

WEATHER

Academics pay respects to educator and social activist



[Current Issues in Thailand](#)



[Bangkok Post Year-end Economic Review](#)

150 people at college to hear citations

About 150 people, mostly academics and social activists, attended Thammasat University yesterday to eulogise Dr Puey Ungphakorn, whose death on July 28 stunned the nation with grief.

"Dr Puey was an ordinary man who showed how greatness can transcend social status," said economist Rangsan Thanapornpan of Thammasat University. He said Dr Puey was a model of a government official with integrity. While at the Bank of Thailand he established its reputation as the fortress of ethics. Dr Puey repeatedly emphasised that a government official must refrain from being involved in private business and stay away from politics.

Unfortunately, his followers at the central bank have failed to abide by his principles. "Among those present were Thanphuying Poonsuk Bhanomyong, widow of former prime minister Pridi Bhanomyong, who like Dr Puey died during a self-imposed exile in Paris; former public health minister Dr Sem Pringpuangkaew; and Pibhop Dhongchai of the Campaign for Popular Democracy. Poet laureate Angkarn Kallayanapong was the first at the podium to read his poem in dedication to Dr Puey.

Nongyao Chaiseri, former Thammasat rector, praised Dr Puey for his vision regarding human resources development and for insisting that politicians not be allowed to hold positions on the university executive board, to preserve its autonomy. But she said he was too optimistic and was wrong to believe that sincerity was all it took to reform society. Political storms during the Oct 6, 1976, bloodshed forced Dr Puey to head for England, where he lived to his last day.

Flash flood warning

People in Mae Hong Son, Chiang Mai, Tak, Kamphaeng Phet, Uthai Thani, Chainat, Suphan Buri, Kanchanaburi and Ratchaburi were yesterday told to prepare for possible flash floods.

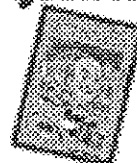
The Meteorological Department predicted heavy rains in these provinces due to strong southwest monsoon winds blowing in from the Andaman Sea and the Gulf of Thailand.

Fishermen and other seafarers were also warned to take special caution.

NEW!

Database 10 yrs

*For a
good read*



Classifieds

Jobs

Property

Entertainment

Investment

Education

Travel

Sales

Learn English



Weekly

Database

Horizons

NiteOwl

Student Weekly

Real Time

Special

We Care

NEW!

Phudhong

Foundation leper

colony

Back Issues

Date: 8/9/99

Publication: The Nation

Section: Headlines

Supporters seek honour of statesman status for Puey

THE Puey Ungphakorn Advocates Group yesterday called on the government to designate Puey a statesman.

Regarded as the father of modern Thai economics, Puey is a former governor of the Bank of Thailand and was rector of Thammasat University. He died at 83 on July 28 in a London hospital after living in exile in Britain for more than 20 years.

Anusorn Thamjai, coordinator of the Puey Ungphakorn Advocates Group, said with the death of Puey, Thailand has lost a great intellectual who devoted himself to the interest of the public. The group, for this reason, demands that the government "cherish" such a good person and designate Puey a statesman.

"The government should grab this chance by encouraging Thais to look up to Puey and become as good as Puey," said Anusorn.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister's Office Minister Khunying Supatra Masdit said Puey's ashes will arrive in Bangkok on Aug 16 at around 9 am.

Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai assigned Supatra to cooperate with the Ungphakorn family over arranging Puey's funeral.

When Puey's ashes arrive, the government will arrange a reception. Thammasat University will then arrange a funeral for the renowned economist. Supatra said the funeral will not be grand as the Ungphakorn family does not want it that way.

According to the minister, the Ungphakorns wanted the funeral to be as private as possible. However, in her opinion, Puey is a public figure. For this reason, the public would be allowed to pay respects to him for seven days. After that some of the ashes will be kept at a temple, while the rest would be scattered over the sea.

Regarding the proposal to construct a monument to Puey, Thammasat University and other concerned organisations are discussing the idea, as Puey would not have wanted anyone to build a monument in memory of him.

"We are trying to come up with other options. Actually, Thammasat University has already built a monument in honour of Acharn Puey at its Rangsit campus. Whatever we do, we'll keep the cost low as Acharn Puey would have liked it that way," said the minister.

The Nation

[Go to Nation Multimedia](#)

Copyright © 1997 Nation Multimedia Group. All rights reserved Last Updated: May 1, 1998

Date: 8/10/99**Publication: The Nation****Section: Headlines**

No official escort for Puey, says Supatra

PRIME MINISTER Chuan Leekpai yesterday joined a Buddhist service held by Bangkok's Thammasat University in memory of the late Puey Ungphakorn, a leading economist and former rector of Thammasat University, who passed away late last month.

About 500 political figures, bureaucrats, faculty members, students and members of the general public signed a condolence book, including Deputy Prime Minister Trairong Suwankhiri, New Aspiration Party Secretary general Chaturon Chaisaeng, former commerce minister Narongchai Akraseranee, and the president of the Law Society of Thailand, Sak Kawsaeng-ruang.

Puey had lived in exile in England since 1976 after political turbulence ended in the brutal attack on students at the Thammasat campus. Right-wing propaganda portrayed Puey then as a communist manipulating his students for a political purpose.

Puey still commands enormous respect among Thais, as was confirmed by the outpouring of grief and tributes following his death.

Trairong told a news conference that he was backing calls for the erection of a memorial in honour of the late thinker, nationally renowned as a finance tsar. He added that Puey should be enshrined in the Hall of Fame for his outstanding accomplishments in finance administration.

PM's Office Minister Supatra Masdit, who is to liaise on behalf of the premier with the university on the matters relating to the commemoration of the late former rector of Thammasat, said it was up to Thammasat to assess public sentiment toward Puey.

His ashes will be taken to the Chamber of the Buddha in front of the university's grand auditorium on Aug 16. Supatra said the ashes will not be led by an official cortege. Puey was cremated in England.

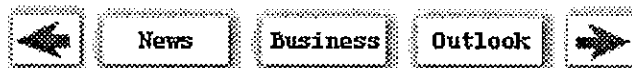
Jaturon said yesterday he supported the idea of enshrining Puey, who was also a former governor of the Bank of Thailand.

Education Minister Somsak Prissanananthakul said the erection of a memorial for Puey would be out of place, but he agreed that the school syllabus should include descriptions of the lives of the nation's great, a stance that reportedly reflects the attitude of Puey's surviving relatives.

The Nation

[Go to Nation Multimedia](#)

Copyright © 1997 Nation Multimedia Group. All rights reserved Last Updated: May 1, 1998



TRIBUTE / THE WISDOM OF DR PUEY UNGPHAKORN

On ethics in economics and management



[Current Issues in Thailand](#)



[Bangkok Post Year-end
Economic Review](#)

The following address was given by Chavalit Thanachanan to post-graduate students with the faculty of commerce and accountancy at Thammasat University on March 25, 1998.

The study of economics to which Dr Puey Ungphakorn and myself dedicated much of our lives consists of looking at all the links in the chain and figuring out how strong or weak they are, why, and what their specific impact is on economic performance. Traditionally, this has meant focusing on things like productivity, consumer behaviour, comparative advantage, the cost of money, and so on.

Economics involves motivations of profit and success, and the methods of getting there and maximising the results. Management is the set of tools by which you achieve those goals.

Dr Puey, who I had the honour of serving under at the Bank of Thailand, went a step farther. He introduced another factor as crucial to economic success or failure: ethical behaviour.

When I studied economics, ethics was not a part of the curriculum. Nor was it a common topic in courses on management. And it was not something we had on our list of duties at the Bank of Thailand.

Likewise, you will not find a chapter on ethics in most economics textbooks. It does not arise typically in the teachings of experts like the well known American economist Milton Friedman.

