal which will allow Thaksin Shinawatra and other political convicts to receive amnesty.

The Pheu Thai still tried to present the next 'bomb' – the national government. This proposal is similar to the National Conciliation Act. It offers a win-win solution to both political sides. However, it is now too late.

Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Thuangsuban completely denied the suggestion saying, "you can wait until the next life and the national government will not be formed!"

Right now, we know that there will be no negotiation between both parties and the situation will become intense.

Red-shirt people gathered in front of the Government House to declare four demands. However, their demands do not get the public's support.

Pheu Thai part therefore has to apply its last strategy – the face-to-face fight in the House of Representatives. Another no-confidence vote will be held.

Issues which will be discussed during the vote are still unclear. However, it is the only way to improve the opposition's situation.

Signal from the red-shirts – translated and summarized from *ASTV Manager Daily*; Author: Parnthep Puapongphan; March 4, 2009

On February 9, 2009, Mr. Ji Ungpakorn issued the 'Red Siam' statement, insulting Thailand's royal institute. He also urged the red-shirt mob to change Thailand's administrative system to socialism.

The statement makes lots of people believe that there is a rebellious movement in Thailand, that wants to get rid of the constitutional monarchy system.

The statement shows that Mr. Ji Ungpakorn is not only a marxist, but also an academic who fully supports Thaksin's mean regime.

He once said that Thailand was now under the aristocracy, not democracy. People had to fight for democracy to allow the Thai Rak Thai Party to create a welfare state.

Some followers and students of Mr. Ji, who helped seek signatures to bring down the lese majeste law became heart-broken once he joined the red-shirt party and supported the robber baron system.

The Red Siam statement tells people that his target is to destroy the royal institute, not to get academic freedom as claimed.

On March 1, 2009, Mr. Ji issued another article, entitled 'how can we support the 'red party'.

He issued the statement to signal red-shirt people to form the red party from the grassroots.

However, the Red Siam statement focuses only on superficial election system. Some members of the Election Commission have just revealed that the current EC is fake one. So, how can we trust the fake election system, which is the origin of the political power?

Politicians coming from a dirty election are the beginning of the robber baron system. They block the freedom of the press and amend the law to make themselves clean. Red-shirt people working for a Thaksin regime are becoming weak.

Consequently, the signal sent from Mr. Ji Ungpakorn reflects that the red-shirt party is losing the battle.

Is it true or just a game? – translated and summarized from *Thai Rath*; Column: Editorial; March 2, 2009

Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva and Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Thaugsuban both said that the Democrat Party had no plan to join forces with the Pheu Thai Party to set up the 'National Government'. Mr. Abhisit sees that there should be an opposition party to interrogate the government and Mr. Suthep also confirms that there would be no national government, even in the next life.

It is rumored that high-ranking people are coaxing the Democrat to join forces with Pheu Thai to form the national government. However, the rumor is not confirmed. Some say that the rumor was just an ordinary political game, which Thai politicians like. It could be just an effort to create a conflict among the Democrat and coalition parties.

Some members of Pheu Thai see that the best solution to Thailand's situation now is to form the national government as it will be accepted by all parties. However, the constitution must be amended to allow an outsider to be the prime minister.

A source from Pheu Thai claims that Thaksin fully supports the national government policy to create unity in the country and allow him to get back home, without any charges.

If believing the report above, we will see that Pheu Thai, which has been announced that it is against dictatorship and will fight for democracy, is willing to do anything, even accepting an outsider prime minister which is against democracy, to join the government and enable Thaksin to come back to Thailand elegantly. We must admit that Thai politicians are especially good at playing political games to win the opposition. Hopefully, Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva will not be trapped in the dirty political circle, nor fooled by political games so much that he cannot use solve the current economic and political crises.

Punch to punch – *Thai Rath*, March 29, 2009

Left: Noppadol Pattama said: Former PM Thaksin Shinawatra's plan to give a special speech at the Foreign Correspondents' Club in Hong Kong made the government worry too much even though Thaksin went there only to talk about the economy."

Right: Suthep Thaugsuban said: Please stop talking to Thaksin because no matter what he does, there is nothing that happens. Now, we has to speed up working for people.



The position of a prime minister: "Dr. Chalerm" is reaching for the stars – translated and summarized from *Thaipost*; Column: The editorial; March 3, 2009

According to proposing non-confidence motion against each individual minister, it is necessary to also propose the name of a new prime minister attaching to the motion as specified by the constitution B.E. 2550 on Act 158 So, the Pheu Thai party's plan to propose the non-confidence motion against each individual minister of the Apisit government faces an obstacle because at the present, there is no the leader of the opposite party so he has to find a good person who is suited for the position of prime minister to attach his name to the motion before proposing. He decided on Pol. Capt. Charlern Yoobamrung for this position but we could not know whether former PM Thaksin Shinawatra will trust Charlern to work as the Pheu Thai party leader or not. However, the Pheu Thai party had better propose Pol. Gen. Pracha Promnok to be a new prime minister because once, the Pheu Thai party used to vote him into the office. Besides, it is possible that the coalition government parties especially the Thai Political party may join together holding the majority vote for defeating the Apisit-led government.



Matichon, March 4, 2009

The headlines read: Appoint a "Leader" – Military officer supports "Charlern" to be prime minister

British ambassador assures that rumor about giving back Thaksin's visa cannot be proved – Democrat party reveals that Thaksin appeals for his visa

Protect "Maptaphut industrial port" – Administrative court designates Maptaphut industrial port to be pollution control area within 60 days – Find many toxin substances

US economic crisis runs deep – "Dow Jones" falls 7 points in 11 years

Interrogate "the Mark government" – The Pheu Thai party is home alone



Krungthep Turakij, March 4, 2009

The headlines read: Administrative court designates Maptaphut industrial port to be pollution control area within 60 days – “Maptaphut industrial port”: PTT plans to block Rayong investment plan

"PTT's investment plan at Rayong": Foreigners sell some shares in their real-estate business for running away from the mortgage crisis – Thai investors wait to buy the cheap shares

Appoint Jatumongkol to administer the board of the Bank of Thailand – Tharisa asks the government to support the budget stimulating Thailand's economy

"Charnchai" recants his view on car tax decrease

Samui vow – translated and summarized from *Krungthep Thurakit*; Author: Pracha Burapavithree; March 6, 2009

Five leaders of the People Alliance for Democracy (PAD) finally announced that they would form a political party for the first time at their fifth political concert, held in Samui Island, Surat Thani province.

However, the party will not be formed in the next few days. It will be formed if the following criteria are not met:

1. If the Abhisit's administration does not proceed with the new politics concept.
2. If the Abhisit's administration does not get rid of the "police state," which is the carcass of the Thaksin regime.
3. If the Abhisit's administration does not hasten to punish those who want to bring down the royal institute.

These criteria play a very important role in setting up the PAD's political party. If there is a sign showing that the Abhisit's administration or the Democrats will keep using the old political system to manage the country, the PAD party will really be formed.

Leaders of the PAD insist that they will support the Abhisit's government. Suthep Thaugsuban is a person who creates a conflict among the PAD and the Democrat as he does not try to get rid of the Thaksin police system.

Window dressing – translated and summarized from *Daily News*; Column: The editorial; March 4, 2009

Nearly 3 months of Apisit's administration, members of the opposite party, NGO, specialists, media and Thai people always evaluate Apisit government's administration. Conducting polls by many institutes is also included in the evaluation. The economic crisis is most important and the political conflict is less interesting.

One of Apisit's ideas is to ask 36 ministers to go on an inspection tour in each province around the country within 2 weeks to give every minister a chance to follow up their governing policy which is in progress and to listen to the problems of people in each province. After work, they have to report to the cabinet on their progress.

Nevertheless, the government is accused of trying to get votes in advance of the next election and trying to reduce the popularity of the proposal of a no-confidence motion by the opposition party.

However, we hope that 36 ministers care for the population sincerely because, in the past, most politicians tried to behave in the ways that people admired even if their behavior was different from their performance.

Keeping a close watch on the green party – translated and summarized from *Krungthep Thurakit*; Column: Kae Roy Karn Muang; Author: Reporter No. 10; March 2, 2009

Currently, Thai people are not united, but we cannot forget that we are all Thais.

Politicians should think carefully before risking the country's future and its people to serve the need of one person.

Pheu Thai, Thailand's number one political party, should turn back and think about its actions, especially those done for the Shinawatra Family, not Thai people.

Looking back, we can see that the party has not done any favor for Thai people, but former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. The party does everything ordered by Thaksin. It does not have to do anything to strengthen itself, but waiting for the money and Thaksin's power.

However, movements by Thaksin and his followers begin to bore people.

And, it does not seem that Thai people can count on the government leadership of the Democrat party.

Although Abhisit Vejjajiva received a chance from people who are bored of the old power, he cannot gain popularity as expected.

It is rumored that some old and new politicians are moving to form a new party, which is backed by powerful people.

If the situation between two parties does not improve by the middle of the year, a green party, mixed with yellow-shirt people, could be officially introduced.

It is useless to fight with shadow – translated and summarized from *Krungthep Thurakit*; Column: Kae Roy Karn Muang; Author: Weerasak; March 4, 2009

The Prime Minister is asked not to pay too much attention to the movements of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who is a political carcass and cannot get any important positions, even how hard he tries.

The core problem is not about what he is doing, but how the country can go through the economic crisis. A global economist says the third support from the US government for the American International Group (AIG) reflects that the global economic crisis could be even worse, especially in 2010.

Therefore, we should focus on what is the real problem. Thaksin's leadership was over after September 19, 2006 and he will have no chance to become the Prime Minister again.

The reason is that this place is Thailand and that no international political model can be applied here. Moreover, the 'Peron return' belief is absolutely different to normal Thai political behavior.

Even though Thaksin knows that it is very difficult to win the game, he is still trying.

It is not surprising that Abhisit Vejjajiva's administration creates the shadow of the former Prime Minister and sees that it is the enemy.

However, the real enemies are poverty and unemployment.

Saint Gabriel connection for Thailand – outside councillors – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; March 5, 2009

A big problem Thai people are facing in 2009 is the economic crisis.

The crisis directly affects people's living and will also have an impact on politics, which is now disunited – people split into two colours.

Political enthusiasts might recently hear about the formation of the Rak Muang Thai group. Members of the party are, for instance, Kanok Wongtrangan, M.R. Pridiyathorn Devakula, Anek Lathamthath, Pravich Ratanapien, Weerasak Kowsurat and Sombat Thamrongthanyawong.

They all have a doctoral degrees and play an important economic or social role.

Rak Muang Thai announces that it is an independent thinker's group which will help offer economic solutions to all parties.

The origin of the party is quite interesting. The founders of the group were activists during the October 14 era. After that, the October 14 connection joined forces with economic gurus.

They meet up once a month to discuss significant issues and report them through the press.

M.R. Pridiyathorn said that the Rak Muang Thai party is a group which contains gurus from all businesses who have moderate ways of thinking. He insisted that the party was not set up to fight against the government, nor become a political party itself.

However, there is a possibility that it will develop to be a political party, if considering 'Saint Gabriel' connection. M.R. Pridiyathorn and Pravich were both students of the school.

Lots of high-ranking authorities in the forces were also from Saint Gabriel, including Gen. Sondhi Boonyaratklin and Suwat Liptapallop.

In term of personnel, the group is fully ready to form a political party.

Focusing too much on a criminal is not a good thing, the government should pay less attention to it – translated and summarized from *Thaipost*; Column: The editorial; March 5, 2009

Nowadays, Thai people are interested in the news about Thaksin's action as much as the political conflict. It is necessary that the government had better make them realize that everyone who breaks the law has to be punished including former PM Thaksin Shinawatra.

During the ASEAN summit conference, members of the Pheu Thai party played a political game by creating the story that Thai people really praised Thaksin, but he had to escape from the country because he was framed by soldiers so it made him have no permanent home.

Putting a value on Thaksin, who is an escaping prisoner, makes the Apisit government less reliable. Apisit is so worried that sometimes he cannot concentrate on his work.

The important thing that is the government has to pay attention to is the country's problem and to try to solve them urgently for a better quality of life of people.

Besides, the government had better put emphasis on Thaksin's case by asking every group to follow Thaksin and bring him back to Thailand for punishment.

Importantly, every group has to be able to answer the question when the society wants to really know about Thaksin's case.

Abhisit's administration expands its base – sends out ministers to the provinces – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; March 8, 2009

It looks like the Democrat government, led by Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva, is at a big political advantage. Thaksin's ninja strategy trying to create news is not successful.

Following a recent report saying that Thaksin would give a speech in Hong Kong, the Prime Minister ordered government units to go there and bring him back to Thailand to receive punishment. Therefore, Thaksin had to halt his travel and postpone the phone-in plan. Politicians visiting Thaksin abroad were urged to unveil where the former Prime Minister stays.

So, today, Thaksin is in big trouble.

The move by his followers trying to boost the Rachaprasa Samasai trend was also not successful.

The red-shirt mob during the ASEAN Summit was unable to mobilize people to help oust the Democrat government.

Here comes the last hope – the Pheu Thai party is holding a no-confidence vote.

Nevertheless, the move has been opposed, especially by Sanoh Thienthong, the head of Pracharat Party. He openly disagrees with the Pheu Thai party's decision.

All of these show that Thaksin supporters become weaker.

The government is using the opportunity to expand its base.

It sent out ministers to the provinces.

Even Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva visited Lop Buri by himself for the first time.

Other deputy ministers visited other provinces like Nakhon Nayok, Samut Prakan, Chon Buri, Kamphaengpet, Phijit, Chiang Mai, etc.

The local visits would prove power of red-shirt people in the provinces and also prove the capacity of provincial governors.

The visits also tell the public that the current government is not afraid of Thaksin Shinawatra. Therefore, the government is at an advantage.

It is also the first time for the Democrats to expand its base to these provinces.



Thairath, March 9, 2009

Horrible accident offered as a sacrifice for wedding – 19 people dead in the crash

Thaksin talks ironically to Mark – Solve economic crisis: Not borrow money, not give money to people

Beware of fever with rash: It is spreading around the country

Killer arrested: a killer who kills ex-director of Phatra Securities is arrested

Kill pensioned teacher: The pensioned teacher stifled with hands



Krungtep Turakij, March 9, 2009

Bank indicates that tourism-automobile-real estate-energy-iron business is in a worrying situation – Due to the fear of bad debt, banks stop giving risky businesses a loan

"Bank stops giving a loan" – analyst asks Asians to urgently increase the budget for encouraging themselves by giving them more money – Suppress bringing the recession to the economic situation

It is worrying that the credit crisis may hold the purchasing power – NESDB warns to keep up with the economic recession happening for the second time.

"Amman" suggests to increase the liquor tax – Depend on the degree of liquor – Retail price



Matichon, March 9, 2009

Disbelieve King Prajadhipok's Institute – Terng – Jatuporn oppose

'Maew' accuses the government of using the wrong solutions to solve the economic problem – Ruin the country – Brags that if he had been a prime minister, he would not have borrowed money

ATM hacker arrested – Reveal that he uses the jamming machine to hack the information

NESDB prepares the solutions of the economic crisis for dealing with the economic recession in the second time

Moving to oust the government both from outside and inside the parliament – translated and summarized from *Krungthep Thurakit*; Column: Kae Roy Karn Muang; Author: Reporter No. 10; March 9, 2009

The Pheu Thai Party is confident that the no-confidence vote against the Prime Minister and some ministers will worsen the image of the government.

However, the fact is conflicts are still seen inside the party. Members clearly have different ideas.

They completely split up. Some say they receive orders directly from the big boss. They are trying to increase their value, hoping to be promoted.

Watchdogs see that it is weird as leaders of the party said that they will not discuss Suthep Thaugsuban.

Boasts by lower-ranking representatives of the party make the vote even more doubtful. People wonder if it will be just a political game.

However, to play only in the parliament is not enough, they have to make a move outside as well, as ordered by the big boss.

Therefore, party members let red-shirt people start the game outside the parliament.

It is rumored that two weeks from, red-shirt people and the United Front of Democracy against Dictatorship will move to mobilize people. The big boss will also hold phone-ins.

In addition, one day before the vote, red-shirt people will mobilize people from across the country to gather again at the parliament and the Government House to oust the current government. They will stay there until the government steps down.

The one who sets the strategy for red-shirt people is Thaksin Shinawatra.

Ideal political party – translated and summarized from *Thai Rath*; Column: Editorial; March 9, 2009

Four leaders of the People Alliance for Democracy (PAD) announced for the first time during the fourth political concert in Samui island that it planned to form a political party.

If the PAD really forms a political party, the political battles will heat up. From a public political group, it will become a real political group which seeks power to manage the country. It will also end the accusation saying that the PAD is a network of the Democrat party.

If it is true, Thailand will have another political party, which claimed by leaders to come from people. They claim that the party will not seek power and advantage and will focus on creating the new political system.

If it is going to become a political party, the PAD will have to clearly explain about its 'new politics' concept. It will have to tell people that what the political culture will be like under the new politics.

According to the history, a political party which focuses on its ideal concept was never successful. Chamlong Srimuang is an example.

Thaksin Shinawatra's old habit – translated and summarized from *Thai Post*; Column: The Editorial; March 10, 2009

Deposed Premier Thaksin Shinawatra became a fugitive premier due to his criminal charge should reside permanently in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. He who

faces the verdict of the Supreme Administrative Court's special litigation on criminal cases of political office holders will be protected by the Middle East law which excludes the extradition of fugitives.

On concerns over the deposed premier's speech given during the interview with the Far Eastern Economics Review in defending his lese majeste accusations, quoted his words "I am the tame dog that can be tamed (more) at any time." This is the speech from the man whose viewpoints never change like when he gave a speech many years before with the phrase interpreted his request to HM King to "whisper in his ear" . Such a speech would never be delivered from any Thai except Thaksin Shinawatra.

What is the point that Thaksin wants to present to the foreign media by his interview on the plan to return to Thailand by the end of this year with an amnesty enacted by Parliament? The law which was mentioned is to be approved by the King and includes amnesty for political post holders facing lese majeste accusations. There is no doubt to say that this is the old habit of the man who quotes his strong loyalty to the King to the public, the man who has a 2 year jail sentence, the man who still wants to return to power, and the man who never changes his viewpoints and want to clean away mistakes as if with an eraser, and the man who views the people as dull all the time.

