Chapter I

Introduction : Land, People and Politics in Thailand

1.1 Historical Background:

There are conflicting opinions as to the origins of the Thai. Only a few decades ago, it could be said with presumed certainly that they originated in northwestern Szechuan in China about 4,500 years ago and later migrated down to their present home. However, this theory has been altered by the discovery of remarkable prehistoric artifacts in the village of Ban Chiang, in the northern province of Udon Thani. These include evidence of bronze metallurgy going back 3,500 years, as well as dопер indications of a far more sophisticated culture land any previously suspected. It now appears that the Thais might have originated here in Thailand and later scattered to various parts of Asia, including some parts of China, though as yet [he matter is far from settled.

"Siam" is the name by which the country was known to the world until 1949. On 11 May 1949, an official proclamation changed the name of the country to "Praihet Thai", or Thailand. The word "Thai" means "free", and therefore "Thailand" means "Land of the Free."¹

- History

Archaeological discoveries around the north-east hamlet of Ban Chiang suggest that the world's oldest Bronze Age civilization was flourishing in Thailand some 5,600 years ago. By the early 1200s, Thais

¹ Thailand into the 2000's, the National Identity Board Office of the Prime Minister, 2000, page 1-5
had established small northern city states in Lanna, Phayao and Sukhothai. In 1238, two Thai chieftains rebelled against Khmer suzerainty and established the first truly independent Thai kingdom in Sukhothai.

Founded in 1350, Ayutthaya remained the Thai capital until 1767 when it was destroyed by Burmese invaders. During Ayutthaya's 417 years as the capital, under the rule of 33 kings, the Thais brought their distinctive culture to full fruition, rid of their lands of Khmer presence and fostered contact with Arabian, Indian, Chinese, Japanese and European powers. Ayutthaya's destruction was as severe a blow to the Thais as the loss of Paris or London would have been to the French or English.

However, Thai revival occurred within a few months and the Burmese were expelled by King Taksin who later made Thon Buri his capital. In 1782, the first king of the present Chakri dynasty, Rama I, established his new capital on the site of a riverside hamlet called Bangkok. Two Chakri monarchies, Mongkut (Rama IV) who reigned between 1851 and 1868, and his son Chulalongkorn (Rama V, 1868-1910) saved Thailand from western colonization through adroit diplomacy and selective modernization.

- **Geography**

  Situated in the heart of the Southeast Asian mainland and covering an area of 513,115 sq. km., from North 5° 30" to 21" and from East 97° 30" to 105".
Thailand borders the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar to the north, Cambodia and Gulf of Thailand to the east, Myanmar and the Indian Ocean to the west, and Malaysia to the south.

Map 1.1
Thailand has maximum dimensions of about 2,500 km. nuncio south and 1,250 km, east to west, with a coastline of
approximately 1,840 km. on the Gulf of Thailand and 865 km. along the Indian Ocean.²

The country covers an area of 198,000 square miles, stretching from 5 to 21 degrees north of the equator. It lies between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea. It is bordered by Myanmar to the west and north, Laos to the north-east, Cambodia to the east and Malaysia to the south. The kingdom has four very different regions. The North is mountainous. The Central Plains are a fertile rice bowl. The North-east is an upland plateau. The South is a peninsula lined with stunning tropical beaches and enticing islands.

• **Topography**³

Thailand is divided into four natural regions: the North; the Central Plain, or the Chao Phraya River Basin; the Northeast, or the Korat Plateau; and the South, or the Southern Peninsula. **The North** is a mountainous region comprising natural forests, ridges, and deep, narrow alluvial valleys. The leading city of this region is Chiang Mai, **Central** Thailand, the basin of the Chao Phraya River, is a rush, fertile valley. It is the richest and most extensive rice-producing area in the country and has often been called the "Rice Bowl of Asia." **Bangkok**, the capital of Thailand, is located in this region. **The northeast:** region, or the Korat Plateau, is an arid region characterized by a rolling surface and

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² Thailand into the 2000's, the National Identity Board Office of the Prime Minister, 2000, page 1
³ Thailand into the 2000's, the National Identity Board Office of the Prime Minister, 2000, page 1-2
undulating hills. Harsh climatic conditions often result in this region being subjected to floods and droughts. **The southern region** is hilly to mountainous, with thick virgin forest and rich deposits of minerals and ores. This region is the centre for the production of rubber and the cultivation of other tropical crops.

- **Climate**

  Thailand is a warm and rather humid tropical country. The climate is monsoonal, marked by a pronounced rainy season lasting from about May to September and a relatively dry season for the remainder of the year. Temperatures are highest in March and April and lowest in December and January. The average temperatures is 23.7°C to 37.5°C.\(^4\)

- **People**

  Thailand has a population of about 60 million. The majority are ethnic Thais, but historically the area has been a migratory crossroads, with Mon, Khmer, Burmese, Lao, Malay, Indian and Chinese. Despite this diversity, the country has a great cultural and social harmony. Everyone speaks the same Thai language, even though there are subtle differences of dialect in the various regions and localities. Each region also has a unique identity, molded by the landscape and people.

- **Culture**

\(^4\) Thailand into the 2000's, the National Identity Board Office of the Prime Minister, 2000, page 2
Thailand's world-renowned style of kick-boxing draws big crowds. Another local sport is Takraw, which is played rather like volleyball but with feet instead of hands, which requires some acrobatic skill. Kite-flying is a popular favorite. Festivals linked either to Buddhism or to the changing seasons, are celebrated with exuberance throughout the year.

- **Language**

  Thais are very proud of their language. It is the carrier of the cultural and artistic heritage, and also a mark of Thailand's long-standing independence and sovereignty. There are 44 consonants, 32 vowels and five tones in Thai pronunciation, including a script which has its origins in India. However, English is now quite widely understood, particularly in Bangkok where it is almost the major commercial language. Even so, it is difficult to give a precise rendering of Thai words in the western alphabet.

- **Administration**

  Today, Thailand is a constitutional monarchy. Since 1932, Thai kings including the present monarch, have exercised their legislative powers through a national assembly, their executive powers through a cabinet headed by a prime minister, and their judicial powers through the law courts.

- **Religion**

  Over 90 per cent of Thais follow Theravada Buddhism - a branch of Hinayana Buddhism. Buddhism is the most powerful force in the nation's culture. Muslims are the second biggest religious group, but there are also Christians, Hindus and other faiths. Tolerance is total and there is no history of religious conflict.
1.2 Agriculture Scenario:

Thailand is a developing economy with high percentage of agricultural land. Majority of people in Thailand depends on agriculture for not only primarily living even as an occupation. Thailand with different topographical regions is efficient in producing different crops. Agriculture is the foundation of Thai economy. By agriculture, we mean especially production of rice. Rice has been the base foundation of Thai economy. 90 percent of land cultivated are for rice production rice is not only source of primary living But even earning of foreign exchange. Rice fields during the harvest season are called “field of gold’s” agriculture sector in Thailand includes crop cultivation livestock, fishery and forestry. Agriculture sector alone in 1988 contributed about 17 percent of the GNP and 34 percent of all exports. Although the GDP of agriculture at present has decline however the importance of agriculture sector has increased. As discussed earlier that agriculture sector includes crop cultivation, livestock, fishery and forestry. Under crop cultivation, the four most important food crops in terms of cultivated area and value of production are rice, maize, sugarcane and cassava.

1.3 Social Scenario:

Over the past 30 years, real per capita GDP in Thailand has tripled. Between 1980 and 1995, growth averaged 6.4% annually. The rapid growth rate has been accompanied by a steep decline in poverty and an increase in inequality. With rapid economic growth, disparities between urban and rural areas and between well-educated and less-well-educated households increased. In 1992, a household whose head has a basic education, elementary or junior secondary school, has 60% less...
likely to be in poverty than in 1975. If the household head had little or no education, that household was only 38% less likely to be in poverty. Life expectancy increased by 12 years to 70 between 1975 and 1998. Illiteracy rate fell to 6.2% of population in 1995.