To Friedman, the sole duty of business is to make profits. It is up to the government to establish the ground rules, to use laws to prescribe what is ethical and what is not. Beyond those laws are economics and business.

Dr Puey had a different view.

To him, ethics is an integral part of the study of economics and management. He did not introduce ethics into these disciplines formally. Instead, he raised the issue casually, in his many lectures and speeches.

He especially reserved discussion on the role of ethics in economics and management to speeches he gave to his contemporaries in government and private business: his fellow bureaucrats, commercial bankers and even cabinet ministers.

This is how he ended a lecture on "Economics as a Branch of

NEW!

Database 10 yrs

For a
good read



Classifieds

Jobs

Property

Entertainment

Investment

Education

Travel

Sales

Learn English



Weekly

Database

Horizons

NiteOwl

Student Weekly

Real Time

Special

We Care

NEW!

Phudhong

Foundation leper colony

Back Issues



This is how he ended a lecture on "Economics as a Branch of Science" in 1962:



"We economists... not only must be learned and efficient, we must also be honest, appear to be honest, and honest enough to urge other people to be honest."

In summing up his speech with a statement on honesty, Dr Puey stressed the importance of such a seemingly unscientific factor as ethics in the science of economics.

It was not an emotional view. Dr Puey saw ethics as a rational factor in the achievement of success in business and economic management. He demonstrated its relevance to economic development, and specifically to the development of Thailand.

The topic of ethics is somewhat difficult for me. Like most people, I think, I do not have an academic, researched grasp of the subject.

We Thais also often feel ill-at-ease discussing ethics, perhaps because it is not traditionally a part of our culture to go about preaching morality. (The only people who seem to do that are those politicians most guilty of immoral behaviour.)

We consider ethical issues very personally. We leave it to individuals to judge themselves, to understand within themselves what is wrong and what is right, what is ethical and what is not. We seem to prefer to invoke the law of karma, a personal morality, rather than civil laws, in order to correct people's misguided actions.

Even respected monks simply instruct us to understand right and wrong, and act accordingly. The assumption is that when everyone begins to behave ethically, then society will benefit as a whole.

This may be true, yet we have a society that is full of unethical and immoral behaviour. And this behaviour has contributed greatly to the country's continued low level of economic development.

It is one of the causes of the continuing problems of poverty in Thailand, and it has been an important factor in the economic crisis which besets us today.

Of course there are other causes. Economic problems elsewhere affect us. Our leaders and managers have made honest errors of judgment.

But unethical behaviour has played a significant part. At the root of the meltdown in our financial system is not George Soros or the IMF, but our own mismanagement, and deeply unethical behaviour by many of the supposed leaders of our society. It is no wonder, then, that Dr Puey felt that ethics was indeed an important issue in the

Company Services

[Subscriptions](#)

[Advertising](#)

[Annual Report](#)

study of economics and management.

So what is ethical behaviour? And what is its relationship to marketing, to management, to industry and commerce, to economics, and to our country's development?

Centuries of philosophical debate have not made it any easier to answer this. One can end up splitting hairs over this case or that, trying to define the difference between right and wrong. It is an impossible task.

But we in Thailand do not need to lose ourselves splitting hairs. Thai people are not by nature immoral or unethical. I think most of us already have a well-developed sense of right and wrong.

It is a matter of common sense. If I gave you a list of basic scenarios and asked each of you which constitutes ethical behaviour and which does not, I am sure your answers would all agree.

Even our politicians can tell us that taking pay-offs is wrong, and that mis-managing public funds is both a crime and immoral. Company officials will readily agree that cheating customers is wrong and is bad business, that insider trading is unethical and illegal, that mistreating workers is bad.

Each of these conclusions is the result of a strong tradition in Thailand of moral teaching, in the family, in the temple, and in law and society. So I think it is unnecessary to try to define conclusively what constitutes ethical behaviour.

Each of us knows the basics, and the basics are what is at issue in Thailand.

The second question is, what is the relevance of ethics to our country's economic development, and to the management of government and of private enterprises?

In some areas, the answer is obvious. Corruption, the theft of public property, bank embezzlement, and so on, are all destructive when one considers the interests of the entire country. Likewise in a corporate environment such acts will damage the performance of the company. The result will be the loss of money and loss of jobs.

An equally damaging but less visible type of unethical behaviour is the non-performance of one's assigned duties. Neglect of their basic and essential duties by our civil servants and politicians has very clearly been an important cause of this current economic crisis.

The same is true in private commerce and industry. Companies as a whole suffer when managers fail to carry out their basic

responsibilities. In that sense, unethical behaviour is hardly different from incompetence: the result is the same.

It is easy to see the connection between the economy's poor performance and the suffering of our people and corruption and neglect by its managers.

However, if we as economists and managers analyse the ethics link in the chain for strength or weakness, we find the most important facet of this link is leadership and example.

Dr Puey did not make his speeches on ethics, on honesty and morality to his economics students. He made them mostly to his equals at the top levels of government. He was not afraid at all to raise the issue with Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat or Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn-neither of whom were a willing audience.

Dr Puey understood that for the country's long-term, sustainable development, the weakest link would be unethical behaviour by its leaders, both in the private and public sector. He knew that it is our leaders who should demonstrate the need for people to work honestly for the long-term benefit of our entire society. If our leaders and managers do not set an example, how can our people be expected not to behave corruptly and unethically?

Again, this assessment of the role of ethics in management and economics does not stem from our emotions. Economics aims at the long-term, sustainable development of the society as a group. Unethical behaviour is ultimately an act of destructive selfishness which impedes economic development.

Likewise, business management strives for the long-term survivability of the company and for sustainable growth. Unethical behaviour by managers defeats this purpose.

I think most of us understand this innately. But if we know this, we must ask ourselves, why does there still seem to be so much unethical and immoral behaviour in Thai society? Why is it that the everyday Thai people must continue to suffer so much due to the neglect, corruption and immorality of our leaders and managers?

This is very difficult to answer. I believe it is because we too readily accept the behaviour of our leaders, our bosses, our seniors, whether it is immoral or not. We even reward unethical behaviour. We elect unethical politicians to office time again. Managers promote staff who produce the best bottom-line results, ignoring how they may have done so. It saves money, and if it gets results; that is enough.

I think this goes back to our culture: we have an inborn, automatic respect for our leaders, our phuyai. We are unwilling to make

judgments about their behaviour, right or wrong. We make the assumption that they will correct themselves. Or, when we do feel critical of them, we readily forgive them when they perform acts of goodness, like making temple donations.

We also have seen that many people, whether in government or private business, have profited greatly from unethical and immoral behaviour. Their success, and their methods, becomes an example, and too many Thais readily follow them. The ends come to justify the means for us.

But the proof is in whether such actions achieve the country's or the company's long-term goals.

Can a company last long if its profits are built upon unethical behaviour? Will its workers continue to work honestly and diligently if the managers and owners do not? Will customers stand by a dishonest supplier? Can a country with unethical and selfish leaders be successful in economic development? If the country fails, will people continue to support such leaders? The answer to all these questions is clearly "no". Eventually, such as in the case of the current economic crisis, we have generally concluded that unethical civil servants and politicians have failed us. Now we are searching for responsible, honest, hard-working and capable people to replace them.

We study economics to understand what factors bring about successful—that is, long-term and sustainable—development. We study management to understand what factors are crucial in the long-term-sustainable-success of the company.

I think that if we keep this word, "sustainable", in mind, we can only conclude that ethical leadership is an important factor. It is not the only factor; efficiency, technology, financial skills, and so on, are also important. But ethical leadership is crucial to sustainable success. Without it, you have a very weak chain.

Whenever Dr Puey spoke in public, the bottom line of his speech was not the laws of economy or physics, or the specific methods of effective management. His main point was the ultimate need for us to pursue the collective interests of society.