Right: Step over, but cannot pass by

A political question – Why 'stepping over' but can't 'pass by' Thaksin? – translated and summarized from *Matichon*;
Column: Vipak Hang Vipak; March 13, 2009

The choice to pick Thaksin is not surprising as Thaksin Shinawatra currently becomes headline news of both English and Thai newspapers, domestically and internationally.

The first factor is he continues to make his moves and the Abhisit Vejjajiva's government and the Democrat Party focuses a lot on Thaksin Shinawatra.

But, what does the headline saying "stepping over him, but cannot pass by" him mean?

The answer is in the page 9 of *Matichon Weekly's* special report.

It is an answer which triggers discussions.

Thaksin Shinawatra was no longer the Prime Minister after the September 19, 2006 coup. He came back again in early 2008 once the People Power's Party won the election. He fled Thailand again to run away from the Ratchada land case in mid-2008.

Two and a half years after the coup he continues to make news.

The phenomenon tells the Democrats that no matter how much it wants to pass by Thaksin, it cannot.

One factor is that Thaksin Shinawatra is too big to pass by. He has huge political power.

Another factor is that he does not allow the Democrat to pass him by. He never stops moving. He keeps holding phone-ins to his red-shirt followers and giving interviews to the international media.

The Digital Exorcist – translated and summarized from *Krungthep Turakit*; Column: Tracking politics; Author: Pracha; March 12, 2009

As deposed Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra is moving ahead on his phone-in policy to fight for his political claims and even compares himself to a tamed dog, the real enemy of the fugitive Premier is now not the yellow-shirt PAD group or the old aristocrat, but the so called "Digital exorcist" of the Dark Blue political pole .

The Dark Blue is attempting to turn the Pro-Thaksin red color into the dark blue starting from the seizure of power over the Interior Ministry .

The Interior Ministry policy is now giving priority to salary raises for tambon and village headman. The plan is partially to achieve the goal of changing the area under red influence (especially the Northeast) into dark blue.

The digital exorcist is moving ahead on buying broadcasting time from 150 community radio stations in the Northeast by its Buri Ram Media team. The digital plan is faster (to communicate with local/grassroots people) than the phone-in policy of red color headmaster .

The "Maew-analogue" policy to fight the ruling Democrat government is being defeated by the Dark Blue Digital Exorcist in the rural area and facing the yellow PAD's movement in seizing the initiative in the provinces.

And when the suitable time arrives, the dark blue sorcerer would manifest its magic by creating a parliament dissolution to clear the way for his new political pole in the next election. Any formula is possible for Thai politics—the dark blue with light blue to win the red or the dark blue with the red to win over the light blue!



What is to be done? – *Nation Weekend* cover, March 13, 2009

Top left:

- * Paiwarin Khaongam – Wien Wai Tai Kerd
- * Banchon Chawarlsilp – A path to hell in Ho Chi Minh city
- * Weenarat Laohapakakul – 50 years of Tibetan fight to free the country
- * Following Naowarat to the path of new politics

The main headline: What is to be done? "Yasai" reveals the doubt.

Right: Step over, but cannot pass by

Political question – Why 'stepping over,' but can't 'pass by' Thaksin? – translated and summarized from *Matichon*;
Column: Vipak Hang Vipak; March 13, 2009

PAD party – translated and summarized from *ASTV Manager Daily*; Column: Editorial; Author; Chai-anant Samutwanich; March 16, 2009

After the meeting on Samui island, it is rumored that the People Alliance for Democracy is about to form a political party. As known so far, the region which supports the PAD the most is the south, followed by the east.

Before giving an opinion, this columnist wants to review the PAD's political movements.

Previously, political movements in Thailand were led by upper social class like the military and politicians – the public did not take part in the movements. However, the PAD movements were from the lower class. Members of the group came from different classes and occupations. They are well-educated.

The PAD movements are led by those who hate politics. The target is to end chronic problems in the country.

Several factors helped strengthen their movement. The group's leaders have the capacity to pick issues and are good at explaining them. They allowed people to talk on the stage. Money, food and other stuff were also given away to members. They have their own symbols. An outstanding one is the yellow shirt. They have their own media, which allows them to have an advantage over over media.

Whether it will form a political party or not, it possesses basic structure of an actual political party which no longer exists in Thailand .

This columnist foresees that the PAD will end up being a political party. Members who disagree with the idea can still be a powerful group which monitors the party activities.

Thaksin's phone-in strategy reflects his skill in solving crises – But pressuring Thailand to wash away all accusations – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; Column: Analysis; March 15, 2009

It is noticeable that Thaksin lately focuses on the phone-in strategy. He makes phone-ins to several places in Thailand and other countries. Previously, he allowed his personal spokesperson to speak for him.

Maybe he realizes that he must promote himself as a "product" and present his skill and ability to enable people to make a choice.

He recently phoned the Hong Kong FCCT to speak in a seminar about the global economic crises. He gave advice to China and the United States of American on how to solve economic problems. He did not hesitate to talk about ways to solve economic crises in Thailand.

As always, his advice showed his cleverness in economic subjects. He is a very interesting product. All he wants is an opportunity to return to Thailand and get the country out of economic crises. However, the price is too high – he wants all accusations against him gone.

Don't act along with Thaksin – translated and summarized from *Kom Chad Luek*; Column: Editorial; March 14, 2009

As expected, former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra decided to make a phone-in to the Hong Kong's FCCT, instead of giving a lecture in person. He was afraid he would get caught and be sent back to Thailand to receive his punishments.

During the phone-in, Thaksin mentioned Thailand and also used wording to mobilize loyal people to fight to democracy. He did not say what the right democracy is like.

He also said things which were contrasting. For instance, he formerly announced he would quit the political world, but later, he said he would fight no matter where he was as he did not receive fair treatment.

His phone-in did not provide anything new. It only energizes his believers and repeats the same old complaints. He never admitted that his actions were illegal. He saw himself as a political victim and denied all accusations.

It is time that the government and the public stop paying attention to his phone-ins. The government has some other ways to counterattack him. It can terminate his passport which will corner him.

Moreover, he does not express that he loves the country. Both of his parties were disbanded and his wife no longer wants to spend her life with him.



Matichon, March 17, 2009

The headlines read: Mark expresses confidence to tie the knot of 258 million baht conflict – Democrats not to be dissolved – Chalerm insists cheque is clear evidence

4 bomb attacks in Surat Thani – Suthep believes a political ploy involved with the plot

Lawsuit filed against Wattana for the alleged bribery case of the Ua-Arthorn housing project

A choice purposed to have DSI and the AMLO to jointly investigate the Government Pension Fund

The small letter in red and in green close to Sudarat Keyurapan's photo: Jae Noy to go hand in hand with Newin – A big surprise not to overlook



The street of investors – Five hundred plus 1, by Mor, Tassana Vijarn, *Khungthep Turakit*, March 19, 2009

On the direction sign at the top: Maptaphud

On the sign on the ground: pollution control zone

Caption at the bottom: The street of investors

Punch to punch: Thaksin and Abhisit – Kon La Mad (Punch to Punch), *Thairath*, March 16, 2009



On the Thaksin side: If I were the Prime Minister, I would not borrow money from loans and I must bring hundred thousand million to the system to promote employment, not to give it for free. This is wasting the money and useless.

On the Abhisit side: During the ruling government under your leadership, you do not take the loan, but you let the people take many loans. Your government was not in debt, but the people had a double amount of debt to pay. However, we take out loans to support the people in the name of government.

Report: Cornered – translated and summarized from *Kom Chad Luek*; Column: Report; Author; Political news table; March 17, 2009

Thaksin Shinawatra's continuous phone-ins lately reflect if the dog, which once claimed to be tamed by itself, really is tamed.

It can be considered as a signal for a real fight, which could happen real soon.

Thaksin still uses same old efforts to explain the matter to the press. He claims that he is not guilty and has been bullied by political and juristic systems.

The only way which could end the conflict between red-shirt and yellow-shirt people is to ask the press to bring back the former 23rd Prime Minister back to his homeland. He also volunteers to solve the economic problem.

Those sweet words encourage Thaksin's supporters to fight.

However, this game seems to become too shallow.

Results of an ABAC poll show that over 50 percent of respondents do not believe in Thaksin's words.

He is still the same old person who does not want to change nor admit what he did.

He also blames several parties for triggering the current conflict among Thai people.

If we allow this square-faced person to enter this country again without receiving any punishment, the number of political conflicts will double.

However, this will not happen as Thai people do not want more conflict, which yield no good outcome.

Following conflicts among the coalition parties and rumor of conflicts in the government, the square-faced person, the Pheu Thai party and red-shirt people announce that they will not stop until they win in the no-confidence vote against the Prime Minister and five other ministers.

To consider well, we will see that issues which will be discussed during the vote do not seem to rock the current Cabinet's throne at all.

It is only the beginning of the game, the major target is to enable the United Front of Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD) to move more aggressively.

Red-shirt people will block the Government House for as long as possible.

During the time, Thaksin will make phone-ins to mobilize people to fight against the current government.



Local radio station 100.5 MHz Sukhothai moves to promote yellow-shirt people – loyalty to the King – translated and summarized from *ASTV Manager Daily*; March 15, 2009

The 100.5 MHz radio station of Sukhothai can be counted as the front line of the 193-day fight of the yellow-shirt people. Permsak 'Uncle Taew' Iamraera, a 64-year-old Muslim man, is the only DJ of the station. He runs his own gas station and car maintenance business. The radio station has been operated for four years.

During night time, Uncle Taew aired programs from ASTV channel all day long. He helped spread news and information from leaders of the People Alliance for Democracy.

Once, during the time of the nominee government, he had to hide himself at home and kept airing ASTV programs.

(Source: ASTV Manager Daily)

He put a computer in front of his gas station to allow people who wanted to join the gathering in Bangkok to register. After that, all of those people would go together. This is a good database which can be used in the future. There were about 3,000 people registered at that time. They were all potential people who possess good knowledge in economics and other matters.

Uncle Taew said that these people were all loyal to the King.

Until now, Uncle Taew still runs his radio station, offering people songs from the sixties and political information, to keep people in Sukhothai updated.



Thai Rath, March 17, 2009

The headlines read: The Prime Minister is the first in queue to be questioned, along with Pradit and Kasit – Chalerm warns do not oppose – Chai says 2 days is enough for the censorship debate

Klong Toey Market in outrages – 2 killed in the conflict – Gunman shot dead 2 guards causing local vendors to protest against police claiming for protection of their lives

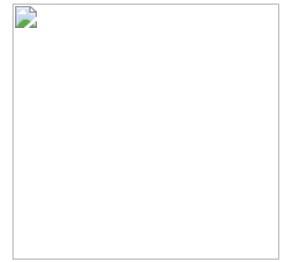
Willie apologizes admitting his unbearable joke about Mam

The Prime Minister states that the 5 step attack policy to clear away hard drug trafficking, especially in Bangkok and in South within 6 months

Cruel taxi driver uses ax to hurt victim
4 bombs planted to create turmoil for Suthep

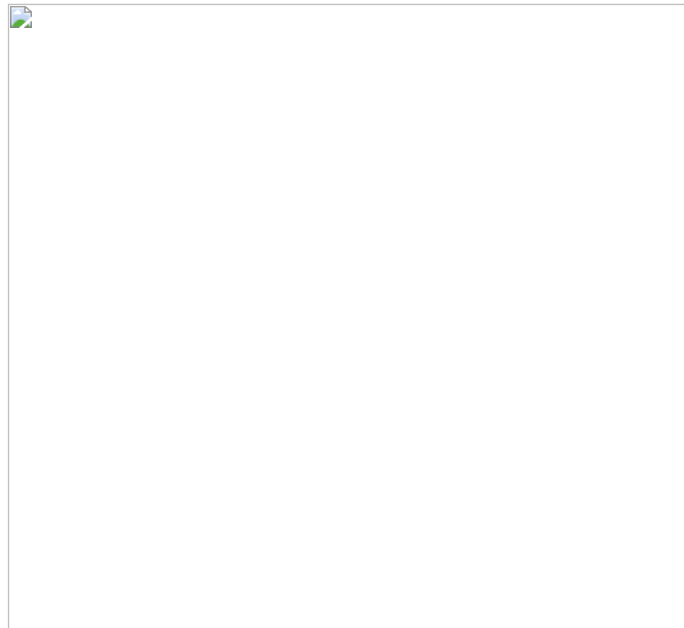
“Noi” hand in hand with Newin – Not the overlooking the case for the big surprise – translated and summarized from *Matichon*, March 19, 2009

The appearance of former Thai Rak Thai's Bangkok MP Supamas Issrapakdi during the Bhum Jai Thai Party meeting on March 17, 2009, in her “blue” attire, declaring oneself a Newin ally was a matter that surprised many political observers. Supamas is the close aide of former Thai Rak Thai executive Sudarat Keyurapan, who is under a political ban for 5 years and who once was a chief party member who was in charge of Bangkok MPs for the party. The unforgettable truth is that the relationship between Sudarat and Newin Chidchob, the influential figure of the Bhum Jai Thai Party, was aloof when the two were members of the disbanded Thai Rak Thai. At the time, both vied for the chance to be close aides of the party headmaster .



(Source: *Matichon*)

After the disbandment of the People Power Party, the Newin faction established the Bhum Jai Thai Party. Meanwhile, the Pheu Thai Party, formed by many former Thai Rak Thai MPs, faced pressure from claims that they were nominees of Thaksin and this was darkening their future glory in politics. Sources eyes Sudarat earlier attempted to set up her “Rak Thai” group to promote the Bangkok MPs. Now, backed by some high-ranking military people, she is a political network with Defense Minister Gen. Prawit Wongsuwan. The appearance of Supamas in a blue shirt is possibly a sign of Sudarat and Newin's reconciliation in politics, or else merely a normal case of politicians seeking way to change their allegiances.



In the world of the “low cost” – Kaolao Ruammit by Tin, *Matichon*, March 22, 2009

Top, left to right: Debate to suffer a sore throat and the poll does not give credit to because of the “low cost” debater

Setting the censure debate time to be fixed on an earlier date, claiming it is his own idea, but nobody gives credit to him because of his “low cost”

Despite having a Master's Degree and graduating from Oxford University , she was blamed for her insensibility due to the “low cost” reason

Bottom, left to right: Many of their gatherings do not gain people's credit to believe its peaceful goals due to the “low cost” reason

“Phone-in Today” with everything revealed turns to meaningless due to the “low cost”

The “low cost” who is still able to be nurtured “kee kor” – being on one's shoulders] by the “high cost” – laugh!

Multi-dimension politics – Pheu Thai organizes no-confidence debate, hoping for an outcome outside the Parliament – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; Column: Wikhro; March 22, 2009

The no-confidence debate against Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva and five other ministers – Finance Minister Korn Jatikananich, Foreign Minister Kasit Pirom, Interior Minister Chaowarat Charnveerakul, Deputy Interior Minister Boonchong Wongtrarat and Deputy Finance Minister Pradit Patprasit – was held. The debate took two days.

The reason this no-confidence debate is important is that a Thai political fight is multi-dimension.

The debate was held in the Parliament. It was also broadcast live via TV and radio nationwide. It would also be published in newspapers on the next day.

So, this means that during March 19-20, a large number of Thai people who kept a close watch on the debate would absorb all information of both sides – the opposition and the government.

Although the Prime Minister and five other ministers won the vote, it does not mean that all Thai people think the same way.

Therefore, although the vote was held in the Parliament, the Pheu Thai aims for some other outcome – to set up a trend among Thai people outside the Parliament.

The Pheu Thai party dug into Democrat ministers with hidden information and raised those issues during the debate.

Moreover, red-shirt people both in Bangkok and the provinces, were gathering to create a situation. They threw eggs or water bottles at the Prime Minister and ministers who visited provincial areas. They also yelled at those ministers.

Meanwhile, Thaksin Shinawatra continues to hold phone-ins to criticize policies and strategies of the government, led by Abhisit Vejjajiva.

Following those movements, members of the Democrat party raised an issue about the Taksin strategy .

The spokesperson of the Democrats discloses that the anti-government group has applied five measures under the Taksin strategy.

The target is to grant Thaksin amnesty.

Bet on party dissolving – Issue we must keep an eye on – translated and summarized from *Thai Post*; Column: Editorial; March 23, 2009

The no-confidence debate against the Prime Minister and five other ministers is already over. Some may agree with the vote, some may not. But what is interesting is an issue raised by Chalerm Yoobamrung on March 19. He said that the Democrat broke the Political Party Act, which could lead to the disbanding of the party.

The opposition was confident that it had evidence which could prove the Democrat Party was guilty of receiving 258 million baht in financial support from TPI. The action was against the law. It also said that the lead government party was guilty of spending 29 million baht for the Election Commission in a wrong way. We must admit that the public will agree with the idea to let the Election Commission investigate the issue. The Democrats may also be happy as there will be an independent party to investigate whose words are true and whose are false. This could be a new standard in the future to prevent political parties from using a no-confidence debate as a tool to discredit another party. Now, people are keeping an eye on Chalerm Yoobamrung to see whether he will proceed with the 258-million-baht issue. They also want to see the Democrat's reaction. If it just lets it go, the bet on party disbanding will also be another political game.

Thaksin and the war for brain space – translated and summarized from *Krungthep Thurakit*; March 25, 2009

Former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra is quite successful in vying for media space after giving a speech via video link to people gathering in Chiang Mai in the evening of March 22.

According to the hegemony theory by Antonio Gramsci, the key to make people gain power is not only the financial status, but also the ability to make people believe in oneself.

The heart of hegemony is the media, as this is the war for brain spaces.

They have to fight to win people's thoughts and beliefs.

Former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva and educated Thai people know about it.

They take control of the media, block the media and intervene with the media to prevent the opposition from controlling people's thoughts, as well as providing their concepts to the people.

The phone-in on March 22, which mentioned powerful people, probably privy councilors, is meant to vie for more brain space. The issue was widely-discussed—but, what is important is if the public believes him.

