

His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's 7th Cycle Birthday Anniversary

This year on 5 December 2011 all Thais will join together to celebrate the auspicious occasion of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's 7th Cycle Birthday Anniversary.

"We shall reign with righteousness for the benefit and happiness of the Siamese people." This was the oath His Majesty the King gave to the Thai people on the occasion of His Majesty's coronation on 5 May 1950, which remains true today.

For more than six decades, His Majesty the King has carried out his duties and responsibilities both as a constitutional monarch in accordance with the country's constitution and as a Thai King in keeping with the traditions and deep-seated beliefs that have evolved over the seven centuries of the country's existence. Throughout the years, His Majesty the King has worked tirelessly and devoted his life to aiding the development of the Kingdom and the improvement of the Thai people's livelihood. His Majesty has always placed people at the centre of all development endeavours and ensured that benefits rendered will lead to sustainable development. For up to eight months each year, His Majesty used to travel to different parts of the country, no matter how remote or rural, to see for himself how his people lived and what could be done to better their livelihood.

"... It is extremely important to encourage and help people to earn their living and support themselves with adequate means, because those who are gainfully employed and self-supporting are capable of meaningfully contributing towards higher levels of development..."

Royal address by His Majesty the King delivered at the Commencement Ceremony,
Kasetsart University Auditorium, 19 July 1974

Today, these exist over 4,000 royally initiated projects, from irrigation to flood alleviation and from public health to distance learning. These projects have touched the lives of millions of Thais, particularly those in rural areas. Among the best-known of His Majesty's projects and initiatives have been the Royal Project and the Royal Project Foundation to help promote highland agriculture through crop substitution and water resource restoration, the Royal Rainmaking Programme, the Water Treatment by the Chaipattana Aerator, the Soil Acidity Acceleration Project and the Kaem Ling (Monkey's Cheek) Project. His Majesty's New Theory on Agriculture and Sufficiency Economy

Philosophy have also been widely adopted as models of how to achieve balanced and sustainable development.

Beyond national boundaries, His Majesty's contributions have been recognized in a multitude of honours, including more than 30 international awards and more than 20 honorary degrees. International recognition followed when His Majesty's Royal Project was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award, an Asian Prize equivalent to the Noble Prize, in 1988 and the Colombo Plan Award in 2003. Currently, more than 300 upland villages benefit from the Royal Project and the Royal Project Foundation, working from 38 development centres and four research stations, touching the lives of no less than 30,000 households.

In 2006, the United Nations conferred on His Majesty the first "United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Lifetime Achievement Award", according to the citation, "for his dedication to develop and industriously uplift the living condition of Thai people all through his 60-year reign." In his speech at the award ceremony, Mr. Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General, accurately summed up His Majesty's gift to his country when he said, "... as the world's 'Development King', His Majesty reached out to the poorest and most vulnerable people of Thailand, listened to their problems and empowered them to take their lives into their own hands."

In 2009, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) awarded His Majesty the first WIPO Global Leaders Award in recognition of His remarkable contribution to intellectual property both as an inventor and as an active proponent of intellectual property as a tool for development. As a prolific artist and inventor, His Majesty is the first living member of a royal family to be awarded a patent. He holds 20 patents and 19 trademarks to be precise – all of which are available to the public free of charge. His Majesty's innovations for development include a patented rainmaking technology, water diversion and storage techniques, as well as turning palm oil and other crops into biogas and biofuels as far back as the 1980s.

"He serves as scientist, philosopher, advocate and exemplar. He offers an example of outstanding leadership that might be unique, but is still an inspiration from which the world can learn."

Beside the honorary awards presented to His Majesty by various international organizations and institutions, there are also the spoken words of admirers. Addressing the United States Senate in 1995, Senator Max Baucus captured the essence of His Majesty's hard work:

“Today, Thailand is one of the anchors of the modern, prosperous Southeast Asia. Bangkok has become one of the world's great cities and commercial centers ... Much of this extraordinary success is due to the wise guidance of King Bhumibol. The king has led by example. He has embodied the ten traditional moral principles of Buddhist kings: charity toward the poor; morality; sacrifice of personal interest; honesty; courtesy; self-restraint; tranquility of temperament; non-violence; patience; and impartiality in settling disputes. And he has led by action. Together, King Bhumibol and Queen Sirikit have devoted decades to improving the lives of Thai people in rural and impoverished regions. They constantly travel the country's 73 provinces, meeting with villages and staying close to the people. The results are obvious in improved public health, the spread of education to all Thai children and the renewal of traditional crafts and textiles.”*

Max Baucus, Senator,
“Tribute to King Rama IX of Thailand”, 9 June 1995
(*There are now 77 provinces in Thailand)

Internationally, His Majesty is also a living symbol of Thailand, the Thai personage the world knows best. In the 1960s, His Majesty, accompanied by Her Majesty Queen Sirikit, travelled abroad on goodwill state visits to several countries in Asia, America, Europe as well as to Australia and New Zealand. He has also received many of the world's leaders and royalties in Thailand. During the past thirty years, however, His Majesty has travelled abroad only once, in 1994, and then only to the neighboring Lao People's Democratic Republic. Her Majesty the Queen once explained that: *“His Majesty does not go abroad because he knows that Thailand is heading for danger. He would like to stay close to his subjects to help the poor.”*

Over time, His Majesty has been recognized nationally and internationally for his hard work and dedication to his people. On the auspicious occasion of the 60th Anniversary of His Majesty's Accession to the Throne on 9 June 2006, monarchs and members of royal families from 25 countries around the world visited the Kingdom to join the Thai people in honoring His Majesty as the world's longest reigning monarch.

In response to His Majesty's toast of friendship between their countries, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzadding Waddaulah, Sultan Dan Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, spoke on behalf of the other royals:

"You have never sought to distance yourself from the lives of your people. You have never asked them to be followers or mere subjects. You have shared their joys, fears and disappointments. You have made them deeply proud of their heritage and their identity. You have made your people feel that the Kingdom of Thailand is indeed their own Kingdom. Above all, I feel, you have given them confidence."

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah
Sultan Dan Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam
at a Banquet in Honour of 60th Anniversary of
His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's Accession to the Throne
13 June 2006

It was a majestic and historic celebration, highlighted by the stateliness and grandeur of the royal barge procession, that once again drew the world's attention to Thailand.

Throughout his noble reign, His Majesty King Bhumibol has selflessly elevated the interests of the Thai nation above personal interests. For more than six decades, His Majesty has stood as a pillar of national stability and unity and dedicated himself to fulfilling the oath he made, to the benefit and happiness of the Thai people. For all Thais, His Majesty is truly "the King" and our "Father of the Land"

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