He never condemned the motivation of profit that drives commerce and industry. He applauded it. But he was strongly critical when the methods to achieve profit were harmful to society. For harmful behaviour by one, can cause a snowball of harmful behaviour by all, and all will then suffer. It is not sustainable.

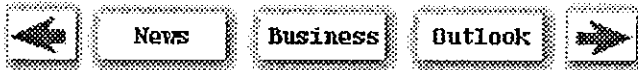
Dr Puey talked mainly of our collective interests as a society. But it should be no different in a corporate environment.

The enduring success of the company is to be found in serving the long-term interests of everyone there: the management, the shareholders, the workforce and the customers.

So we must use this approach to recognise the importance and utility of ethics in management. Unethical behaviour is ultimately destructive, even if there are short-term benefits. And the best way to foster ethical behaviour is through the example of our leaders.

As Dr Puey said in a lecture to bankers: "Good will only come out of good. To do good should not depend on other people doing good. Morality has no conditions. In the Ten Commandments there is no escape clause." Dr Puey did not need to cite ancient philosophers, or Pali scripts, to validate his assessment of ethical issues. As a true economist, a very effective manager, an inspirational teacher, and a Thai dedicated to his country, he concluded: There are very rational reasons to behave ethically. It is an important ingredient in sustainable success-of a person, of an enterprise, and of a country.

***Chavalit Thanachanan is the chairman of Bank of Asia and Post Publishing Co.



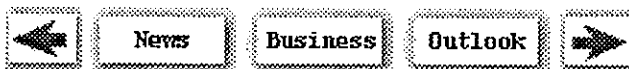
© Copyright The Post Publishing Public Co., Ltd. 1999

Last Modified: Tue, Aug 10, 1999

For comments and letters to the editor see : [notes](#)

Comments to: [Webmaster](#)

Advertising enquiries to [Internet Marketing](#)

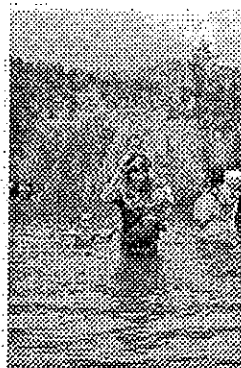


We care

Lessons in the university of life

For the last 26 years, students have been learning that there's more to a good education than sitting in a classroom-especially when it comes to developing a social conscience

Story And Pictures By Supara Janchitfah



Thai-Karen families from Ban Suan Turian wade through streams after being evicted. They were in search of food at nearby villages.

Naruemol Paiboonsithikul could have been in class preparing for her forthcoming mid-term exam. Instead, she was trekking through rough terrain to help a group of evicted forest dwellers in Prachuab Khiri Khan province-experiencing education of a different kind.

The two huge bags of rice on her back made it difficult for Ms Naruemol, a Thammasat University student, to balance as she crossed the forest streams, but she and her friends kept on.

Their destination was Ban Pah Maak, a small forest settlement in Hua Hin district. Waiting for them were some 200 Thai-Karens from Ban Suan Turian, still shocked by their eviction.

Although the Suan Turian Karens have lived in their village for generations, the military moved them on-in a mass relocation last



Current Issues in Thailand



Bangkok Post Year-end Economic Review

NEW!

Database 10 yrs

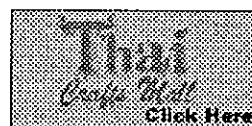
For a good read



Classifieds

Jobs
Property
Entertainment
Investment
Education
Travel
Sales

Learn English



Weekly

Database

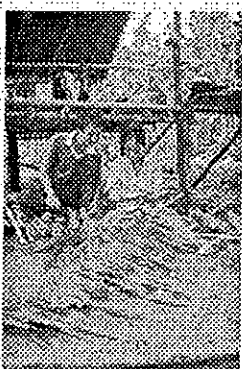
generations, the military moved them on-in a mass relocation last July. The reason given for the relocation was that the villagers threatened the well-being of the watershed area.

Regardless of the reason, the manner of the eviction was such that many might consider it a stark violation of human rights.

Because the eviction involved a minority group, it received little attention from the public. And that triggered Ms Naruemol, in her capacity as coordinator of the Natural and Environment Conservation of 16 Institutes (CNEC), to act on their behalf.

The CNEC is a student organisation established in 1973 after the hunting scandal in the Thung Yai-Naresuan Wildlife Sanctuaries became public.

Over the years, the committee has been a driving force in many campaigns aimed at stopping environmentally destructive mega-projects such as the Nam Choan Dam, the Tantalum smelting plant and the Kaeng Krung dam.



An evicted family make a roof for their new home.

The Committee initially comprised of students from four institutes, but later expanded to 16 institutions. Its mission is to raise public awareness of environmental and natural resources conservation, to stop the destruction of natural resources often caused by the state, and to promote people's participation in natural resources management.

When a problem crops up, the committee sends a study team to the area. After gathering information, they return, analyse the situation and try to contact concerned agencies to solve the problems.

In the case of the Ban Suan Turian eviction, the committee submitted a petition to Parliament's Human Rights Committee. They also contacted the army, NGOs and the media to make the issue public. They also asked concerned agencies to look into the rights of the Karens as Thai citizens.

But the immediate emergency was hunger. The shelters at Ban Pah Maak were half-finished shacks, hardly sufficient for the villagers.

The military gave nothing to help the villagers survive and officials at Sam Roi Yod district said they could not help much since the government has no budget to help uprooted forest dwellers.

For a week, the committee members carried boxes up and down the

[Database](#)
[Horizons](#)
[NiteOwl](#)
[Student Weekly](#)
[Real Time](#)



Special
[We Care](#)

NEW!
[Phudhong](#)
[Foundation leper](#)
[colony](#)

[Back Issues](#)

Company Services
[Subscriptions](#)
[Advertising](#)
[Annual Report](#)

streets around Thammasat University campus asking for donations. They collected about 2,000 baht.

"We've learned people on the streets still have a heart for the underprivileged," said Thanathorn Juerungreungkit, also a Thammasat University student.

The 2,000 baht was not enough to buy rice and medicine for the 200 evicted villagers. So the committee members dug into their own pockets, as they often do when there is an emergency.

"The evicted Karens in Ban Pah Maak now only have one meal a day. Many of them go to bed on empty stomachs. Their huts have no roofs and walls," said Mr Thanathorn.

"We don't mind sharing our own allowances to help people in misery," he said.

The evicted Suan Turian villagers have been touched by their generosity.

"We didn't know them before, but we only know they came at the right time to help us. We had no one to turn to. They helped us to stand up again," said Jamjaeng Chanoop-pathum, a Thai-Karen villager.

Since its inception, the CNEC has been a vehicle promoting a collective social conscience among university students.

"I joined the CNEC because I wanted to learn more about my own field aside from what was being taught in class," said Ms Naruemol, a fourth-year science student.

"Honestly speaking, I've learned more about biodiversity in Thai forests through my work with the Karens than in the classroom," she said.

Such work has also provided students knowledge on the workings of bureaucracy, politics, anthropology, and development.

"I also have learned that much of the people's misery is caused by the authorities' lack of systematic information, their prejudices and their use of top-down power," said Ms Naruemol.

"A case in point is the state authorities' sweeping generalisation that all forest dwellers are forest destroyers. They don't care to research into how the forest people live and how they have managed their natural resources," she said.

Moreover officials still cling to their old authoritarian ways despite

the new Constitution's demands for a respect for human rights, she added.

She pointed to the forced eviction of the Thai-Karens from Suan Turian village to Pah Maak village. The military just walked in and told the Ban Suan Turian villagers they all had to move. Only those who spoke Thai, practise Buddhism or have identity cards would be allowed to remain in Ban Pak Maak. The rest faced deportation to Burma.

