

CARI CAPTURES



01 LAST DITCH TO OUST THAI PRIME MINISTER YINGLUCK

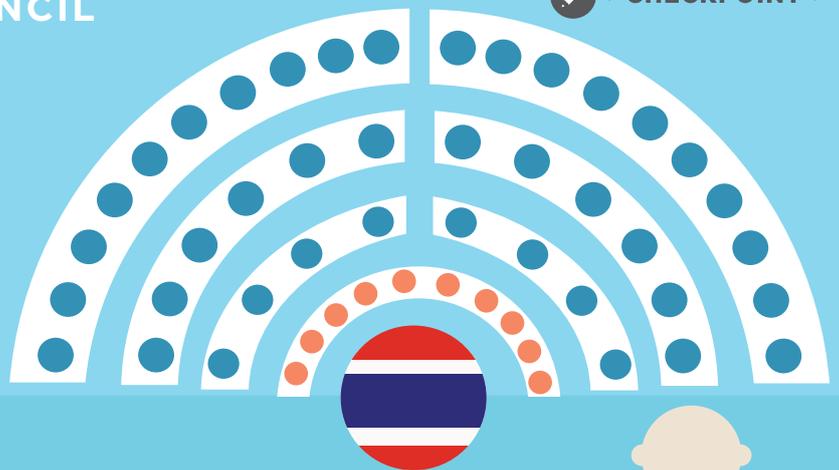


THAILAND

PROPOSED PEOPLE'S COUNCIL



- In order to set up the People's Council, the house must be dissolved and the caretaker prime minister and the cabinet must resign
- This would pave the way for a royally appointed government as His Majesty the King of Thailand will exercise his royal power to appoint a new Prime Minister and the cabinet under Article 7 of the 2007 Constitution



- The council will contain 400 seats with 300 selected from "occupation-based" quota and 100 for "experts" selected by People's Committee for Absolute Democracy (PCAD)
- The representatives would work out policies and draw up legislation including charter amendments

 Occupation-based

 Experts selected by PCAD



MPs from the opposition Democrat Party resigned en masse on 8 December in what was seen as the party's last-ditch effort to force Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra to dissolve the House of Representatives and transfer administrative power to protesters.

- ▶ Democrat leader Abhisit Vejjajiva announced that all 153 party MPs have agreed to resign with immediate effect, a decision made before the People's Democratic Reform Committee's (PDRC) nationwide march
- ▶ Mr Abhisit reasoned that the mass resignation of his party was to maintain high standards and reaffirm the lack of legitimacy of the house which betrayed the public trust
- ▶ The ex-Prime Minister and the MPs would join the march as ordinary

people and would not accept any political positions if they were not in line with the constitution and parliamentary system

- ▶ Mr Suthep, the leader of anti-government protestors, also promised demonstrators they would not go home empty-handed after the march and would declare the people's powers on behalf of the anti-government protestors
- ▶ Following the mass resignation and nationwide march, Prime Minister Yingluck had decided to dissolve the house but would remain as caretaker Prime Minister until the proposed election in February 2014

[Bangkok Post \(9 Dec 2013\)](#)

02 ASEAN AND US LAUNCH NEW PARTNERSHIP



ASEAN and US officials met in Jakarta on 6 December to launch new cooperation programmes and mark achievements over the course of 36 years of partnership.

▶ The event highlighted joint promotion of trade and investment, good governance, combating transnational crimes such as trafficking in persons and wildlife trafficking and promoting people-to-people ties through youth engagement activities

▶ The US Agency for International Development and the US Department of State, in cooperation with other US Government agencies, launched two new five-year flagship programmes totaling US\$30 million based at the ASEAN Secretariat and would target poverty alleviation and inclusive economic development

▶ The first programme is called the ASEAN Connectivity through Trade and Investment which will support the implementation

of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in the areas of customs integration, trade and investment facilitation, small and medium-sized enterprises, clean and efficient energy, and information and communication technologies; which estimated to increase trade value between ASEAN-US

▶ The second programme is the ASEAN-US Partnership for Good Governance, Equitable and Sustainable Development and Security which will support intra-ASEAN and ASEAN-US

cooperation in good governance, public-private sector dialogue and cooperation, promotion of human rights, and, combating transnational crimes and non-traditional security threat, support ASEAN's work in disaster management, human capital development, quality, science-based policy-making, and strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat

[ASEAN Org \(06 Dec 2013\)](#)

03 CAMBODIA RICE'S EXPORT REACHES NEW HIGH



Cambodia exported 332,000 tonnes of milled rice in the first eleven months of this year which records new high in the past 5 years.

