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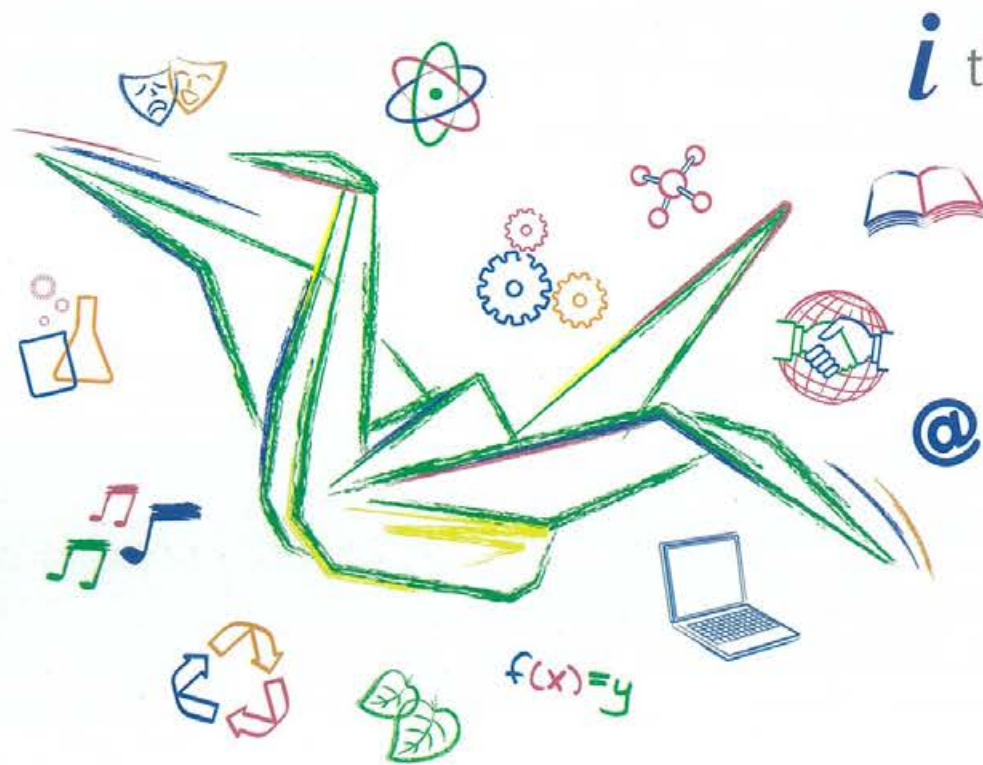
BANGKOK

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS' CLUB OF THAILAND MAGAZINE

THIRD QUARTER 2007



FCCT
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Take a front line seat at world events and be part of the buzz in the region by joining the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand.

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FEEDING THE MACHINE

Dateline magazine looks at the stories behind the stories. All offerings will be considered, from articles and photo essays to letters, essays, haiku or sonnets. How you covered a story, what you think about how journalism works, or even some gossip for the Soi Whispers column – send it all in, to editor Patrick Barta (Patrick.Barta@wsj.com) or deputy editor Marwaan Macan-Markar (marwaan@ips.org). Submissions are paid for with glory and bar coupons.

From the President...

By Amy Kazmin, President

There are few countries in the world where the monarchy plays as critical a role in the life of the nation as it does in Thailand. King Bhumibol Adulyadej is not only the world's longest reigning monarch – he is also, arguably, the most revered by his subjects, and a King who, despite the essentially ceremonial role accorded to him under the constitution, has played a decisive role at critical moments in Thailand's history. He is therefore a figure of great importance and interest to the many foreign journalists who have been based in Thailand throughout his reign.

Reporting the monarchy is of course subject to unique constraints – not least the law of lese-majeste – which makes it a serious crime, punishable by up to 15 years imprisonment, to make any comment deemed offensive to the dignity of the monarchy. As a result of this extreme protectiveness towards the reputation of the monarch, all foreign journalists face a difficult juggling act in reporting about the institution to our international audiences.

Besides the constraints that the law imposes on our actual writing or broadcasts, we also are often unable to obtain the variety of opinions from interviewees that we do on other subjects. All comments on the monarchy, with a few exceptions, tend to be couched in deeply respectful language, in keeping with the way most people here feel about their King, or due to interviewees' own concerns about running foul of the law. It means reports about the monarchy tend to have a very different feel than our reporting on other political and economic issues.