Due to the state's poor system of highlanders' registration and the village's isolation, many Suan Turian villagers did not have the required ID cards, nor the special blue cards certifying them as highlanders. And so they were subject to the eviction. "This is simply unjust," said Ms Naruemol.



The Thai Karen families were forced to cut down plants at Ban Pah Maak in order to build new huts. The authorities had taken no proper measures to help them resettle.

Ban Suan Turian is a branch of Ban Prak Takhao in Hua Hin district. The old hamlet is scattered along the Talui Prakkwa stream which is the tributary of the Pran Buri River. (Talui in Karen means durian). The lush orchards in the area show the long establishment of the village.

Many factors have contributed to the Karen people not having the blue cards.

"In 1988, the officials told us to come for a meeting. Many of us did not know it was to register us and so didn't go. Some people only sent the head of their family," said Daeng Jaiyen, a 73-year-old Karen.

Mrs Orasa, 30, a Thai-Karen, was born in the village and is fluent in Thai. Yet she was also evicted. She did not attend the meeting in Ban Prak Takrao-24 kilometres away-because on that day she gave birth to her baby.

Spelling mistakes by officials has also led many Karen villagers to be evicted because their names do not match with those on their ID cards.

Some 169 Suan Turian Karens have fled into the jungle amid fears they will be pushed into Burma.

A study by Dr Pornchai Danwiwat of the Department of Treaties and Legal Affairs, says minority people have the right to a peaceful existence and identity-and the right not to be discriminated against.

In respect of these rights, different survey and registration methods should be used to accredit the citizenship of these Thai-Karen minorities, said Ms Naruemol.

Though the CNEC was set up to protect nature, the committee members quickly realised how closely the health of human societies was linked to the health of the environment.

"The indigenous Karens have been living in their forest settlements for generations. And the forest remained fertile. That in itself is evidence their existence does not harm the environment," said Thanalack Sasean, Kasetsart University student.

Unfortunately, state authorities seem blind to this fact, she said. Worse, they continue to promote the big agro-industry projects and plantations that have severely destroyed forest lands.

"From Hua Hin to Ban Pah Maak, pineapple plantations stretch to the horizon. Not long ago, the same areas were lush forests," she said.

"Who destroys the forests? I don't blame the Thais who grow the pineapples. They are just pawns of the pineapple canning factories."



Naruemol Paiboonsithikul: "The state authorities make sweeping generalisations that all forest dwellers are forest destroyers."

The CNEC is constantly busy because conflict over natural resources management has been increasingly intense in the last few years. In recent years it has been involved in campaigns for the Community Forest Bill and in protests against the construction of the Kaeng Sua Ten Dam, the Yadana gas pipeline and the nuclear power plants.

Generation after generation of students works with the CNEC, then leaves to pursue different careers-but many take with them a firm commitment to be an agent of change in their particular field of work.

Kanitha Inchukul, a journalist, said her college experience as an CNEC member has been invaluable to her understanding of the country's environmental problems which, more often than not, have been aggravated by state inertia and corruption.

And Kulthida Samapudhi, a writer on Feature Magazine, said the CNEC experience instilled in her a voice of conscience that refuses to be silenced.

Thammasat University law lecturer, Prinya Thaewanarumitkul, a former student activist, said socially-conscious university students remained a rare breed.

"While most university students are trapped in a competitive education system, the committee members have succeeded in breaking loose because they let compassion and a desire for social justice steer their conscience.

"Their work against injustice has strengthened their social conscience and that stays with them for life," he said.

"If we want to live in a compassionate society, we should support these students. We need people who are willing to lend a helping hand.

"We must realise a country which focuses only on academic excellence and material success cannot create a humane society. We need students who have a heart."

"We Care" is a weekly series honouring people who believe in giving. Apart from supporting these causes, you can also let us know about people who unselfishly help others so we can make more people aware of their efforts. Fax "We Care" on 240-3668 or call 240-3700 ext 3208 or 3212. Email can be sent to sanitsuda@bangkokpost.net.

For a comprehensive list of charities covered by Outlook's "We Care" weekly series, see the Bangkok Post Website at <http://www.bangkokpost.net/outlookwecare/>

Info for donations:

Name of organisation: Committee for Natural and Environmental Conservation of 16 Institutes (CNEC).

Contact person: Ms Naruemol Paiboonsithikul

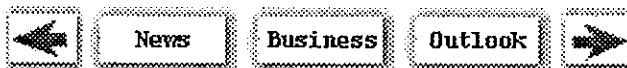
Address: 2nd Floor, Student Activities' Building, Thammasat University, Tha Phra Chan Campus, Bangkok 10200

Tel: 223-2858

Fax: 221-6111 ext 4130

Or send a cheque payable to Post Publishing Public Company Limited (For CNEC) to Mrs Kusuma Mintakhin, Editorial Manager, 136 Na Ranong Road, off Sunthorn Kosa, Klong Toey, Bangkok 10110. Her telephone number is 240-3700 ext 3224-5.

Please also include your name and address with your cheque so we



With good reason and a true heart

When Dr Puey Ungphakorn passed away last month, Thailand lost not only a competent economist, but also a man of integrity who cared deeply for the poor and underprivileged and was dedicated to rural development

Atiya Achakulwisut

'He wasn't that tall, really, and never liked getting dressed up in formal clothing, but somehow, when he was with us, we always felt he stood taller than any of us," Dr Aran Thammano, a former director general of the Fiscal Policy Office and a student of Dr Puey Ungphakorn once said of his mentor. Such a comment reveals much of Puey's stature. He was so much more than a very able and practical economist and administrator.



Dr. Puey..

"He is also a transparently honest and firm man, in a country where dishonesty is very easy and firmness usually undervalued," said Thomas Silcock describing Puey in the book, *A Siamese of All Seasons*.

As a former governor of the Bank of Thailand, it's hardly surprising Puey was widely respected. But what is unusual is the fact he was so well-loved by people from the many circles he touched. Acharn Puey, as he was known to his students and followers,

embodied the kind of integrity one might expect, but so very rarely finds, in a civil servant.



Current Issues
in Thailand



Bangkok Post Year-end
Economic Review

NEW!

Database 10 yrs

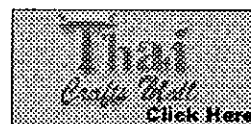
For a
good read



Classifieds

Jobs
Property
Entertainment
Investment
Education
Travel
Sales

Learn English



Weekly

Database

"We, economists in the pursuit of truth and in the practice of our science, not only must be learned and efficient. We must also be honest, appear to be honest, and honest enough to urge other people to be honest," Puey often told his colleagues.

Late last month, when the Thai sky was overcast with rain clouds, Puey, 83, passed away quietly in London where he had lived in self-imposed exile for the last two decades. As a rector of Thammasat University, a centre of political turmoil during the 1970s, Puey was forced to leave the country after the bloody upheaval on October 6, 1976. Next Monday, Puey's ashes will be returned to Thailand-his beloved motherland-the nation for which he did so much and received so little in return.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Much has been written about Puey's achievements as a central banker and his role in strengthening the Thai financial sector. Less mentioned is his pioneering role in helping the rural poor and less privileged.

Unlike many Western-educated, top-ranking economists, Puey, later in his life, rejected the idea that allowing the market to function freely would eventually see wealth trickle down to people in the lower rungs of society.

A good economy, he believed, is more than a set of impressive figures signifying a rate of growth or income. Puey's good economy meant smiling faces. For him, the economy would improve only when the quality of life improved for poor people, particularly those in rural areas who make up the majority of the population.