Poverty is another aspect to be addressed for the case of Thailand. Data from the Socioeconomic Survey (SES) shows a sharp decline of poverty from 1988 to 1996. The head count ratio declined from 32.6 percent to 11.4 percent, while poverty gap ratio declined from 10.4 percent to 2.8 percent. During this period the average income was growing very rapidly and poverty rate decreased due to the high migration rate from poor areas of North-East to Bangkok and the Central. Employment generated at the construction sectors of these rapidly growing cities where demand for un-skilled and semi skilled manpower was very high. With this, school enrolment increased at the primary and the lower secondary level. Education is an important predictor of poverty. In Thailand with enormous expansion in education, poverty level decreased rapidly. The regional dimension of poverty in Thailand is extremely strong. Northeast has been the poorest region with 48% people living below poverty line in 1988, while in South there were 33%, in the North there were 32% and in the Central 27%. The incidence of poverty was lowest in Bangkok where 6% were below poverty line in 1988 that reduced to 1% during 1996. While the head count in Northeast, South,
North and Central during 1996 were 19, 12, 11 and 6% respectively. That shows the decline in poverty in much pronounced in the better-off regions. The dimension of rural poverty is quite severe in Thailand. In 1988, 40% people in the rural area live below poverty line while the corresponding figure for Sanitary and Municipal areas were respectively 22 and 8%. Rural poverty decreased to 15% in 1996, while only 6 and 2 out of 100 in Sanitary and Municipal areas respectively lived below poverty line. To investigate the reason for the poverty the World Bank identified a strong positive correlation between incidence of poverty and household size and the relationship was found to become stronger over time. In the 1990s it was found that the incidence of poverty is highest among farm workers, then come Farm operators (including tenants), General workers, Production and construction workers. The lowest level of poverty was found in Professionals, technical and managers. Slightly higher incidence of poverty is there among Clerical, sales and service workers and Entrepreneur, trade and industry people.

- **Poverty : Strategies, Policies and Plans**

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In Thailand, there is no specific poverty legislation in force, but the country's *Economic and Social Development Plans* have been aimed at poverty reduction, especially during the last 20-25 years. Progress made in this area during the Seventh Plan was evaluated formally in 1995. The Eighth Plan has been approved and contains specific targets for the further reduction of both urban and rural poverty. The Eighth Plan's formulation was initiated on a "bottom-up" consultation basis to emphasize the participation of poor communities and women in problem solving. This latest plan and Thailand's long-term *Environment Quality Promotion Strategy* make linkages between poverty and the environment.

The Human Development Report (1995) reported that in 1990, 7% of the urban population and 29% of the rural population lived in poverty in Thailand. The Government's report to the 1995 Copenhagen Social Summit discusses the linkages between poverty and the environment.\(^9\)

- **Demographics\(^10\): Coordinating Bodies :Strategies, Policies and Plans :**

  The National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) and the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) are most directly concerned with demographic issues in Thailand. NESDB and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (MOSTE) are the

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principal government agencies responsible for the integration of all aspects of population, environment, and development. MOPH is involved in providing family planning, and maternal and child health services. In addition, NGOs are actively involved in family planning and developing public awareness programmes. The National Commission on Women's Affairs, which reports directly to the Prime Minister, has introduced a Gender-Based Analysis Methodology, for use in sustainable development planning.

Thailand is considered to be at the forefront of persuasive, imaginative, and effective family planning programmes (see Thailand's national report to the Cairo Conference). NESDB considers demographic trends when preparing *five-year plans for sustainable social and economic development*. Plans include policies to reduce population growth rates and manage geographic distribution. Thai plans recognize the critical importance of providing educational opportunities for women.

The Population and Community Development Association, Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand, and other NGOs, work on population issues with strong governmental support. The *Twenty Year Perspective Policies and Plans for the Developmental of Women* (1992-2011) aims to involve women in decision making at all levels, and particularly in sustainable development, through three major initiatives: economic participation, social participation, and political and administrative participation.
Health: Coordinating Bodies: Programmes and Projects

The Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) coordinates human health protection with other organizations, such as the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (MOSTE). The Ministry of Interior, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, the Ministry of University Affairs, the Thai Red Cross Society, and NGOs provide services ranging from care and treatment, health promotion, disease prevention, and rehabilitative care. However, decision-making structures are decentralized in these areas.

The Primary Health Care Programme was launched in 1977 as the main public health strategy to reach the goal of "Health for All by the Year 2000". The programme is based on community involvement, utilization of appropriate technology, intersect oral collaboration, and equity in the health system. The programme aims to satisfy basic community health needs for clean water, sanitation, adequate and balanced nutrition, food safety, and maternal and child health care. It works through village health volunteers and receives government support through health centers, district hospitals, and provincial health officials. The programme covers all villages and communities in rural, sub-urban, and urban areas. Thailand is expected to achieve the goal of "Health for All" by the Year 1999.

Programmes have been created to reduce environmental health risks from pollution and to promote environmental health protection. Activities include: advocacy among business owners, polluters, workers, consumers and people in general, through meetings, publications, mass media and special campaigns; revision, enactment and enforcement of legislation concerning environmental health by applying economic
instruments in pollution control (for example, appropriate subsidies or charges); development of environmental health; surveillance programmes dealing with the quality of drinking water, surface water, and health; encouragement of control of water and air pollution, especially in large cities; establishment of occupational health programmes in both industrial and agricultural sectors to limit workers' exposure to health hazards; and lastly, implementation of the World Health Organization (WHO) Healthy Cities Programmes. All these approaches play a significant role in the Eighth National Economic and Social Development Plan.

Government support gives top priority to health insurance programmes for lower income groups, children under 12, disabled persons, and the elderly. In addition, a programme to promote better health and quality of life of urban dwellers, especially under privileged groups, has been implemented. Intersect oral committees on pollution prevention and control at provincial levels have been established. Programmes to strengthen local authorities' capacity, especially in municipalities, were created to encourage community participation in supporting environmental health.

• Education : Coordinating Bodies : Decision Making: Major Groups involvement

The Department of Environmental Quality Promotion (DEQP), the Ministry of Science Technology and Environment (MOSTE), and the Ministry of Education, all full members of the National Coordinating Body for Sustainable Development, jointly prepared The National Education Plan (1997-2001). Its contents are
consistent with the Eighth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1997-2001). In addition, the Department of Environmental Quality Promotion is preparing a national plan on environmental education to be submitted to the National Environment Board. In the meantime, the Departments of Curriculum and Instruction (Ministry of Education) cooperate with DEQP/MOSTE to ensure that environmental topics and sustainable development concepts are included in national curricula at all school levels.

Cooperative efforts between the public and private sector to provide environmental education include:

- The Good Morning Project which involves cooperation between the Ministry of Education, the National Energy Policy Office and the Thailand Environment Institute to develop education in energy and environment conservation at primary and secondary school levels. The project also aims at using schools as community energy and environment conservation centers.

- The Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment regularly conducts environmental training courses to develop personnel of various agencies.

- In order to promote electricity conservation among youth, the Ministry of Education, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration and the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand prepared a manual for energy conservation promotion as teaching materials for primary and secondary school levels.

- The Wildlife Fund Foundation of Thailand and the Office of the National Primary School Committee conducted a project called "Green School" as a demonstration project to develop and promote
environmental management and conservation habits among national youth.

- A network of environmental educators both from government and non-governmental organizations is being established.

- **Programmes and Projects**

  The Ministry of Education provides relevant information to promote training. A priority area for reorienting education towards sustainable development is the improvement of teacher training programmes. The Ministry of Education has trained teachers, administrators, educational planners, and non-formal educators. Programmes have been reoriented to foster full understanding of sustainable development policies. Training has been conducted by inviting experts, arranging workshops, and undertaking field studies.

  Several agencies including the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, Ministry of Public Health, Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand, Metropolitan Water Authority have organized projects/campaigns, through different media, exhibitions, posters etc. The main objective of these projects/campaigns is to encourage the public to recognize, be aware of, and act in conserving the environment, through consumption approaches such as getting the longest and maximum beneficial use of products through reuse, substitution, rehabilitation and reduced toxicity.

- **Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-raising**

  In addition to formal education, informal education is promoted by the Ministry of Education through provision of curricula suitable to communities with emphasis on practical measures to improve quality of
life and solve community problems. The Asian Institute of Technology together with the Ministry of Interior conducted a training workshop for all the provincial governors aimed at having them understand and initiate local participation. Provincial development offices also organized workshops to promote gender integration at the grass root levels for participation in local administration. There are also a series of training programs for teachers and heads of schools in the North which will be organized by Department of Environmental Quality Promotion.  

The progress of social development in Thailand has been improving steadily in all areas, mostly as a result of poverty reduction programs. The Thai government's social development goals are:

1. To provide higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions conducive to economic and social progress and development.

2. To provide solutions to social, health, and related problems, as well as to promote international cultural and educational cooperation.

3. To observe human rights and fundamental freedom for all without any distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion. 