However, it can be counted as a successful move. Issues, which will be discussed during the coming phone-in, scheduled on March 27, could include more powerful people.

He is waiting for the second victory – to make people believe him.

PAD party!? A historical necessity – translated and summarized from *ASTV Manager Daily*; Author; Kamnoon Sitthisaman; March 24, 2009

After watching the no-confidence debate, the columnist sees that the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) needs to set up a new political party to fight in the parliamentary system and undergo political movements.

Firstly, to set up a political party will prevent it from being a social victim without any opportunity to protect itself.

The second reason is that it will be allowed to use the parliament to explain about the concept of the new politics instead of only using ASTV or other media.

There were two people mentioned very often during the no-confidence vote – Thaksin Shinawatra and the People's Alliance for Democracy.

What was different is that there were people speaking for the first person, while the second nearly had no one.

The no-confidence vote was really against the PAD, especially the 193-day gathering issue. Their gathering at Suvarnabhumi and Don Muang airports was claimed to be a real crime. The PAD is called an international criminal and an economic destroyer.

Nobody officially speaks for the PAD, even if it is very easy to give reasons for their action. The Democrat Party was too afraid to do anything.

All actions by the PAD had their own reasons and could be explained under the frame of the constitutional monarchy.

To explain about their actions will allow people to understand each movement, but also get to know the basic principles of them.

However, the PAD has no members who are a House Representative.

It has to send members to be a part of the Parliament.

It is not an easy step, but they have to make the first move.

After that, all people who are bored of the PAD will be stunned by all of its information.

The political characters – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; March 28, 2009

The political chaos is now disgracing of many important figures of the society like Privy Council President Gen Prem Tinnasulanonta, Privy Councilor Gen Surayuth Chulanont and former Supreme Administrative Court President Charnchai Likitjitha. These people are being denounced by former ousted Premier Thaksin Shinawatra.

The ongoing political chaos declared by the Red Shirts in their fight against the Abhisit-led government and the aristocrats is being spread by media channels that broadcast ideas to confuse the people. This includes information that disgraces many seniors in society.

I comment that a situation like this is a dangerous case that possibly leads to the situation where there is no "middleman" who has character that is respected and accepted by all the people who are now wearing different colors.

Foreigners must disclose website postings – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; April 1, 2009

New regulations in effect from April require foreign visa holders (whether tourist or those applying for B, M, or O-type visas) to disclose if they are owners of a website or intend to post information about Thailand on a website forum or blog.

Website owners who work in Thailand must possess a Thai business registration in the form of a limited partnership even if the site is hosted overseas.

If a visa-holder intends to post material to a website—including

internet forums and blogs—the posting must first be approved by

the Ministry of Culture. Forms for the approval process will be handed out with the Thai Immigration entry card upon arrival or approval can be submitted via an online form at the [Ministry of Culture website](#).

Visa holders will also be required to install "Cyber Cop" program to ensure they abide by

the new regulations that restrict the viewing of some websites within Thailand. This program will automatically upload the latest blocklists without the user having to do anything.

The Ministry will not use the new regulations to censor

political speech. Instead, the Ministry is mainly focusing on material

that might be of detriment to Thai tourism or the country's image in general.

More on [Website censorship in Thailand](#)

What Thaksin should do – translated and summarized from *Thai Rath*; Column: Editorial; March 27, 2009

During the previous meeting of the Privy Council, the meeting expressed concern over continuous phone-ins by former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. He claimed that some Privy Councilors were involved in the movement to bring down the Thaksin regime. The meeting of Privy Councilors saw that the action by Thaksin aimed to create disunity among Thai people and tries to make people believe that the Privy Council is involved in politics.

During the past few days, Thaksin had made several phone-ins to his red-shirt people and even used the video-link method to allow people to see him. Most issues during the phone-ins are aimed at attacking the government over its measures to solve economic crisis. He also claimed that some judges and Privy Councilors were involved in the attempt to bring down his regime.

It is said that this is Thaksin's final war and his last hope to gain power again after the Pheu Thai party completely lost the no-confidence vote. He will do anything to win his fight outside the parliament. He hopes that the gathering at the Parliament will help dethrone the government. We must wait and see whether the red-shirt people and Thaksin will be able to mobilize people to dethrone the government.

Thailand is being affected by the global economic recession. Instead of calling in to criticize the government's strategy, Thaksin should propose some solutions to the problem. By that, he can regain the popularity among Thai people.

Red-shirt people – Thaksin – Amnesty law – Doubtful game for benefits – translated and summarized from *Krungthep Thurakit*; Column: Editorial; March 28, 2009

It is not known yet what strategy the red-shirt people will apply during its blockade at the Government House.

It is said that they may use the Dao Kra Jai strategy. To block the Government House is the same strategy once applied by the People's Alliance for Democracy. The

move is aimed at causing trouble for the government. The gathering is also a tool to provide negative or double-standard information to the public. The red-shirt people also have their own channels to distribute such information – radio stations and cable TV. However, former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra is a shadow behind their movements. He is the key factor of the gathering. He mobilized people by raising issues about how the military coup destroyed his government. This could be his last bet. In addition, the political part seems to move in line with those outside parliament. Some members of the Pheu Thai party and coalition government parties jointly submitted a draft National Reconciliation Act. Its details do not seem to be different from the draft Amnesty Act, which had already been submitted previously and rejected by the public. Now, the United Front of Democracy against Dictatorship mobilizes red-shirt people to gather at the Government House. People wonder if Thaksin wants to use the gathering as a tool to pressure the government to consider the new draft act. It is not surprising if people see that the movements, both inside and outside the parliament, are games which have been planned by a group of powerful people behind the scenes. The movements aim to benefit these people.

Thaksin makes a big move – Plays ‘disunity’ game for ‘unity’ – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; March 29, 2009

On the day when red-shirt people gathered at the Government House, a small article appeared. It said that the lawsuit against Thaksin Shinawatra’s 76-billion-baht asset will be considered on April 20, at 2.00 pm.

The news tells us that the legal process against Thaksin’s assets has started.

Once it starts, everything has to go on, no matter how long it is.

Thaksin is now a homeless person. He is not able to fight for himself much.

The petition asking the court to consider the case via a video conference system reflects that he is trying hard to fight the case.

We must not forget that if he loses the case, his 76-billion-baht assets will be gone.

This could be a major factor which drives him to make a major move to keep his 76-billion-baht assets.

If he cannot keep them, he will completely lose the game. His hope to regain power will be far away.

Therefore, the video link aired at the gathering of red-shirt people in Chiang Mai on March 22 talked about people whom he claimed to be involved in a move to dethrone him. This was an attempt to try to make the others as dirty as him.

His move also affected authorities in higher positions, which play an important role in the country. This could be the final trick he chooses.

He hopes that if all are dirty, they all need to be cleaned. And he will be cleaned as well.

So, it is not surprising that 149 House representatives from different parties submitted the draft National Reconciliation Act to Chai Chidlom, Chairman of the House of Representatives.

They said that the country is currently under a state of disunity, which could be harmful to the kingdom itself, the region and the Royal Institute. Therefore, the unity should be created again by granting amnesty to all actions committed between September 19, 2006 to May 5, 2009, or any related actions committed before September 19, 2006.

To make all parties willingly accept the National Reconciliation Act is a very difficult task. Hence, Thaksin seems to use every method to pressure and threaten the Democrat Party. They include the no-confidence vote.

Outside the House, Thaksin’s phone-ins focus on unveiling names of high-ranking officials involving in the coup. The gathering of red-shirt people is also a key factor which will rock the aristocracy.

Moreover, the country is also facing the economic crises.

This could be Thaksin’s target, aiming to pressure all parties to become united. It is a measure to create unity from disunity.



Left: *Matichon Weekly*

The photo shows recently deceased writer and national artist Rong Wongsawan. The words read: Half mast in reverence

Right: *Nation Weekend*

It reads: “We are (your) friend
Thank heaven for letting us meet.

The men are PM Abhisit and Finance Minister Korn Jatikananich, both regarded as urban blue bloods. The headline pokes fun at the Democrat Party efforts to gain popularity in the rural Northeast. This was earlier parodied on *Not the Nation*: [Abhisit, Korn Plan Historic Journey Outside Bangkok](#)



Thai Rath, March 23, 2009

- Raid to destroy the wedding of ex-wife – One dead/gunned down – The ex-husband raged over the failure to reconcile – Opens fire on karaoke band – Friend of bridegroom falls victim – Gunman injured from return fire
- Anti-Money Laundering Office co-chair investigation of government’s pension fund
- “Luang Pu Tim” – Revered monk passed away
- Thaksin sternly moves against – Appears on VDO conference



Matichon, March 23, 2009

- 2 high ranking claimed to be behind the toppling down policy – Thaksin fights back – Saying lese majeste case is used as a claim – VDO link for more than thousand audience – Flower wreath sent for his sister’s funeral – Mark warns not to destroy the country
- Poll conducted in 18 provinces showing support of reshuffle ranks Kasit top to be replaced
- Finance Minister reveals public debt reaches 4.46 trillion
- Militant planted bomb in tambon chief’s car – The bomb was detected – Disposal operation within 2 hours
- Mark is the first volunteer to join the justice project aimed at protecting Institute and honoring/celebrates HM the King’s wisdom in law
- “Talk to Boonjong”, friend of Newin

Punch to punch – Thai Rath, March 23, 2009

Left: Abhisit quote: We have economic boost measures for the short, middle and long term. However, we need to depend on foreign financial institutes for the reserve funds to solve the economic crisis.

Right: Thaksin quote: I am concerned about the case of two boys possibly returning home with swollen head injuries as they might have to tax their brains too much figuring it out how to solve the economic crisis. This time, the economic situation is complicated.



The tamed dog – *Tassana Vijarn*, 500 plus 1... , column by *Mor*; *Krungthepturakit*, March 25, 2009

The caption reads: Thailand with 2 children and a tamed dog

The drawing represents Korn and Abhisit riding a bicycle off a cliff with the national flag followed after by the “tamed dog” which refers to deposed Premier Thaksin.

Thaksin earlier compared himself to a tamed dog, but Thaksin’s personal direction of the red shirts to surround government house suggests otherwise.

King's bodyguard, 1926

March 30, 2009

Categories: Old photos and films



(Source: Vintage photo)

Above: King's bodyguard, 1926

Burmese rock fans arrested in Bangkok

March 31, 2009

[Burmese rock fans arrested in Bangkok](#) – *The Irrawaddy*, March 31, 2009

More than 400 Burmese illegal migrants were arrested by Thai immigration authorities as they tried to attend a concert in Bangkok by the Burmese rock band Iron Cross...

In Thailand, Russian buyers have ‘disappeared’

April 2, 2009

Categories: Uncategorized

[In Thailand, Russian buyers have “disappeared”](#) – *New York Times*, April 2, 2009

Thai ‘gangster’ insult a matter of definition, say Bangkok officials

April 2, 2009

Categories: Uncategorized

[Thai ‘gangster’ insult a matter of definition, say Bangkok officials](#) – *Phnom Penh Post*, April 2, 2009
Thai foreign minister says he intended to praise Hun Sen as “sportsmanlike” and “big-hearted” ...

At the Red Shirt rally – April 3, 2009

April 3, 2009

Categories: Red Shirt Protest 2009



(Photo: HK for 2Bangkok.com)

The words on the *Truth Today* TV program donation box read:

Join the donation for the movement against the coup with *Truth Today*

At the Red Shirt rally – April 3, 2009

Also: [January 31, 2009 Red Shirt rally](#).

Also: [March 26, 2009 Red Shirt rally](#).



(HK for 2Bangkok.com)



(HK for 2Bangkok.com)



(HK for 2Bangkok.com)

The words on the [serichon.com](http://www.serichon.com) banner read: Website of Serichon , the online radio station for the people.
The Serichon –cyber fighters for Democracy against dictatorship



(HK for 2Bangkok.com)

The t-shirt reads: I like Thaksinism



(HK for 2Bangkok.com)

The t-shirt reads: Missing Thaksin... love Thaksin



(HK for 2Bangkok.com)



(HK for 2Bangkok.com)



(HK for 2Bangkok.com)

Egg throw at prominent figures



(HK for 2Bangkok.com)



(HK for 2Bangkok.com)

The photo shows Prime Minister Abhisit and PAD leader Sondhi Limthongkul. The caption reads: The PAD will clear away the mob for you. Vote Abhisit. Below: These photos are on the sidewalk for people to walk on. Placing a photo or a person's name on the ground or on a step for people to walk on is a method of insult.



(HK for 2Bangkok.com)



(HK for 2Bangkok.com)

It reads: Evil cheque for the nation – Two thousand baht only – Mark approves
This refers to the recent 2000 baht stimulus checks handed out by the government.



(HK for 2Bangkok.com)

Also: [January 31, 2009 Red Shirt rally](#)
Also: [March 26, 2009 Red Shirt rally](#)

Thai, Cambodian troops clash near disputed temple

April 3, 2009

Categories: Preah Vihear

[Thai, Cambodian troops clash near disputed temple](#) – Reuters, April 3, 2009

Thai and Cambodian soldiers exchanged rocket and small arms fire on a disputed stretch of their border on Friday, the latest flare-up in a long-running feud over a 900-year-old Hindu temple...

People

April 4, 2009



(Source: Vintage photo)

Above: "Siamese lady and child," circa the 1890s

People – April 4, 2009



(Source: Vintage photo)

Above: "Siamese women," circa the 1890s



(Source: Unknown)

Above: "Laos Lady of Rank," date unknown

Disturbing details in Thai blaze inquiry

April 4, 2009

[Disturbing details in Thai blaze inquiry](#) – BBC News, April 4, 2009

... Under a new law passed at the end of 2007, all public buildings have to be inspected for safety, and of the nearly 6,000 in Bangkok, around half have already been checked.

But according to the BMA, none of those was a pub or nightclub – and even then, only 200 buildings passed their inspection.

“If you go to a nightclub in Bangkok, and you want to be safe, always check where the exit is, and stay close to it,” says Prasong Tharachai, from the Engineering Institute of Thailand.

Improving fire safety would not be expensive, he argues. He hopes that after the Santika tragedy that will now happen.

But Chuwit Kamolvisit doubts it ever will. “We prefer things to be informal,” he said. “That is the Thai style...”

The Maesod-Tak Road is closed

April 4, 2009

Categories: Uncategorized



(Photo: Sadortu)

The Maesod-Tak Road is closed – April 4, 2009

The sign reads: The Maesod-Tak Road is closed – Use this lane to go to Tak

Sadortu explains: *This is the continued story of the corn growing farmers' protest blockading the Maesod-Tak Road. The protest caused the trade activities at the border to halt for half the day. The protest is aimed at calling the government to help monitor the price of farming corn product price. This time the pictures received are not the mob activities but shows the results of the road blockade that cause passengers on the Maesod-Tak Road turn to use the Maesod-Mae Ramad and Ban Tak lane to Paholyothin Road to Tak province.*

The Southeast Asia Movie Theater Project

April 4, 2009

Categories: Film and TV

[The Southeast Asia Movie Theater Project](#) – April, 2009

Photos of old theaters in this corner of the world...

Thailand analysis: ‘land of smiles’ becomes land of lies

April 5, 2009

Categories: Uncategorized

[Thailand analysis: ‘land of smiles’ becomes land of lies](#) – *Daily Telegraph*, April 5, 2009

When did Immigration become a madhouse?

April 7, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

When did Immigration become a madhouse? – April 7, 2009

We had not been to the Soi Suan Phlu for many years. In the past (perhaps before 2000?), immigration was slow and sleepy, but one rarely had to wait more than an hour to get anything done and it was rarely crowded. Today it is jammed packed, humid, and smelly—not to mention a fire hazard for human egress.

A thread on this subject is [here](#)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Zeppelin/Blimp in Nonthaburi?

April 7, 2009

[Zeppelin/Blimp in Nonthaburi?](#) – *Koen*, April 7, 2009

Update: Mud notes: [AirShip Asia](#) – It seems that has been seen was the AKRA Skyway – Mobile Airship with two seats – AK-34P...

Thailand insists on calling Preah Vihear temple as Pra Viharn

April 8, 2009

Categories: Border Issues, Cambodia

[Thailand insists on calling Preah Vihear temple as Pra Viharn](#) – *Xinhua*, April 8, 2009

Thailand has insisted on naming the 900-year-old Preah Vihear temple as “Pra Viharn” in accordance with its Thai...

Red Shirt Protests – March 27-April 9, 2009

April 9, 2009

Categories: Red Shirt Protest 2009

[Red Shirt protest main page – March-April 2009](#)

[An assassination of a privy councilor](#) – translated and summarized from *Daily News*; April 9, 2009

[The Red-shirt mob has no righteousness](#) – translated and summarized from *Naew Na*; Column: April 9, 2009



(Photo: Misma)

[Thaksin's revenge](#) – April 9, 2009



(Photo: Graham)

Protesters in front of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – 13:00, April 9, 2009

The lone monk in the above photo is holding a sign that reads "Democracy" in both Thai and English.



(Photo: Graham)



(Source: NBT)



(Source: DTV)

On TV – 19:57, April 9, 2009

Left: NBT is frequently showing a story on a baby with a broken arm who is unable to get to the hospital because of the Red Shirt rally.

Right: Former PM Somchai speaks on DTV—perhaps to counter the publicity that Thaksin family members have fled the country.

Marching to NBT – 19:28, April 9, 2009

From a Red Shirt press release: *Some of the (people) will march from Victory Monument to NBT. The activities on stage remain the same tonight. Former PM Somchai is at the government house ready to give a speech on stage.*

Thaksin phone-in – 17:57, April 9, 2009

From a Red Shirt press release: *Thaksin will call in tonight at 8pm...*

Rama 8 Bridge blocked -17:39, April 9, 2009

Thai TV Channel 11 reports that Rama 8 Bridge is blocked by Red Shirts.

UPDATE: 18:23, April 9, 2009 – Channel 11 is showing traffic camera footage showing the Rama 8 Bridge is, in fact, open.