▶ Cambodia's main rice buyers are Poland, France, Malaysia, Thailand and Netherlands with a total of 173,698 tones in 2013 which makes 52.3% of total rice export

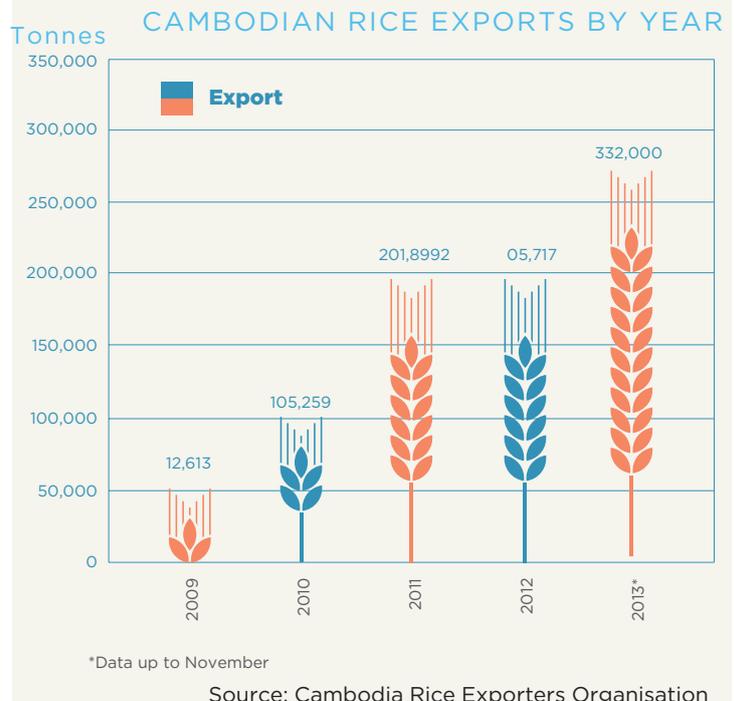
▶ Cambodian rice now has broader market globally as Cambodian fragrant rice was awarded the

best rice for second straight year at the global rice tasting competition which was held in Hong Kong last month

▶ Cambodia produced 9.31 million tonnes of paddy rice last year for both local consumption and exports

▶ With more than 80% of the population being farmers, the country aims to export 1 million tonnes of milled rice starting from 2015

[Global Post \(09 Dec 2013\)](#)



04 BRUNEI-MALAYSIA SIGN TWO NEW MUTUAL AGREEMENTS



A new bridge connecting Malaysia and Brunei on the island of Borneo is considered to reflect the excellent relationship between the two countries. A mutual agreement between the two countries' largest oil companies also shows signs of increase cooperation between the two ASEAN members.

▶ A 60m long Friendship Bridge across Sungai Pandaruan that

separates Brunei's Temburong district and Sarawak's Limbang district which costs RM21.9 million (US\$6.7 million) are in hope to lead to a new era of social and economic development between the northern Sarawak and southern Sabah regions, as well as Brunei

▶ Travelling become easier as travelers from both countries crossing the Sarawak-Brunei region would only need to have

one stamp on passport now instead of getting eight stamps

▶ Joint Announcement between PetroleumBRUNEI and Petronas is a positive step forward in strengthening their presence in Brunei and Malaysia and deepening their relationship for mutual future growth in both countries

▶ Highlight of the agreement include Petronas selling a 3% stake in Canada shale gas

project, the liquefied natural gas (LNG) production from the proposed Pacific NorthWest LNG Ltd's export facility for a minimum period of 20 years to Brunei's national oil company

[Business Inquirer \(09 Dec 2013\)](#)
[The Star \(10 Dec 2013\)](#)



05 PHILIPPINES PICKING UP IN FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT



PHILIPPINES

FDI in Philippines increases by 33% in September due to the improved image of the local economy among foreign fund managers.