Despite these challenges, the FCCT in August proudly launched our beautiful book showcasing sixty-years worth of foreign coverage of King Bhumibol Adulyadej. *The King of Thailand in World Focus* contains 167 articles from 56 news agencies, newspaper and magazines, chronicling the life of King Bhumibol – as seen through the eyes of foreign media covering Thailand. While these days His Majesty, nearing 80, tends to stay out of the public eye, the book includes reports from throughout his reign when he traveled extensively, and was more accessible to journalists. The book contains a great collection of more than 375 historic photographs, some never seen before, and beautifully laid out.

We cannot pretend this is a deeply revealing account of King Bhumibol's personality or views. Nevertheless, it is a rewarding, informative and at times entertaining account of one of Asia's most important historical figures. Along with lively accounts of his travels around Thailand and abroad,

there are many valuable insights into his thinking, including all the formal interviews that the King ever granted the foreign media during his reign.

The book also offers an unusual perspective on the changing styles of reporting and writing over the sixty years of His Majesty's reign. Some of the earlier reports may sound comically dated today – but that's the point of this book – it is an historical record, simply that and nothing else, of how we, the foreign media, have tried to cover this extraordinary monarch, against the backdrop of changing Thai society.

The book was a labor of love by a dedicated team led by Denis Gray, the veteran AP bureau chief in Bangkok; and other long-time Bangkok hands Dominic Faulder, and John Everingham, who worked tirelessly to realize this project. The book is actually a second edition: a far more modest first edition of *The King in Thailand in World Focus* was brought out in mid-1987 to mark the King's 60th birthday, soon after which he also became the longest serving monarch in Thai history. But the current edition has brought the story totally up-to-date, with a wide range of accounts of Thailand's turbulent recent politics, including the Sept. 19 military coup that ousted Thaksin Shinawatra, the former prime minister.

As befits such a project, the book was launched in a lovely dinner at The Oriental Hotel, with Anand Panyarachun, the former prime minister, speaking about the monarchy in Thai society. As well as talking about the nature of the bond between the King and the Thai people, he also grew a bit misty-eyed as he shared some of his surprising personal reminiscences from his own audiences with King Bhumibol – anecdotes intended to highlight the King's dry wit, and, as Mr Anand said, dispel the notion that the king never smiles. It was a rare insight into another aspect of the king's personality rarely seen by the foreign media.

Looking forward, reporting on Thailand's highly influential monarchy will remain a special challenge for foreign correspondents covering this country. The lese-majeste laws look set to remain on the books for a long time – demanded by the Thai people, according to Mr Anand. And if that were not enough, similar principles – making it a serious criminal offense, punishable by prison, to insult the monarchy – are now being written into other new laws, including the new computer crimes act and a new publishing act. When it comes to free and open public discourse about the role of the monarchy in Thailand, full free speech still appears a distant prospect.

Photo: Paula Bronstein



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SEEN AND HEARD AT FCCT



Democrat Party leader Abhisit Vejjajiva

Thailand health minister Dr. Mongkol Na Songkhla

Very Important People

SOI WHISPERS

It's All a Bit Murky: The FCCT Executive Committee took a bit of a battering in the *Bangkok Post* recently after an outside programme involving the Israeli embassy went slightly awry, and felt compelled to issue a letter of clarification. This was greeted by another barrage of abuse, including a remarkable epistle from an alleged club member signed only "FRIEND OF CLARITY, CREDIBILITY AND TRANSPARENCY." The poor old board was more than a little bemused by the notion of any self-proclaimed FRIEND OF TRANSPARENCY who would prefer to remain anonymous, but there is a lot of this kind of thing around at the moment. A withering silence seemed the most appropriate response... **Congratulations On a Job Well Done:** All microphones were kept firmly on in The Royal Ballroom at The Oriental in late August when some 220 members and their distinguished guests attended the launch of the second edition of the FCCT's *The King of Thailand in World Focus*, a 260-page compilation of articles and photographs concerning the life and reign of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej. The highlight of the evening was undoubtedly the speech and Q&A session by two-time former prime minister **Anand Panyarachun**. He did not hesitate to voice his disagreement with some of the questioners, including at one point moderator **Denis Gray**, but that only added to the quality of the dialogue and in no way detracted from the overall warmth of the evening. Anand stayed on afterwards to enjoy brandy and a cigar, and share his thoughts with a smaller group. Upon his departure, he gave **Amy Kazmin** a kiss on both cheeks and declared

the evening an enjoyable success... **Hot Commodity:** Local bookshops were so keen to get copies of the book to market that one prominent chain managed to break the embargo by a week and place the 2.5 kilogramme tome front centre in all its storefronts. Club treasurer **Henry Silverman**'s much discussed diplomatic skills were tested once again, this time by irate rival booksellers baying for his blood... **Return Engagement:** The beloved ROL Trio, one of Bangkok's tightest and most compelling jazz bands, reunited briefly at FCCT in August. The band has been on hiatus ever since upright bassist **Kenro Oshidari** moved to Sudan, but Kenro graciously agreed to stand in for a One Night Only gig at FCCT while passing through town recently. It was great to see old friends