In his semi-autobiographical essay, Looking Back, Looking Ahead, and a lecture entitled Crisis in Thailand delivered at Stanford University, Puey said Thailand's way of development which focused narrowly on physical growth and modernisation had resulted in an impressive gross national income and growth rate in the 70s. Bangkok grew into a monstrous city while the countryside was left high and dry.

"For this, I must blame myself as one of those who devised this kind of development," Puey, who was a member of the National Economic and Social Development Board, wrote. "A child with plenty of toys will have an advantage over a child without any toys, a child born in remote rural area with a bad school and a bad teacher will not be able to compete with a more fortunate city child."

[Database](#)
[Horizons](#)
[NiteOwl](#)
[Student Weekly](#)
[Real Time](#)



Special
[We Care](#)

NEW!
[Phudhong](#)
[Foundation leper](#)
[colony](#)

[Back Issues](#)

Company Services
[Subscriptions](#)
[Advertising](#)
[Annual Report](#)

Therefore, it is not right to adhere to an ideology of efficiency and freedom with the winner taking all.

"The above is usually known as social justice and covers a far greater scope than the distribution of income or distribution of wealth, because happiness is not up to wealth alone. In a social system where a woman is at a disadvantage to a man, the system must be rectified in order to give justice in the society.

"Those who do not have the tools of trade, they must be found for him. Education, health and a job are something which must be given to every human. Poverty makes man lose his human qualities. We have the duty to help each other.

"I came to think that if there is no real grassroots development of rural areas, but only the structure and improvement of the economy alone, then we will not be able to help improve the lot of tens of millions of fellow Thais.

"Puey put his vision into action with the establishment of the Foundation for Thailand Rural Reconstruction Movement Under Royal Patronage in 1967.

He became the foundation's first chairman. The integrated rural development ideas which guided the foundation's work were developed more than 30 years ago, long before anyone talked about sustainable development. The principles, based primarily on simultaneous promotion of self-sufficiency, education, health and local organisation, still sound progressive today.

"Go to the people, live among them, learn from them, plan with them, work with them, start with what they know, build on what they have, teach by showing, learn by doing," so goes the foundation's working guide.

Puey's attempts to build a civil society from the bottom up was misinterpreted by the authorities at that time. He was suspected of being a communist and mobilising people against the government.

After the complicated political conflicts and turbulence which characterised Thai politics in the 1970s culminated in the bloodshed on October 6, 1976, Puey was forced to leave the country, and the work at the foundation. His efforts were not wasted, however. The TRRM was a fertile ground on which a new generation of dedicated development workers were born.

Many, including Ruang Suksawasdi, Bamrung Boonpanya or Phisit Charnsanoh, are now in the forefront of grassroots movements working to empower the poor.

EDUCATION

Puey stunned many people and made front page news with his attempt to resign from the prestigious governorship of the Bank of Thailand to become the Dean of Faculty of Economics at Thammasat University in the late 1960s.

For many, it did not look like a wise career move. Financially speaking, it was certainly a move down. The post of governor of the central bank carried a monthly salary of 50,000 baht, while a dean received a salary of 8,000 baht. But for Puey, money was not the only issue in the equation.

He was a firm believer in the power of education. "Education and the economy complement each other and are symbiotic. If the country's education goes well, its labour will be well trained and the economy will prosper.

The reverse is also true. "Besides, development in education is also the most effective way to distribute wealth and income. It gives each child a chance to seek knowledge and prosperity in life in a more equitable way," he wrote.

The then prime minister, Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn, persuaded Puey to hold both posts concurrently.

Before long, however, Puey resigned from the bank and served full-time as Thammasat's dean of economics, a position he held from 1964 to 1972. To expose university students to the problems ravaging Thai society, Puey initiated the Volunteer Graduate Programme, a domestic counterpart of the United States' Peace Corps.

Under the project, said to be the dearest to his heart, graduates went to live in the countryside to study people's living conditions, their strengths and weaknesses.

No matter how far the graduates went, Puey always visited them. One volunteer graduate Jumhol Vichiensilp recalled his impression of Puey. "Acharn Puey was deeply concerned with students. He visited them whenever he had free time.

The rough roads or risks involved did not stop him. He would ask about our work and well-being. He gave advice when we had problems. The students, thus, felt his fatherly warmth, which encouraged us to carry on the work." Puey tested his integrated

development approach in the field, too. In 1974, he invited Mahidol and Kasetsart university to work with Thammasat University, in the Mae Klong Basin Rural Development Project.

The cooperation enabled each university to employ their different expertise in finding the most appropriate type of development for people in this basin.

The project let students and teachers from the three institutions to get in touch with and learn from real situations in the countryside. But why did it have to be the Mae Klong river basin? In *The Un-phony Adult*: Puey Ungphakorn as I know Him, Sulak Sivaraksa wrote: "He told me the Mae Klong basin is one of our fertile lands. Even so, people deserted it to crowd the city, turning it into a slum.

If we can't solve this problem, there will be no future for our country. We have to help the countryside stand by itself instead of relying on the city." By the time Puey became Rector of Thammasat University, a position that would eventually bring him great misfortune, members of the younger generation were looking to him for inspiration.

Another leading technocrat, ML Pridiyathorn Devakula, for example, said in an interview to a local magazine, that he chose to study economics simply because he knew Puey would become dean of the faculty.

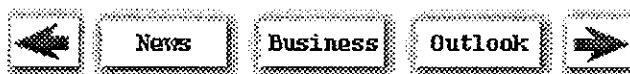
"I chose the faculty because I admired Acharn Puey. I was not at all disappointed," he said. Puey himself pinned his hopes on the new generation.

When asked once why a professional economist like himself had put so much effort into education, he said he began to doubt whether his being an honest central bank governor, making sure no public money was embezzled, was a move in the right direction.

"It is like mending a worn and torn piece of cloth. We have to keep working on it, don't we? Instead, should we start weaving a new cloth, building a whole new generation of people with quality and integrity?

" During a religious ceremony to mourn Puey at Thammasat University last week, Dr Sem Pringpuangkaew, a respected educator, noted that Acharn Puey was a true teacher whose only wish was to see his students surpass him.

There seem to be no shortage of people who would proudly claim they are Puey's students or followers. But only time will tell, whether the new generation are a solid, strong sheet of cloth into which Puey's ideals and sympathy for the poor have been woven.



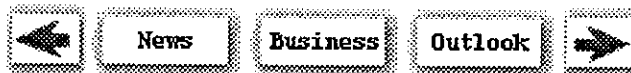
© Copyright The Post Publishing Public Co., Ltd. 1999

Last Modified: Wed, Aug 11, 1999

For comments and letters to the editor see : [notes](#)

Comments to: [Webmaster](#)

Advertisng enquiries to [Internet Marketing](#)



A supporter of democracy and social reform in every sphere

Jon Ungphakorn, Dr Puey's eldest son and director of the Aids support group, ACCESS:

'What I remember most about my father is his courage, emphasis on integrity and conviction in democracy. Many times, he stood up against people in power to fight for what he believed was right. Later in his life, he developed a clear standpoint. Father wished to see a society in which the disparity between the rich and the poor is reduced. The kind of society he described in the essay From Womb to Crematorium [which lays out the kind of social security and welfare plans that he believed people in society should be entitled to] is his dream. It has not come true, yet. Today, welfare for the poor remains a dream too far. One thing I learned from my father is to live a simple and honest life. Father was offered many powerful political posts many times. He rejected them all. Even though he was appointed to several positions, he took the salary of the one job he devoted most of his time to, even if it was lowest. At New Year, we children had to stand at the door to turn down all the gifts that people brought for Father. I can't talk about Father in separation from my mother in terms of our upbringing. In the house, my mom prevails. Father often followed what my mom planned for us. Actually, Father was less strict than my mom. My father brought democracy fully to the house. He gave us freedom to choose whatever we would love to do or to be. When I was eight years old, my parents gave me the freedom to choose which school I wanted to attend. There was one in London and another, less conventional school further away. I chose the less conventional one. As a result, my father had to buy a



Current Issues in Thailand



Bangkok Post Year-end Economic Review

NEW!