Democracy Monument blocked -17:15, April 9, 2009

Thai TV Channel 11 is showing footage from traffic cameras showing the Red Shirts have also blocked Ratchadamneorn around Democracy Monument.

ThaiRath, April 9, 2009

The red shirts force to resign—within 24 hours—3 influential royal advisor

Arrested Sae Pek – Accused of hiring to kill ‘Charnchai’

Pojaman and her children go abroad



Krungthep Turakit, April 9, 2009

Bank of Thailand warns that conflicted politics will drag GDP

About 100,000 red shirts to force ‘Prem’ to resign

‘Thaksin’ asks the red shirts to gather for 3 days

Matichon, April 9, 2009

The red-shirt rally crowded – ‘Maew’ seen as arrogant – Don’t go back empty handed

Arrested ‘Captain Jakkrit’ – Hiring an assassin to kill a Privy Councilor.

Key man ‘Hard Core’ – Mind! The red shirts put an end to the government

Refuse to dissolve the House as per the Red Shirt’s threat ‘Apisit’ insists!



[Taxi drivers block roads at Victory Monument](#) – *The Nation*, April 9, 2009

Some 20 taxi drivers used their cars to block two roads at the Victory Monument at noon Thursday to pressure the government to resign. They started blocking the inbound Rajvithi Road in front of the Center One shopping mall at 12:30 pm and later on blocked the inbound Phayathai Road. The members of the Taxi Community Radio Club said if the government refused to resign by 4 pm, they would use 20,000 taxis to block all roads in Bangkok.

Red Shirt press release – 13:00, April 9, 2009

It reads: Groups of people at their own wills are gathering in several places in Bangkok—groups of taxis at Victory Monument, others at MFA, Democrat Party HQ, Constitutional Court. At 4pm is the deadline due of 24 hours given for Prem, PM, Surayuth to step down. The UDD leader shall announce the decision of further actions then.

[Red-faced police let red shirt go](#) – *Bangkok Post*, April 8, 2009

...In a farcical twist, protester Wanchalerm Kulsen, 22, who allegedly smashed the back window of the SUV carrying Mr Abhisit, escaped from Pattaya City police station shortly after being arrested.

A police source said Mr Wanchalerm escaped after he asked to go outside for a cigarette. He did not return...



(Source: DTV)

On DTV – April 8, 2009

Above and below: Views of the Red Shirt crowds downtown



(Source: DTV)



(Source: DTV)

Left: A reporter describing other areas in Bangkok where protest has broken out and the meaning of "Thailand Needs Change" in Thai.

Right and below: Also being shown periodically are old student protest songs set against scenes of the 1973 student uprising



(Source: DTV)



(Source: DTV)



(Source: DTV)



(Source: DTV)

Left: Part of a montage of scenes of foreigners in the crowd who are claimed to be supporting the return of Thaksin and democracy



(Photo: Graham)

Red shirts on Sathorn Road – April 7, 2009



(Photo: Graham)

Downtown – April 8, 2009

From a Red Shirt press release: *The gathering tomorrow is starting at 10 am. The march should take place in the afternoon...*

Right here, right now: Thaksin speaking to the crowd – 20:11, April 7, 2009

Right and below: Thaksin beams as the crowd applauds him.



(Source: DTV)

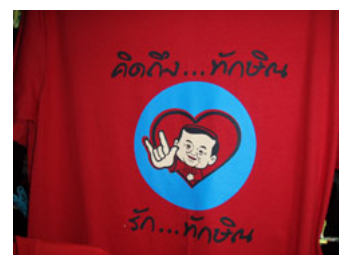


(Source: DTV)

[Looking the source of Red-Shirt power – paying Bt1,000 per person from 26 provinces – followers of Wat Chan Bin will make a move before April 8](#) – translated and summarized from *ASTV Manager Daily*; April 7, 2009

[Government weak: The reason Thaksin gets stronger](#) – translated and summarized from *ASTV Manager Daily*; Author; Samart Mangsang; April 7, 2009

[More photos from the Red Shirt protests](#)



(HK for 2Bangkok.com)



Newsweekly covers – April, 2009

Left: *Matichon Weekly* with a photo of Privy Council President Prem Tinnasulanonda. The caption reads: I am not involved.

This refers to the Thaksin accusation that Prem was behind the coup three years ago.

Right: *The Nation Weekend* magazine with the picture of M.L. Piya Malakul Na Ayuthaya. The caption reads: Piya's vow – the real powerful figure

This also refers to the Thaksin accusation that powerful figures met at M.L. Piya Malakul Na Ayuthaya's house to discuss a coup.



[At the Red Shirt rally](#) – April 3, 2009

[Thailand's way out – Justice must be chosen](#) – translated and summarized from *Thai Post*; Column: Editorial; April 6, 2009

Red shirts claim crackdown imminent – 09:11am, March 30, 2009

The red shirts crowds have been insisting a police raid is imminent and residents should join the demonstration to protect the stage.

Also: [Police threaten to break up rally](#) – *The Nation*, March 30, 2009

Right: Police or soldiers resting under a row of trees at Government House



(Source: DTV)



Left: The camera scanning the Government House grounds on the lookout for the crackdown

It is also difficult, from the DTV camera work, to determine how many protesters there really are around the main stage... perhaps a few hundred or a thousand?

(Source: DTV)

[Photos from the Red Shirt protest](#) – March 26, 2009

"Thailand is a joke" – 21:14, March 27, 2009

Thaksin is speaking to the Red Shirt crowd in his earnest, high-pitched, under-stress voice.

Also: [Thaksin called for Prem and Surayud to stop interfering in politics](#) – *The Nation*, March 27, 2009



(Source: DTV)

Thaksin calling to the red-shirt crowd – 20:10, March 26, 2009

There was a brief statement from Thaksin. The promised naming of those behind the 2006 coup will be postponed to a Thaksin call-in on Friday night (March 27).

Also: [Thaksin claims he knew how to bail out country from economic crisis](#) – *The Nation*, March 26, 2009



(Source: DTV)

Weekly news magazine covers – week of March 27, 2009

Matichon –
The Dictator?



The Nation – The scheme to topple the aristocrats?



The Songkran Festival fairy riding the tiger – by Arun, *Krungthepturakit*, March 25, 2009

The drawing shows the Songkran Festival fairy for 2009 represented by Democrat PM Abhisit Vejjajiva. The flag says “Songkran Festival 2009” and his bullhorn reads “loans.”

Thaksin is represented as a tiger Abhisit is riding.

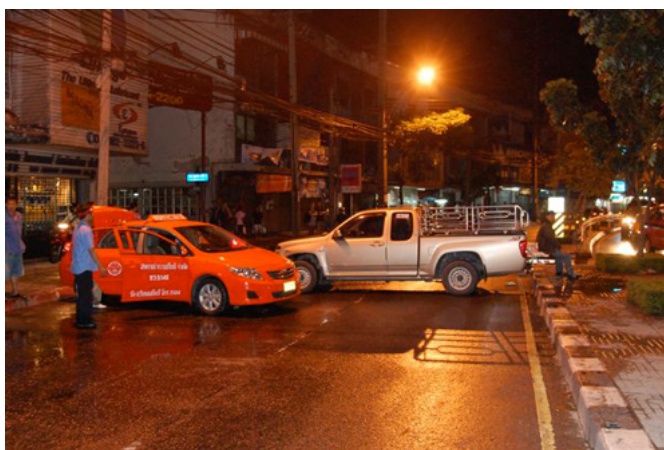
At the bottom right the caption reads "This is really the truth."

[Red Shirt protest main page – March-April 2009](#)

Thaksin's Revenge – April 9, 2009

April 9, 2009

Categories: Red Shirt Protest 2009



(Photo: Misma)

Simple barricade at the end of Rama IV just before the road joins Sukhumvit.

Thaksin's Revenge – April 9, 2009

Misma writes: *Here are photos from 9th of April at the road between Rama IV intersection with Sukhumvit and the Phrakanong intersection (Sukhumvit 71). The red shirts blocked that piece of road around 7pm and up until when these photos were taken at 11pm at least. The traffic was fully congested along the Sukhumvit at least from Ploenchit onwards towards On Nut. I sat in a bus for 2 hours from Ploenchit to Phrakanong... argh.*



(Photo: Misma)



(Photo: Misma)



(Photo: Misma)



(Photo: Misma)

Protestors peacefully at the intersection of Rama IV and Sukhumvit.



(Photo: Misma)



(Photo: Misma)



(Photo: Misma)

The amount of protestors has gone down. They arrived to Prakanong around 7pm and at 9pm had “festival” going on but by 11pm it had already calmed down and few people were present holding the barricades.



(Photo: Misma)

Police presence is very small. Only about 6 in total. Police and volunteer rescue workers are directing the traffic.



(Photo: Misma)



(Photo: Misma)



(Photo: Misma)

Bangkok torture bus stop

April 9, 2009



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Bangkok torture bus stop – April 9, 2009

These new metal bus stop seats have a convex seating surface that is unbelievably uncomfortable to sit on.

Don notes: *Those bus-stop benches aren't new. They've been around for years...*

Red Shirt Protests – April 10-11, 2009

April 10, 2009

Categories: Red Shirt Protest 2009

[Red Shirt protest main page – March-April 2009](#)



(Source: DTV)

Above: April 11 – DTV has added a graphic of the King to their broadcast
April 12 – DTV is no longer using the graphic

15:00, April 11 – Jakrapob Penkair on DTV

Jakrapob Penkair is speaking in English on DTV now to address the international community. He explains that the Red Shirts were ambushed and injured while trying to enter the summit hotel and two taxi drivers were shot. The Red Shirt moved into the hotel to escape attacks from people throwing rocks and to put pressure on the government. The message they wanted to tell the Asean leaders was that the Red Shirts were being attacked in their peaceful protest. He further says that the Red Shirts gatherings will continue past Songkran and will not end until the PM and Privy Councilors will resign as the Thai people are fed up with the aristocracy. He pleads with the international press to spread this message to their readers before more people are killed by the "vicious" Abhisit government.

14:00, April 11 – [Govt announces state of emergency in Pattaya, Chon Buri](#) – *The Nation*, April 11, 2009

13:52, April 11 – We received word that convoys of police van and paddy wagons with lights flashing are racing towards Bangkok from the central provinces

13:52, April 11 – DTV is showing a graphic of the King in the corner of their broadcast

[Asean Summit in Pattaya collapses](#) – *The Nation*, April 11, 2009

Press Release from the Red Shirts – April 11, 2009

It reads in part: ...*We insist that our purpose of protesting is entirely peaceful. The meetings with Thailand's side, if gone on, would be misleading, since the Thai government doesn't represent the people of the country democratically. Deliberate attempts of the government and their supporters must be exposed without any reservation.*

[Arisman directs protesters to hunt for PM inside Royal Cliff Beach hotel](#) – *The Nation*, April 11, 2009

Arisman Pongruangrong, a red-shirted leader, directed protesters to raid inside the Royal Cliff Beach Resort Hotel to hunt for Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva...

[Summit postponed following clash in Pattaya](#) – *The Nation*, April 11, 2009



Matichon, April 10, 2009

The red shirts invade Pattaya to agitate the 'ASEAN Summit Conference' – Block the conference

Spreading the rumor that "Pa", Mark, and a high ranking soldier have a secret discussion – Traffic in Bangkok blocked – The red shirts block the road – Victory

Monument – ‘Maew’ incites the red rally ‘Don’t lose’ – The government handles Thaksin’s political game by asking the government officers to stop working today.
 ‘Sae Pek’ denies hiring an assassin to kill a Privy Councilor
 The bulk of the Democrat Party in planning political game -‘Mark’ has a calm manner – Defeat ‘the red shirts.’



Thairath; April 10, 2009
 Gather around Victory Monument – A center traffic of Bangkok – Blocked intensely
 Sae Pek surrenders himself – ‘The assassination of an influential royal advisor’
 Apisit mentions the red shirt’s sedition – everyone loses
 Catch a dead robber in Southern Thailand – Kills a district-chief officer



Krungtep Turakij; April 10, 2009
 The red shirt’s extreme plan is to block to ASEAN Summit Conference
 The star plan of the red shirts blocks the traffic – Apisit asks the government officers to stop working to deal with the red-shirt rally
 The private sector is worried about the problems of a political movement – Impact on investment – Tourism
 If the violence happens, Thai people and Thailand will lose

Matichon Weekly – April 10, 2009
 It reads: "Thak" tsunami



NBT bumper for the Red Shirt protests – April, 2009
 It reads: Follow the situation of the protest



(Source: NBT)

[Friday extra holiday: Abhisit](#) – *The Nation*, April 10, 2009

Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva announced that Friday will be an extra holiday to pave way for the authorities to take action against wrongdoers in the Bangkok street blockades. The prime minister made the announcement live on TV Thursday night.

Right: Abhisit giving his speech. He was blinking so frequency, it was difficult to get a frame grab with his eyes open.



(Source: NBT)



(Source: NBT)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Friday afternoon in Bangkok – April 10, 2009

Above: 15:39 – Red Shirts at Victory Monument

Below: 15:54 – Red Shirts closing the Weepahwahdeerangsit-Suthisarn Intersection

Also: [Red-shirted shooed away from Sathorn](#) – *The Nation*. April 10, 2009

Red-shirted people's attempt to block the Sathorn-Narathiwat Intersection Friday was foiled by unity of normal people on the road who happened to be there...



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)



(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

[Red Shirt protest main page – March-April 2009](#)

Let's go to Thailand so we can drink!

April 11, 2009

Categories: Food and Drink

[Let's go to Thailand so we can drink!](#) – San Jose Mercury News, April, 2009

I'm always amused when an organization within a city or nation is moved to create some representative cocktail of place. I wonder where this nearly universal impulse to have a signature drink to call one's own arises from. Is it out of jealousy? Desperation? Nationalistic thirstiness? ...

Red Shirt Protests – April 12, 2009

April 12, 2009

Categories: Red Shirt Protest 2009

[Red Shirt protest main page – March-April 2009](#)



(Source: DTV)

22:13 – DTV is still on the air, but the signal is choppy.

Reports indicate DTV is on [NSS-6](#) run by [SES New Skies](#) (although it seems like NSS6 is [only covering the Middle east?](#))



(Source: DTV)

16:56 – Monks praying on the Red Shirt stage on DTV (above).

16:52 – DTV is back on the air.

16:45 – NBT is showing footage of Red Shirts at the Interior Ministry dragging a person out of a police car and stomping on him (right).



(Source: NBT)

(Source: DTV)

Above: Before DTV went off the air, the Red Shirts displayed the weapons and name badge of a security officer for the Prime Minister who was captured at the Interior Ministry and is being held prisoner by the Red Shirts

[Tanks mobilised in Bangkok](#) – *Bangkok Post*, April 12, 2009

[DTV says it is off the air](#) – *The Nation*, April 12, 2009

(Source: DTV)

Right: DTV screen – The spelling error was later corrected.

[Army spokesman pleads public not to panic](#) – *The Nation*, April 12, 2009

The Army spokesperson warned the public not to panic if they happen to see the employ of army forces as the military will start employing their forces and send them to various places.

He said the state of emergency allowed the officials to step up measures to deal with the protesters.

[Jatuporn calls red-shirts to descend on Bangkok to bring down Govt](#) – *The Nation*, April 12, 2009

[Taxi drivers block Bangkok roads again](#) – *The Nation*, April 12, 2009

[PROTESTERS RIOT INSIDE INTERIOR MINISTRY](#) – *The Nation*, April 12, 2009

Several police and protesters were injured during a riot inside the Interior Ministry Sunday afternoon when red-shirted protesters tried to attack a motorcade leaving the compound on suspicion that the prime minister was inside one of the cars, Thai PBS reported...

[STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARED FOR BANGKOK, 5 OTHER PROVINCES](#) – *The Nation*, April 12, 2009

The government Sunday afternoon announced the state of emergency for Bangkok and some districts in satellite provinces...

[Red Shirt protest main page – March-April 2009](#)

Thai family's family ties

April 12, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[Thai family's family ties](#) – Roanoke Times, April, 2009

The US Embassy in Bangkok seems to have a hard time believing that Thai native Piya Thongprasertseree is indeed the brother of a 50-year-old Vinton...

Manchester City's fortunes wane and wax in tale of two billionaires

April 12, 2009

Categories: Sports, The Thaksin Years

[Manchester City's fortunes wane and wax in tale of two billionaires](#) – Guardian, April, 2009

...Few at City doubt that Thaksin used the club to boost his own standing in Thailand. Thai dignitaries were entertained at matches and the City team taken on a tour of the country – for which, the accounts show, 47,912 was paid for PR services to a company owned by Thaksin's son, Panthongtae Shinawatra. Thaksin's own total contribution has been itemised: 17.5m to pay off Wardle and Makin's 20m loans, and he also lent the club 21m, at annual interest rates of up to 11.83%...

Red Shirt Protests – April 13, 2009

April 13, 2009

Categories: Red Shirt Protest 2009

(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Above: Night falls on the city... – April 13, 2009

[Red Shirt protest main page – March-April 2009](#)

[Thaksin: Thai government 'brutal'](#) – *CNN*, April 13, 2009

...many people dying...

[Black Songkran claims first death](#) – *The Nation*, April 13, 2009

(Source: NBT)

15:35 – Sri Ayuthaya Road intersection retaken – This image shows soldiers walking around in the smoke from two buses that were set on fire by the Red Shirts as they retreated. An earlier shot of this intersection is [here](#).

(Source: NBT)

13:45 – [Retaking Bangkok street by street](#)

Thai TV has some [fascinating footage of soldiers moving street by street](#) and pushing the Red Shirts back. Since the Red Shirts banished reporters from their side, all the reporting is going on from the soldiers' point of view.

(Photo: *ThaiRath*)

Red Shirts at the Asean Summit – April 13, 2009

ThaiRath's amazing photo of the moment the Red Shirts broke into the press room at the Asean Summit.

(Source: NBT)

12:44 – Above and below: Red Shirt bus blockades at Victory Monument

(Source: NBT)

11:16 – Bus services cancelled in Bangkok today.

Train service cancelled at Hualampong, but passengers may board at all northerly stations.