Philip Blenkinsop recovers at FCCT

– including **Dale Lee** on drums and **Stuart Raj** on keyboards – again! All's Well That Ends Well: FCCT's own **Philip Blenkinsop** is recovering from the lingering after-effects after finding himself a bit too close for comfort to the ongoing conflict in southern Thailand. Philip was on assignment in May when he was blown off his feet by a roadside bomb that damaged his hearing and left bits of gravel in his face and neck. Despite the close call, he was soon able to tell BBC: "In a couple of days I should be back to my usual handsome self." We wish Philip well.

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THE KING OF THAILAND IN WORLD FOCUS Is Available at Last!

The world's longest-reigning monarch seen through the eyes of foreign journalists and photographers. A unique royal history spanning nearly eight decades of turmoil and triumph.

This book documents a remarkable life through foreign newspaper, magazine and wire service reports as compiled by the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand (FCCT). The original version of *The King of Thailand in World Focus* was undertaken in 1987 to coincide with King Bhumibol's 60th birthday. It has long been out of print, but remains one of the most insightful and readable works on Thailand's widely revered monarch.

In June 2006, nationwide celebrations marked the 60th anniversary of King Bhumibol's accession to the throne, and 5 December 2007 is his 80th birthday. At a much more modest level, the FCCT passed the 50-year mark in 2006. One of the activities undertaken to mark these anniversaries was updating the 1987 royal book.

This new edition of *The King of Thailand in World Focus* has been expanded, and completely redesigned and reformatted. It includes foreign coverage of the intervening years during which King Bhumibol became the world's longest reigning living monarch. The period has not been plain sailing by any means. The dramatic royal intervention in May 1992 to end political chaos and bloodshed is still dramatically etched on the world's collective imagination. The tense political standoff of 2006, when Thai politicians once again grappled with the fine print of constitutional democracy, ended in September with a bloodless military putsch.

The first edition of the book marked the king's 60th birthday celebrations. It sold out long ago, and is now something of a collector's item. Editors of the more ambitious second edition hope it will come to



be regarded as a useful historical document about a reign that has been witness to more change than any comparable period in Thai history. According to Denis Gray, the book's editor in chief on both occasions, the two projects combined took some three years to complete and an untold number of working hours, almost all of which were donated free.

Sixty per cent of the proceeds from the sale of this book will go to His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's charities, the remainder to the FCCT's educational funds.

The book is on sale at the FCCT and all branches of Asiabooks, B2S, Bookazine and Kinokuniya from 24 August. Price: 1,450 baht. The book will also be available to FCCT members from the FCCT office for 1,200 baht.

A Night To Remember

When editors of *The King of Thailand in World Focus* decided to plan a launch party for their new book, they knew they had to make a splash. And they did – with some clever commentary from former Prime Minister H.E. Anand Panyarachun.

On Thursday, Aug. 23, the FCCT and its good friends at The Oriental Hotel sponsored a one-of-a-kind gala event celebrating the publication of *The King of Thailand in World Focus*. Former Prime Minister H.E. Anand Panyarachun was the keynote speaker, and he didn't disappoint, offering a collection of frank – and feisty – insights into the role (and future) of the monarchy in Thailand. At one point, during an intense question-and-answer session with Associated Press bureau Chief Denis Gray, he jokingly exclaimed "I'm fed up with the foreign correspondents!" – followed by a riotous round of applause. It was his fourth keynote address to the FCCT at a major function; the first three were during his premierships in 1991 and 1992. Anand has also spoken to the club on other occasions over the years, most recently in 2006 about the southern unrest. Here are some of the excerpts from this historic occasion. A full transcript is available at the FCCT office.

Many thanks to the warm and generous staff at The Oriental Hotel for their longstanding support of FCCT and kind assistance in organizing the King of Thailand in World Focus dinner.

On whether the King is perfect: Our King, as implied in his public address a few years ago, does not see himself as infallible – a king who can do no wrong in the ordinary sense of the word. The King is not above criticism. In fact, he welcomes critical comments based on fact and objectivity.

On Thailand's lese majeste law: I do not like the law. I happen to have been educated abroad – I was living abroad, and yet you have to understand that the King is held in a certain position which is inviolable by the will of his people. I am sure the king does not mind whether the law exists or not, but the Thai people would never, never tolerate (ending it). You may have to wait for twenty more years, fifty more years. I do not know, but the Thai people rightly or wrongly,



A few of the luminaries at FCCT's King of Thailand in World Focus launch party.

will not tolerate any "criticism" against our King... It is not something you can abolish or abandon overnight.