➢ 1.4 Economic Scenario:

Up to 1995, the Thai economy has been growing at a rapid pace, with growth rates ranging from 8% to 12% per annum. Looking back in hindsight, it could be said that there was overconfidence in the economy's
ability to continue to grow rapidly, and looming problems, such as massive debt creation and possible loss of competitive advantages in labor intensive manufactured products, were not taken seriously enough.

The capital inflow was also facilitated by the liberalization of foreign currency current account transactions and the initiation of the Bangkok International Banking Facility (BIBF) in 1993. Net capital inflow increased from about 8% of GDP in 1990 to 14% of GDP in 1995. These capital inflows, of course, facilitated the country's ability to grow by financing the savings-investment gap and they were in fact much larger than that gap. They allowed the private sector to finance their investment projects at much lower interest rates than domestic interest rates, and as the Baht was very much tied to the US$, the exchange risk was not seriously taken into consideration.

Thailand enjoyed high economic growth in the first half of the 1990s’, partly as a result of the large capital inflow, the current account deficit began to widen considerably; increasing from about 5% of GDP in 1993 to over 8% of GDP in 1995 and 1996. Thailand’s loss of competitiveness in labor intensive products became very apparent in 1996, when total export declined by 0.2%, compared to increases by over 20% per annum in prior years. Exports of some key items, such as medium to low end garments and shoes, declined by about 30-40% in 1996.

All of these factors led to lower confidence of the international financial market in the Thai economy. Speculative attacks against the value of the Baht started after the Mexican crisis, and came back in waves, each heavier than the last. The heaviest attack occurred in May 1997. Net capital flows became highly negative in the early part of 1997 resulting in sharp declines in foreign reserves.
Thailand has managed to achieve all the key IMF targets as of the end of 1997 (such as fiscal cash position, monetary and foreign exchange targets as well as current account deficit target). The task is now to meet future targets. A key target is to achieve about a one percent of GDP fiscal cash surplus. This has become difficult to achieve given the economic decline. However, it is expected that additional measures will be implemented, both on the revenue and expenditure side so that all the IMF conditions will be met. This should lead to greater confidence in the government’s ability to steer the country out of the current crisis, and start the country on a path of recovery.

1.5 Political Setup:

Political history

Thailand, a united kingdom since the 13th century, was an absolute monarchy until 1932, when an army coup led to the adoption of a western system of government. Real power, however, was held by the army. The military government was allied with Japan 1941-44, and in 1944, to avoid Allied occupation, it resigned and allowed the democratic opposition to come to power.

In 1973 the long-serving military ruler Thanom Kittakachorn retired and there was a return to democratic government. But in 1976 another, much more bloody, coup returned the army to power under Thanin Kraivixien and his successors Kriangsak Chomanan and Prem Tinsulanonda.

In 1988 there was another return to civilian government under Chatichai Choonhavan, followed by the inevitable coup in 1991. But this
time the people of Thailand had had enough, and the army's attempt to impose Suchinda Kraprayoon as Prime Minister led to a popular revolt in Bangkok in which many people died.

Intervention by the King led to a final withdrawal of the army from politics and promulgation of a fully democratic constitution in 1997. Under Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai there was considerable economic and political progress, but Thailand was hard-hit by the economic crisis of 1997.

Disillusionment with existing political options led to the triumph of businessman Thaksin Shinawatra and his populist Thais Love Thais party at the 2000 elections. The older parties, the liberal Democratic Party of Chuan Leekpai and the conservative Thai Nation Party, were heavily defeated.

**A. Administrative Structure of Thailand**

In Thailand, the transfer of planning, decisionmaking and administrative authority from the central government to the local administrative units, local government, or nongovernment organizations to a certain degree may have begun over forty years ago when the Municipal Act of 1953 was adopted. The country has six types of local self-government (LSG), namely, Changwat (provincial) Administrative Organizations (CAOs), municipalities, sanitary districts, Tambon (sub-district) Administrative Organizations (TAOs), Bangkok Metropolitan

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Administration (BMA) and Pattaya City. These six types of LSG are briefly described below.

1. Changwat Administrative Organization

The changwat administrative organization is the provincial unit of local self-government. It was created by the Changwat Government Act of 1955 to provide government services to all inhabitants who are not within the geographical jurisdiction of a municipality, a sanitary district, or a TAO. The CAO has two major components: the elected changwat assembly, which acts as a legislative body, and the provincial governor, who acts as its chief executive. The main function of the changwat assembly is to meet annually to pass an annual budget and to audit the previous year's expenditures. Since the CAO's budget comes from provincial revenues, which are usually quite small, it is supplemented by grants and loans from the central government through the Department of Local Administration. The CAO may also receive assistance under the Accelerated Rural Development (ARD) programme involving public work projects in the province. The projects are administered by the Office of ARD within the Ministry of Interior. The governor is responsible for presentation of the budget and implementation of the assembly's adopted programmes.

2. Municipality

The municipality is the most important form of local government in Thailand. It is incorporated to provide large urban areas with limited self-government. Established by the Municipal Act of 1953, municipalities are divided into three classes on the basis of their population, revenue capabilities, and ability to provide services. They
are: (1) city municipality; (2) town municipality; and (3) tambon municipality. Each municipality is composed of an elected municipal council and a municipal executive board. The council is the legislative body of the municipality like the changwat assembly. It reviews and approves the annual budget and passes municipal ordinances (consistent with central government laws). Members of the council are elected from citizens within its incorporated area with a term of five years. The number of members varies according to the municipality class: 24 members for a city, 18 for a town, and 12 for a tambon.

3. Sanitary Districts

The sanitary district is perhaps the oldest form of local government in Thailand. It is a quasiiurban local government jurisdiction, established by the order of the Ministry of Interior, where there is a concentration of population and an expectation of revenue that might support limited governmental activities, but not large enough to finance a small municipality. There are specific conditions for application of sanitary districts under the Municipal Act of 1953: (a) its size must be between one and four square kilometers; (b) it must have about 100 commercial stores; and (c) a population of about 1,500. In practice, the most important factors are population density and potential revenue.

4. Tambon Administrative Organization

The tambon administrative organization is the smallest form of local government. It was first established by the Tambon Authorities Act of 1956, revised in 1968. The organization has as its legislative body a council composed of the Kamnan and all village headmen, plus one elected member from each village. Since its boundary is identical with
that of a subdistrict, the kamnan acts as the chairman of the organization's council. They perform duties in accordance with laws and regulations issued by the Ministry of Interior. Their expenditures are financed through appropriations from the Department of Local Administration under the budget of the provincial council and from the Department of Community Development through its rural programme budget.

5. **Bangkok Metropolitan Authority (BMA)**

The Bangkok Metropolitan Authority is a special form of local self-government, created by the National Executive Council Order No. 355 of 1972, and later revised by the Bangkok Metropolitan Act of 1975. The BMA was established by merging all local self-government within the Bangkok and Thonburi boundaries into one government entity with its own unique organization and functions different from municipalities. The BMA government is made up of the BMA assembly and the governor. The BMA assembly acts like a legislative body, to review and supervise all administrative duties of the governor and his staff, and to propose and pass city ordinances. Members of the BMA assembly are elected by its citizens for a fouryear term.

6. **Pattaya City**

Pattaya City is also a special form of local self-government. It is a chartered city created by the Pattaya City Act of 1978 in the image of city management in the United States. The city itself was developed from the Pattaya sanitary district. But the rapid growth of the district as a major tourist attraction made the sanitary district type of local government incapable of handling local problems and urban development. Hence,
Pattaya City was established with greater independence and flexibility of functions and authorities to the local people.

- **History of Local Government:**

  Local government comprised both regular territorial administrative units and self-governing bodies. Local autonomy was limited, however, by the high degree of centralization of power. The Ministry of Interior controlled the policy, personnel, and finances of the local units at the provincial and district levels. Field officials from the ministry as well as other central ministries constituted the majority of administrators at local levels.

  In 1987 there were seventy-three provinces (*changwat*), including the metropolitan area of Bangkok, which had provincial status. The provinces were grouped into nine regions for administrative purposes. As of 1984 (the latest year for which information was available in 1987), the provinces were divided into 642 districts (*amphoe*), 78 subdistricts (*king amphoe*), 7,236 communes (*tambon*), 55,746 villages (*muban*), 123 municipalities (*tesaban*), and 729 sanitation districts (*sukhaphiban*).

  The province was under a governor (*phuwarachakan*), governor also was responsible for district and municipal administration, presiding over a provincial council composed of senior officials from the central ministries. The council, which served in an advisory capacity, met once a month to transmit central government directives to the district administrators. Apart from the council, an elected provincial assembly exercised limited legislative oversight over provincial affairs.