Database 10 yrs

For a good read



Classifieds

Jobs
Property
Entertainment
Investment
Education
Travel
Sales

Learn English



chose the less conventional one. As a result, my father had to buy a new house closer to the school. He had to travel for hours every day to work in London. In my memory, Father always did everything for us. He taught me homework and brought whatever information we needed for the class. He attended school's conferences and activities. He picked us up from wherever we went, even though he had a lot of work to do. Naturally, Father was sad when he could not speak after a stroke. But he adjusted himself well. He smoked a pipe. And he often had Thai classical music on in his car. The smell of pipe smoke amid the sound of Thai music still lingers in my memory. As a son, I look at my father as a good man, a role model. He was hard-working but never deprived his family of time together. I never looked at him as a hero. He was a father to me, no more, no less."

Paiboon Wattanasiritham, governor of the Government's Savings Bank and former director of TRRM (Thailand Rural Reconstruction Movement):

I did not study with Acharn Puey. But I was a scholarship student of the Bank of Thailand [an in-house human resources development programme initiated by Dr Puey during his tenure as central bank governor]. Later, I worked as a junior under his supervision. Working with Acharn Puey had a considerable influence on me. I saw how he dedicated himself to the cause of rural development, how he built a network and worked efficiently towards the ideal society he envisioned. When the TRRM was first founded, I helped a bit with fundraising. I, therefore, absorbed Acharn Puey's will to empower people. Later, when I learned that the foundation was in trouble [the government suspected it was involved with communist activities], I took the directorship. Since then, rural development has become my obligation. Acharn Puey's vision of a desirable society is imprinted in my memory. The society must be efficient enough to sustain itself. It must ensure freedom and fairness to all. Above all, it must be governed with compassion. People must help one another. His vision of Santi Prachadham (democracy governed by dhamma and peace) is still applicable today. Acharn Puey embodied the four forces according to the Buddhist philosophy: the force of wisdom, perseverance, purity and consideration for others. He was not only an ingenious and capable person, but also a very decent human being. These qualifications are hard to find in a single person. Acharn Puey had considerable compassion for people who worked under him. He helped everyone, be they a driver or janitor. He was also very considerate. I helped change the wallpaper at his home in London once. Upon learning about it, Acharn Puey, who was in Thailand at that time, wrote to thank me and sent me money to cover the cost. Acharn Puey was someone who radiated warmth and encouragement. It is hard to find someone like him. He had an influence on people without having to teach."Economist Rangsan Thanapornphan, a former student: Professor Dr Puey Ungpakorn passed away on July

Weekly

[Database](#)

[Horizons](#)

[NiteOwl](#)

[Student Weekly](#)

[Real Time](#)



Special [We Care](#)

NEW!

[Phudhong](#)

[Foundation leper colony](#)

[Back Issues](#)

Company Services

[Subscriptions](#)

[Advertising](#)

[Annual Report](#)

28, 1999, at the age of 83 years. The world has lost a great 'ordinary man', whom few can equal, and none can replace.

Acharn Puey was born, grew up, and died as an ordinary man. Yet he showed the world that such a life can also be great and beautiful, and that class, social status and privilege are not as important as the quality of a person's humanity.

In his passing, the world has lost a man who genuinely respected the dignity of his fellow beings and cared for the poor. Acharn Puey dreamed of a day when poverty would cease to exist, and everybody could live to fulfil their potential.

Acharn Puey wished for the state to support the underprivileged in such a way that those with less would receive more.

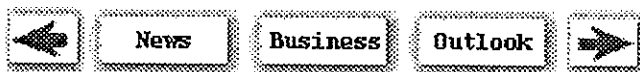
In his famous essay, *From Womb to Crematorium*, Acharn Puey expressed his wish to see the state provide maternity and child welfare, an anti-malnutrition programme, health care and social insurance scheme. Now Thailand has lost a great fighter for democracy, one who called for Santi Prachadham -democracy governed by peace and dhamma- and pushed for social reform without resorting to violence.

In Acharn Puey's views, all Thais could attain the dignity befitting humans when they jointly determined the future of their country in economic, social, and political realms. To realise such a scenario people must have fundamental rights and freedom. He often said: 'Freedom is the soil, air, and nourishment which nurture the trees of thoughts and help them grow into ideals.' The field of economics has lost a great applied economist, one who was highly adept at turning principles and theories into workable, practical policies. The Thai bureaucracy has lost an outstanding civil servant who devoted his mind and body, with sincerity and efficiency, to serve the citizens. Throughout his career in the bureaucracy, Acharn Puey was a remarkable model of integrity for others to follow. Such professionalism contributed to the reputation of the Bank of Thailand as a 'fortress of ethics and intellect'. Sadly, two decades after Acharn Puey's departure from the central bank, these reputations have evaporated. And yet, the central bank's decay only makes Acharn Puey's virtues more pronounced, as it reflects how difficult it is to preserve the integrity of a civil servant.

The field of education has lost a great educator who foresaw the importance of human resource development, and pushed for it (both in terms of schooling and health standards). Wherever he worked, at the Bank of Thailand, the Budget Bureau, the Fiscal Policy Office, or Thammasat University, Acharn Puey was involved in human resources development.

The Chinese community in Thailand lost a great 'Chinese son', who devoted himself far more than a 'native' Thai could ever dream of. Acharn Puey was too honest to himself to have his name changed into one that sounded more Thai. If Acharn Puey goes down in history, he would prefer to be recorded as a son of Chinese, with a pure Thai heart.

Acharn Puey did not seek to be anything but a good person, a good member of the world and of Thai society. Now Thailand has lost one of its best citizens, who sacrificed himself for his motherland with no wish for any reward, even a monument. "Ruang Suksawasdi, one of the first generation of staff at the TRRM: Acharn Puey was an economist who had a heart for the poor. What he set out to achieve with his many initiatives in rural communities was research and development of human resources in these rural areas. His rural development projects, be they the TRRM or Mae Klong basin programme, opened the eyes of people in academic institutes. It also created a network that linked them with those working in the field. From eight years of working with Acharn Puey (at TRRM), I observed that he wanted the poor to learn what their strengths and weaknesses were so they could get organised and expand gradually. Acharn Puey's initiatives created a large network of socially-aware graduates. His students are scattered in almost every social and development movement. His contribution to grassroots development in Thailand, therefore, is enormous. My personal impression of Acharn Puey is that he honoured people from all walks of life, regardless of their social status. He respected the opinions of everybody, including young development workers. When he visited us in the village, he would listen to the villagers with compassion. Occasionally, he would sit and talk to villagers until way past dinner time. Unlike most economists, Acharn Puey respected the local people and their wisdom. He never imposed a project on a community. Everything had to be done through consultation. In losing Acharn Puey, we have lost not only a world-class economist, but also a most insightful anthropologist and social worker ever to have been born in this land."



© Copyright The Post Publishing Public Co., Ltd. 1999

Last Modified: Wed, Aug 11, 1999

For comments and letters to the editor see : [notes](#)

Comments to: [Webmaster](#)

Advertisng enquiries to [Internet Marketing](#)



Editorial

Puey: We do well to follow his lead

Great men are few and far between. Fewer still are those who not only have the intelligence and vision to set a course for their country but also have compassion in their hearts, a character of integrity and an unyielding conviction to do the right thing by their countrymen no matter the cost to themselves.

Such a man was Puey Ungphakorn. And it is with deep sadness that the nation learned of his recent passing in London.