On the King's perceived intervention in Thai political affairs: Secondly, in all the audiences I had with the king in my first premiership and second premiership, he never once interfered with the politics of the country. Never in (all) our conversations when I had an audience... Unless the issues are raised by the prime minister, the king would never venture to advise you.

On last year's coup, and Western views about democracy: Well, I never thought I would live to see the day when Western observers began to think of democracy the same way Thaksin did.... I never thought Westerners could be that simplistic – that they could impose democracy on Iraq, that they would want to change the world into democratic states by (an) implanting process. (Applause) I never thought that some Westerners would equate elections to democracy. Don't we know, or have we forgotten, that

democracy is all about an open society? It is about the rule of law, it is about transparency, it is about freedom of the media, it is about accountability, it is about participation, it is about an independent judiciary, it is about civil society's participation, it is about checks and balances, etcetera, etcetera. To me, I am really flabbergasted by what has been happening in our world in the past few years. Could we have gone astray to such an extent that we even did not know where we came from and who we are... I am not concerned about what is going to happen to Thailand in the future. I am more concerned with what is happening to the world.

On the future of the monarchy in Thailand: I have no doubt that the institution will remain intact.

On whether the next King could be a "she": I don't see any impediment in having a she in the future... (But) I don't think it is something the Thais would spend too much time pondering about...



H.E. Anand Panyarachun, Asa Sarasin, U.S. Ambassador Ralph "Skip" Boyce and other VIPs pose with the FCCT board.



FCCT president Amy Kazmin corners her sources.

FCCT PHOTOJOURNALISM CONTEST 2007

Thailand has long been a hub for the best photographers in Southeast Asia. This year, the FCCT decided to recognize that work through its first-ever FCCT Photojournalism Contest.

Amateur and professional photographers submitted hundreds of images from across the region, from the cool hills of northern Vietnam to the mountain passes of Pakistan to the harsh streets of Bangkok's slums. The work was a testament to the dedication and creativity of photojournalists working in and around Southeast Asia, including many who endured harsh conditions in conflict zones or disaster areas.

The Club planned to offer awards in four categories: Spot News, Feature Photography, Sport, and Photo Essay, with one photo from all the categories to be designated "Photo of the Year." But when it came time to select winners, the judges found the quality of work so impressive that they decided to add another category: Daily Life, for the photos that best captured the world as we live it in Southeast Asia.

FCCT would like to thank all its outstanding sponsors for agreeing to support this year's contest: Canon, Dusit Hotels, Star Alliance, The Oriental Hotel, and Anantara. We encourage all our members to patronize the companies that give so much back to the FCCT.

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PHOTO OF THE YEAR



Vinai Dithajohn

Massive forest fires have plagued Borneo and other parts of Indonesia in recent years as giant paper and palm oil companies clear land to make new plantations. The fires have made headlines across the world, partly because of concern over the loss of precious forest resources, but also because of the respiratory and other health problems linked to the dangerous smoke.

Thai freelance photographer Vinai Dithajohn captured the full devastation of this unfolding environmental calamity from a number of impressive angles. But this image – of burned forest near Riau on the island of Sumatra – is the one that most captured the attention of the FCCT judges. Although the Indonesian government has made it a crime to clear land by burning, this land, controlled by two large pulp and paper producers, may well have been burned intentionally. The photo – along with a series of other Indonesian haze shots included later in this issue – helps draw attention to the increasingly unsustainable cost of rapid economic development in Southeast Asia.

What the judges liked: "The key is simplicity. Although this photo was hard to get, it tells you straight away what it needs to say. There's no point of view or artistry – it's simply a perfect and neutral picture. The photographer is not anywhere in the photo and yet the result is absolutely striking – the full effect of deforestation could not be more evident."

CATEGORY: SPOT NEWS

First Place:
Lino G. Escandor II

Anti-riot policemen in the Philippines stand their ground as rioters make their way into a barricade despite a water cannon's assault.

What the judges liked: "The water, the tone of the image, and the action of the people make this a perfect picture showing how easy it is for humans to come into conflict."



Second Place: Dan Caspersz
Police stand watch on a tense, rainy night in the middle of Thailand's 2006 coup.



Third Place: Lino G. Escandor II
An old lady becomes hysterical in a dramatic photo filled with stories. A demolition crew from the Philippine Estate Authority (PEA) is tearing down a so-called "floating village" shanty in Paranaque, south of Manila. Authorities said that residents had agreed they would voluntarily vacate in exchange for 6,000 pesos and a relocation site at a designated area.