  District administration was under the charge of a district officer (*nai amphor*), district officer's duties as overseer of the laws and policies
of the central government were extensive. He supervised the collection of taxes, kept basic registers and vital statistics, registered schoolchildren and aliens, administered local elections at the commune and village levels, and coordinated the activities of field officials from Bangkok.

Municipalities in Thailand included Bangkok, seventy-two cities serving as provincial capitals, and some large district towns. According to the 1980 census, municipalities had a combined population of 7.6 million, or about 17 percent of the national total. The municipalities consisted of communes, towns, and cities, depending on population. Municipal residents elected mayors and twelve to twenty-four municipal assemblymen; the assemblymen chose two to four councillors from among their number, who together with the mayors made up executive councils.

In theory, the municipal authorities were self-governing, but in practice municipal government was an administrative arm of the central and provincial authorities. Until 1985 Bangkok's governor and assemblymen were appointed by the central government. At the next lower level of local government, every district had at least one sanitation district committee, usually in the district capital. This committee's purpose was to provide services such as refuse collection, water and sewage facilities, recreation, and road maintenance. The committee was run by exofficio members headed by the district officer. Like municipalities, the sanitation districts were financially and administratively dependent on the government, notably the district administration.

- History of Central Government:
In the 1980s, the governmental system remained unitary, with all important decisions emanating from the traditionally powerful bureaucratic elite in Bangkok. Composed of senior members of the civil and military wings of the bureaucracy, this elite dominated the governmental process from the national level down to the district level. In this process, the Ministry of Interior continued to play a key role as the administrative framework of the state, resisting reforms and changes.

1. The King

The Constitution stipulates that the king is "enthroned in a position of revered worship" and is not to be exposed "to any sort of accusation or action." As ceremonial head of state, the monarch is endowed with a formal power of assent and appointment, is above partisan affairs, and does not involve himself in the decision-making process of the government.

In discharging his formal duties, the king was assisted by the Privy Council, whose president and not more than fourteen members were royal appointees. These members could not hold other public offices, belong to political parties, or show loyalty to any partisan organization. Also assisting the king were the Office of His Majesty's Principal Private Secretary and the Bureau of the Royal Household, agencies responsible for organizing ceremonial functions and administering the finances and logistics of the royal palace.

The mode of succession was set forth in the Palace Law on Succession. When the throne became vacant, an heir was to be appointed by the Privy Council. Until the heir formally ascended the throne, the president of the Privy Council would act as regent.
2. National Assembly

Under the Constitution, the National Assembly was structured to accommodate both the military and civilian bureaucratic elite and the electorate. The influence of the traditionally powerful bureaucracy was channeled through the Senate, whose members were nominated by the prime minister for pro forma appointment by the king. Up to 85 percent of the Senate membership in the late 1980s was drawn from the armed forces and the police. The intent of this arrangement was to encourage the military to play its traditional political role through the upper house rather than through a coup or countercoup.

3. Council of Ministers

The cabinet, the center of Thai political power, consisted of forty-four members, including the prime minister, deputy prime ministers, ministers, and deputy ministers. Individually and collectively the members were accountable to the House of Representatives and had to retain its confidence. The cabinet was required to resign en masse if a no-confidence motion against it was passed by the House. The four-party coalition cabinet formed in August 1986 had no civil servants or active-duty military officers. Under the Constitution, cabinet members were not allowed to hold political posts as part of an effort to strengthen the political party system.

The prime minister held the real powers of appointment and removal, which he exercised in the name of the king. He countersigned royal decrees and wielded a wide range of executive powers, including the power to declare a national emergency to ensure "national or public safety or national economic security or to avert public calamity." The
legality of an emergency decree had to be validated by the next session of the National Assembly. The prime minister could also proclaim or lift martial law, declare war with the advice and consent of parliament, and conclude peace treaties, armistices, and other treaties—all in the king's name.

4. Judiciary

The judiciary provided for three levels of courts: the courts of first instance, the Court of Appeal, and the Supreme Court. The courts came under two separate jurisdictions. The Ministry of Justice appointed and supervised the administrative personnel of the courts and instituted reform in judicial procedures; the Judicial Service Commission, which was responsible for the independence of the courts, appointed, promoted, and removed judges. As a rule, judges retired at age sixty, but their service could be extended to age sixty-five.

The country was divided into nine judicial regions, which were coextensive with the nine administrative regions (phag), in contrast to the four geographic regions (North, Northeast, Center, and South). At the base of the judiciary system were the courts of first instance, most of which were formally known as provincial courts with unlimited civil and criminal jurisdiction. Petty civil and criminal offenses were handled by magistrates' courts, which were designed to relieve the increasing burden on provincial courts. Offenses committed by Thai citizens on the high seas and outside the country were tried before the Criminal Court in Bangkok. Labor disputes were adjudicated by the Central Labor Court established in Bangkok in 1980. Offenses by persons under eighteen years of age were referred to the Central Juvenile Court and its counterparts in several regional centers.
The Supreme Court, which was the highest court of appeal, also had original jurisdiction over election disputes. Although decisions of the court were final, in criminal cases the king could grant clemency. A dispute over court jurisdiction was settled by the Constitutional Tribunal

1.5

a. Special features of the country's political economy

- New Constitution in 1997
  A new constitution passed in 1997 led to major reforms in the political system, and also sought to empower the poor and disadvantaged. Decentralization and more open accessibility to information gave the poor more opportunities to participate in economic and political activities. Good government and civil society are also sought in Thai society through this historic reformation.

- The Establishment of Tambon Administrative Organizations (TAOs)
  Tambon (or Sub-district) Administrative Organizations (TAOs) came into existence in 1994, following a revision of a local community bill by the parliament. The central government decentralized its power to TAOs, which can now collect taxes to spend in their local communities. They also have more authority in making decisions about the welfare of local people, as long as these are not in conflict with the nation’s constitution. In 1997 the number of TAOs rose sharply from 2,760 in 1996 to 6,397.

1.6 Election System Thailand:

- Elections
From the first election on 15 November 1933 until the present election on 2 July 1995, Thailand has had 18 national elections. Even though every election is held according to due process, a real democracy does not exist here. Elections are characterized by dishonest campaigns, vote-buying, the murders of competitors or campaign workers, and the use of illegal influence to hamper rival parties.

- **Multiple political parties**

  Again, quite indifferent from elections, the substance of political parties in Thailand is severely lacking. Although there is ample freedom to set up political parties, these parties are only democratic in form. Ample evidence suggest that the formation of Thai political parties is dependent solely on the benefits – usually financial – gained, rather than on the basis of a compatible ideology. This can be seen from the switching of parties of politicians during every election season. The predilections of the party chief are far more significant to a party than its ideologies or policies. In other words, the reason to establish a political party is to promote some powerful and influential persons or groups. Take for example, the establishment of the Serimanangkasila party to support Sarit and his group after the coup d'etat in 1957, and the Samakkheetham party which was formed to perpetuate the power of the military-based National Peace and Security Council in 1991.

  In conclusion, Thailand can be analyzed as a nation having democratic governance in form only. It has a parliamentary system, general elections and multiple political parties, but these forms do not fulfill the requirements of a government with true democratic substance. With regard to the Thai parliamentary system, frequently senate seats are awarded on the basis of appointment rather than through election in
accord with principles encoded in a system governed by popular sovereignty. In the case of general elections of the lower house, there are a myriad technique of dishonest behaviors such as vote–buying or the forgery of citizenship cards at election time. Political parties are to take as conjoining of people who have a mutual ideology but, in most cases, they are collections of people who seek personal benefits through involvement in the political party system of Thailand.

**Research Methodology**

1.7 **Research Methodology** :

- **Title of the study**
  

- **Objectives of study**
  
  The following are the main objective of the study:

  1. To know the setup of government in Thailand.
  3. To understand the General Elections in Thailand.
  4. To undertake some of case studies of general election in Thailand.
  5. To find out the problems and obstacles in election system.

- **Area of Study**

  The area is confined only to Songkhla Province. The selection of this province is done on the basis of its election performance in 2001. The province has shown good political parties involvement in the general elections. It was found that the general public reaction
towards political parties and election is more positive than any other provinces.

• **Hypothesis**

After the transition periods, Thai political system faced challenges. The political administration power plays a much important part in up holding the democratic system, which are helpful for the country in heading to the right direction.

