



Special Supplement

69th Birthday Anniversary of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej and National Day of Thailand



The Daily Star
December 5, 1996



4 August 1986: His Majesty the King giving a Royal Address on the occasion when His Majesty presided over the Opening Ceremony of the National Assembly, at Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall, Dusit Palace.

A Monarch Who Cares

HIS Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej has dedicated himself to development work for the well-being of the Thais since his accession to the throne as a constitutional monarch. His Majesty and his Office of the Royal Development Projects Board has successfully implemented more than 1,800 projects. The development projects cover various areas, including: 1) Agriculture; 2) Environment; 3) Public health; 4) Occupational promotion; 5) Water resources development; 6) Communications; and 7) Social welfare and others.

Most of His Majesty's development projects concern "water": water for agriculture use, water for consumption, improvement of water quality, building water communication routes, prevention and treatment of water pollution and the increase of the water level in the major dams for generating electricity.

With his sincerity in this matter, His Majesty had invented various technology ma-

chines to assist in the projects. These technology machines include the rain making technology and the aerator machine, an oxygen-filling waste water treatment machine.

In fact, His Majesty concerns himself intimately with every aspect of Thai life, namely, hill tribes men's agrarian problems in the mountainous north; religious leaders' needs for land to build a new temple; the aspirations of university graduates eager to change the world; a newly built road in the remotest corner of his kingdom; traffic problem in and around Bangkok; the natural disaster-flooding; an improved livestock strain to increase Thai dairy farmers' income; rural dam and irrigation projects to boost farmers' crop yields, etc.

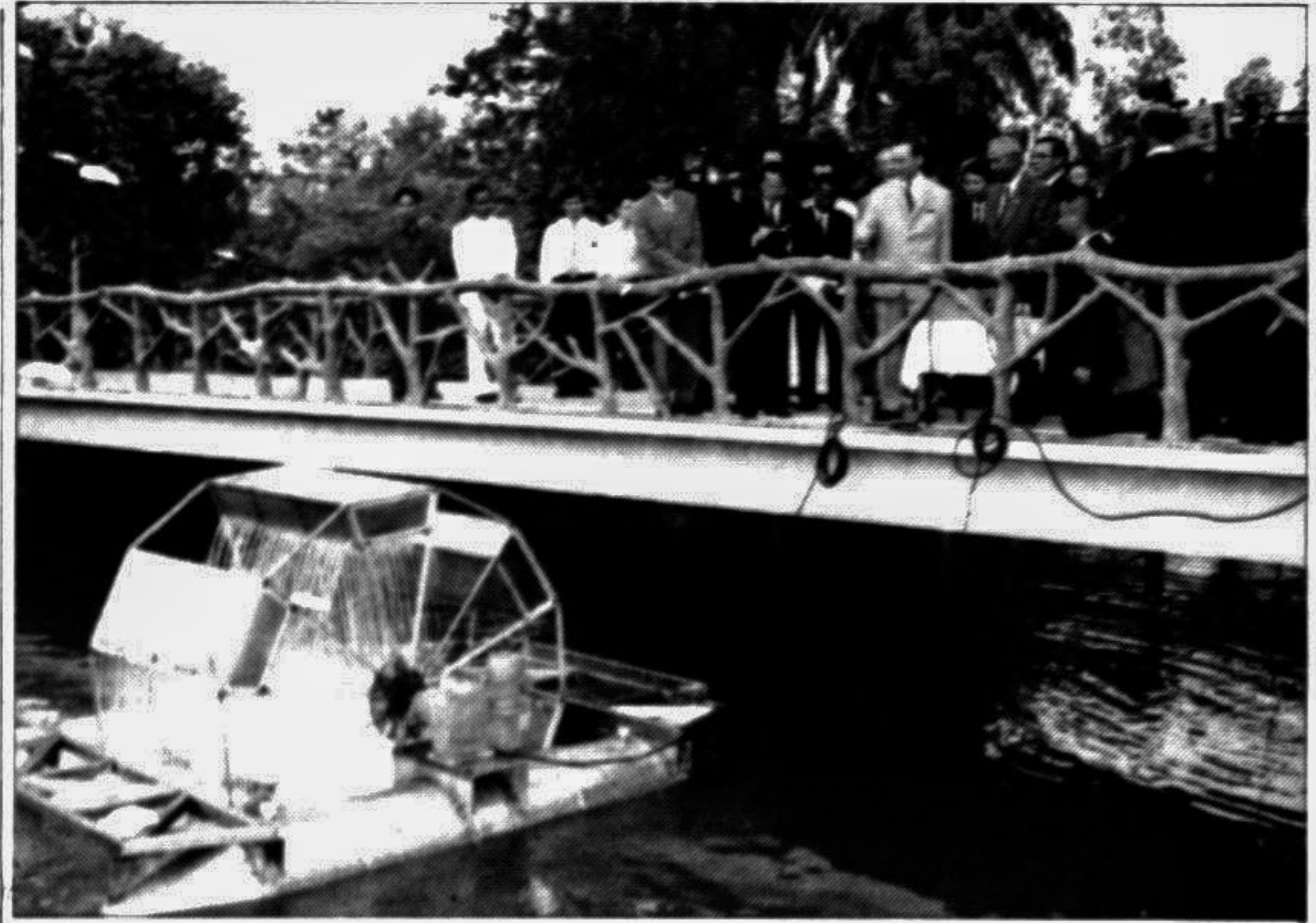
For several years, His Majesty has spent almost eight months out of a year in each of the other widely-dispersed royal residences outside Bangkok. The upcountry visits thus provide an invaluable insight into his people's lives and