Red Shirt road blocks are going up again: [Protesters block roads at Victory Monument](#) and [Protesters block Lard Prao Road in front of Big C](#)

09:41 – Below: NBT showing live traffic cam photos from around the city...

(Source: NBT)

Above and below: Views of bus barricades and a small number of protesters at the end of Sri Ayuthaya Road under the expressway.

(Source: NBT)

(Source: NBT)

Above and below: Views of the deserted Din Daeng intersection

(Source: NBT)

(Source: NBT)

Above: The nearly deserted Phahon Yothin-Weepahwahdeerangsit Intersection

(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

Above: 08:14 – DTV appears to be largely off the air now (right) while NBT (left) is running programming as usual—in this case a documentary on Javanese musical instruments.

[Reporters move away from rally site at Government House following threats by protesters](#) – *The Nation*, April 12, 2009

[Thailand's state of emergency: Brits urged not to travel](#) – *Telegraph*, April 12, 2009

The Foreign Office has urged Britons planning to travel to Bangkok to "urgently review their plans" after the Thai government declared a state of emergency in the capital...

[CRACKDOWN BEGINS](#) – *The Nation*, April 12, 2009

[Red Shirt protest main page – March-April 2009](#)

Retaking Bangkok street by street – April 13, 2009

April 13, 2009

Categories: Red Shirt Protest 2009

(Source: NBT)

Above: Soldiers approach Victory Monument

Thai TV has some fascinating footage of soldiers moving street by street and pushing the Red Shirts back. Since the Red Shirts banished reporters from their side, all the reporting is going on from the soldiers' point of view.

[Red Shirt protest main page – March-April 2009](#)

(Source: NBT)

Above: Soldiers fire into the air as they advance on a Red Shirt line

(Source: NBT)

Above and below: Series of shots as they go past an alley that appears blocked. They look down and a soldier motions to the taxi in the distance to stop blocking the street. The taxi pulls away out of the street.

(Source: NBT)

(Source: NBT)

(Source: NBT)

[Red Shirt protest main page – March-April 2009](#)

Red Shirt Protest Headlines – April 13-14, 2009

April 14, 2009

Categories: Red Shirt Protest 2009

[Red Shirt protest main page – March-April 2009](#)

(Source: *Daily News*)

The stressful year of the cow – *Daily News*, April 13, 2009

Title: All cool for merry Songkran's day

Top left: The men in the window left to right: Deputy Prime Minister Sanan Kajronprasart, Privy Council President Gen. Prem Tinasulanonda, Commander-in-Chief Gen. Anupong Paojinda

The sign under the window reads: Return home sons!

The man climbing a ladder on the building is UDD leader Chatuporn Prompan.

Below on TV, an NBT reporter throws water on a Red Shirt.

PM Abhisit Vejjajiva and Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Tuagsuban are on the roof of the car.

The man climbing the ladder to the Thaksin billboard is Foreign Minister Kasit Piromya, who was accused by the red-shirt people of being involving with the PAD.

On the back of his shirt is the word "foreign" referring to his post as Foreign Minister.

The sign that the buffalo is holding reads "Stressful year of the cow"

[Army pressure ends Thai protest](#) – *BBC*, April 14, 2009

...One such protest leader, Jakrapap Penkair, told the *BBC* that the campaign may be taken underground – and he did not rule out non-peaceful means in the future to remove the current "disguised dictatorship".

"The protest is over; the campaign is not. It fell on deaf ears as expected, but the showing off of the people's power could have changed mind slightly.

"We move fast to the second phase... when they will be forced to hear us six months to a year from now," he said, without giving any details...

Who planned Bangkok's urban warfare? – April 14, 2009

From [Urban-terrorism tactics alienating the public](#): ...They used public buses to block the streets, installed three gas trucks at Din Daeng, Ayutthaya Road and Soi Rangnam near Victory Monument and threw petrol bombs, sticks and bricks at the security forces.

The tactics are similar to those employed by the Krathing Daeng Group, which during the October 1976 crisis played a catalytic role in suppressing students at Thammasat University.

An ex-general by the abbreviated name of PP is believed to be the mastermind behind the current use of these terrorist tactics...

The Nation is referring to [General Panlop Pinmanee](#)

(Source: NBT)

Songkran on Khao Sarn Road – April 13, 2009

Traffic cam on NBT shows the very sparse crowd on Khao Sarn Road for Songkran. Usually it is [like this](#).

[Red protesters told to disperse; "arson" plots unveiled](#) – *The Nation*, April 14, 2009

[The "line up for 500 baht" gaffe](#) – *YouTube*, April 14, 2009

Thanks to the many who pointed this out.

[US condemns Thai violence by pro-Thaksin protests](#) – *The Nation*, April 14, 2009

Red Shirt protest headlines – April 13-14, 2009

Daily News, April 14, 2009 – The headline in the black area says "Mark arm-in-arm with Army to finish off the Reds"

ThaiRath, April 14, 2009 – Armored forces deployed to handle red shirt protest – Emergency decree announced in Bangkok and 5 provinces – the UDD broke the Prime Minister's Mercedes Benz – Critical law announced to tackle protestors – Thaksin calls up mob to constantly continue protest

ThaiRath, April 13, 2009 –
Hotel seizure protest troubles leaders – World's scandalous issue

Daily News, April 14, 2009 – The Prime Minister's secretary was taken by the reds

ThaiRath, April 14, 2009 –
"Blockade and hunt" – The red shirt protest surrounded to break the window of the car that Prime Minister Abhisit and Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Tuagsuban sit in and at the same time the Prime Minister's secretary Nipon Prompan was being taken out from the car and sent to the hospital.

[Red Shirt protest main page – March-April 2009](#)

Songkran Cartoons 2009

April 15, 2009

Categories: Songkran

The Songkran fairy on the tiger – April 15, 2009

Translated and summarized from *Krungthepturakit*, March, 2009

Explanation of the [Songkran cards](#): The description of the picture of the Songkran Festival 2009 fairy symbol, issued by the Ministry of Culture says "Songkran Fairy: (Thewi or Queen of the festival, rotating on the yearly basis and coming to earth during the celebration of the Feast)."

The National Culture Commission Office, the Ministry of Culture reveals the appearance of the Songkran Fairy of the Songkran festival 2009 (the year of cow), named "Ko Raka Thewi", her right hand holding the sword and her left hand holding a walking stick. The fairy comes to the earth in her sleeping position laying on the back of tiger that is her servant.

The picture was designed by famous cartoonist Om Ratchavetaya

Other Ministry of Culture Songkran cards are [here](#)

And [on the forum](#): *I'm always weirded out by how totally un-Thai the characters in Ministry of Culture publications look. Huge googly cartoon eyes, pearly white skin, the obscenely rounded faces of fat Chinese baby idols...* :confused: [Compare to how it's done in Singapore](#).

Another take on the Songkran fairy is the editorial cartoon below:



The Songkran Festival fairy riding the tiger – by Arun, *Krungthepturakit*, March 25, 2009

The drawing shows the Songkran Festival fairy for 2009 represented by Democrat PM Abhisit Vejjajiva. The flag says "Songkran Festival 2009" and his bullhorn reads "loans."

Thaksin is represented as a tiger Abhisit is riding.

At the bottom right the caption reads "This is really the truth."

Songkran prophecy 2009 –

translated and summarized from *Matichon*, March 24, 2009

From the prophecy of Miss Songkran in 2009, we can see that the Songkran Day is on Monday. It is foreseen that high-ranking officials and all Khunyings and Khunnai will gain power. Tuesday is the 'Nao' Day. It is said that fruit will be expensive. Wednesday is the New Year's Day, scholars will be delightful. To see Miss Songkran lying with her eyes shut on a tiger's back means that the King will have glorious future. It also warns people not to be tempted by luxurious stuff. The prophecy is in line with the current economic situation, which leads to unemployment and diseases. Luckily, Miss Songkran has a dagger (Phra Khan) as her weapon, which means that it will help protect and bring the country out of crises.

Thai teenager is one of the tallest in the world

April 15, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

Thai teenager is one of the tallest in the world – April 15, 2009

Thanks to Nils for pointing this out.

[The tallest teenagers in the world](#) – *Telegraph*, April 9, 2009

...Another of the teenagers to appear in the documentary is 17-year-old Thai Malee Duangdee. At 6ft 10in she is the tallest girl in the world. Her stature is due to a tumour on her pituitary gland which makes her body produce too much growth hormone. Malee had two unsuccessful operations to remove the tumour and her only hope is a tumour-shrinking drug which her father, a poorly paid labourer, cannot afford.

[In Thailand, 360 km east of Bangkok, Thailand's state of Tor](#) – *YouTube*

A Japanese TV report from 2006, when she was 14 years old and 207 cm (6ft 9.5in). If you listen closely, you can hear the commentator saying that she is from Trat province ("Toratu") at 0:05 into the video...

[Superhuman](#) – *ITV*, April 8, 2009

...Craig Glenday, editor of the Guinness World Records book, travels from London to Bangkok to verify a possible new world record. 17-year-old Malee Duangdee has found it hard to be accepted because of her height. Her father tells the programme: "When she walked down the street many people called her a giant and laughed at her."

Malee says: "So many times I ask myself why? I sit in front of the mirror and cry. Why am I not the same as other people." Malee's height is caused by a tumour on her pituitary gland, a condition which could be fatal. She desperately needs expensive drugs and the fame of holding a Guinness World Record may bring the money her family needs for her treatment.

[Teeny whoppers](#) – *The Sun*, April 8, 2009

...MALEE DUANGDEE, 17, 6ft 10in, now tallest girl in the world. BEST THING: "Getting the money I need to have medical treatment." WORST THING: "Being teased and being worried about my health." With the average height of a woman in Thailand less than 5ft 2in, Malee really does stand out. Her amazing stature is due to a tumour on her pituitary gland which makes her body produce too much growth hormone...

Phan Fa Bridge

April 18, 2009

Categories: Old photos and films

(Source: Undated postcard)

Phan Fa Bridge – April 18, 2009
Other views of Phan Far Bridge are [here](#).

Old photos

April 18, 2009

(Source: Undated postcard)

Above: Farmers returning home

Old photos – April 18, 2009

(Source: Vintage photo)

Above: Thai man, 1860

A thread about this man is [here](#)

“Gay-Cut”

April 18, 2009
Categories: Uncategorized

(Photo: Graham)

“Gay-Cut” – April 18, 2009

Trying to Kill Sondhi – April 2009

April 19, 2009

Categories: Thai Media Project

More: [Unlocking the Thai world: Thai-language newspaper headlines](#)

Political assassination – translated and summarized from *Kom Chad Luek*; April 19, 2009

Thailand's political society and conflicts have entered a new dimension. People separate into groups, caused mainly by personal beliefs and ideas.

The conflict is also partly created by money, misleading statements or other benefits given to supporters. The generosity of Thai people is gone as they are overwhelmed by greediness and ambition.

The effort to assassinate Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva twice by red-shirt members reflects the darkness of the people. They try to kill the others without any personal reasons. They were hired and lured.

Luckily, the Prime Minister escaped from the attack. But others, including Secretary to the Prime Minister Nippon Promphan, were seriously injured. In addition, Mr. Sondhi Limthongkul, a leader of the People Alliance for Democracy and an advisor of ASTV, was fired upon by weapons in the middle of the city.

The political assassination can be counted as a new phenomenon in a fight for government power and personal benefits, or even personal revenge to get rid of enemies. They applied dirty strategies without considering any bad effects, for instance, people's well being, economy, society and politics.

It is time that the Prime Minister applies decisive power under the law to bring back peace to the country and restore security. If it hesitates, bad incidents could happen and it will be too late to solve them.

To apply the law decisively – solution to current social conflict – translated and summarized from *Krungthep Thurakit*, April 19, 2009

The assassination attempt on Mr. Sondhi Limthongkul, a leader of the People's Alliance for Democracy and the owner of ASTV channel and ASTV Manager Daily newspaper, will lead to a more serious political conflict. He played an important role in opposing former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

Right now, several parties start to become worried as the assassination will create an in-depth impact. The conflict between the red-shirt and yellow-shirt parties will become worse. Yellow-shirt people will automatically believe that the ones who commit the crime are Thaksin supporters. The above situation is about to become a trigger of a battle between both parties. It will develop to a real violent fight.

It means that the current political situation of Thailand is extremely worrying. Violent incidents could happen everywhere, not only in Bangkok. An effort to bring back peace will be just a dream. The challenge is how to live our lives in chaos.

The only solution is to apply to law – precisely and decisively. The law applier will have to show that he applies the law transparently. It may take time to prove that as people are now in a state of doubt.

Thaksin's goal – The failure of Thai government – translated and summarized from *Thai Rath*, Column: Political News Analysis, April 19, 2009

This year, people have the longest Songkran holiday as the government wants people to have fun and be happy in order to ease the internal conflict. However, what red-shirt people did brought the country into chaos.

They blocked several roads and streets in Bangkok. The traffic became paralyzed. Many spots were attacked by bombs. The protesters also burnt down buses and took over gas trucks. The situation was so horrible that the government applied the State of Emergency, allowing military officers to take charge of the situation.

The mob fought against the military and civilians fought against the mob.

Even Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva was attacked by the mob, while his secretary was seriously injured.

The military brought the situation under control and pressured leaders of the red-shirt people to dissolve the mob and surrender themselves.

Luckily, no bloodshed incident happened.

It must be admitted that the current conflicts and chaos have been halted for a while, but not permanently.

The true leader of the red-shirt mob – Thaksin Shinawatra – is not giving up as he does not achieve his goal yet.

As the leader of the mob, he announced that he wanted to mobilize the red-shirt members to face the government, aiming to create negotiation power.

He also stepped up the gathering by blocking the Government House, trying to oust the Prime Minister and the aristocracy.

He pressured Chairman of the Privy Council and statesman Gen. Prem Tinsulanonda, Privy Councilor Gen. Surayud Chulanont and Privy Councilor Charnchai Likhitjita to quit their positions.

Moreover, he also tried to negotiate with some parties to give him back 50 billion baht, from his total assets of 76 billion baht, and dismiss all of his charges.

However, secret negotiations did not enable him to achieve his goal.

Consequently, he stepped up the protest – aimed at bringing an absolute conflict among Thai people. He tried to make Thailand a failed government state.

He tried to tell the world through international media that Thailand's current government did not come from a right election and it was an outcome of a military coup.

He talked about Thailand's legal processes in a bad way. He also discredited the Chairman of the Privy Council and Privy Councilors.

He wanted international organizations like the United Nations to give him a hand. However, it did not work as the government was able to control the mob in the last minute.

Nevertheless, he could make the ASEAN Summit in Pattaya collapse.

Leader of ten ASEAN countries and other partners had to make their way home.

International media reported the news, which greatly affected Thailand's investment and tourism.

Leaders of the mob will have to talk to seek solutions. However, it depends on if they still have to listen to the 'big boss'. If they still have to, the problem can never be ended.

Red-shirt and yellow-shirt people – translated and summarized from *ASTV Manager Daily*, Author: Chaianant Samutwanich, April 20, 2009

I once said that there was no solution to Thailand's political crisis and did not see that a political revolution would help. The main problem is Thai people's character and behavior, mostly of those who want a social revolution. This is a major factor which affects political behavior.

During the Songkran festival, we have seen actions which tell about cultural background. The mob was mobilized by a group of leaders who were poor and had family problems. They were angry at society and those who possess a better life.

These people gathered for the advantage of one person. They expressed aggressiveness and violence. They attacked the Prime Minister's car, officials and the Prime Minister's Secretary. Therefore, we must admit that Thai society is seriously sick. This problem needs to be solved before it gets worse. The child raising revolution is needed before the political revolution.

All leaders of the red-shirt people have mental problems. The mass was also full of madness, as well as drunk people.

They were noticeably different to yellow-shirt people, who have a concrete political point and were hugely supported. Leaders of yellow-shirt people are various, educated and well-known, while the red-shirt mob was led by a group of people who were not well-known and not accepted.

The effort to assassinate Mr. Sondhi Limthongkul shows that even though the red-shirt mob was over, problems in Thai politics do not end yet.

The columnist tells Abhisit Vejjajiva that this sort of politics is not worth for him to get involved in. If he were Abhisit, he would either get rid of powerful people or quit.

To arrest the person behind the assassination of Sondhi is part of the national agenda – A bid to restore military and police image – translated and summarized from *Thai Post*; Column: Editorial; April 20, 2009

The attempt to assassinate Mr. Sondhi Limthongkul, a leader of the People Alliance for Democracy, becomes the talk of the town. Even international media report about the matter. Therefore, it automatically becomes the responsibility of the Abhisit Vejjajiva's government to seek the answer of the incident. It will not only restore the confidence of Thailand, but also restore the image of the country's security image after the ASEAN Summit in Pattaya was cancelled.

Many notices on the matter, like weapons used, the way the crime was committed, the time of the incident and the fact that Bangkok was under the State of

Emergency, reflect that ordinary people, who have nothing to do with weapon, would not be able to commit such a crime.

In addition, the son of Mr. Sondhi Limthongkul, leaders of the PAD and even a leader of the red-shirt mob – Mr. Jatuporn Promphan – see that the crime, which challenges the power of the government and the State of Emergency, cannot be done if the police or military do not get involved.

Once all notices go in the same way – government officials are involved in the assassination – the Abhisit government has a responsibility to seek the truth and answer to the question about the influence and power of those colored people.

The bloodshed formula – translated and summarized from *Krungthep Turakit*; Column: Tracking politics; Author: Pracha Burapavithet; April 10, 2009

The red shirt protest under the leadership of the “Truth Today” team chooses the path that leads to the “breakup” by mean of the seizure of the Victory Monument. This is the same policy to pressure the incumbent government which is not different from the yellow counterpart .

We comment that this is not a surprise strategy, but the same old “bloodshed formula” like in the past when the October 14, 1973 and the Black May 1992 events occurred. The October 14, 1973 bloodshed event allowed the country to have an “appointed government” and the after the Black May 1992 event the government was formed and joined by outsiders. This is, therefore, why we say a bloodshed formula is the formula to make change in politics. The strategy to wreak chaos in the city is not deceptive, but well-planned and launched by some old army figure who joined hands with some influential army figure, close aide of a former leader , aimed at bringing the army to be involved. This is to create the situation like in the past when the mass of the people was stirred up to fight the army power. This situation then led to pave the way for political change.