The present study would provide and bring the following results:

1) The Political democracy is maintained through the Election system.
2) The Election supports the democratic system in Thailand.
3) The Election System gives rise to law and order problems, after the elections are over.
4) The Election System helps for money inflation and Economic problems in the society.
5) There is a need of bringing reforms in the present Election system to lead the Thai democracy.

• **Need for Study**

The study is useful for understanding the present election system. Thailand is a democratic country there is need to maintain such democracy through the election system. The election can be helpful in promoting democratization in developing countries, which is important for their governing mechanisms to be transparent and to function efficiently and effectively.

The study will make us understand the problems related to elections and supporting electoral assistance as a primary means for all
citizens to participate in and influence government policy and practice. It will be also helpful to know how links of accountability between voters and their elected representatives, broad-based political parties, cost-effective election processes, and independent and permanent electoral management bodies are means of government policies.

- **Research Methods**

The data for the present study will be collected from both Primary and Secondary sources:

**Primary data:**
Primary data will be collected in person through direct interview method, structure interview schedule.

**Secondary data:**
The needed data will also be collected from secondary sources such as:

1) Document from Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2) Document from the office of Prime Minister.
3) Document from office of the National Economy and Social Development Boards, The office Prime Minister.
4) Thai and English books.
5) Journals
6) Pamphlets
7) Periodicals
8) Magazines
9) Newspapers
Chapter Schemes

The Tentative outline of the study will be as below:

Chapter I
Introduction: Land, People, and Politics in Thailand.

Chapter II
Political Reform in Thailand (1970-2001)

Chapter III
General Election in Thailand (system and procedure).

Chapter IV
Case Study of General Election of 2001: Special reference to Songkhla Province.

Chapter V
Problems in Election System.

Chapter VI
Conclusion & Suggestion.

1.8 Review of Literature


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This thesis was inspired by a chain of events transpiring late in the year 2000. In early November, there was a widely known crisis involving the U.S. Presidential elections. Due to irregularities in voting, vote counting, ballot construction, and numerous other factors, the selection of the President of the United States of America fell to the Supreme Court. The author believes that the thesis contributes to the creation of a better world. The protocol presented in this thesis could become the basis for the voting systems eventually, on a global scale. Finally the author concludes that: We have seen that it is possible to design a secure and verifiable election system that uses the instant runo and Borda Count voting methods, and is extensible to any other positional voting method. If this design falls short, it is in that it does not include voter authentication. The difficulty of this problem is similar to a difficulty faced, it seems, by all attempts at security: in order to accomplish anything, it is necessary at some point in time to trust someone other than oneself.


The 1994 election is very widely perceived as an exceptional turning point in the electoral, party and policy history of the USA. This perception is quite correct by the author. The situation is also "unusual" in another dimension. The vast majority of the time, off-year elections modify or confirm an underlying state of affairs, but they do not appear

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[NOTE FROM PROFESSOR BURNHAM: "This essay is in rough-draft, unedited form and will probably be extended somewhat prior to publication."
to inaugurate a turning-point in the organization and articulation of the political system. The author have presented some historical cases that come to mind of elections with system transforming potential include only 1854, 1894, (possibly) 1930 and 1994 -- three or four cases in all, out of 52 off-year congressional and state elections. Certain other elections -- 1838, 1874, 1910, 1918, 1946, 1958 and 1974 (eight in all) -- involved considerable electoral and policy shifts, but fell below the "mega-event" range. The other 40 cases were for the most part articulations of "politics as (then-) usual" with marginalto -minimal impact on the system as a whole. Lastly he explains that of all these elections, the structure of the 1946 election in many ways most closely resembles that of 1994. This reminds of something. 1946 was a very large event, temporarily recreating the electoral structure of the 1920s; and it was significant in its policy consequences (notably in labor law -- the Taft-Hartley act but also otherwise). But it electorally did not lead anywhere; it was a "sport," promptly repealed in 1948.

The author sum up his thesis, 1994 appears to have marked a major accelerating point in the political crisis which has been increasingly engulfing the United States in the past 20-30 years. We are in for explosively polarizing times. Whether 1994 turns out to be a "sport," like 1946, or the dawning of a new era is of course impossible to say with certainty. It may be nothing more in the end than an unusually empathic closure of the latest midpoint crisis in an ongoing regime order. The public continues to grope for a satisfactory revitalization tool. Newt Gingrich, in his demand that the whole Republican "contract" be carried out and form the basis for further developments, has noted that if the Republicans in their turn fail to achieve this, the stage will be set for a
public turning to third parties (or candidates). In this the author well agree with him. Events will decide whether the growing contradictions in American economic, political and social life can be contained or channeled through revitalization strategies that Gingrich and his allies propose. If not, then among many other things the liquidation of the traditional two-party system may indeed follow.

The author also hopes that whatever happens along these dimensions, the political jolt in 1995 will be tremendous. Forty years is a very long time; it is one-fifth of the history of the American republic and well over half the average life expectancy for individuals. It is as though a great sledgehammer blow was struck against a Capitol dome which appeared to be of iron but was actually of glass. It was shattered into bits. Just this sort of thing has happened in earlier American cycles of punctuated-change upheaval. The creative potential of electoral politics not to be eternally repetitive is again confirmed.

The author felt about the future of democratic government in this country have been considerably sharpened in the wake of this election. And so he hasten to add that this heightened anxiety has nothing to do with the fact of Republican victory as such. But it has everything to do with the entire _mis-en-scene_ which he had inadequately tried to describe in the discussion, one in which the Republican victory and the new cast of policy-dominant characters duly take their place.

In this author Benjamin J. Wyatt discusses that the election process lies at the very heart of republican democracy. As such, election reform has been a consistent theme of the last one hundred years of American political dialogue. Early reforms, such as the introduction of the Australian ballot, were followed by experiments with direct primaries, non-partisan elections, and regulation of campaign finances through the Corrupt Practices Act of 1925 and the Hatch Act of 1940.

Arguably the most fundamental change in the administration of American elections has been the institution of government financing of many election campaigns. Public campaign financing is distinct from other campaign reforms because it substitutes an alternative funding mechanism for political campaigns rather than seeking to regulate the two existing mechanisms; fundraising and candidate personal financing. Despite the attention devoted to campaign finance reform efforts on the federal level, it is in American states, over half of which employ some form of public financing, where sufficient diversity exists to make conclusions concerning the origins of public financing systems.

Limited studies have been conducted assessing the effect of specific state public financing measures. However, there are no comprehensive nation-wide surveys of the origins of the state systems. This study also seeks to profile how American states came to focus on campaign reforms, and explain why individual states chose to implement specific forms of public financing when they did.

University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts, with Departmental Honors from the College of Social Studies, Middletown, Connecticut April, 2002.
Lastly he concluded that public financing of elections is arguably the most radical and far reaching election reform instituted in the United States in the last thirty years. Although numerous studies and analyses have examined public financing of elections on the national level, the academic literature concerning the more common and varied state public financing systems is surprisingly sparse. As of the time of this study, there was not an up to date and comprehensive database of the characteristics and histories of state public financing measures. Accordingly, the first project of this study was to establish such a database through the synthesis of a variety of sources. This database containing the profiles of all current state public financing systems is a significant contribution to the existing literature and will hopefully prove a useful resource for future researchers of the subject.

The major goal of this thesis was to explore the questions of why public financing was adopted in certain states at certain times and how it came to reach the agenda of the policy makers of these states. The very breadth of public financing implementation is quite striking, and makes it especially difficult to establish patterns among states. Nevertheless, factors ranging from the political, cultural, and demographic characteristics of states, to the political atmosphere surrounding public financing adoption, to the intentions and strategies of the advocates of public financing themselves were examined to isolate relevant tendencies. A number of conclusions are evident, which may provide insight into the future of state public financing of elections.

Thus, it would seem that future partial public financing measures may only result from the formation of wider coalitions, which encompass larger numbers of progressive groups, roughly on the model of the
successful 1996 Maine ballot measure coalition. In addition, legislators seem to be much more willing to approve public financing for statewide candidates than for their own races. Only four legislative public financing systems have been approved by state legislatures, and only one—a very limited system in Nebraska—has been adopted since the 1970’s.

Finally, moralistic attitudes which include a positive view of government intervention make public financing implementation far more likely. This positive view of government innovation does not need to characterize all levels of society, as can be seen by the success of public financing proposals in Florida and Arizona. However, it must be present in some significant way among politically mobilized elements of the population or the political elite.