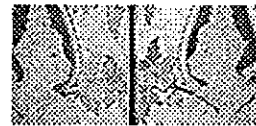
Forced into self-imposed exile by the Oct 6, 1976 student massacre at Thammasat University, where he was the rector, Archarn Puey passed away peacefully at the age of 83. His life was an illustrious and eventful one spent in the service of his country and his people during some of the most tumultuous years in Thai history.

World War Two broke out while he was studying at the London School of Economics and so he joined the Seri Thai movement, serving as a resistance leader with the British Army Pioneers Corps from 1942 to 1945. As with many of his generation whose lives were shaped by the experience of war, Archarn Puey emerged with a heightened sense of sacrifice, integrity and honesty.

These qualities were to serve him well when he returned to join the Finance Ministry, rising quickly to become deputy governor of the Bank of Thailand in 1953. But they also got him into trouble; he would not yield to the corrupt practices of the time when generals sat



Current Issues in Thailand



Bangkok Post Year-end
Economic Review

NEW!
**SEA Games news
archive!**
Database 10 yrs
Thailand Tatler
Magazine

*For a
good read*



Classifieds

Jobs
Property
Entertainment
Investment
Education
Travel
Sales

Learn English

would not yield to the corrupt practices of the time when generals sat on the boards of commercial banks and used their influence to fight off competitors and the central bank. His refusal to break the exchange regulations for one banker ended with him being forced to resign.

But it wasn't long before they realised how much he was missed and so Dr Puey became the central bank governor in 1959, a position he held until 1971. During that period he instituted reforms to government fiscal and monetary policy as well as the bureaucratic and financial system, making the Bank of Thailand one of the most respected institutions in the region. He also served as the dean of the economics faculty at Thammasat University, laying the foundations for the teaching of modern economics in Thailand.

Over the years, he became more and more convinced that corruption at the top and the failure of the economic system to channel through the country's wealth to the poor would prove to be the undoing of the country. This led to his focus on education and his reform of the curriculum and teaching methods used by the economics faculty before he became rector in 1975 of Thammasat University, taking a drop in wages from 50,000 baht a month at the central bank to 8,000 baht.

He also initiated rural development projects which required students to work with farmers, and teach as well as learn from them. He wanted them to appreciate the condition of their fellow man. "Poverty makes man lose his human qualities. We have the duty to help each other," he would tell them.

For his trouble, he was branded a communist and in the upheaval of Oct 6, 1976, Archarn Puey felt he was no longer safe living in Thailand. He fled with his English wife and their three children to London. But his concern for and involvement in the affairs of the country did not end there and he continued to take an interest in the various foundations and projects he had helped form.

Serving national and social leaders would do well to emulate his honesty, integrity, sacrifice and unwavering concern for the poor. In many ways we did not deserve such a man as this, a man who never asked for anything in return and who never complained about the way his country treated him. When his ashes finally return home to Thailand on Monday, let's accord him the same honour and love he gave the country his entire active life.



[Weekly](#)

[Database](#)

[Horizons](#)

[NiteOwl](#)

[Student Weekly](#)

[Real Time](#)

Special

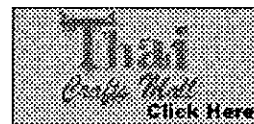
[We Care](#)

NEW!

[Phudhong](#)

[Foundation leper colony](#)

[Back Issues](#)



Company Services

[Subscriptions](#)

[Advertising](#)

[Annual Report](#)



© Copyright The Post Publishing Public Co., Ltd. 1999

Last Modified: Fri, Aug 13, 1999

**Buy & Sell
Properties**
www.mh.com

**SAHAVIRIYA
A CENTER**

**SAHAVIRIYA
MIRA**

Work Permit?

Nation Search

Nation Classifieds

Radio FM 90.5

Weekend Magazine

ดูประวัติ Ent

กรุงเทพฯธุรกิจ

เรียนรู้ตลาดปลา

ไทยฟอรั่ม

**QUICK
SEARCH**

Go

Back Issues

Go



**See if US changes
its mind this week.**

**Net Kids !
check out
Nation Junior**

**Get big
prizes!**

**Pick your
artists and
entertainers**

THE Nation

Thailand's independent
daily news

ONLINE EDITION

Aug
7,
1999

Today's headlines:

TRIBUTE TO DR PUEY UNGPHAKORN

A TRIUMPH of lies over truth in the 1970s sent an honest, capable and patriotic man into exile where he spent the rest of his life. But Puey Ungphakorn did not leave without "sowing the seeds", and as he passed away peacefully on July 28, surrounded by only the closest members of his family, some flowers of freedom have managed to blossom through rock-hard earth.



"Nothing is worse than the pollution caused by the fear of intimidation. Such fear poisons people's minds and wisdom." Dr Puey Ungphakorn

Monk doubts committee's jurisdiction

I.T. DAILY: Six models for running successful Internet business

more...

BREAKING NEWS

Updated Monday - Friday (Starting 10 am)

In Today's Nation:

Business

- » Tax breaks for capital urged
- » Low bids lead to delay in Radanasin sale
- » NESDB approves

Feature

- » Caring For Corals
- » Mountain Glory
- » TRAVEL TIP: Thai history and beauty with TAT.

more...

today

BKK 26-32 C/ 79-90

BAHT/US\$ 37.37

(Last 8/5/99)

S.E.T. 437.04 -10.0

(Last 8/6/99)

**SAKTHONG
Bangkok Bank**

**THAI CAPITAL
Management**

**Need Help?
24 hour
Call Centre**

What's New

**Nation News Update
Exclusive for The Na
Krungthep Turakij
subscribers!**

**ISPs set to offer 'virtu
private networks to fir
more**

Thai business survey

Bangkok.com

Mammoth Moth

**Nation Junior's Engl
Clinic Clinic Andrew
away for vacation. Ac
will be here to help. E
Monday from 6-7 pm.
time.**

Nation WebBoard Ch

Headlines

Sat Aug 7 01:00:38 1999

TRIBUTE TO DR PUEY UNGPHAKORN

A TRIUMPH of lies over truth in the 1970s sent an honest, capable and patriotic man into exile where he spent the rest of his life. But Puey Ungphakorn did not leave without "sowing the seeds", and as he passed away peacefully on July 28, surrounded by only the closest members of his family, some flowers of freedom have managed to blossom through rock-hard earth.

Monk doubts committee's jurisdiction

THE embattled Wat Dhammakaya abbot and his deputy yesterday failed to appear before a provincial monastic body to hear the disciplinary charges against them, consequently dragging the investigation for an unknown period of time.

I.T. DAILY: Six models for running successful Internet business

FOR those who want to start up a business on the world wide web, thinking of technology and what to sell electronically seems not enough to effectively run a business.

TRIBUTE TO DR PUEY: A honest man in a corrupt country

PUEY Ungphakorn had one great misfortune: his parents raised him to become an absolutely honest man in a chronically corrupt country, writes Ammar Siamwalla.

Brilliant economist who was an inspiration to the younger generation

PUEY Ungphakorn was a brilliant economist and a professional pillar who had inspired a younger generation of economists to pursue their profession with compassion.

Puey cremated in UK, ashes to arrive next week

DR PUEY Ungphakorn was cremated yesterday in London, where he had lived in exile for nearly 20 years until his death on July 28, his eldest son Jon Ungphakorn said.

TRIBUTE TO DR PUEY: Plea to live without fear

DR Puey Ungphakorn wrote this open letter with the intention of sending a message to dictator Thanom Kittikachorn after the latter abrogated the Constitution and ushered in oppressive rule. The letter became a resounding, leading voice for freedom.

THAI helps tour campaign take off

THE Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has come up with several attractive domestic tour packages in cooperation with Thai Airways International, hotels and tour operators, aiming to boost the "Thais tour Thailand" campaign.

