

The Daily Star

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Rama IX: "Great Strength of the Land," ninth king in the Chakri Dynasty, "Father of the Nation," peacemaker, Thailand's longest reigning monarch, the world's longest reigning living monarch, jazz composer, saxophonist, artist, inventor, patent holder, sailor, philanthropist, animal lover, expert in agriculture and irrigation. For nearly half a century, King Bhumibol has remained inside Thailand, dedicating himself to the country's poor, and wielding moral authority according to his personal philosophy: "Give more, take less." In June 2006, nationwide celebrations marked the 60th anniversary of King Bhumibol's accession to the throne, and 5 December 2007 is his 80th Birthday.

It is often said that a man's pastimes best reflect his character and it is obvious that a man's character governs his style of conduct. His Majesty is recognized as an extremely successful amateur in several recreational areas prominent among which are jazz and popular music, painting, photography and the sport of yachting. Critical analyses of his style in those fields have been given by those knowledgeable and some of these comments may be the best leads to his character and thus to the approach which he takes in the conduct of his official duties. Perhaps the key word of his character, like the style of his photography, is "involvement". Whether it be in any minor area or in the total task of kingship, it would never be in the nature of His Majesty to gloss over the subject, he would instead submerge his total self in the matter and is never satisfied until the best possible result is obtained. In addition, His Majesty often makes formal state functions into personal affairs, even adjusting the details of some ceremonies to make them more authentic and meaningful.

As a constitutional monarch, of course, His Majesty is above politics and thus his activities in certain fields must by nature be very limited. He, however, could still make his influence felt even in those limited fields through giving advices or merely expressing personal opinions, substituting words for actions in order to achieve the same objective. In making a proper appraisal of his role in modern Thailand, therefore, one must give emphasis to his words as much as to his actions, for the two have been deliberately used by him to complement one another.

## Thailand's Working Royal

### New Theory...For Community Empowerment and Sustainable Development

"Development of the nation must be carried out in stages, starting with the laying of the foundation by ensuring the majority of the people with their basic necessities through the use of economic means and equipment in accordance with theoretical principles. Once reasonably firm foundation has been held and in effect, higher levels of economic growth and development should next be promoted."

His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej has over more than 5 decades devoted his time and energy, working alongside his subjects in all parts of the country. Uncountable projects and programs came up at his initiatives, aimed at the people's well-being and happiness, with his ingenuity and wide vision, using researches and applied modern technologies. Presently, there are more than 3,000 royal development projects scattering across the country. They are mostly meant to solve problems and improve the people's livelihood, covering agriculture, environment, public health, occupational promotion, development of water sources, communications, social welfare and others.

As a practical development worker and

a true leader, His Majesty based his royal development projects on researches and experimentation, usually undertaken by himself within the Chitralada Villa. He then initiated field projects in different parts of the country, implementing results of the research and experimentation, while improving them to suit the circumstances, resulting in uncountable innovations widely recognized by development workers the world over.

One example of an innovative development concept, based on his wisdom and true knowledge and understanding of the situation, to help solve the problem of water shortage faced by farmers from time to time, has been termed by His Majesty as "The New Theory".

His Majesty explained the idea in his royal addresses on 15 March 1994 and on 12 and 13 February 1995, clearly defining "The New Theory" as follows:

"...The New Theory is the method to achieve self-sufficiency, as the means to manage land and water resources for agriculture and consumption. The theory applies to small farmers holding an average cultivation area, to maximize the use of their land, with the aim for them to be able to support themselves adequately in the first



place. This will lead to organizations such as farmers' groups or cooperatives to jointly carry out community activities. At the same time, they must be able to coordinate and connect with outside organizations and agencies concerning capital source to support occupational and people's quality of life development...."

### Principles of Royally Initiated Projects

His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej is a

true development worker. His royally-initiated development projects are based on well-researched principles exhorted by His Majesty on various occasions. Step-by-step approach, His Majesty emphasizes the need to tackle the problems by solving simple riddles to the complex ones, from small to large points, and not to implement the project at a leapfrog pace, as stated in His Majesty's royal address delivered to the gathering of Chulalongkorn University students that:

"In bringing prosperity and progress to the country, one should build up gradually, in stages. Implement the program carefully, review the operation and improve it all the while, not in a haste, or for the sake of novelty. In fact, nothing new really exists. All novelties evolve from old things, and will in time become old."

Standing proofs to this principle are pictures of His Majesty studiously working among his people in remote areas, alongside his subjects and government officials of all levels, while listening to their problems and obstacles and seeking solutions with them. It can be concluded that common understanding is first reached about the project, leading to agreed terms by all sides, and resulting in a project that benefits the majority of residents in the locality.