States which may provide promising arenas for future partial public financing adoption include California, Connecticut, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, and Washington. In addition, systems in Maryland, Vermont, and Wisconsin may need to be significantly reformed to ensure their continued effectiveness. However, if historical patterns repeat themselves, the rapidly rising Hispanic populations in many of these states may inspire racial and cultural tensions which may prove an obstacle to progressive coalition building by polarizing the political spectrum of these states.

The effects of public financing systems, are beyond the scope of this study. However, the real key to the future of public financing likely lies in the consensus which develops concerning the success of current systems. In surveys and interviews, reform advocates in Arizona, Florida, Maine, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Rhode Island reported being very satisfied with their systems, while reformers in Hawaii, Maryland,
Michigan, Wisconsin, and Vermont seemed less enthusiastic. Undoubtedly, the best predictor of whether comprehensive public financing will continue to expand in states and localities, and whether it has any chance of being adopted on a national level, is the ability of systems presently in place to achieve their wide-ranging goals while maintaining the support of the politicians who are their major constituents.

Very few studies have profiled the effects of state public financing systems. The author hopes that, this thesis will aid these explorations through its discovery of significant patterns of characteristics common among states adopting comprehensive public financing measures. In addition, this thesis may assist future inquiries by defining the goals and intentions of the politicians and activists who implemented public financing systems in the first place. The jury may still be out on the ultimate effectiveness of public financing measures. However, state attempts to provide public funds for political campaigns are arguably the most significant political reform instituted during the preceding three decades. Thus, for the good of our democracy, one can only hope that future years will witness an increase in academic studies examining the utility of public financing of elections.


The book explains the recent election problems that have sparked great interest in managing the election process through the use of electronic voting systems. While computer scientists, for the most part, have been warning of the perils of such action, vendors have forged ahead with their products, claiming increased security and reliability. Many municipalities have adopted electronic systems, and the number of deployed systems is rising. For these new computerized voting systems, neither source code nor the results of any third-party certification analyses have been available for the general population to study, because vendors claim that secrecy is a necessary requirement to keep their systems secure.

Lastly the author by using publicly available source code, performed an analysis of a voting machine. This code was apparently developed by a company that sells to states and other municipalities that use them in real elections. It was found that significant security flaws: voters can trivially cast multiple ballots with no built-in traceability, administrative functions can be performed by regular voters, and the threats posed by insiders such as poll workers, software developers, and even janitors, is even greater. Based on our analysis of the development environment, including change logs and comments, we believe that an appropriate level of programming discipline for a project such as this was not maintained. In fact, there appears to have been little quality control in the process.

For quite some time, voting equipment vendors have maintained that their systems are secure, and that the closed-source nature makes them even more secure. The authors glimpse into the code of such a system reveals that there is little difference in the way code is developed for voting machines relative to other commercial endeavors. In fact, it
was believed by authors that an open process would result in more careful development, as more scientists, software engineers, political activists, and others who value their democracy would be paying attention to the quality of the software that is used for their elections. (Of course, open source would not solve all of the problems with electronic elections. It is still important to verify somehow that the binaries running in the machine correspond to the source code and that the compilers used on the source code are non-malicious. However, open source is a good start.) Such open design processes have proven successful in projects ranging from very focused efforts, such as specifying the Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) [NBB + 00], through very large and complex systems such as maintaining the Linux operating system.

The model used where individual vendors write proprietary code to run our elections appears to be unreliable, and if there is no change in the process of designing voting systems, the authors do not have any confidence that their election results will reflect the will of the electorate.


The author’s presents the design and implementation of Sensus, a practical, secure and private system for polling (conducting surveys and elections) over computer networks. Expanding on the work of Fujioka, Okamoto, and Ohta, Sensus uses blind signatures to ensure that only

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registered voters can vote and that each registered voter only votes once, while at the same time maintaining voters' privacy. Sensus allows voters to verify independently that their votes were counted correctly, and anonymously challenge the results should their votes be miscounted. The authors outlines seven desirable properties of voting systems and show that Sensus satisfies these properties well, in some cases better than traditional voting systems.

Democratic governments and organizations must have mechanisms for polling their members. Traditionally, elections have served as the official mechanisms for people to express their views to their governments, while surveys have augmented elections as unofficial -- but nonetheless valuable -- measures of public opinion. In both surveys and elections, privacy and security are usually desired, but not always simultaneously achievable at a reasonable cost. Mechanisms that ensure the security and privacy of an election can be time-consuming and expensive for election administrators, and inconvenient for voters. Conducting secure and private elections can become even more difficult when voters are geographically distributed.

Due to the rapid growth of computer networks and advances in cryptographic techniques, electronic polling is now a viable alternative for many non-governmental elections and surveys, and it is likely to become viable soon for governmental elections as well. Electronic polling over the Internet can be convenient for voters with easy access to networked computers, even if the voters are geographically distributed. In addition, electronic surveys and elections can be inexpensive to administer. However, if not carefully designed, electronic polling
systems can be easily compromised, thus corrupting results or violating voters' privacy.

Following the work of Fujioka, Okamoto, and Ohta, the authors have designed a security-conscious electronic polling system called *Sensus* that can be used to conduct surveys and elections over the Internet. Sensus was designed primarily as a replacement for postal mail balloting systems; however, it is flexible enough to suit a variety of other polling applications, including those not feasible using traditional polling systems. The authors have demonstrated that our implementation can be used to conduct small-scale elections. Furthermore, they also believe their implementation could accommodate large-scale elections with minor modifications.

While there has been much theoretical discussion of secure and private electronic voting systems, most of the systems actually used for Internet polling ignore security and/or privacy issues. However, regardless of the voting method used, voters' names were affixed to their ballots, eliminating any possibility of a secret ballot. Other Internet polls lack provisions to ensure that each voter votes only once. With polls becoming increasingly common on the Web, the authors believe it is important for people to be aware that security and privacy considerations need not be ignored. If these considerations are not addressed early, lay people are likely to view all secure Internet applications with skepticism. Their work has focussed on developing a *practical* security-conscious electronic polling system design that can be implemented and used for actual surveys and elections.

In this paper they present the Sensus design and implementation. In Section 2 they present their design goals, including a list of desirable
properties for election systems. In Section 3 they detail the Sensus polling protocol, describing the role of each system component and comparing Sensus with other polling protocols. In Section 4 they evaluate Sensus and analyze the degree to which it satisfies the properties outlined in Section 2, and in Section 5 they presented the conclusions.

However, the authors have presented seven desirable properties of polling systems, as well as the design and implementation of Sensus, a practical electronic polling system that satisfies these properties. The system protects voter privacy, even when election authorities collude. It also allows voters to verify that their votes have been counted correctly, and anonymously challenge the results should their votes be miscounted. Sensus will not accept ballots from those not registered to vote, nor will it accept more than one ballot from each registered voter. Invalid ballots can only be introduced into the final tally by the validating authority if some voters do not submit ballots.

The author agrees that it is important security and privacy considerations be taken into account when designing electronic voting systems. In addition to the usual security concerns that should be considered when designing any secure computer system, voting systems have unique concerns that come about as a result of our desire to maintain voter privacy. Although neither Sensus nor the other voting protocols described here satisfy all of our desirable properties completely, some satisfy them well enough so as to be as good as or better than the traditional voting systems they may replace.
6. The Citizen's Right to Know Electoral Reforms: Key to Effective Democracy by Mr. Jagdeep S. Chhokar, 2002

The author explains that India is often referred to it as a vibrant and vigorous democracy. This might well be justified compared to a large number of other countries that gained independence from colonial rule around the same time. There is however reason to be concerned about the health of our democracy and its future. Just because we have elections regularly, some might even say far too often, does not necessarily mean that we have an effective democracy. One view is that the kind of elections we have are the very anti-thesis of democracy.

He further explains the Election Process briefly. If democracy has anything to do with freedom – and freedom with responsibility – then the electoral system might well be the very heart of democracy. The author tries to sketch briefly what all does the electoral system include. It determines who can or should be allowed to vote. When should electoral rolls be prepared, revised, and how? The formation, functioning including funding, etc. of political parties is also an integral part of the electoral system. Included also is the basic question, who can contest an election. Then comes the actual conduct of the election which is what is most associated with the electoral system. On what basis is the winner of the election decided is another key element of the electoral system. These are some of the pre-election and during election activities. There is a whole range of post election activities during which the outcome of the

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19 The Citizen's Right to Know, Jagdeep S. Chhokar, Electoral Reforms: Key to Effective Democracy. Mr. Jagdeep S. Chhokar is a life member of the Indian Liberal Group and a founder member of the Association for Democratic Reforms. He is a professor, and currently Dean and Director In-charge, at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, 2002.
electoral process are managed, such as post election disputes, election petitions, formation of the government, and subsequent functioning of the government including issues such as defections. This illustrative list indicates the critical role of the electoral system in ensuring an effectively functioning democracy.