- ▶ The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) on 10 December reported that net inflows of FDIs reached US\$319 million in September alone, more than double the US\$132 million that went into the country last year, which pushed the year-to-date figure to US \$3.1 billion at the end of September, up from US \$2.33 billion a year ago
- ▶ BSP attributed the increase in FDI to the favorable investor outlook on the Philippine economy on the back of sound macroeconomic fundamentals amid challenging global economic conditions
- ▶ Debt instruments to local affiliates, making up 83.7% of FDI in September, reached US\$267 million in September from only US\$10 million a year ago as parent companies continued to lend to their local subsidiaries to fund existing operations and expand their businesses in the country.
- ▶ BSP noted that bulk of the loans originated from multinationals based in Mexico, Japan, the United States, British Virgin Islands, and the United Kingdom were invested in the manufacturing, water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation, financial services, real estate, art and entertainment, and recreational industries.
- ▶ On the other hand, reinvested earnings recorded a net inflow of US\$42 million, lower by 32.2% compared to US\$65 million last year

[Business Inquirer \(10 Dec 2013\)](#)

06 MALAYSIA AND AUSTRALIA JOIN FORCES IN ERADICATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING



MALAYSIA



AUSTRALIA

Canberra says that 60% of foreigners in human trafficking cases used illegal entry points along Malaysia's shorelines to gain entry into Australia.

- ▶ According to Danielle Yannopoulos, the Australia's Custom and Border Protections (ACBPS) senior liaison officer, these foreigners entered legally into Malaysia via the KL International Airport and Malaysia-Thailand border before going by sea to Christmas Island and Darwin in Australia to appeal for refugee status
- ▶ Yannopoulos pinpointed that Kuala Lumpur was the last piece of puzzle that the department wanted to resolve to fully eradicate human trafficking by working closely with the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA)
- ▶ Datuk Zulkifli Abu Bakar, MMEA Criminal Investigation Units Director, commented that MMEA had extensive experiences in such issues as they had resolved 10 human trafficking cases and 26 migrant smuggling cases from 2010 to October 2013 while successfully detained 564 foreigners who tried to depart from Malaysian shorelines during the same period

[The Star Online \(11 Dec 2013\)](#)

07 HO CHI MINH CITY MOVES TO LOWER HIV/AIDS NUMBERS



VIETNAM

Anti-retroviral therapy treatment will be expanded in 2014 while prevention and harm-reduction measures are increased to reduce the number of HIV/AIDS cases in Ho Chi Minh City.

- ▶ The early (ARV) treatment will be offered in all medical units, including private ones, to 2,500 patients, or 20 per cent of the total number of HIV/AIDS patients, by the end of 2015, while aiming to cover 90% of infected persons by 2025 in order to eliminate all cases in the 2025-30 period
- ▶ HIV/AIDS prevention in HCM City has received 90-93 % of its financial support from international organisations and the expected fall in such support might pose significant challenges in rolling out the prevention activities effectively in the city
- ▶ Le Truong Giang, chairman of the HCM City Public Health Association, said that funding for HIV/AIDS prevention programmes would rely on the State budget, health insurance and private funds, as international aid is falling sharply
- ▶ Funding resources should be used efficiently, Giang said, adding that funding from the Government and international organisations would be given priority on certain target groups, such as pregnant women, high-risk people and patients infected with hepatitis and tuberculosis

[Vietnam News \(11 Dec 2013\)](#)



08 MYANMAR MONITOR

ECONOMY

▶ Japan pledged fresh aid worth about 63 billion yen (US\$ 610 million) in loans to Myanmar on 15 December, during talks at the regional summit between Japan and ASEAN. The total aid of Japan under Abe's government launched in December last year is now more than 150 billion yen. Japan and Myanmar also signed an investment pact to ease Japanese investment in Myanmar. With the pact, Japan has now concluded investment agreements with all 10 ASEAN nations.