problems. During his trips, he consults not only officials and

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His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej



29 November 1994: His Majesty the King observing the working of "Chaipattana Aerator", a floating buoy that rotates slowly to pump oxygen into waste water, in a pond behind the Chaipattana Building, Chitralada Villa.



What the Thai People Think of Their King

by Bonnie Davis

THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT IN anyone's mind that the Thai people love their king but many take him for granted much the same as they do family, friends, and daily routine. He's there. He's a part of their lives, yet as king — apart from them. Since Thailand has been blessed by having King Bhumibol Adulyadej on the throne for more than 40 years, there are entire generations who were born and have grown to adulthood during this, the ninth reign of the Chakri dynasty.

This same phenomenon occurred during the reign of King Chulalongkorn, fifth king of the Chakri dynasty and paternal grandfather of the present

king. Many of his subjects too, had never lived under any other king and they entertained no thought of change. People rejoiced during the entire year of his Jubilee, or "Record Reign Celebration" in 1908, which culminated in the grandest of all festivities during November that year, his coronation month.

King Chulalongkorn was the most visible of any Siamese king up to that period. He traveled by royal yacht up and down the coastline and into the interior by small houseboats, on rivers and canals. The latter trips were often made incognito, quietly and unannounced, so he could meet the people informally and speak to them, or they to him, simply as one person to another.

The old Siamese concept of kingship changed during the fifth reign. Although previous kings were considered "paternal monarchs," the rigid formality remained. King Chulalongkorn brought about — at that time — inconceivable changes. He was the first Siamese king to be informally visible to his people, often driving through the city in the evening by carriage — and later by automobile which he sometimes drove himself. His queens were also seen publicly

on occasion — something which had never happened before.

Their Majesties King Bhumibol Adulyadej and Queen Sirikit have made their own history during this reign, for not only have they led and joined in auspicious religious and public celebrations, they have also traveled the length and breadth of the Kingdom to meet their people, see how they live, listen to their problems and then — personally — set the wheels of help in motion. They have taken royalty to their people as never before.

This year, that of the King's 60th birthday, is a year of jubilation in Thailand. A 60th birthday of a well-loved friend or relative is a time of happy celebrations; when a king reaches the auspicious age of 60, an entire nation celebrates.

What then do the Thai people think of their king? What does he mean to them individually? When asked, some have said, "I don't know; I never thought about it." Others have responded that they felt safer by having a king "because he keeps the country together." Some said, "He's our king and he's always there." A general feeling seemed to be that although the

to seeing the king is on a television screen.

While riding in taxis, chatting with Thai friends, talking to market people and shopkeepers or street vendors, this question has been manipulated into the conversation. Some asked: "why the question?" Some refused an answer; and some "harumphed" and ignored the question. The harshest criticism was that the King cared more about the poor farmers up-country than he did about other poor people.

A popular comment also is that His Majesty works too hard and never has any fun himself. Loving a good time, as Thai people do, they believed His Majesty should have a little sanuk in his life too. Many expressed worry about his health,

for they haven't forgotten his serious illness only four years ago. One vendor said, "he should not work so hard because we need him. If he gets sick again, we may not have his help at all."

One longtime musical acquaintance of King Bhumibol Adulyadej answered the question by voicing admiration of His Majesty's simplicity and unpretentiousness, citing a couple of examples. One evening the went to the palace to play with the "Or Sor Band" and found His Majesty on the floor with scissors, working on his maps. Thinking the King should not be down on the floor doing this work, he offered his help — but His Majesty King said that he wanted to do it himself. Continued on page 9.