Later he gives the current situation as the widespread and increasing disenchantment with politics and politicians is much too widely known to require any substantiation. The way our legislatures, Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, and State assemblies, function does not make us proud. One of the major causes for the unruly and unproductive functioning of the legislatures is the quality of people who find their way into the legislatures. For example it was reported in the media that more than half of the MLAs elected to the current state assembly of Uttar Pradesh had significant criminal records. When the recognised political parties were not able to form a government because no single party or coalition had more than half of the MLAs supporting it, one of the newspapers went to the extent of saying that if all the MLAs with criminal background decided to get together, they could comfortably form a government of their own!

It is quite common to put almost the entire blame for the current state of affairs on the so-called political class in the country. But all those who would have us believe that all that is wrong has been caused by the political class seem to overlook the fact that the political class does not exist or develop in isolation or in a vacuum, but that it emerges and evolves out of the society at large. Therefore the society at large, of which all of us are a part, cannot escape responsibility for the existing state of affairs. While the so-called political class cannot be assigned the
complete responsibility for the current state of affairs, they cannot be entirely absolved of it either. As a student of human behaviour, he believe that a substantial portion of the behaviour of the political class can be explained as a logical response to the broader social system within which they have to operate. And the electoral system is a major and immediate part of that broader social system. Consequently, one way to change the behaviour of the political class would be to change the system in which they have to operate and to which they have to respond. This is where electoral reforms become important.

Finally he says that from the all evident presented we should agree that changing the electoral system is not going to be easy but it must be done if democracy has to be preserved and strengthened. Concerned citizens and civil society groups will have to work really hard and in a sustained manner to achieve anything worthwhile. Being committed to freedom with responsibility, all Liberals need to contribute to this.


The paper explains the perspective on election processes. The author noted in this forum and before that in the ACM Software Engineering Notes, that there are very serious actual and potential problems in computer-related elections. He explains that The current issue of *The New Yorker* (4 Dec 2000) begins with The Talk of the

Town section by considering the current mess: "But it is not as if we were without warning." The article notes the series of writings of David Burnham in *The New York Times* in 1985 and Ronnie Dugger's long article in *The New Yorker* issue dated 7 Nov 1988. The article notes that Dugger's 1988 article quotes Willis Ware, who has long been a wise observer: There is probably a Chernobyl or a Three Mile Island waiting to happen in some election, just as a Richter 8 earthquake is waiting to happen in California.

Many people have been asleep at the wheel for too long. See the Election material on web site for pointers to some of the collected RISKs-historical material, especially the Illustrative Risks section on Election Problems, a document in which the author have long cited Burnham's articles from *The NY Times*, 29 and 30 Jul, 4 and 21 Aug, and 18 Dec 1985. (he had already noted the 14% undervote for the Senate race in Florida in 1988.) What we are experiencing now is not a new problem. Unfortunately, it had not previously reached Chernobyl-like proportions or surfaced in a close presidential election. Nevertheless, the process that is currently before us is finally forcing an examination of many of the relevant issues. Further he hopes that some of the more basic deeper issues will not be ignored in trying to resolve the immediate issues. The time has come for a serious reassessment of the entire process. Later he offers just a few suggestions:

- In the UK, Canada, France, Germany, and many other places, ballots for national elections consist of a single piece of paper with one candidate to be selected for one office. This is an extremely reliable process, is counted very quickly in a highly distributed fashion, and seldom challenged. Perhaps in the U.S., elections for the President
should be considered a Federal function and conducted by a one-issue paper ballot, with all other election issues run by local jurisdiction in their own way, as is the case at present. Even in such a simple paper ballot, the challenges of avoiding fraud and accidents are significant, but by no means unsolvable. The reliability can indeed be greater than in all of the alternatives.

- If ballots are to be recorded and counted electronically, some sort of nonforgeable, nonalterable, and nonbypassable audit record must exist to make electronic tampering and accidents infeasible. Of course, voter privacy also needs to be honored. No existing electronic systems have anything close to what might be considered adequate, and the election system developers (with proprietary closed-source code) do not seem eager to take the extra miles needed for greater integrity. Claims of integrity are not backed up by standard practice of secure systems (which itself is extraordinarily weak), and no one seems to be applying even the relatively minimal standards of the Generally Accepted System Security Principles or reasonable certification processes.

- Voting by the Internet, even if only from well established polling places, is and will remain extraordinarily risky because of the inherent untrustworthiness of computer systems attached to the Internet and indeed the networking itself. It should not be recommended for use in the foreseeable future.

- Fraud and accidents must be anticipated throughout the election process. Election systems must be designed, implemented, and operated as systems in the large, and the human interfaces (for voters, administrators, maintenance personnel, etc.) must be considered as
integral parts of the system. Any system should have live checking for invalid ballots. This existed decades ago in lever machines, and is common in electronic systems. If punched cards survive after 2000, card systems could easily include a single precinct display device that checks for overvoted or otherwise invalid ballots and for undervoted ballots before they are deposited.

- The author previously noted the doctoral thesis work of Rebecca Mercuri. She has devoted an entire dissertation to the topic of election system integrity, and particularly the conflicts inherent with process integrity and voter ballot privacy. The thesis takes a broad system approach to voting security/integrity/reliability, and is in fact relevant in a much broader context. Highly recommended. Rebecca also considers a proposal for an auditable paper trail of each electronic ballot that is verified by each voter before leaving and automatically deposited in a tamperproof receptacle. This is still not enough, but is worth considering as one more integrity measure. (For example, voters should not be allowed to photograph that record, because of the requirement that votes must not be salable, for example based on paper evidence of how you voted!) Many wags have cited the aphorism that perfection is the enemy of the good. In election systems, there will never be perfection. But the existing state of the art is the enemy of sanity, and a rush to all-electronic voting is utter madness -- even though it may appeal to advocates of conceptual simplicity. It is by no means an easy path, if all of the desired requirements of the voting process are to be satisfied. And there is an enormous gap between the concept and an implementation that provides any real assurances.

This Consultation Paper on ‘Review of the Working of Political Parties specially the relation to Elections and Reform Options’ was prepared by the Advisory Panel on Electoral Reforms; Standards in Political Life. It is based on a paper prepared by the Institute of Constitutional and Parliamentary Studies (ICPS). The ICPS appointed its own Committee of experts with Shri R.N. Mirdha in the chair. The paper explains the following points:

- Political parties are indispensable to any democratic system and play the most crucial role in the electoral process – in setting up candidates and conducting election campaigns. In recent years, it was witnessed a succession of unstable governments, and the reason for such a recurring phenomenon is said to be the archaic and chaotic functioning of political parties. Alliances and coalitions are made, broken and changed at whim, and the balance of power seems to be held not by those at the Union level, but by minor parties on the fringes. There is no doubt that Indian political parties have fragmented over the years. Frequent party splits, mergers and counter splits have dramatically increased the number of parties that now contest elections.

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• Political parties and the party system in India have been greatly influenced by cultural diversity, social, ethnic, caste, community and religious pluralism, traditions of the nationalist movement, contrasting style of party leadership, and clashing ideological perspectives. The two major categories of political parties in India are National and State, and are so recognized by the Election Commission of India on the basis of certain specified criteria.

• The National parties are Indian National Congress, Bharatiya Janata Party, Communist Party of India, Communist Party of India (Marxist), Bahujan Samaj Party, and Janata Dal. As per the latest notification (June 29, 2000) the Election Commission has decided to de-recognize seven regional parties in some States based on their poll performance. These are Haryana Vikas Party, NTR-TDP (Lakshmi Parvati), Rashtriya Janata Dal in Manipur, Shiv Sena in Dadar, Nagar and Haveli, United Minority Party in Assam, Samajwadi Janata Party in Chandigarh and Samta Party in Haryana. Meanwhile, the CPI (M) and the Republican Party of India have been served notices of de-recognition.


This paper outlines the strengths and weaknesses of the 1997 Thai Constitution, which for the past five years has successfully fostered democratic development. At present there are a number of discourses about the possibility of amending this constitution. The authors discuss several aspects of how this constitution has provided for the continued

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22 The Thai Constitution of 1997: Evidence of Democratization, by Thawilwadee Bureekul, Ph.D. and Stithorn Thananithichot, King Prajadhipok’s Institute, Thailand
development of democracy in Thailand. These include: establishing fundamental political reforms, promoting and protecting rights and liberties of the people, providing a forum for public participation in governance and a means to monitor the exercise of state power, as well as for making the political structure more efficient and stable.