Hardcore key man – Beware the red shirt’s war plan –

translated and summarized from *Matichon*; April 9, 2009

The red shirt protest announced its goal to topple the aristocracy in the country and this is to be closely watched as the UDD war strategy. The key men monitoring the protests consist of three teams. First, the front team operating the movements for the gathering are Veere Musikapong, Jatuporn Promphan and Nuttawut Saikuer. Second, the team on overall strategy are the Pheu Thai opposition party members and the disbanded politicians. The only man who knows the top policy is ousted Premier Thaksin Shinawatra. The third team is the special operational team of pro-red high rank military officials including former ISOC Deputy Director Gen Pallop Pinmanee.

It is a dangerous time for Thailand as the reds are out to topple aristocracy in the country.

Daily News, April 19, 2009 – Anupong urges police to follow up with the hunt of gunmen involved with Sondhi’s shooting attack – Stating army general rank holder is mastermind

Army Commander-in-Chief bets his life to prove the army kills no one – The emergency decree is prolonged – Every injured person to be helped

Daily News, April 19, 2009 –

The caption is reads: Assassin – The authorities (top left) inspect the spot where the gunman gang opened fire on the van close to the Bangkhunprom intersection causing Sondhi Limthongkul (top right) to suffer injury on his right temple. The doctor performed a surgical operation to save his life. Sondhi has his charm cloth (below right) with him all the time. The picture below left and in the middle shows the close circuit camera’s footage with the record of Sondhi’s van and the pickup of suspects passing the Thewes Intersection.

Thai Rath, April 19, 2009 – Thaksin’s target – The Thai government’s failure
At the bottom: Red Shirt chaos “breaks” Asean summit – riles up the people’s anger

Kom Chad Luek, April 18, 2009 – Miracle Sondhi (survives) –

The tragic Songkran – The 84 bullets of a weapon – Car damaged – Part of bullet left injured in head – Police confused as many accusers involved – The PAD believes Army post holder involved

In the bid of life – Anupong insists no deaths

The reasons of the mob dissolution – Emergency decree prolonged

The Recent Songkran Festival

April 19, 2009

Categories: Editorial Cartoons, Songkran

The Recent Songkran Festival – Kha parjam Wan Arthit (Sunday’s article) by Khwad, *Daily News*, April 19, 2009
The title is “The Recent Songkran Festival”

Top right: There is another historical page of the tragic Songkran 2009 –
The word close to the map of Thailand says “breakup”

Middle left: The little canary has to move again –
The captions around Thaksin say “Head to Africa” and “Goodbye Dubai”

Middle right: It is for Thais to learn to be accustomed to living with the emergency decree

Lower middle left:
The buses that were seized by the red today are to be seized by some other groups.
The man, who appears to be Newin because of his large lower lip, is saying “4,000 buses”

Lower middle right: The word "two standards" is still to be proved by the government of the O-BA-MARK”

Bottom: At least there is one thing acknowledged–the government is able to succeed in doing something.
The caption by PM Abhisit reads: The government succeeds in enforcing the emergency decree and performs better than the past government of Somchai.

‘In Thailand, the Law of the Jungle Prevails’

April 20, 2009

Categories: Thai Politics

[‘In Thailand, the Law of the Jungle Prevails’](#) – Spiegel Online, April 20, 2009

In a SPIEGEL interview, Sukhumbhand Paribatra, the governor of Bangkok and a cousin of the king, condemns former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and criticizes the Thai Army. He says he is deeply concerned about the state of Thailand and the future of the monarchy...

Zack and Miri make a porno banned by National Film Board

April 21, 2009

Categories: Film and TV

[Zack and Miri make a porno banned by National Film Board](#) – *The Nation*, April 21, 2009

... "The screening of this film may encourage copycats here," Culture Ministry permanent secretary Vira Rojpojchanarat said Tuesday.

Bangkok beats London in carbon pollution

April 22, 2009

[Bangkok beats London in carbon pollution](#) – *Reuters*, April 22, 2009

National Liberation Front of Patani

April 24, 2009

Categories: The Thai Deep South

Statement from a member of the National Liberation Front of Patani – translated and summarized from *Issara News Centre*; April 24, 2009

Part 1

During the past five years of the unrest in the South, we often heard about words like "insurgents" or "R.K.K. commando bombing men." Those words were used by the security forces after a violent event took place.

However, people have never been informed what exactly insurgents are, who they work for, and what they do. Are the words "R.K.K." or "commando" names that the armed group calls itself or is it a word created by the government?

Previously, there were efforts to let members of those movements unveil inside information to the media, but the public was not interested. They were seen as a set-up of the government.

Recently, the Issara News Centre had a chance to talk to a former member of an insurgency movement called Jihad. Jihad means a religious effort or is used for an action done to increase people's faith in God. However, here, it means a holy war.

The information unveiled by this man, who was a former insurgent, and words of people living in the same village, enables us to know about the movement's ideas, measures and strategies applied to achieve its goal – land separatism.

"I don't think I made a wrong decision that day"

The 39-year-old former insurgent said that he worked with the group for about four years and he never thought that he had made a wrong decision.

"I was a member for about four years. Back then, I was proud of what I was facing. In early 2004, 'Ayah' (a position of a leading member in a village) liked to come talking to me about history and the Patani state. The man also told me about what happened during the time, focusing on discrediting the Thai government. He never talked about good side of the Thai government. No one thought of asking him either."

The former insurgent discloses that 'Ayah' spent years talking to him.

"He would spend a long time coaxing people. He made us feel confident in the movement day by day. After that, Ayah will persuade them to become a member of the movement. He claimed that all of residents in the village were members of Jihad, except you. He would say that you were the last one, go back home and think about it".

"I spent two days considering about the proposal and joining the Jihad. After that, Ayah held a meeting at the home of a member, without informing people of the purpose of the meeting. I was there and saw four people already waiting. Later, five other villagers joined. So, there were ten, the whole village".

"After that, Ayah showed up with a 50-year-old man and asked everybody in the house to sit in a circle. The old man told everyone to put their right hands on his (this is "supoh," an inauguration ceremony – a personal belief of Muslim people) and speak after him in Yawi language. The vow said that no person was allowed to unveil any secrets. If one did so, he would be punished by Allah. After one performed "supoh," he would have to follow all orders. He would let us speak a few times".

However, during the ceremony, the former insurgent started to think that there was no such ceremony of Islamic doctrine.

"It was not stated in doctrine, so how come we prepared the ceremony? This was what made me dare unveiling secrets of the movement."

Part 2

Mobilising people to hate the government – hoarding food to prepare for war

After the ceremony, Ayah told everyone that they were now members of the movement. They would be called 'Masa' of the Jihad. Masas were told to separate into two groups – one had to attend a meeting once a month and another had to provide security.

"The meetings were aimed at mobilizing people. The Ayah said that Muslim people had to worship Allah's kindness five times a day – it is a wajib. All villagers had to ask God to bless them in the war.

"Sometimes, he would talk about the history of the Patani State which previously belonged to Malayu people. The state was seized by Siam. And Malayu people were captured as prisoners and dug the San Saeb Canal in Bangkok with their bare hands.

"Ayah also showed them that there were only Muslim people living along the San Saeb Canal. They were descendants of Malayu people in Pattani. Hence, we, as descendants of Pattani, had to fight for freedom of Pattani."

Meetings also detailed about the movement's way of life and its next plan.

All Muslim people must join the Jihad movement. Those with wives and children did not have to fight. They would only support the movement. The movement focused on a way of life in which people would have to depend on themselves. They grew their own vegetables, raised ducks, chickens, cows and fish and stockpiled rice and medicines as when the war began we could not go out. However, we would still have our own supplies.

"If one died during war, it was a *zahit* (which means to die in a God's way), but the movement uses the word to mean "god's warrior." When a *zahit* dies, his body does not have to be cleaned. Moreover, he could take 70 other people with him to heaven.

Moving to free the country – collecting money to support the movement

The former member said that back then, he felt so proud and uplifted.

"Definitely, everybody wanted himself and the ones he loved to go to heaven", he said.

The former member said that besides mobilization meetings, the organization also had ten rules.

"Actually, there were ten, but I could remember only five. All members have to undergo all religious activities, obey leaders, do not unveil secrets of the movement, be punctual, and focus on movement's tasks instead of personal ones."

The former member was one of the economic staff, responsible for collecting money from members.

"They told me to collect one baht from a person daily – as a monthly payment. For annual payment, 360 baht would be collected from everyone. And they could pay more than that if they wanted. Every tenth of a month, members would have to get the collected money to me. After that, another member would take it from me. I did not know what the organization did with the money.

Part 3

Physical training – Bravery test

Besides regular duties, all members had to receive physical training.

"This was an order of leading members. Military members were trainers. The venues were mostly homes of members in the village. At that time, there were five other people attending the training with me. The trainer would tell us to line up and jog, push up, sit up and jump. Members would receive training for three days per week, two hours daily."

He said that after the training, members would have to take a bravery test.

"The training would last a few weeks. After that, the trainer would order us to create a situation in the village and nearby villages. In my first time, a plan was set. Members would create a situation twice in a night. Members were separated into two groups, five each. The first group would attack road signs and the second one would attack the foot of a bridge at the entrance of the village. Both groups would have military members."

"After the meeting, when all members got the plan they would go home immediately to prepare for the attacks. Some members and I had to seek two tires, rags, three liters of benzene and two cans of spray paint. Military members would bring nails. When the time came, members would meet up at the

appointment spot. We met up at 8:00 pm that night. My friend and I helped throw nails on the main road. The rest cut trees down to block the road. After the mission completed, my friends and me got back to my place to rest and wait for the next mission.”

“When the time for the second mission came – around 1.30 am – other members and I brought tools to create a situation again. Rag would be put in both tires. Benzene was poured onto the tires. Afterwards, we would put one tire on the road, and another one would be a bit away from the first one. Benzene would be poured from one tire to another before setting fire. Other leftovers like the gallon jug and rag would be thrown into the fire.”

He said that after the mission, they all went back home like nothing happened. The next morning, they heard people saying that last night, nails were thrown along the road. Tires were burnt and trees were cut to block the road. Moreover, residents in a nearby village were decapitated. So, he knew that there were also other activities.

Monitoring officials

Besides collecting money, he also had to do several tasks, especially providing security.

“At first, there was no obvious security measures. Members just had to monitor movements of officials going in and out of the village. At the end of 2005, leading members ordered the organization of a security system. Military and other members would act as guards together.

To act as a guard, we were unarmed. We had only walkie-talkies. We were only members and were responsible only for monitoring movements of officials and report them to members in the nearby village by walkie-talkie. We were not allowed to talk about other issues in the walkie-talkie. In my village, there were four groups of security guards, two each. A group would have to provide security from 7:00 pm to 5:00 am.

“When officials came, members would use a code to communicate with other members in their own and nearby villages. The code were, for instance, a fruit truck is going up there, which meant an official’s vehicle was going in the village, or your relatives are coming, which meant officials are going into the village. But, those codes were used only in my group. I did not know the codes of other villages. I also knew that some villages would have women member acting as guards. But, in my village, all guards were men,” he said.

Spending many years with the movement, he felt that there was only chaos and strain. Last year, a team of government officers helped develop the village and showed their sincerity. Village residents felt that they could try officers and turned their back to the movement.

The swine flu crisis lays bare the meat industry's monstrous power

April 27, 2009

Categories: 2Bangkok News

[The swine flu crisis lays bare the meat industry's monstrous power](#) – Guardian, April 27, 2009

...Just as Bangkok-based chicken giant Charoen Pokphand was able to suppress enquiries into its role in the spread of bird flu in southeast Asia, so it is likely that the forensic epidemiology of the swine flu outbreak will pound its head against the corporate stonewall of the pork industry...

‘Etiquette guide’ for Thai monks

April 27, 2009

[‘Etiquette guide’ for Thai monks](#) – BBC News, April 27, 2009

A Buddhist preacher in Thailand has announced plans for new guidelines aimed at curbing the flamboyant behavior of gay and transgender monks...

Thai golf star cracks world top 50

April 27, 2009

[Thai golf star cracks world top 50](#) – TODAYonline, April 27, 2009

This handout picture shows Thongchai Jaidee of Thailand in action during the Barclays Singapore Open Pro Am event at Sentosa Golf Club in Singapore, 2008. Thongchai's victory at the Ballantine's Championship saw him crack the world's top 50 and qualify for next week's lucrative Players Championship in the United States...

Southern Violence Statistics – April 2009

April 30, 2009

Categories: Deep South Violence Statistics

Map of four provinces in the deep south (Songkhla, Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat) showing numbers of the dead and injured by location.

Southern Violence Statistics – April 2009

[Index of violence statistics for the Thai Deep South](#)

This chart shows violent incidents classified by the hour of the day (x-axis) and the province (y-axis). Songkhla=light blue, Pattani=blue, Yala=green, Narathiwat=red, total events=black

This chart shows violent incidents classified by day of the week (x-axis) and the province (y-axis). The days of the week start with Monday on the left. Songkhla=light blue, Pattani=blue, Yala=green, Narathiwat=red, total events=black

This chart shows violent incidents classified by day of the month (x-axis) and the province (y-axis). Songkhla=light blue, Pattani=blue, Yala=green, Narathiwat=red, total events=black

Numbers of violent incidents since January 2004. Across the bottom are the years (2547 is 2004, 2548 is 2005, 2549 is 2006, 2550 is 2007, 2551 is 2008, 2552 is 2009). The blue line shows the number of all violent incidents that took place as reported by the Deep South Coordination Center (counting all incidents both injury and non-injury). The red line shows data according to the Violence-related Injury Surveillance (a form that hospitals, doctors and clinics are supposed to fill out to report violent incidents).

The blue line shows the average monthly level of violent incidents from 2004 up to the present. The red line shows the information provided to the Violence-related Injury Surveillance in the present year. The y-axis shows the numbers of events from 0-300. The x-axis shows the months of the year from January to December (left to right).

The numbers of injured and dead reported from each province where the events occurred (Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat and Songkhla). Black= dead, orange=injured. The CFR (Case Fatality Rate) of each province is above each bar.

The toll of dead and injured (y-axis), classified by the districts where the incidents took place (x-axis). Black= dead, orange=injured.

Map of four provinces in the deep south (Songkhla, Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat) showing the number of violent events by tambon (village). Starting at light yellow, the levels are 1-10, 10-20, 20-30, 30-40, 40-50, and greater than 60.

The numbers of dead and injured, classified by the victims' profession. Black= dead, orange=injured. From left to right: police officers, army officers, others, businessmen, students and college students, agriculturists, laborers, volunteer defense guards, housewives, state enterprise employees, unknown (no data), unemployed, tambon administrative officials, other officials

Source: Deep South Violence-related Injury Surveillance statistics

Red Shirt Protest Headlines – April 15-30, 2009

April 30, 2009

Categories: Red Shirt Protest 2009

[Red Shirt protest main page – March-April 2009](#)

[Clowns aplenty in parliament circus](#) – Bangkok Post, April 23, 2009

...Here are some examples of the "garbage" discharged by Pheu Thai MPs, especially Surapong Tovichakchaikul from Chiang Mai and Chalerm Yubamrung:

+ Red-shirt protesters were not responsible for the collapse of the Asean plus 3 and Asean plus 6 summit in Pattaya. It was the Abhisit government which cancelled the summits and it was the blue shirts who provoked the red-shirt protest.

+ The LPG gas truck which was parked near the Din Daeng apartment with its valves open was not the work of the red-shirt protesters, but outsiders masquerading as red shirts.

+ Red-shirt protesters did not harm or smashed the car of Niphon Promphan, secretary-general of the prime minister, at the Interior Ministry. On the contrary, they were there to rescue Niphon.

+ Red-shirt protest was peaceful and they did not cause any hardships to the people in Bangkok. They went on rampage after they were provoked by the government which declared the state of emergency in Bangkok.

+ The declaration of state of emergency was totally unjustified because there was no emergency situation in Bangkok...

Right: Komchadluek, April 21, 2009 – It reads: Some of the Red Shirt UDD leaders who have arrest warrants on their heads and rewards for useful information that leads to their arrest.

[Interior Ministry mayhem –](#)

[Police offer bounty for info on suspects](#) – The Nation, April 20, 2009

...Meanwhile, red-shirt co-leader Jatuporn Phromphan said he had just had a telephone conversation with ex-premier Thaksin Shinawatra on Saturday. He quoted Thaksin as saying that the Songkran mayhem, such as the torching of buses, were done not by the red shirts but the blue shirts, who are state officials in disguise to wreak havoc and pin the blame on the red shirts.

He accused Abhisit of picking on the red shirts while neglecting to enforce the law on the yellow shirts...

[Moving into 'action' phase](#) – The Straits Times, April 20, 2009

... "I believe people are now planning and thinking whether or not peaceful means serve them best. We are not encouraging violence, but have to admit that people have been repeatedly disappointed."

"Legal standards have been clearly unfair and unjust. I am not saying there will be violence in the days ahead. But the remaining opportunities for a peaceful solution are every day decreasing."

"We still talk about a peaceful way in which people can get their rights back. But people have the right to defend themselves against aggression," he said...

[Where Thaksin went wrong](#) – Bangkok Post, April 19, 2009

...The PAD's "final solution" was taking the airport hostage. Sure, there were weapons, violence and deaths. But there was also organisation to the movement. Key leaders were always visible, leading the charge, keeping the mob under control. For the rest of us Thais, Suvarnabhumi is way over there – isolated, way, way, way over there. It was annoying. It was unfortunate. It was inconvenient. But it did not threaten people of their properties. It's not right outside our windows. Unless a trip was planned, it didn't directly touch us.

The UDD's "final solution", on the other hand, was to take over Bangkok. Oops. Who thought that one up? An armed mob running amok all over the city. Key leaders were nowhere in sight. Citizens were threatened and killed. Yup, that will win over public opinion alright. Their actions were way, way, way too near and menacing for comfort. People's revolution? Nope, mob rule...