Bar-code to assist collection of debts

A BAR-CODE will be put on the grade certificates of students who graduate from high schools and universities to enable effective collection of debts they owe to the government's Education Fund, after most borrowers failed to honour existing deals, Education Minister Somsak Prissanananthakul said yesterday.

Bilateral drive for tourism

THE tourism ministers of Malaysia and Thailand will hold informal talks today on bilateral marketing cooperation aimed at boosting the Asean tourism industry in the long run.

Demolition debris hurts 3

THREE people were injured yesterday after three large pieces of concrete debris plunged into their house from the seventh floor of nearby Kaew Fa Plaza Department Store, which is undergoing demolition work.

Headlines

Puey's son reflects on his life

THE best way to commemorate the death of Puey Ungphakorn is to show understanding of his life and work instead of building a personal monument, said his youngest son Giles.

In his life-long dedication to public service, Puey had left a legacy for his principle of "Santi-Prachadham" -- the peaceful struggle to build a better society and overcome dictatorship.

"I think my father's most important message is that dictatorship is evil, violence is evil," Giles said.

"His life was the struggle to create a democratic society, a just and egalitarian society," he added, calling for members of the public to emulate Puey's contributions.

As the first family member to break the silence after last week's private funeral for Puey, Giles talked with The Nation group's editor-in-chief Suthichai Yoon, reflecting on his memories of the man as a civil servant and a father.

The interview was aired last night on the News Talk programme on Channel 9.

According to Giles, the October 1976 incident was a most traumatic experience for Puey and his family.

Puey, then the rector of Thammasat University -- the seat of two democracy uprisings -- had to flee the country after an angry mob of political right-wingers had threatened to lynch him.

Giles said his father was a victim of political turbulence. Although Puey advocated the principle of non-violence and urged student activists to follow suit, the conservative forces did not hesitate to use violent measures to crush the progressive movement, resulting in bloodshed.

Despite the wild speculation in those days that Puey was a communist, his son argued that he was never a follower of such ideology, not even a leftist socialist. "My father, like economists of all stripes, believed in the

role of government as a vehicle to implement welfare for the underprivileged."

Months following the incident, Puey suffered his first stroke in 1977, impairing his ability to communicate. For more than two decades before his death, he could only express his rudimentary needs, but could not handle any sophisticated exchanges.

"My father had never complained about what happened to him personally in the October 1976 incident, and he would have probably forgiven those who treated him rudely, but I as the son could not easily forgive and forget," Giles said.

Although many still remembered the chaotic scene in which a ranking police officer assaulted Puey at Don Muang Airport before his departure, Giles commented that the incident should not be viewed as a personal issue but serve as a reminder of the evil of violence.

True to his devotion to the country, Puey wrote two articles trying to put the uprising and subsequent harsh suppression into context. If anyone would like to pay tribute to him, they should study what he thought of this uprising, Giles said.

Puey's dedication to public service was a great influence on his family. As the father, he instilled in his three sons -- Jon, Peter and Giles -- the pride to stand up and speak out for what is right, although he allowed each son to develop his own style and life's goal.

Giles speculated that as a husband, Puey probably found in his wife Margaret a soul-mate. They complemented rather than dominated one another, the son said. Margaret was a strong advocate for non-violence long before she met the young scholarship student from Thailand at the London School of Economics.

In spite of his opposition to the dictatorship which came to power, Puey decided to return to serve the country as a bureaucrat as best he could, expressing the gratitude for his education financed by the taxpayers' money.

Puey had to serve under two dictators, Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat and Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn, but he refused to bow to political pressure and declined political appointments.

He often spoke out against what he saw as the causes of the country's perils, and suffered for ruffling the feathers of the powers-that-be.

While in self-imposed exile in 1972, Puey wrote a series of open letters urging Thanom to relinquish his dictatorial power. His letters became the catalyst for the democracy movement.

In retrospect, Giles said his father could have made more contributions to the country had he not suffer the stroke two decades ago.

But Puey's accomplishments were already beyond what an ordinary man would dream of having the opportunity of achieving in a lifetime, he noted.

After Puey's death, Giles wrote to his daughter, who is in England, telling her how he remembered her grandfather as "the brave man who fears no consequences, and a warm and big-hearted father."

The Nation

Editorial & Opinion

THAI TALK: Dr Puey Ungphakorn: simply monumental

Politicians want to build monuments. Great men simply want to pass on ideas. A deep sense of guilt must have prompted a few Cabinet members to suggest that we honour the late Dr Puey Ungphakorn with a monument.

That's the easy part. Our political leaders seem reluctant to tackle the hard, and more pertinent, part of this great man's legacy: Are we really serious about honouring good people?

If the answer is yes, then treat good, honest men well when they are still alive and serving the country. Unfortunately, that doesn't seem to be the case. Public service still doesn't attract the country's best and brightest, or the most honest for that matter.

On the contrary, most Thais aspiring to make it to the top of Thai public service have somehow been convinced by their elders that while integrity may sound noble and respectable, realities dictate that they learn how to cut corners, compromise with crooks and perfect the art of "know-who" rather than "know-how".

If ever a Dr Puey monument were built, it would only serve a ceremonial purpose. Young Thais may praise his many contributions. They may remember him as a hero -- but only of his times. Indeed, our youth may not find honesty and integrity "practical values" of today's world.

And they have every reason to be cynical. Today's "successful" politicians, businessmen and even academics do not go against the currents. They don't consult their conscience. They consider honesty an old-fashioned value. To them, money has no colour. They don't get angry when corrupt officials get promoted and honest guys are punished for sticking to their principles.

A monument for Dr Puey may make some politicians feel less guilty. But if they are not careful, such a memorial could boomerang on them. After all, quite a few of them do claimed to be faithful students of Dr

Puey during their Thammasat days. But not much of the great teacher's insistence on "honesty above everything else" is in evidence in the performance of these former students who are now national political, business and academic leaders.

While these ex-students eulogise the great teacher's struggle for Thailand's democracy, we don't see them making special efforts in cleaning up politics the way Dr Puey would have been proud of. They may call themselves "faithful followers" of the former Thammasat rector's philosophy, but when was the last time they took a common position against massive corruption?

Dr Puey would have certainly frowned upon the way some of Thammasat's academics kowtow to political and business interests. He would surely have come out in the open to challenge the government's attempt to paint a distorted picture of the country's real economy, no matter who is in power. Such "professionally objective and independent" academics, even among those who call themselves "Dr Puey's true students", are few and far between today.

If they were really interested in Dr Puey's legacy, the real "monument" would be to set the historical facts about Oct 14, 1973 and Oct 6, 1976 straight. That was what Dr Puey attempted to do after he left Thailand in a hurry during the Oct 6, 1976 bloodbath.

He wrote a series of articles and gave testimony in a number of international forums. The great teacher's mission at the time was clear and simple: He wanted Thais to learn from the painful experience of dictatorship and to never again engage in violence to achieve the ambitions of certain vested interest groups. He wanted us to realise that a civil society in which honesty, integrity, accountability and transparency -- not cronyism, corruption and connections -- form the foundation of every citizen's convictions and behaviour.

If anything, Dr Puey's emphasis on simplicity in life and clarity in thought should have prevented anyone from proposing to build a monument in his memory. Oscar Wilde, the Anglo-Irish playwright and author, wrote before he died in 1900: "If a man needs an elaborate tombstone in order to remain in the memory of his country, it is clear that his living at all was an act of absolute superfluity."

Dr Puey put it even better when he wrote 20 years before his death: "When I die, just cremate me. Don't bury me. The space saved could be used productively by others."

The Great Teacher didn't leave any doubt about what his "monument" should be. Be honest to yourself. That's monumental and it's as simple as that.

BY SUTHICHA YOUN

The Nation