Honorable Mention: Sarot Meksophawannakul
Waist-deep in flood waters, a woman struggles to take her motorbike across a street in Uttaradit's Muang district in Thailand.



CATEGORY: FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

First Place:
Nguyen Viet Thanh

Vietnamese artist Dao Anh Khanh dances during a performance art show in Hanoi. Khanh and other artists have struggled to find a place for the relatively new art form in the cultural life of Vietnam.

What the judges liked: "Not every image showing movement works – but this one does. It looks like a ghost in the darkness. It's magical, it's mysterious, and especially compared with the other photos, there's nothing logical in it – you have to use your imagination."



Second Place: Edwin J. Wendell
Banners honoring King Rama IX form an unusually colorful backdrop for the Royal Barge Procession in Bangkok in 2006.



Third Place: Le Anh Dung
A man prays outside of a pagoda at a Hanoi construction site in a photo that captures the contradictions of Vietnam's economic boom. People have to pray outside because the pagoda is becoming too crowded.

Honorable Mention: Edwin J. Wendell
Competing for resources, cows try to graze in an area of discarded water tanks in a clever, humorous photo taken along Highway 9 in Phatum Thani.

CATEGORY: DAILY LIFE

First Place:
Matthew Duncan

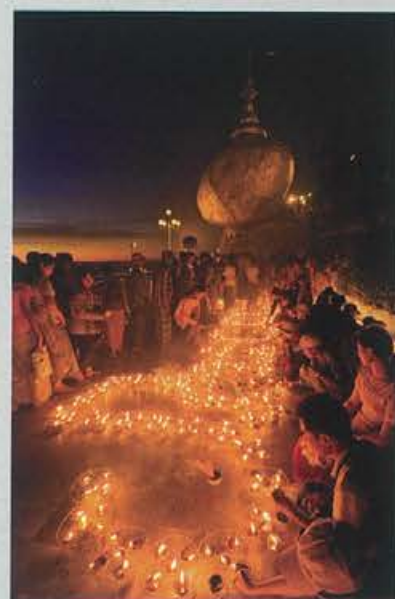
Many Bangkok children beg with their mothers – or women who claim to be their mothers. A child from a poor family can be hired for \$50 a month to work as a beggar.

What the judges liked: "This photo gives us a new perspective, from above, reminding us how some people remain trapped in the lowest class of society. The man walking nearby underscores how no one cares about them."



Second Place: Nguyen Viet Thanh

A Hmong minority tribe woman shows the confluence of modern and traditional living as she takes care of her child in her house's bathroom in Vietnam's northern province of Son La.



Honorable Mention:
Moe Min

Pilgrims offer 9,000 lights at the Golden Rock pagoda in Burma.



Third Place: Nic Dunlop

Thirty year-old Cho Cho Win rests at a safe house on the Burmese border in a photograph filled with feeling. After an abusive home life in Burma, she sought work as a maid in Thailand through a broker, but instead was delivered to a brothel. She contracted HIV from her husband. Her family abandoned her on learning she was infected and she is now looked after by a Burmese NGO in Thailand.

CATEGORY: SPORTS

First Place:
Matthew Duncan

In some Thai boxing matches in Mae Sot, referees call a halt only when fighters can no longer stand.

What the judges liked: "The key to getting good sport photos is capturing action and movement. But this image is exceptional because it tells us more about how it feels to be in the action. It's an amazingly gentle picture in a most brutal sport."



Second Place:
Tawatchai Kemgumnerd

Tricycle racers go head-to-head during a Loy Krathong festival event organized by the Nonthaburi municipality in Thailand.



Honorable Mention: Sarot Meksophawannakul

A dog born to offspring of Khun Thong Daeng, His Majesty the King's favorite pet canine, walks atop bottles in a light-hearted display of skill at a national pet expo in Thailand.



Third Place:
Pawat Laopaisarntaksin

Thai Navy athletes celebrate football success with coach Piyakul Kaewnumkang in a photo that captures the thrill of victory.

CATEGORY: PHOTO ESSAY

First Place: Nguyen Viet Thanh Ethnic Thai Funeral in Vietnam

The Thais, with a population of around one million people, are among the 54 ethnic groups in Vietnam. The residents of one Thai commune, Chieng Ha, will soon have to be relocated to give way for a reservoir that's part of a \$2.3 billion hydropower project called Son La. Such changes pose a challenge to their diverse and unique culture, which includes its own language and rituals, including funerals – like this one, captured in all its drama by a Vietnamese photographer.