[FTI: Damage greater this time – Scenes of violence alarm investors](#) – Bangkok Post, April 17, 2009

...The damage to investment sentiment from the Songkran unrest will definitely be greater than the economic fallout from last year's airport closures, particularly in terms of country risk, say business leaders.

Physical attacks on a minister and VIP guards, in particular, have portrayed an image of an uncivilised country, which will take a very long time to recover...

[Sondhi of PAD survives shootings](#) – Bangkok Post, April 17, 2009

[Media mogul Sondhi's car ambushed](#) – TOC, April 17, 2009

Also:

[Jakrapob's website](#) is blocked within Thailand (when accessing the site starting with "www"). However, the website itself is apparently offline.

[The Economist](#) will [not be distributed in Thailand this week](#) because of a critical editorial.

DTV now MVTV – April, 17, 2009

The broadcast DTV has been switched to [MVTV](#) – a combination of infomercials, patriotic videos, and a news report on the Red Shirt leaders arriving at court. The [DTV website](#) is also offline.

[Red Shirt protest main page – March-April 2009](#)

Thai Media Project – April 2009

April 30, 2009

Categories: Thai Media Project

More: [Unlocking the Thai world: Thai-language newspaper headlines](#)

Punch to Punch – *Thairath*, April 30, 2009

Left: Jakrapob Penkae: We still resist the Apisit government continuously and are now preparing some strategies to oppose the government. Surely, the red-shirt movement is still alive.

Right: Sathit Wongnongtoey: An arrest warrant for Jakrapob Penkae is now issued. It is necessary to bring a charge against him urgently because he is one of the Red Shirt core leaders who incited people to violence.

Not the “new” political pole – translated and summarized from *Krungthep Turakit*; Column: Tracking politics; Author: Nipawan Khaewrakmook, April 29, 2009
The unceasing political chaos is not a finalized issue at this moment as the movement of political pole leaders continue. The “old” political pole is Thaksin—the ousted premier and his red-shirt supporters—and the “new” political pole at this moment is the Democrat-led government, backed by the yellow shirt People’s Alliance for Democracy and the Army.

Recently, rumor spreads that some Army figures are to join hands with some political factions in the incumbent government and possibly form the new political party. Many eyes are on the move of some high-ranked army figures who are thought to step into politics to maintain their influence. Everything seems to be possible if the Army led by Defense Minister Gen Prawit Wongsuwan is to join hand with the blue shirt group of Newin Chidchob.

The issue of that PAD leader, who was targeted in the shooting attack but survived is interesting. It is said he tried to disclose earlier information about a coup attempt on April 12, 2009 from another PAD core leader Chamlong Srimuang. This is a matter of concern. If a coup attempt was achieved, some ministers in the incumbent government were to step in to lead the government. Thaksin earlier gave speech revealing the possible coalition of Newin and Gen. Prawit as well. It is undeniable that the Army is involved in politics nowadays, especially in the case that the Democrat ruling government is formed after a discussion at the residence of Gen. Prawit in the 1st Infantry Regiment (King’s Guard) before he becomes the Defense Minister in the incumbent government. Despite the attempt to clarify this rumor from the Defense Minister, many who are involved with the close networks of Gen. Prawit and his brother, National Police Chief Pol. Gen Patcharawat Wongsuwan are now saying that Gen. Prawit is “readily dressed up” for the “post”.

To save – To survive – translated and summarized from *Krungtep Turakit*; Column: Trace of politics; Author: Rak Montri; April 28, 2009

Although the red-shirt crisis was handled by the government, it is possible that the Red Shirt army is ready to rally all the time because the red shirts collect many kinds of weapons and also prepare to make a great assembly.

Violence by the Red Shirts may happen again and their movement may be so violent that it will become a civil war due to a clash between the Red Shirt rally and the local people. Importantly, a rumor that there is something violent happening in the country causes a lot of damage to the country’s reputation.

A group of three high-ranking generals warns the government to urgently find out the measures to prevent a severe situation. If the severe situation created by the Red Shirts happens again, people will not forgive the government at all and the government will be accused of causing the country to fall into ruin. The reason why the Red Shirt movement is taking place has changed to usurping the country. Thus, forgiving some politicians, setting up a committee to investigate the facts about Songkran crisis, setting up a committee to find a solution to political problems, and amending the constitution cannot stop the Red Shirt movement.

Especially, amending the constitution will bring many benefits to 111 politicians of the Thai Rak Thai Party and the 109 politicians of the Chart Thai and the People’s Power Party even though they broke the law. Hence, PM Abhisit Wejchacheewa should not think that goodness and morality can help only him to survive, but it also must help all Thai people to be saved.

Threat of terrorist attacks – translated and summarized from *Kom Chad Luek*; April 26, 2009

Mr. Jakrapob Penkae, a leader of the red-shirt mob, has run away after the mob was cancelled following the announcement of the State of Emergency and the court issuing an arrest warrant against him. No one knows exactly where he is. However, he still gives interviews to international media saying that he will not stop fighting and will apply underground measures and other violent strategies to win the fight.

To guess, Mr. Jakrapob may have an intention to stage a civil war, as he told red-shirt people. He also announced that he would also apply the guerrilla strategy. This could be related to city terrorist attacks if Jakrapob has capacity and is supported financially to mobilize people with the same attitude.

Mr. Jakrapob’s threat should not be overlooked by careless officials. His behaviors show that he has never been a royalist and is against the Privy Council. He was accused of offending the Royal Institute many times.

Mr. Jakrapob alone may not be able to mobilize people and raise funds. However, there is a high possibility that he will be backed by an escaped political prisoner, who has just lost in his battle and is now a homeless.

The government should launch measures to cope with the threat. It is better than to let the situation go uncontrolled.

Besides Jakrapob, there are many red-shirt leaders who have escaped and those communist people who keep moving underground. It is possible that these people will work together without considering of any negative impacts on Thailand as they want to help their boss.

Subordinates of Pravit-Anupong moved in – Getting rid of Thaksin’s followers – translated and summarized from *ASTV Manager Daily*; April 28, 2009

On April 27, the Office of the Prime Minister announced that the King has endorsed the proposal to appoint 454 military officers.

The mid-year military reshuffle list had been proposed on March 12. It was expected the conclusion would be announced before the end of March. However, there are too many processes in the new military reshuffle and the new military list and structure must be stated in the gazette before taking effect.

Several military units have been restructured. The military says that the new structure will allow it to work easier and more efficiently. This is the first time that all forces are restructured.

It is reported that all military officers who are close to Thaksin Shinawatra have been transferred. It is possible that Gen. Pravit and military commanders agreed that all Thaksin’s close friends should be transferred to prevent unexpected incidents as now the political situation is still uncertain and Thaksin is still making waves.

Military’s bullet – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; Column: The Preface; April 25, 2009

The People’s Alliance for Democracy (PAD) core leader Sondhi Limthongkul was shot by army bullets bearing the mark of the Royal Thai Army (RTA) which are the series produced specifically for the 1st Army. General Anupong Paochinda agreed that the bullets came from the army’s 9th Infantry Division under the command of the 1st Army but they have been used for training only. It is also difficult to bring them out of the base.

Meanwhile, First Army commander Lieutenant General Kanit Sapitak said that the bullets bearing the mark RTA were used by many army divisions so it is difficult to know whether they have been brought out or not.

We are seeing that General Anupong and Lieutenant General Kanit have a different opinion. Maybe it makes people think that their opinions about politics are also different so their words are opposite. Besides, there was also a violence crash between the red shirts and the soldiers on Songkran day after declaring the Royal Act of State of Emergency. So, it is not strange that people give many comments on their action. The comments will be reduced if Sondhi’s case is improved.

Importantly, the weapons should be systematized and tracked because it will cause serious damage to the nation’s security if they are lost.

Questions that Anupong never answers – translated and summarized from *ASTV Manager Daily*; April 23, 2009

After the situation gets back to normal, people turn to question about authorities' noticeably strange gesture towards the risky situation, especially Commander-in-Chief Gen. Anupong Paojinda.

While waiting for the progress in the case of Sondhi Limthongkul's assassination, people have more time to think about the matter.

Back to the 193-day gathering of the People Alliance for Democracy (PAD), starting from May 24, 2008, those who joined the protest were attacked by war weapons from several places located close to the Headquarters of the Royal Thai Army and the First Region Army under the supervision of Gen. Anupong Paojinda. Later, during the recent red-shirt mob, the Prime Minister stated that there was a military vehicle that blocked his car. He added that people in the vehicle aimed to kill him.

In addition, criminals who tried to kill Mr. Sondhi Limthongkul used kinds of war weapons. Commander-in-Chief Anupong concluded that it was ordinary that civilians would use war weapons in the attack.

What people are wondering is why there was no security on Bang Khunprom junction, which was located near the Bank of Thailand (BoT), during the State of Emergency?

What had happened was directly related to Gen. Anupong Paojinda. As the Commander-in-Chief and a committee of the State of Emergency Operation Center, he never answered any questions about the issue.

Kom Chad Luek, April 21, 2009

The headline of the article reads: The underground's affair... who gain the benefits?

The policeman is saying: Ai Puea

The word on the jar in which the police hides reads: The National Intelligence Police

Amnesty – translated and summarized from *Thai Post*; Column: Editorial; April 21, 2009

The new proposal for an amnesty for 220 politicians from the Thai Rak Thai Party, Chart Thai Party and Matchima Party is more accepted than previous ones as people are absolutely tired of political conflicts.

Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva's expression of interest in the idea will make less people oppose it.

Before we reach that point, we must consider that Thailand's political world is full of corruption which also destroys the country. Politicians do not represent civilians, but henchmen of investors. We must think if we want the country goes back to the point again.

Prime Minister Abhisit's suggestion to separate political charges from criminal charges is a perfect idea, if it is possible. To separate charges that happened during the past 7 to 8 years is not easy.

Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva might want to solve political conflicts by politics.

If prisoner Thaksin really receives an amnesty for political charges, he cannot get back all his political rights. He has also been charged with corruption and has been sentenced to two years in jail. If he really wants his political life back, he must come back to Thailand and spend at least seven years in jail. Moreover, he has to wait for other five years. However, this does not include other of his charges yet that have not been decided.

Assassination of Sondhi unveils the new political concept amidst conflicts – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; Column: Wipak Haeng Wipak; April 21, 2009

The assassination attempt on Charnchai Likhitjittha and Sondhi Limthongkul created a new political movement.

It will be interesting when both efforts are combined with two situations occurring in the meantime – the gun attack at the Office of the Constitutional Court and an effort to burn the headquarters of Bangkok Bank and Charoen Pokphand.

The question is if there is a group of people who want to make the red-shirt mob become more aggressive, especially after the State of Emergency was declared.

The situation became more complicated.

The feeling that someone was trying to create a hostile situation made people become more careful politically.

It seems like we see shadows of Abhisit Vejjajiva and Thaksin Shinawatra standing.

Since the mob started on April 8, the name of Mr. Sondhi Limthongkul had not been mentioned. The mob targeted Gen. Prem Tinsulanont.

However, several incidents like the gun attack at the Office of Constitutional Court, efforts to burn headquarters of Bangkok Bank and Charoen Pokphand and the attempt to kill Mr. Sondhi Limthongkul enabled the public to see that some people were trying to worsen the situation and expand the conflict to include new political figures.

Keep eyes on the new "political pole" – Abhisit encircled – Sondhi to be gotten rid of to clear political pole blockade – translated and summarized from *ASTV-Phujatkarn*; Author: Nokwheed; April 20, 2009

The car shooting attack targeting the life of *Manager* media founder Sondhi Limthongkul on April 17, 2009 was a brutal event, especially for a man who dared stand to fight against Thaksin's regime in the recent years. Supposedly the mastermind of the murder is then, influential figures.

Groups of involved suspects are possibly those who are formed the pro-Thaksin groups, but newly joined hands with some politicians in the government who aim at creating a new political reality.

It is the new political pole that aims to step up to replace the old political pole of aristocracy and targets to become the next prime minister. By comparing the life target attack that Mr. Sondhi has faced recently with the attack that occurred during the Asian summit meeting in Pattaya (the Prime Minister fell as target of the attack) and the raid on the Interior Ministry by the Reds, the Prime Minister has to be aware of who he is fighting with. He has failed to prevent the attack on his life as he trusts the close aide ministerial posts.

The Prime minister is now facing with both the Pro-Thaksins and the inner government figures who aim at stepping into power. I believe that if the Prime Minister proves his leadership and leads the country to overcome the crisis, the public will support him and he will not to walk alone in the path of the leader.

Behind the "will" – Targeting Sondhi's life – Instigating anger between Reds and Yellows – translated and summarized from *Thai Post*, Author: Plew Seengern, April 18, 2009

The attack targeting the life of Mr. Sondhi Limthongkul, Manager Media founder was, to me, a signal for us, the media to be aware of producing the news that is devoted to the truth and the nation.

Mr. Sondhi survives incredibly and this is proof that a good man is protected by goodness. Regarding the ill will to threaten Mr. Sondhi's life, I dare say that the red-shirt people are not involved. We are all Thai people under the constitutional monarchy and we all have loyalty for our beloved King.

You might then ask who did it? I am to ask back "who" receives the gain from the situation that the reds and the yellows fight each other. Who is in the person in a mediocre position who gains benefit from any political side? Many can say he/she is loyal, but on the bias of power and money, what is to be cherished in nowadays' value?

The feeling that the reds are losers generates a deep breakup among reds and that vengeance is deserved for them. The murder plan targeting Sondhi's life generates, likewise, the deep anger among the yellow PAD.

I urge that the yellows and the reds to be clam and aware of the "visible" hand that aims to wreak chaos from the situation and to claim a heroic action that leads to absolute power.

As for Prime Minister Abhisit, I would like the Prime Minister to have awareness of the people around you. You can imagine you are sitting in barbed wire. You cannot believe every one around you will not turn a betrayer one day in the future as "Brutus." Please reconsider on how the security plan was managed on the day your car was attacked, as well as the scene of protest in Pattaya. Beware of the "Thai" style vision in exercising your PM power.

Yui explains: *As you ask in the website "Anyone know what this really means?"...For the summary it means "getting nothing from the investment of the former PM Thaksin"*

Update: Another take on the meaning – A reader explains: *...Note the story on page 23 where they interview a man who was detained before the coup and claims to have heard General Sonthi take a phone call from someone he calls "ma." Anyway my wife thinks that the "footprints in the air" title is a cryptic reference to evidence (or non-evidence) of royal intervention in the coup by citing royal language (the dust beneath the soles of your feets, etc). In other words, royal tracks leave no footprints. But it's just a hypothesis.*

Matichon Weekly,
April 17, 2009
It reads: No footprints
in the air

Amending the constitution and declaring an amnesty for some politicians, it is irrelevant to unity – translated and summarized from *Thaipost*; Column: The Editorial; April 22, 2009

The debate about the political conflict is now going ahead in the parliament. The representatives of the coalition government party and of the opposition party come to debate what solution is the best of solving the political conflict, but they talk about an amnesty for some politicians who were deprived of the political rights by the court, and a constitutional amendment on article 237.

These topics are opposed immediately by the people. It means that the political conflict is not improved although the constitution is amended and some politicians are forgiven. According to the case of the party dissolution of Thai Rak Thai party, it showed that Thai Rak Thai party could do everything to govern the country and its actions are in conflict with the constitution and has endangered the country's security. It was unsure whether Thaksin thought over the country's benefit more than his personal interest when administering the country.

The Thai Rak Thai party was dissolved by the court after their decision. Hence, the ideas about an amnesty for some politicians and a constitutional amendment is irrelevant to unity and also is in conflict with the political reform proposed by Abhisit government. However, the political benefits of each party is focused firstly when the debate is begun.

Nation Weekly – April 20, 2009

The cover reads: War of 7.6 ten thousand million baht

“It happens at the Bangna intersection” – by Kui, *Kom Chad Luek*, April 21, 2009

Left: From the in-depth information, we initially believe we know who is the assassin involved with the shooting targeting Mr. Sondhi.

Middle: Who is the person sir?

Right: Ai Puea

Thai Rath, April 19, 2009

Follow up with the case to close down the community radio stations involved with rallying the masses

Bloodshed shooting attack aimed at Sondhi – Surgery operation undergone

Life bidding

Kom Chad Luek, April 21, 2009

Don't miss the record of the April crisis event – the tragic Songkran

Chamlong says coup involved – The PAD urges panel of officials on national security restructured

Rely on the real fans for tracking for the pickup's whereabouts

Sondhi's head valued at 3 million baht

Punch to Punch – *Thairath*, April 20, 2009

Left: Abhisit Wejchacheewa – It reads: Although the severe situation was improved, no one gained the victory or the defeat. If the better situation shows victory, it would have been the victory to bring a peace to society.

Right: Thaksin Shinawatra – It reads: Thai government should find a way to create a rapport with the red-shirt protest rally more than put them in a jail. When the Thai government uses violence to solve the problem, the severe situation happening in the country is also its result. If he puts the red-shirt core leaders in a jail, the violent situation will be more severe.

Punch to Punch – *Thairath*, April 13, 2009

Left: Thaksin Shinawatra – It reads: Thai people who love freedom and fairness, please come to show your power extremely because you are one who change Thailand's history.

Right: Abhisit Wejchacheewa – It reads: If it is the claim on democracy, the government will surely respond. But, if the claim is irrelevant to democracy, the government can't respond. The government has to be covered by the law and the principle institutions of the nation.

Goodness protects good man – Incredibly Sondhi survives – translated and summarized from *Phujatkan*; Author: Crime news team; April 17, 2009

The People's Alliance for Democracy or PAD core leader and media magnet Sondhi Limthongkul was attacked in a shooting attack targeted his life early morning on April 17, 2009 close to the Eium Woranutch Temple at Bangkhumprom intersection in the Phra Nakorn district in Bangkok. Sondhi's car was attacked by M16 guns shooting. His driver was injured severely. Sondhi receives the injury from a bullet in his head and he was operated on. The doctor later revealed that Mr. Sondhi was in safe condition.