## The Royal Ceremonial Emblem in Commemoration of His Majesty the King's 80th Birthday

The emblem depicts the privy seal of the Ninth Reign, which is composed of the Octagonal Throne and the Discus (Chakra), in the middle of which is the symbolic letter "Unalom." Around the Chakra Discus, there are rays in all directions. Above the Chakra Discus is the Seven-Tiered Umbrella over the Octagonal Throne, meaning that His Majesty the King has sovereign power in therealm.

At the coronation ceremony, His Majesty sat upon the Octagonal Throne and received consecrated water from the eight cardinal points in accordance with the ancient royal custom, which for the first time was presented by members of parliament instead of royal sages. As for the platform on which rests the Octagonal Throne, it is strewn with nine silver and golden "phikun," or bulletwood, flowers.

Eighty diamonds, meaning the 80th birthday anniversary, encircle the privy seal. On top of the seal is the Great Crown of Victory, which signifies the royal dignity of the sovereign and symbolizes supreme kingship. Within the Great Crown of Victory is the Thai numeral 9, meaning the Ninth Reign.

The Great Crown of Victory is in front of the Great White Umbrella of State, which is in the center and flanked by two Seven-Tiered Umbrellas, marking the great rank of the sovereign. Beneath the privy



seal is the Thai number 80, meaning that His Majesty the King has reached His Eightieth Year.

Under the number 80 is the silk ribbon bearing the words "The Celebrations on the Auspicious Occasion of His Majesty the King's 80th Birthday Anniversary 5th December 2007." Apart from naming the royal ceremony, the silk ribbon also supports the two Seven-Tiered Umbrellas.

## Highlights of the Celebrations of His Majesty the King's 80th Birthday

### Royal Flora Ratchaphruek

To mark this momentous occasion, "Royal Flora Ratchaphruek" was one of the grand celebrations being hosted by the Royal Thai Government in honor of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. Royal Flora Ratchaphruek 2006 represented a concerted effort of the Thai people to create one of the world's most beautiful international horticultural expositions as an expression of deep love and respect for their Beloved King who has won the hearts of Thai people across the Kingdom through His Majesty's tireless dedication to bringing about a better quality of life for the Thai people through His Majesty's gifts in agricultural projects as well as valuable lessons in life. Thailand was joined by her international friends with whom Thailand has shared history, cultural, diplomatic and trade ties, many spanning the centuries. Around 30 countries participate in "Gardens for the King". The expo site was situated on 80 hectares of land at the Royal Agricultural Research Center in Mae Hia sub-district, Muang district, Chiang Mai Province in Northern Thailand. A one-of-a-kind event, Royal Flora Ratchaphruek 2006 was organized to present to the world the marvels of plants and breeds of over 2,200 species of tropical plants and flowers. 2,500,000 plants in total had enriched the land and the minds of onlookers. Presented under the theme of "To Express the Love for Humanity", conceptual designs and layouts of the event have been conceived to function seamlessly with and to complement the remarkable geographical surroundings.

### A grand public audience

A grand public audience granted by His Majesty the King on December 5 will be the highlight of the Celebrations on the Auspicious Occasion of His Majesty the King's 80th Birthday Anniversary 5th December 2007.

The grand public audience will take place at the Chakri Maha Prasat Throne Hall within the Grand Palace compound. The Thai government has persuaded people to wear yellow shirts every day from December 1 to 5 to show their love and respect for His Majesty.

### Tree Planting in Honor of His Majesty the King

The populace of the entire country has been urged to join the campaign "Tree Planting, 80 Seeds for Father" in honor of His Majesty the King, who is recognized as Father of the Land. The campaign is part of the project in celebration of the 80th birthday anniversary of His Majesty this year. It is aimed to encourage people to show their gratitude to His Majesty on this auspicious occasion. Under the project, it has been suggested that people grow trees with yellow flowers. Among these trees is ratchaphruek, known by several names, including the Pudding Tree, or Indian laburnum. Recognized as the national flower of Thailand, ratchaphruek is a deciduous tree that grows to a height of eight to 15 meters. It is a native of the Asian tropics and is found in mixed deciduous forests. It blooms from February to May and grows leaves prior to flowering. Ratchaphruek illuminates the cities and forests alike with its beautiful, bright yellow flowers.

Besides those mentioned activities, several activities in support of public charities are held to celebrate this important event, both through private initiative and by government agencies. The Government hosts a festive reception in celebration of His Majesty the King's birthday at Government House on December 7. This event is graced by the presence of members of the Royal Family and attended by invited guests, including eminent personages of the Kingdom and foreign dignitaries.