What the judges liked: "With these images, the photographer takes the viewer deep into the story. The photographer tries every angle, without missing any details, following the ceremony from beginning to end. All of the emotions are captured as the photographer brings these people, and their ceremony, to the outside world. This is what photojournalism should be about: Telling a story."



▲ The portrait and identification card of Quang Van Xom, a 108-year-old Thai man, are placed next to those of his wife at Xom's funeral in Chieng Ha.



▲ A wizard makes a toast.



▲ Thai people join the funeral procession.



▲ A tribal man prays at the coffin of Qang Van Xom.



▲ Two elderly men sit solemnly at the funeral.



▲ A tribal man drinks rice wine at the funeral of his father.



▲ Tribal people burn the body.



▲ A grave decorated with tribal flags memorializes the deceased.

CATEGORY: PHOTO ESSAY

Second Place: Mikel Flamm Out of the Darkness

In China, large numbers of people with leprosy live in remote villages cut off from the outside world. Many were forced to leave their families more than 40 years ago. Mikel Flamm visited some of these villages starting in 2003 and decided to document the victims' will, determination and ability to survive—as well as their ability to forgive, as they learn to live in peace in communities that once shut them out of society.



▲ Li Shiyang sits below cords of corn that she and her neighbors from Xiang Hai An Leprosy Rehabilitation Village, Yunnan, have grown in nearby fields. Some villagers continue to work well into their seventies.



▲ Huang Kai has lived in Xipingba Rehabilitation Village, Yunnan, for over 25 years. Both his legs were amputated at the knee, so he walks on what remains of his legs, using pieces of cloth and rubber from old car tires to protect the ends of his limbs.



▲ Ye Yajun negotiates the uneven walkway near his old mud-brick house in Chagen Leprosy Rehabilitation Village. His right leg was amputated over 20 years ago.



▲ Wang Ruiyin, 88, is nearly blind, but still enjoys the warmth of the sun.



▲ Zhou Chaoping grows corn near the village and sells some to the local market to earn some extra money.



▲ Huang Yong Shen has lived in the Dingwo Leprosy Rehabilitation Village, Guangxi, for over four decades.



▲ Men from Chagen Leprosy Rehabilitation Village in Guangdong play dominoes in the village recreation room. Some of the residents still work in the fields.

CATEGORY: PHOTO ESSAY

Third Place: Vinai Dithajohn Indonesian Haze

Over the last several years, forest fires have ravaged many acres of Indonesia's land, and continue to have a lasting effect on its people, especially on the islands of Borneo and Sumatra. Logging and slash and burn farming are the main suspects in the seasonal fires, but the resulting smoke is creating health problems as far as Malaysia.



▲ An aerial view of Pekanbaru, Indonesia covered in smog from forest fires.



▲ A father coughs as he carries his daughter in front of a mosque in Pekanbaru.



▲ Plantations owned by two giant pulp and paper producers are cleared with the help of fires.



▲ Locals heading home near a burned peat swamp forest. Workers are paid very low wages at plantations.



▲ A truck carries plantation wood against the backdrop of a burning forest in a national park.



▲ Burned forest in plantations owned by giant pulp and paper producers.



▲ More burned land.



▲ Municipal policemen work to extinguish a forest fire in Pekanbaru.

CATEGORY: PHOTO ESSAY

Honorable Mention: Mikel Flamm Earthquake Victims in Pakistan

A devastating earthquake in Pakistan in October 2005 left thousands of families homeless. But it also provided an opportunity for volunteers to help them rebuild their lives, as shown in this collection of photos.



▲ A family who lost their home lived in a tent for over a year while they waited for the government to find a permanent location to build a new home.



▲ A volunteer loads a truck with building materials for transitional shelters for families that lost their homes.



▲ A mother and her son in a Pakistani tent village.



▲ A family survives in a tent village in Balakot, Pakistan.

▲ Volunteers from Habitat for Humanity and elsewhere provided hundreds of temporary shelters.

ABOUT THE JUDGES:



PHILIP BLENKINSOP has been described as "a man of guerrillas and of resistances," (Herve Le Goff) and "one of the most essential photographers of his generation." (Christian Caujolle). Since arriving in Asia in 1989, Blenkinsop's name has become synonymous with forgotten conflicts. "Photographers are both witnesses and messengers. Our responsibility must always lie with the people we focus on, and with the accurate depiction of their plight, regardless of how unpalatable this might be for magazine readers," he says.

His work, published in international arenas, has been the catalyst for much discussion and amongst other accolades was awarded Amnesty International's Photojournalism prize for excellence in human rights journalism. The author of two books, *The Cars That Ate Bangkok* (White Lotus), and *Extreme Asia* (Photopoche Societe), Blenkinsop continues to live in Asia and is currently working on two long-term projects: Nepal, and Thailand's Southern Insurgency.