The many popular uprisings of the country’s recent past are evidence that democracy is a goal Thais have struggled to achieve for some time. As representatives of the people, the Constitution Drafting Assembly of Thailand prepared the initial draft of the current constitution using public participation from throughout the country. In general, very few constitution-related problems have arisen during the five years this document has been in force, with most that have arisen resulting from unclear and inappropriate organic laws and related regulations. One of the reasons problems have not arisen may be that several components of the constitution created an environment of public participation and democracy. A number of independent organizations were established to monitor the exercise of state power, to promote public participation, to guarantee human activities, and to prepare reports and submit opinions and suggestions to the National Assembly. These organizations include the Constitutional Court, the Administrative Court, the Court of Justice, the Supreme Court of Justice (a Criminal Division for Persons Holding Political Positions), the Ombudsman, the Election Commission, the National Human Rights Commission, the National Counter Corruption Commission, and the State Audit Commission.

Public perceptions are that these organizations have been working effectively. However, some sections of the constitution have not been acted on at all, especially the establishment of two important
organizations for public well-being, the Consumer’s Protection Organization, and the Environmental Conservation Organization. The constitution has also resulted in the creation of a new political culture, indicated by a higher level of political participation and political efficacy, and greater public awareness and satisfaction of the way democracy works in Thailand. The new system of MP and senate elections has established greater political stability, and the system has become more representative through the decentralization of state power to local administrative authorities that are directly chosen by the electorate. The general population also now has the opportunity to submit their own laws for adoption and to remove politicians from office, which are significant changes from past constitutions. The concept of good governance is becoming widely applied in both public and private sectors.

The authors use several examples from the work of King Prajadhipok’s Institute’s national survey on the degree of democratization in Thailand to help explain the effectiveness of the constitution. Components of this survey include a high level of support for democracy, the degree that individuals do not accept autocratic and military government, and a high degree of trust in independent organizations. However, this paper also presents some weaknesses of the constitution and makes recommendations, which will help strengthen the Thai democratization process.
10. Good Governance, Political Stability and Constitutionalism in Thailand 2002: The state of democratic consolidation five years after the implementation of the 1997 constitution, by Paul Chambers, 2002

This paper began with the assumption that good governance requires greater efficiency, representativeness, accountability, transparency, and equity. Liberal democracy is deemed the most politically stable form of government today given its prioritization of electoral contestation and civil liberties. The more consensual the constitution, the higher the effectiveness of political stability, for consensuality begets popular legitimacy and durability. The Freedom House indicators place Thailand (a constitutional monarchy) as “free.” The country has possessed a democratic system since 1988 with only one brief (1991-2) interruption. Thailand is thus on its way to fully achieving the 10 attributes of liberal democracy.

Still, five years after the most liberal and far-reaching constitution in Thailand’s history was enacted, democratic consolidation and institutional effectiveness remain issues of urgency. The constitution was implemented during the start of an economic crisis, when the achievement of transparency and good governance became ultimate objectives. Thaksin Shinawatra, a shrewd and successful corporate CEO, built a party from scratch (all the while lashing out at the dirty style of politics practiced by parties in previous elections), and vowed never to allow unsavory politicos to obtain ministerial positions in his government. He thus seemed to be a beacon of good governance. Yet

23 GOOD GOVERNANCE, POLITICAL STABILITY AND CONSTITUTIONALISM IN THAILAND 2002: The state of democratic consolidation five years after the implementation of the 1997 constitution. By Paul Chambers, King Prajadhipok’s Institute, August 10, 2002.
when he himself suddenly became threatened by the institutional reforms which he had championed, he did not shy from fighting them (i.e. the autonomous commissions). Thus, while Thaksin may have guaranteed himself several years in office and thus a degree of government stability, the cost was a swipe at the just-created constitution and the country’s emerging democracy.

Moreover, some general observations about the pace of reform can be made. First, to work effectively, the special commissions must not be hostage to powerful interests. Governments in power must not be allowed to indirectly influence the commissions’ members. Unless adequate commission investigations and enforcement of commission judgments are allowed to occur, Thailand’s democratic consolidation will happen more slowly. Civil liberties, including freedom of the press, must be much more adequately enforced. Otherwise, they are merely words on paper. Institutions must be effectively constructed to prevent politicians from finding loopholes and/or using the system for material gain. Furthermore, separation of powers must be kept at all times and the executive must not be allowed to transgress the power of the legislature or judiciary. Finally, the author agrees that, the Thai political culture could be the greatest impediment to the 1997 constitution’s success. Will it alter the traditional reliance of particularly rural Thais on patron-client relationships? The private sector must be willing to accede to the checks activated by the constitution. Otherwise placing a halt on corruption will continue to be difficult.

Yet Thais need not give up suddenly and go back to the institutional drawing board. Not enough time has passed to adequately judge the 1997 reforms. Perhaps after the next general elections in four
years, greater insight can be gleaned. After five years, there are certainly some pluses and minus in the new post-1997 era. To ensure continued democratic consolidation and greater pluralist intercourse, however, authorities must work harder to enforce the fragile state of Thai constitutionalism.

10. Institute of Future Studies for Development

The main objective of this paper is to examine the relationship among democracy, Good Governance and economic development by using Thailand as a case study. The outline of my presentation has four major section, namely (1) democracy and economic development (2) democracy and Good Governance (3) Good Governance and economic development and (4) a pathway to the establishment of Good Governance in Thailand.

The first part of this paper presents the relationship between democracy and economic development under a proposed three-dimensional democracy framework. It is designed to illustrate the salient characteristics of democracy in Thailand and its relation to Thailand’s economic development. This part is further divided into three sections. The first examines Thai democracy as an ideology, form and way of life; the second presents past strategies of economic development in Thailand; and the last part explores the relationship between democracy and its outcomes on economic development in Thailand.

In the 2nd dimension, the author focuses on these aspects: (1) Three forms of democracy: Fusion of power (parliamentary system), Separation of power (presidential system) or a mixed system, (2) Elections and (3) Provision for multiple political parties.
This paradigm of economic development focuses primarily on the reduction of poverty and the reduction of the income distribution gap - resulting in the promotion of justice in society, the elevation of the honor and dignity of the people, increased income levels and higher basic consumption levels for low income people, or in other words, to improve the quality of human life. The first strategy is for the government to provide the poor with their basic needs for life (such as food, clothing, housing and medicine), provide the basic services required by the community (such as water, electricity, and fundamental public health), and finally, provide basic human rights and the creation of jobs for the needy people. A second strategy for this paradigm focuses on self-reliance development which is an attempt to minimize reliance on the global economy in the form of investments, support, technology, unnecessary imports, and at the same time to increase the capacity and self-sufficiency of domestic production.

The author propose to succeed in building Good Governance Thailand must embark on a program of full-cycle reform, as all aspects are interrelated. To believe that successful political reform alone will bring well-being to people in society is to misunderstand development, as the other systems in Thai society, such as the economy, social values and education effect each other. I will explain. If we embark on educational reform without political, reform politicians as policy makers may not understand the significance of education and may not allocate funds to support educational activities. Reforming the mass media is also necessary, or unsupportive ideas and values which effect the behavior of learners may also be transferred. Conversely, the effect of educational reforms on other areas must be considered. For instance, solving political
problems by implanting the right political values and organizing the right political human resources, or do economic reforms to reduce vote–buying behavior may causes more complicated problems later on if we neglect the reform of social values through educational reforms. In conclusion, according to the 10 aspects of full cycle reform, the educational reforms can not be successful without accompanying political reforms, family reforms, economic reforms and other such reforms.

To solve the problem of the country an interdisciplinary approach is needed. The stated approaches do not only solve the short–run problems, but also prevent negative impacts in the long run. In conclusion, the problems stated above are linked together as webs which cannot be separated. Therefore, to solve the individual problems separately would not be an effective approach. Sometimes reform of a particular section may be given priority, but the effectiveness of the separate reforms will be maximized when the full–cycle reform is undertaken.

For Good Governance, political reform, reform of the Ministerial qualification expectations, bureaucratic reform, Judicial reform and social reform are necessary. Reforms in education, the mass media, the family, and ethical and moral systems are also needed in support. The building of good governance will not be accomplished without the completion of the full–cycle reform. Moreover, reform must involve 3 major parts.