HEARTIEST FELICITATIONS ON THE OCCASION OF THE NATIONAL DAY OF THAILAND



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MESSAGE

Today, December 5, is the auspicious occasion for the Thai people in celebrating their beloved King, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's 69th Birthday Anniversary as well as National Day. On this special occasion, I would like to take this opportunity to extend our warm sincerity to the government and the people of Bangladesh for their progress and prosperity and the strengthening of the good existing relations between Bangladesh and Thailand.

For the past 50 years since His Majesty's accession to the Throne on 9 June 1946, the Thai people have realized very well that their King has ceaselessly assisted his subjects in an effort to alleviate distress and bring for the happiness to them. His Majesty stands as the example of developer. He is considered to be the Monarch who is dedicated both physically and mentally to development work for the sake of Thai Nation. There are more than 1,800 projects under the Royal Projects that have been successfully implemented in various areas including agriculture, environment, public health, occupational promotion, water resources, communications and social welfare.

The relations between Thailand and Bangladesh is always cordial and excellent since both countries have established diplomatic relation on 5 October 1972 and had concluded agreements on trade, fishery, shipping, civil aviation and cultural and scientific affairs in the following years. Besides these fundamental documents that we have attached to, we are continuing to explore other areas that will serve our interests

for the nations and peoples. Thailand has always admired the progress achieved by Bangladesh in the economic sphere in recent years. At the meetings of the 4th and 5th sessions of Thai-Bangladesh Joint Commission on Cooperation held in Bangkok and Dhaka respectively, both sides have committed to enhance their co-operations, particularly on trade, economic and investment which are now playing a vital role in national economy. Both countries are looking forward to enhancing the good relations and cooperations as promised.

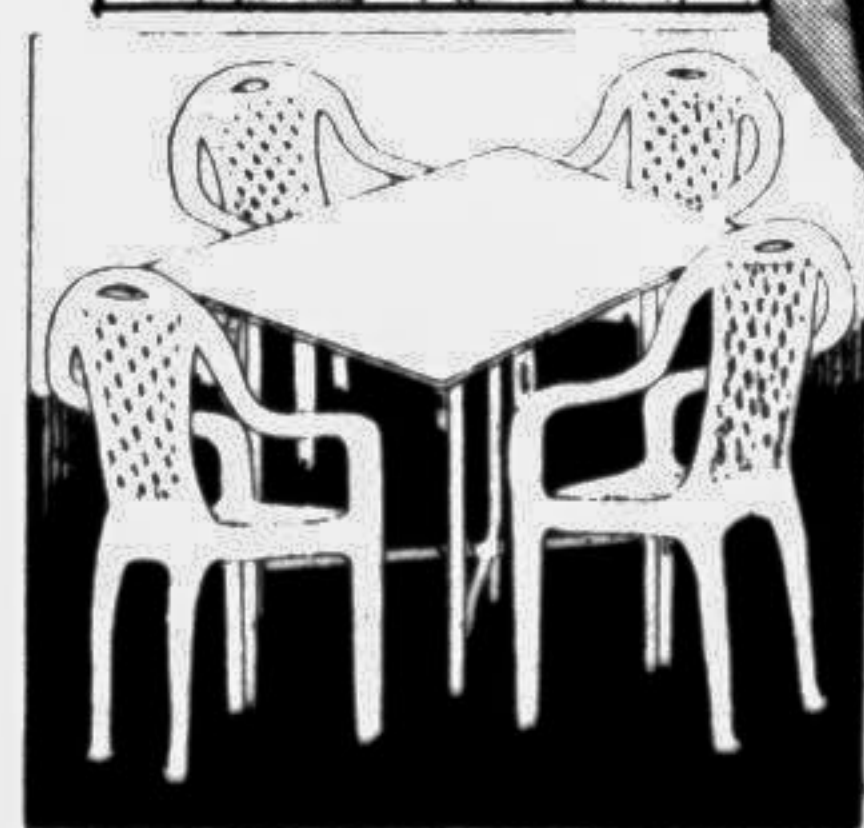


Sunthorn Vidhyameth
Ambassador of Thailand to Bangladesh

THE NATIONAL DAY OF THAILAND WE WISH A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NOBLE LIFE TO HIS MAJESTY KING BHUMIBOL ADULYADEJ AND THE FRIENDLY PEOPLE OF THAILAND



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