SUTHEP KRITSANAVARIN is one of the most outstanding photojournalists to emerge out of Thailand in recent years. Over the years, his work has included a photographic record of life in Xinjiang province in China and a project to document life along the Mekong before development changes it forever. His

photographs have been published in the Far Eastern Economic Review, the New York Times, the International Herald Tribune, Japan Times and CNN Traveler.

After the 2004 tsunami, Suthep helped coordinate the InSIGHT Out! project to teach children in Banda Aceh and Southern Thailand to document their lives through photography. His work has been exhibited worldwide in Japan, Germany, Spain and France.



OLIVIER NILSSON is a senior editor at OnAsia Images, a leading stock photography and assignment agency specializing in work from Asia. He joined OnAsia after 18 years as photo editor with the Associated Press. He graduated from the Ecole Supérieure de Journalisme in 1986.

The FCCT would also like to thank **PAULA BRONSTEIN** of *Getty Images* for her support of this year's contest. Ms. Bronstein agreed to serve as one of the judges but was on assignment in Afghanistan when the photos were reviewed. A collection of her photographs from Tibet were featured in *Dateline* in the fourth quarter of 2006.

ABOUT THE PHOTOGRAPHERS:

DAN CASPERSZ, Thailand, works with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (UN OCHA). His work involves coordinating the humanitarian response to conflict situations and natural disasters across Asia and the Pacific.

VINAI DITHAJOHN, Thailand, is a freelance photographer who previously worked for the international news picture service European Pressphoto Agency (EPA) and the *Bangkok Post*. His photographs have appeared in *Time Magazine*, the *International Herald Tribune*, *National Geographic Magazine* (Netherlands), and *National Geographic Magazine* (Thailand). In 2002, his photo essay on sea gypsies was awarded the first prize in a contest held by *National Geographic* (Thailand).

MATTHEW DUNCAN, U.K. is a freelance photographer in his early 30s who spends significant amounts of time in Bangkok. He has been involved in teaching, journalism, publishing, and human rights. The FCCT Photojournalism Awards is the first competition he has entered.

LE ANH DUNG, Vietnam, is a full-time photojournalist for the online newspaper, *vietnamnet.vn*.

NIC DUNLOP, Thailand, is a Bangkok-based photographer represented by Panos Pictures in London. His work has been published in the *New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The South China Morning Post*. Nic is also co-author, with Paul Davies, of a book on landmines in Cambodia entitled, *War of the Mines*. In 1999, he was co-recipient of an award from the John Hopkins University for Excellence in International Journalism for exposing the head of the Khmer Rouge secret police, Comrade Duch, a story detailed in his book, *The Lost Executioner*, published by Bloomsbury in 2005.

Nic is currently completing a major photographic book on Burma's dictatorship.

LINO G. ESCANDOR II, Philippines, is a Manila-based photographer.

MIKEL FLAMM, Thailand, has been a Bangkok-based photographer since 1990 and has covered conflicts along the Thai-Cambodian border, AIDS issues, trafficking, natural disasters and children at risk. He has worked on assignment for *Newsweek*, *Getty Images* and a number of non-governmental organizations, including Habitat for Humanity, CARE and the United Nations.

TAWATCHAI KEMGUMNERD, Thailand, is a full-time staff photographer for the *Bangkok Post* in Bangkok.

PAWAT LAOPAISARNTAKSIN, Thailand, is a full-time staff photographer for the *Bangkok Post* in Bangkok.

SAROT MEKSOPHAWANNAKUL, Thailand, is a full-time staff photographer for the *Bangkok Post* in Bangkok.

MOE MIN, Myanmar, entered the field of photography in 1979 and has worked in photojournalism as well as travel and commercial photography. He has exhibited work across the region, including Myanmar, Korea and Malaysia.

NGUYEN VIET THANH, Vietnam, is a full-time photojournalist for the Vietnam News Agency.

EDWIN "JOE" WENDELL, Singapore, is an investment consultant with Smith Barney. He travels extensively for his work, which allows him to take photographs across the region.

Sandwich Time

By Bangkok Chowhound

I've always considered the sandwich the single greatest contribution England has made to global gastronomy. Hardly a controversial statement, I know, as England is often ridiculed for offering tasteless fare. Some loyal Englanders would make a case for shepherd's pie or clotted cream or something else that takes at least two days to digest. Consider the crumpet. If nothing else, it allows for some dubious puns, like how about "a nice bit of crumpet" (nudge, nudge, wink, wink).