The Sanam Luang ceremonial site in Bangkok will also be the focal point, where festivities will be held together with a ceremony to present floral offerings to pay homage to His Majesty on December 5. Thai people are urged to sing the song "Father of the Land" during the grand public audience, which will be televised through the Global Network for audiences in 176 countries. Celebrative festivities to commemorate this auspicious occasion will also be organized at 16 public parks in Bangkok on the same day. Fireworks displays will take place in major areas in Bangkok.

### MESSAGE



THE 5th of December has a very special meaning to the Thai people since it is not only our National Day but also the birthday of our beloved king, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who has reigned the Kingdom of Thailand with His endless devotion and unfailing commitment to His citizens for the past 61 years. This year in particular is His Majesty's 80th Birthday Anniversary, and therefore is a source of joy and happiness for all Thai people living in Thailand and as well abroad.

In fact, we in Thailand are most fortunate to have witnessed the most important years for Thailand and for our King two years in a row.

The year 2006 marked the 60th Anniversary of His Majesty's Accession to the Throne, making Him the present world's longest-reigning Monarch. Monarchs and Royalities around the world honoured our nation with their presence in Bangkok, and joined with the Thais in a grand celebration to pay tribute to His Majesty's achievements and dedication.

Since His Majesty's accession to the throne in 1946, He has displayed an unwavering dedication to the well-being of His subjects, and a deep concern that they have sufficient food and proper nutrition. This is reflected in the more than 3,000 royal projects He has established throughout the Kingdom. Indeed, His Majesty the King is a true development worker. His royally-initiated development projects are based on well-researched principles exhorted by His Majesty on various occasions. His Majesty's "sufficiency economy" philosophy, emphasizing moderation, responsible consumption, and resilience to external shocks, is especially of great relevance worldwide during these times of rapid

globalization. According to former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, the philosophy's "middle path" approach strongly reinforces the United Nations' own advocacy of a people-centred and sustainable path toward human development. For His Majesty's extraordinary achievements and deep and unwavering commitment to human development, Mr. Kofi Annan in May 2006 presented to His Majesty on behalf of the United Nations the UNDP's first ever Lifetime Achievement Award.

This auspicious occasion marking His Majesty's Birthday Anniversary also affords me the opportunity to highlight the expansion and deepening of Thai-Bangladesh relations which is now celebrating the 35th anniversary of our diplomatic relations. Having taken a quantum leap in many areas on the strength of the commonality of interest and complementary nature of our two economies, our bilateral relations both at Government level and people level have increasingly developed with sincere understanding and mutual trust, reflecting the long-standing spirit of close and friendly relations. There are countless number of heritages and values we have commonly been sharing since ancient times.

Over the last few years, there has been substantial development of relations between our two friendly nations in many aspects, including the several exchanges of visits and meetings between our two leaders, the cultural ties, people-to-people contacts, as well as cooperation under regional forums. In terms of bilateral trade and investment, the business communities of the two countries have taken opportunity to invest in each other's private sector. The Thai investors in Bangladesh have been successful in the areas of poultry, agriculture, tourism, construction and medical services, etc. Indeed, Thailand is keen to promote the bilateral relations with Bangladesh on a basis of mutual benefit as the two countries have similar culture and way of life, and therefore can work together for common economic benefit.

At the moment, trade between our two countries is increasing steadily, and Thailand is willing to extend the duty-free access for some items of goods from Bangladesh, as this would be another way to increase volume of 2-way trading between our coun-

tries. Moreover, Thailand and Bangladesh have expanded our relations through technical cooperation in order to enable the sharing of experiences in many areas such as public health, business, social welfare, agriculture, management, ICT and sustainable development, etc.

Thailand always appreciates the active participation of Bangladesh in regional cooperation bodies like BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) and the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD). Thailand has attached great importance to Bangladesh as an economic partner and co-founder of BIMSTEC. Moreover, cooperation within the ACD Framework has met with success. This is due to strong political will of all participating countries including Bangladesh. Thailand appreciates Bangladesh's keen interest in being prime mover in the area of poverty alleviation. In addition, Bangladesh's entry as a member of ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the signing on the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, have demonstrated the willingness of Bangladesh to cooperate with ARF member countries in promoting peace and stability in the region. The crucial role of Bangladesh in OIC is also very much appreciated by Thailand.

In light of the above, our two countries can also draw upon a large reservoir of goodwill and strong bounds of friendship in our endeavour towards common goals, and to bring our mutually beneficial partnership to a new height. We shall continue to exchange views and express initiatives to further enhance our cooperation. In this connection, the Royal Thai Embassy in Dhaka stands ever ready to give full cooperation with the authorities in Bangladesh in working together towards this end.