Behind the "force" dissolving the red protest – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; Page: 11, April 16, 2009

It is to be inscribed in Thai history that the mob was dissolved by the Army without loss of people's life during the Army operation to handle the red-shirt protest during Songkran Festival, 2009.

According to the Army preparation, approximately 40 troops of military forces were dispatched to monitor the situation. Regarding the strategy to handle the masses, the front line force used shields and bats while the back-up team is equipped with guns with drill ammunition. The rear line military team is equipped with bullets and the Army used these to threaten the protest by shooting onto the sky.

Anyway, the truth is to be verified by the footage of the camera recoding the event on the operation date. The thankful message is to be partially delivered to the red leaders who declared a halt to the protest unless bloodshed would occur. For all lessons we learned from the tragic Songkran, 2009, it is us, Thai people who are to answer the doubtful question whether the national breakup is what we really want to see indeed.

The Red-shirt mob has no righteousness – translated and summarized from *Naew Na*; Column: April 9, 2009

Thaksin Shinawatra tries to mobilize red-shirt people nationwide to join a civil war, aiming to bring down the government and aristocracy. He claimed that it is a civil revolution just like the October 14, 1973 and the Black May 1992 events, which is a complete distortion of the truth.

It is known that the events of October 14, 1973 and May 17, 1992 were collaboration of academics and people who were motivated by pure ideals. They moved peacefully to get real democracy. They fought for the majority.

The movements by red-shirt people are known to be only for the benefit of one person. They do not concern themselves with improving the government.

The red-shirt movement, claimed to be a fight for democracy, is aimed at laundering all of Thaksin's guilty and taking back Thaksin's 76-billion-baht assets and his power.

The leaders of the red-shirt mob demand for four things, including sacking Gen. Prem Tinsulanonda, Chairman of the Privy Council and statesman, and Gen. Surayud Chulanont, a privy councilor, and former Prime Minister.

It is such an aggressive and overconfident requirement. It shows their intention to destroy the royal institute. Other requirements are also not in line with the current situation. They are just reasons to create a situation which will lead to violence.

Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva announced via TV Pool that the government will not be trapped by the red-shirt mob and it will not use any violent measures.

Punch to punch – *Thai Rath*, April 4, 2009

Left: Thaksin Shinawatra – It reads: I have nothing that is in conflict with Gen Surayuth Chulanont, therefore the chaos and grudges that led to the cases to get rid of me over claims that I am not loyal

Right: Privy Councilor and former Prime Minister Gen Surayuth Chulanont – The information from Thaksin might be mistaken information. I did not take part in the coup. I believe in the circle of good and bad actions that every man will receive the result from their good and bad deeds.

An assassination of a privy councilor – translated and summarized from *Daily News*; April 9, 2009

Currently, the country is separated into two groups—the yellows and the reds—created by their extremely different political ideas. Meanwhile, an issue about an assassination of a privy councilor was reported. Four suspects with guns, bullets, pictures and important documents, were arrested. They confessed that they were trying to kill one of seven privy councilors—Mr. Charnchai Likhitjittha. He is a person who joined a discussion on national problems at Mr. Pee Malakul Na Ayutthaya's place before the September 19 2006 coup.

The motivation for the assassination cannot be concluded yet. Suspects claimed that they were hired by a northern businessman who has a conflict with Mr. Charnchai over businesses and personal matters. They disclosed that a special captain was a middleman. They were told to commit the crime before April 7, before the big gathering of red-shirt people. It was assumed that it was aimed to create a situation – to make it more violent and aggressive.

People may wonder about the case as it seemed to be unprofessional. However, Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Thaugsuban confirmed that the government and the police did not create the situation. The government also ordered officials to provide strict security for the Chairman of the Privy Councilor, privy councilors and other important figures.

We hope that the case will not be a repeats of repeat Thaksin's assassination attempt, which was proven to be a 'silly' incident.

Government weak: The reason Thaksin gets stronger – translated and summarized from *ASTV Manager Daily*; Author: Samart Mangsang; April 7, 2009

If you look back to see the reason the military ran a coup to bring down the government led by Thaksin Shinawatra on September 19, 2006, you will see that reasons were the Thaksin government tended to seek their own benefits in an illegal way which led to social disunity and media intervention.

Until now, the action has not been eliminated, and even worsened. Red-shirt people tend to try to create disunity in society, aiming to destroy the good image people have towards the government led by Abhisit Vejjajiva and the country's important institutes, especially the court, which is one of three major institutes in Thailand.

All Thaksin's phone-ins aimed to make people see that he was bullied by the court.

What makes Thaksin and his followers dare challenge the court's power when he is an escaped prisoner and is charged for many lawsuits?

However, to analyze why the government is weak, we must take a look back from the September 19 coup until now – the day red-shirt people moved to block Government House, announcing they will bring down the government before Songkran festival.

Starting from the Council for Democracy Reform, after dethroning the Thaksin government, it did not take charge like other revolutionists. Instead, they let Gen. Surayud Chulanont take the Prime Minister position. As a leader of the government, Gen. Surayud did not express any bravery in fixing problems and suing Thaksin and people in the Thaksin regime. He just let everything go slowly.

Until the end of 2007, the People Power's Party, a nominee government of Thaksin Shinawatra, which was led by Mr. Samak Sudaravej. The PPP won the majority vote in the election.

After Samak took the helm, he was moving to amend the Constitution to grant amnesty to Thaksin and people under Thaksin regime. This was where five leaders of the People's Alliance for Democracy made a move. They opposed the idea to amend the Constitution.

Later, Mr. Samak was found guilty for being an employee of a private company. He had to step out of his position. Then, Mr. Somchai Wongsawat replaced him. Samak continued with the move to amend the constitution. The PAD opposed him with more aggressive measures.

We can see that from September 19, 2006, there were no governments focusing on solving problems stated in the reason for the revolution.

Today, the Democrat Party, led by Abhisit Vejjajiva and Suthep Thaugsuban, is the government. They do not seem to focus on handling with people in the Thaksin regime. In contrast, they even plan to negotiate with Thaksin. So, the intervention of Thaksin is not likely to be solved.

In conclusion, if the government is still weak and its ministers are still inexperienced, one day the Thaksin regime will become stronger and take charge of Thailand.

Nation Weekend, April 10, 2009
It reads: This round, overthrow Pa
Next round, overthrow who?

Punch to Punch – *ThaiRath*, April 6, 2009

Thaksin Shinawatra – It reads: Privy Councilor Gen. Prem and Gen. Surayuth have participated in political activities. It caused damage to the country so they should not meddle in politics. If they meddle in politics, they will be also involved in politics.

Prime Minister Abhisit – It reads: In the case of Thaksin's claim to something pertaining to politics, no matter what he wants, he had better negotiate with politicians. It was wrong that he alluded to Privy Councilor President Gen. Prem Tinsulanonda and Privy Councilor Gen. Surayuth Chulanonda.

Looking the source of Red-Shirt power – paying Bt1,000 per person from 26 provinces – followers of Wat Chan Bin will make a move before April 8 –

translated and summarized from *ASTV Manager Daily*; April 7, 2009

Finally, when a problem comes, Thailand need 'adult's' help anyway.

The Democrat government let Thaksin Shinawatra, escaped prisoner, lead the country to turmoil. It cannot do anything but asking for help from 'adults'.

If it was more hard-working, that 'devil' would not come out and haunt people, including persons who people worship.

The Democrat Party should have known that the target of the escaped prisoner is to bring down the royal institute.

It is not too late for Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva to make a move.

First things first, he must order all authorities concerned to do their duty.

Do not let that capitalist dictator tell the public about wrong concepts of democracy. Do not let him tell people that Thaksin is equal to democracy.

Thaksin is doing everything for himself.

Thaksin announced that he would mobilize people from April 8 to 10. Red-shirt people would gather to bring down the aristocrats.

A five-million-baht donation would be used to mobilize 300,000 red-shirt members from 26 provinces.

They would get at least 1,000 baht per person, plus free transportation and meals.

What should be monitored was the reason of the mobilization. Thaksin coaxed people to help change the country, to help promote Thailand to a real democratic kingdom.

It is said that 'Chanbin' members from the 'direct dharma' organization will join the gathering.

Thailand's way out – Justice must be chosen – translated and summarized from *Thai Post*; Column: Editorial; April 6, 2009

It cannot be denied that the announcement of red-shirt people stating that they will mobilize to oust Chairman of the Privy Council Gen. Prem Tinsulanonda from his position has created anxiety in the Thai people. People question about Thailand's future and way out.

People are worrying about the country's future as it seems to be clear that Thaksin's target is to destroy the Privy Council's image, which is directly related to the royal institute. It is feared that Thai people may kill one another as the red-shirt mob announced they would not stop until the goal is achieved.

Amidst this risky situation, Thai people must think and consider carefully if the current political upheaval leads to the unhappiness of all Thai people. Is it the corruption under Thaksin regime which creates disunity among Thai people? In the past, the former Prime Minister announced that he would quit politics, but instead, he is doing everything he can to get his powerful position back.

Thai people must weigh the situation and stand on the right side – either the Privy Council that took a risk getting involved in the politics or a rich businessman who buys everything with his money.

Every party must be patient – translated and summarized from *Krungthep Thurakit*; Column: Editorial; April 4, 2009

The gathering of the United Front of Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD) has reached its second week. They have been gathering at the Government House.

What concerns people is that they will move to the residence of Privy Councilor Gen. Prem Tinsulanonda on April 8.

In fact, to demand real democracy and oppose the Abhisit government is a basic right under democracy. People will be allowed to gather as long as they understand their rights.

The government's acceptance of the gathering is a good sign. It is what a democratic government should do. The heart of democracy is patience and endurance which will lead to a reasonable discussion to seek solutions to social problems.

To compare to previous gatherings, we will see that no violent attacks take place lately. People say that Thais are getting used to and are learning to live with political mobs.

We can see that Thai people can stand different opinions and accept political movements. We hope that the situation will remain unchanged in order to develop a sustainable democracy. A little political turmoil is a part of changes. And it is not a bad action if it leads to a better future.

The government, officials and a lot of people are learning to be patient which is an important part of democracy. We hope that the coming gathering of the UDD will be the same. If it really asks for real democracy, no violent actions should take place as it will break the basic law of democracy.

Decency-Neutrality – translated and summarized from *Dailynews*; Column: The editorial; April 1, 2009

After a group of police officers in half uniform participated in the Democratic Alliance Against Dictatorship (DAAD) rally for deposing the Apisit government. Due to this action, the red shirts were delighted and also feel that the police officers are their partisans. In fact, it was an improper action that the police officers in uniform participate in the rally. The police officers, who peacefully police the rally, should be neutral and adhere to democratic politics.

The metropolitan police are setting up a committee to inquire about the event.

Previously, a senior soldier in full uniform made a speech on the stage of the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD). He was criticized for his improper behavior so the commander asked him to change his behavior. If he did not change his behavior, it would impact on the image of military institution.

In the case of the police officers and the red shirts, they can participate in the red-shirt protest rally, if we consider the right to freedom of peaceful assembly. But maybe the people will misunderstand if the police officers appear in uniform.

Burst of gunfire – translated and summarized from *Krungthep Thurakit*; Column: Kae Roy Karn Muang; April 3, 2009

Ran Muanglong, a Thai left-wing theoretician, analyses the current political situation.

He said red-shirt people will be attacked even more for disloyalty by focusing on Gen. Prem Tinsulanonda and Gen. Surayud Chulanont. Their gatherings will face obstacles and will be eventually suppressed.

He said that the leaders of Thailand's aristocracy, who play important roles in the society, will not surrender easily.

It means the chance of a new war in the city is high.

As we know after an incident of political bloodshed and fighting that an interim government will be set up, and then an elected one.

Moreover, members of upper-class society and politicians will be even more united.

This always is the solution to Thai social conflicts.

Dead civilians become heroes and living ones will still be chips in political games.

The military, as a villain, is a social victim. It will have to go back to their bases and will come back again as a hero later.

Ran Muanglung said Thaksin is applying Iranian Ayatollah Khomeini's strategy.

His phone-ins and video links create anxiety among aristocrats and the Abhisit government.

Ran Muanglung is confident that the red-shirt force will win the battle.

He said the world is on the democratic side as aristocracy is an outdated administrative system.

Actions in response to rumours of the end of battle – translated and summarized from *Thai Rath*; April 4, 2009

It is rumoured that Thaksin disappeared for two days to go to the United States to discuss human rights issues – about Thailand's double-standard treatment against himself.

Coincidentally, in the meantime, US Ambassador to Thailand Eric G. John visited the Chairman of the Privy Council and statesman Gen. Prem Tinsulanonda at his residence on Si Sao Thevet.

Recently, Senate chairman Prasobuk Boondech confirmed that upper-class people, or the so-called "Poo Yai," are concerned about the current situation. He said they are moving to solve it.

A middleman from the upper-class society, who has respect from both sides, will negotiate with them. The negotiation will take place before April 8.

An insider source names this person as Asa Sarasin who is His Majesty's Deputy Principal Private Secretary. He is a person close to the palace with whom Thaksin can make contact.

All parties express that they want to negotiate to solve the problem and help the country.

Return to the time before September 19 coup – translated and summarized from *Thai Rath*, April 1, 2009

Ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra is urging a house dissolution and a snap election from his opponent Democrat-led government and, at the same time, remarking that everything should begin at its first stage-like before the September 19th coup.

This is Thaksin's request to return to his power. Many times that Thaksin has put the blame on those who treat him unfairly and toppled him from the leader post. He announced the involvement of the Privy Council President and some Privy councilors in the work behind September 19 coup.

However, Thaksin never clarified the fact that before the coup of September 19, he was the one who caused wide corruption in the government, a grave breakup in Thai society and the dismantling of the power check system of counter-corrupt panels.

The ousted Prime Minister and his supporters' movement is aimed at toppling the Democrat-led government. My remark to give here is, according to the criminal code article 116, those who generate chaos are to face up to 7 years in jail.

(Source: DTV)

Thaksin puts emphasis on "fighting with the head" for running his political game – translated and summarized from *Thairath*; Column: The Analysis, April 1, 2009

The sentence, 'Thailand need change' appeared on the background of Thaksin's video link when former PM Thaksin Shinawatra was making a speech to the red shirts gathered around Government House. It is because he tried to convey the idea of "Thailand need change" to the foreign media and also used the foreign media to spread the news about the red shirt movement. Speaking by video link, the content of his speech involved Gen. Prem Tinsulanonda, the head Privy Council and Gen. Surayud Chulanond, the privy councilor and ex-prime minister.

We are seeing that his political game pertains to the influential people. So, no matter what the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) do, Thaksin does not care.

In the meantime, PNET vice-president Gen. Saiyud Kerdphol and his group made a statement and appraised the situation of the red shirt rally. They believe that the objective of Thaksin's movement is to create disorder so that this situation can bring a coup d'état to the country.

Phenomena: "The Blue Shirts" – translated and summarized from *Matichon*, April 1, 2009

A group of Suvarnabhumi airport custodians worn blue shirts and gathered to protect the Suvarnabhumi International Airport from the red-shirt rally. It is said that "the blue shirts" came from the idea of the Bhumjaithai party.

This is in line with Interior Minister and Bhumjaithai party leader Chaowarat Charnwerakul, who initiated the policy of protecting the royal institution.

During his inspection tour in 10 provinces, people accompanying him had to wear blue shirts on which were printed the words "Protect the Royal Institution".

Many people may think that the blue shirts were originally connected to the Bhumjaithai Party. In fact, the words on the blue shirts have been different from time to time: "Protect the Royal Institution," "The Bhumjaithai Party," and "Newin is my friend, I am Newin's friend".

The blue shirts with "Newin is my friend, I am Newin's friend" was a special version which was provided for the politicians and aides of any other parties that joined the Bhumjaithai Party. So, we are seeing that the blue shirt is popular right now and also is a new political movement. It seems unlikely that the Blue Shirt are going to stop the conflict between the Yellow Shirts and Red Shirts as per Newin's group claimed.

Foreigners must disclose website postings – translated and summarized from *Matichon*; April 1, 2009

New regulations in effect from April require foreign visa holders (whether tourist or those applying for B, M, or O-type visas) to disclose if they are owners of a website or intend to post information about Thailand on a website forum or blog.

Website owners who work in Thailand must possess a Thai business registration in the form of a limited partnership even if the site is hosted overseas.

If a visa-holder intends to post material to a website—including internet forums and blogs—the posting must first be approved by

the Ministry of Culture. Forms for the approval process will be handed out with the Thai Immigration entry card upon arrival or approval can be submitted via an online form at the [Ministry of Culture website](#).

Visa holders will also be required to install "Cyber Cop" program to ensure they abide by the new regulations that restrict the viewing of some websites within Thailand. This program will automatically upload the latest blocklists without the user having to do anything.

The Ministry will not use the new regulations to censor political speech. Instead, the Ministry is mainly focusing on material that might be of detriment to Thai tourism or the country's image in general.

More on [Website censorship in Thailand](#)

Must make people put their trust in the government – translated and summarized from *Dailynews*; Column: The editorial; April 6, 2009

Former PM Thaksin Shinawatra, speaking by video link, is persuading the Democratic Alliance Against Dictatorship (DAAD) to rally in an extreme way as possible because he expects that a people power revolution will happen. This action causes a lot of entrepreneurs to be greatly worried. The president of the Federation of Thai Industries Santi Wiladsakdanonda believes that it also impacts the government's measures to stimulate the economy.

In addition, this action brings disorder to many groups of people, for example, those who respect Privy Councilor General Prem Tinasulanonda. They will be ready to rally for protecting him if there is a movement impacting this influential royal advisor.

It is necessary that the government rushes to deal with this problem for peace and makes neutral people have great faith by explaining the truth to the people that the main reason of the rally is to conceal Thaksin's guilt. Meanwhile the government should also tackle the economic crisis.

Want to play monk? Fork over \$700

April 30, 2009

[Want to play monk? Fork over \\$700](#) – *Global Post*, April 30, 2009

Drawing Buddhism-curious foreigners to a Thai temple through Facebook...

Pipe delivery

April 30, 2009

(Photo: 2Bangkok.com)

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