It turns out I'm wrong—about sandwiches being English—but more on that later.

The classic sandwich is pure genius in its simplicity: Two pieces of bread with the filling of your choice in the middle. You can derive comfort from the double dose of carbohydrates, feel righteous by adding a slice of tomato and lettuce, and add fuel to the system if there's protein involved.

Like so many other culinary fixtures, the sandwich has spawned a whole taxonomy of its own: grilled, roasted, meaty, squidgy, and even sat-upon, as with a French pan bagné. It has inspired phrases such as "One sandwich short of a picnic" and book titles, as in *A Hero Ain't Nothing But a Sandwich*. And, as you would expect from a food that's popular from London to Hanoi, the sandwich has suffered some sad indignities and truly abhorrent misinterpretations. But more on that later.

Many of us have been told that piquant tale of how the sandwich came about: John Montagu, the 4th Earl of Sandwich, was so fond of playing cards that he commandeered his cook to concoct a meal he could easily hold in one hand while he continued to deal with the other.

Charming as this story may be, it's not true, at least according to sandwich historians, whose ranks have multiplied over the years.

No, it's now generally agreed that the first sandwich was invented by a Jewish

sage, Hillel the Elder, who apparently decided one Passover to stick some lamb and bitter herbs between two pieces of matzo. The new invention was meant to remind Jews of their forced labor under the Egyptians (the matzos were the brick and the lamb was the mortar-get it?), but others cottoned onto it pretty quick, and soon what the Romans called "cibus Hilleli," or Hillel's snack, spread to other parts of the Middle East, the Mediterranean and of course, England.

Thankfully, someone must have realized that eating meat between two large crackers was a bit unwieldy. So, improvements were made. By the time Montagu was ordering them up from his kitchen, sandwiches had moved onto leavened bread and condiments were discovered.

While not entirely an invention of the English, sandwiches flourished under their stewardship. According to English cookery writer Elizabeth David, while the Italians and French clung to their baguettes and ciabattas, the English began baking bread composed of fine white flour in rectangular tins for making sandwiches. What popped out of those tins was a less crusty loaf, but one that could produce uniform slices and was pillowy enough to absorb the juices of Sunday's leftover roast.

It was in the hands of the Americans that things started to go terribly wrong for the sandwich. Sometime in the mid-19th century, a long-forgotten cookbook writer gently urged her fellow Yanks to serve up ham sandwiches as a main course. But Americans, ever ones for convenience, didn't really embrace the sandwich until the introduction of pre-sliced white bread. It was the

advent of Wonder bread-like loaves that spurred Americans to get off from their chaise lounges and make sandwiches. And it all went downhill from there.

In my nearly nine years in Asia, I've seen appalling crimes committed against mainstays of Western cuisine. To be fair, in America, I've seen shameful renderings of Asian cuisine. But sandwiches have been unduly misrepresented on this continent. Let us begin with examples in Bangkok of foods that should not be called sandwiches. In that category: two flaccid pieces of white bread and pork floss (that mysterious, orangey brown substance that is supposedly dried pork). The same goes for any combination of bread slathered in mayo with iceberg lettuce, a slice of cooked ham/chicken, a slice of green tomato, and packaged in a triangular plastic box. Or, anything that has been anywhere near a crab stick. Or anything purchased at a 7-Eleven, Dairy Mart, Tops Supermarket, gas station, vending machine or breakfast stand that also sells little bags of fried pumpkin with scrambled egg.

I wish I could claim to have embraced my adopted country to such a degree that I can eat krapao gai and bamee mu daeng every day. But I don't have the fortitude to eat spicy food continuously, and I've been spoiled by the choices that bombard you in truly cosmopolitan cities like London, New York, and Hong Kong. There are some days when all I want to eat is something happily nestled between two pieces of bread, preferably the flesh of some dead animal with Dijon mustard or eggy mayonnaise.

So over the years, I've sniffed out Bangkok's best sandwich counters:

Kuppa I know it's full of expat wives and screaming toddlers, but they do some of the best sarnies in town. They dip with butter, and as with all good sandwiches, you need to use both hands and maneuver your mouth just so in order to eat them. So leave the pack of cards at home.

Bangkok Baking Co. at the JW Marriott This is the expensive, once-in-a-while venue for good sandwiches. If the price makes you blanch, take comfort in the fact that they're generously sized and come with a heaping side order of fries (or salad, if you must be virtuous).

The Landmark OK, it's dusty and you're surrounded by mustachioed Germans with mullets. But they do a decent grilled panini at wallet-friendly prices. Also, this is one of the few places that actually serves up Reuben sandwiches.



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