[Bangkok Post \(15 December 2013\)](#)

▶ Myanmar's Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) will launch a Myanmar Intellectual Property Association ahead of the expected passage of an Intellectual Property Law by Parliament. Well known Myanmar brands have been invited to join the association, which will advocate on their behalf.

[The Irrawaddy \(9 December 2013\)](#)

▶ The Customs Department has seized illegal imports and exports worth about 3 billion kyats (about US\$3.1 million) in the eight months to the end of November. Illegal imports include unregistered pharmaceuticals, narcotics, mobile phones, and computers. Illegal exports included timber, jade, food products, alcohol and cigarettes.

[Mizzima \(10 December 2013\)](#)

▶ Yangon is now the sixth most expensive ASEAN city for expatriates to live and work, according to a new survey by global consulting firm ECA International. Salaries in Yangon - even for expats - had remained low and stagnant in the face of rising living costs in Yangon.

[Myanmar Times \(15 December 2013\)](#)

▶ Japan will help Myanmar to modernise its outdated mail delivery system, but it currently takes about a week for mail and parcels from the northernmost part of Myanmar to reach the southernmost part. "This is going to be a long project. We plan to send a team of trainers to Yangon and other key cities, said Kawano, director of the International Affairs Office at the ministry's Postal Services Policy Department.

[The Irrawaddy \(14 December 2013\)](#)

POLITICS

▶ Myanmar President Thein Sein pardoned 44 political prisoners on 11 December, coinciding with the country's hosting of the Southeast Asian Games. The majority of those freed were activists charged under a peaceful assembly law that sets a maximum one-year prison term to people who protest without permission.

[Asian Correspondent \(11 December 2013\)](#)

▶ Myanmar spared no expense for the opening ceremony of the Southeast Asian Games on 11 December. The four-hour extravaganza was held in a packed 30,000-seat stadium, 11 days after the games got underway.

[Inquirer \(12 December 2013\)](#)

09 RIOT BREAKS OUT IN SINGAPORE'S LITTLE INDIA

SINGAPORE

Singapore was shocked by its worst riot in decades, as migrant workers vent anger following a traffic accident in Little India.

▶ A rare riot involving a crowd of about 400 people broke out in Singapore on 8 December night, apparently after a Bangladeshi worker in the Little India district was hit and killed by a bus

▶ Such violence is unheard of in Singapore, an orderly, modern city-state known for strict punishments for crime and generally law-

abiding citizens

▶ Eighteen people, including ten Police officers and four Singapore Civil Defence Force personnels, were injured in the riot that broke out in Little India on Sunday night

▶ Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong expressed grief over the unfortunate incident and stressed that the government would spare no effort to identify the culprits and deal with them with the full force of the law

[The Guardians \(09 Dec 2013\)](#)

[Channelnewsasia \(09 Dec 2013\)](#)

10 INDONESIA-CHINA TOURISM YEAR 2014

INDONESIA CHINA



The Indonesian government has launched a website in Mandarin to boost Chinese tourists to the country.

▶ Indonesia government recently launched a website in Mandarin Chinese in a bid to boost tourist numbers from the world's second largest economy where the website includes the details of tourist destinations, tour programmes and general information

▶ According to Tourism and Creative Economy Ministry's director for publicity, Ratna Suranti, they hope to promote Indonesia better by using the Mandarin website since the Chinese people are globally connected

▶ The website is expecting to reach target of 1 million tourists from China by 2014 as data showed that China set a new record in world tourism by becoming the biggest travel spender in 2012 at US\$102 million, up by 40 % from the previous year

▶ Garuda Indonesia, the national flag carrier is in line to promote Indonesia tourism by intensifying its promotion in China and increase its services to major cities in China from five to seven flights a week

[Jakarta Post \(10 Dec 2013\)](#)