On this auspicious occasion, I would like, on behalf of the Royal Thai Embassy and the Thai community in Bangladesh, to extend our best wishes to the friendly people of Bangladesh for your good health, happiness, prosperity, and success.

Long live Thailand-Bangladesh Friendship.

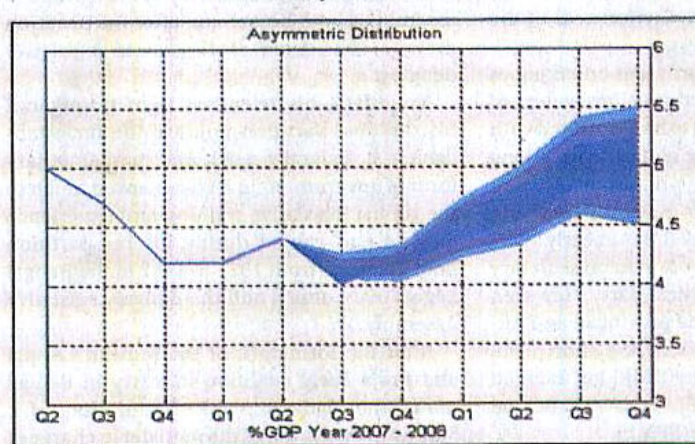
**Chalermpol Thanchitt**  
Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand to the People's Republic of Bangladesh

## Thai Economy at a Glance

A fresh parliamentary election is set to take place on December 23rd this year, with a view that this will help boost up Thai economy. Interest rates will be relatively stable in 2008-2009 and annual consumer price inflation will average 2.1% in 2008-2009. The National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) of Thailand has reported that the overall economic situation remained favorable with continued stability. Inflation was 1.9%, subsided from the 2.4% recorded in the first quarter of 2007. Unemployment rate stood at 1.6% while current account balance enjoyed a surplus of 1.32 billion USD, following 5.5 billion USD surplus in the first quarter.

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Probability Forecast in 2007



Economic Projection of 2007

	Preliminary			Projection	
	2004	2005	2006_p	4 Jun 07	3 Sep 07
GDP (at current prices; Bil.Bht)	6,489.8	7,087.7	7,813.1	8,399.0	8,399.0
GDP per capita (Bht per year)	101,017.2	109,318.4	120,497.4	128,541.5	128,541.5
GDP (at current prices; Bil.USD)	161.0	176.0	206.1	240.0	240.0
GDP per capita (USD per year)	2,507	2,715	3,179	3,672.6	3,672.6
GDP Growth (at constant prices, %)	6.3	4.5	5.0	4.0-4.5	4.0-4.5
Investment (at constant prices, %)	13.2	11.1	4.0	2.1	1.5
Private (at constant prices, %)	16.2	10.9	3.9	1.5	1.0
Public (at constant prices, %)	5.0	11.3	4.5	4.0	3.0
Consumption (at constant prices, %)	6.1	5.5	3.2	2.8	2.6
Private (at constant prices, %)	6.2	4.3	3.1	2.2	1.7
Public (at constant prices, %)	5.6	13.7	3.4	6.3	7.8
Export volume of goods&services (%)	9.6	4.3	8.5	6.9	7.3
Export value of goods (Bil.USD)	94.9	109.2	128.2	144.1	144.9
Growth rate (%)	21.6	15.0	17.4	12.4	13.0
Growth rate (Volume, %)	8.4	4.3	9.0	7.9	6.5
Import volume of goods&services (%)	13.4	9.3	1.6	4.3	3.4
Import value of goods (Bil.USD)	93.5	117.7	126.0	136.4	135.4
Growth rate (%)	25.7	25.9	7.0	8.3	7.5
Growth rate (Volume, %)	12.3	8.9	-0.8	3.8	3.0
Trade balance (Bil.USD)	1.5	-8.5	2.2	7.7	9.5
Current account balance (Bil.USD)	2.8	-7.9	3.2	8.5	10.2
Current account to GDP (%)	1.7	-4.4	1.5	3.6	4.2
Inflation (%)					
CPI	2.7	4.5	4.7	2.0-2.5	2.0-2.5
GDP Deflator	3.2	4.5	5.0	3.3	3.3
Unemployment rate (%)	2.1	1.8	1.5	1.5-2.0	1.5-2.0

Source: Office of National Economic and Social Development Board, September 3, 2007

Note: \* Reinvested earnings has been recorded as part of FDI in Financial account, and its contra entry recorded as Income on equity in current account.