

MBK-002
1 February 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service
THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT : Monthly Report -- Bangkok Bureau -- January 1983

I. GENERAL

A. The always-present coup rumors in Thailand gained credibility in January due to the military establishment's inability thus far to reconvene Parliament to push through constitutional amendments which would preserve much of the military's control over the political situation. While some political leaders were engaged in a lengthy and frustrating attempt to collect enough signatures from MP's to reopen Parliament, reports were floated that Army Commander in Chief Athit Kamlang-ek had put the Army on alert on 14 January. Athit subsequently directly called for reconvening of Parliament and on 20 January made an unscheduled TV appearance -- monitored by Bangkok Bureau shortly after it started -- in which he resigned his seat in the Senate. This was shortly followed by the resignations from the Senate of nine other military leaders. An announcement was made on 31 January that the necessary number of signatures for reopening of Parliament had been registered, and political leaders were reportedly working behind the scenes to reach a compromise and tone down public polemics. However, concern continues that the spring Parliamentary elections -- which will mark the first successive elections in Thai history without an intervening coup -- could be nullified by another military takeover.

B. The bureau has been closely covering the apparent crumbling of the foundations of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's political power in India since her party's resounding defeat in three Indian State elections early this month. Since the defeat, Gandhi has temporarily given up her party position and reshuffled her Cabinet to provide at least the facade of a political cleanup of her administration and party in anticipation of elections in Delhi and strife-torn Assam.

C. Kampuchea's Prince Sihanouk made a surprise visit to Thailand 25-29 January during which he met the Thai King and other Thai and regional officials, went into Kampuchea to chair a Democratic Kampuchean coalition Cabinet meeting, entertained the local press corps with his flamboyant chatter and padded the bureau's file.

D. On 18 January the bureau covered what could be considered a typically Thai-style plane hijacking in which three men (one reportedly a disgruntled government employee) hijacked a domestic flight traveling between the northern

towns of Lampang and Chiang Mai and tried to have the plane diverted to the nearby town of Chiang Rai. The whole concept behind the hijacking raised eyebrows, as the airfare between Lampang and Chiang Mai and Lampang and Chiang Rai are comparable, and the hijacking was generally considered an updated version of a stagecoach holdup. The airplane pilot landed in Chiang Mai, and he and the copilot "fled the scene" through the cockpit window following which the hijackers commandeered a car, broke through a supposedly tight police cordon and disappeared into the hills. Two have been arrested.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. Following a worldwide alert on the anticipated fall of a nuclear-powered Cosmos 1402 satellite, the bureau sent a flash on 22 January from a normally unmonitored Colombo Radio cast on the reported grounding of a piece of the satellite in Sri Lanka and followed up on 24 January with more conclusive reports that the satellite had come down harmlessly in the Indian Ocean near Diego Garcia. On 31 January Colombo Radio announced the object of the earlier report was a flare from a fireworks display.

2. The bureau hit paydirt on the first FSL it has filed in two years -- Bangkok TV coverage of the Thai King's New Year address -- the ordering of which has prompted the bureau to regularize video monitoring procedures. The bureau has been studying the Bangkok TV 1300 GMT cast with a view to adding this program to coverage when and if monitoring arrangements can be made during this currently fully subscribed coverage period. Indications thus far are that TV does occasionally carry exclusive fileworthy material.

3. Senior Editor [redacted] began weekly review sessions on monitorial procedures/editorial style and format on 26 January. Attendance is voluntary, but nearly all monitors free to do so attended the first session which dealt with comparison FYI's. STAT

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

1. Senior Editor [redacted] was promoted to GS-12 effective 13 January. The promotion was announced at a bureau social hour in the chief's office. STAT

2. Vietnamese monitor [redacted] became the father of a boy on 9 January, and, not to be upstaged, [redacted] gave birth to their first child, a girl, on 17 January. STAT
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STAT

B. Buildings and Grounds

1. Construction of two new monitoring booths in the area once used for monitor files and duplicating equipment has been completed. The booths will be occupied by the Indonesian/Malay unit. One booth is equipped with the new MACP replacement amplifier for trial use.

2. The bureau executive offices have been reconfigured to give

more space to the deputy chief, who can now come out from behind the pillar supporting the roof.

3. The bureau's three office vehicles are being equipped with Motorola mobile communications units. When the system is fully operational the bureau will be able to contact its vehicles anywhere within the city limits and at the [redacted] remote site.

STAT

4. George Larson, Embassy security officer, visited the bureau 12 January to help with plans for installing grillwork on a security door at the bureau entrance.

IV. VISITS

A. An official from the Japanese Embassy visited on 12 January, by request of our Embassy political section, and discussed the general outlook for communications satellite technology with the bureau chief and chief engineer.

B. DAO/TLO Chief John Eastman and Deputy Chief Tom Johnson and three senior-level visitors from Washington toured the bureau on 24 January.

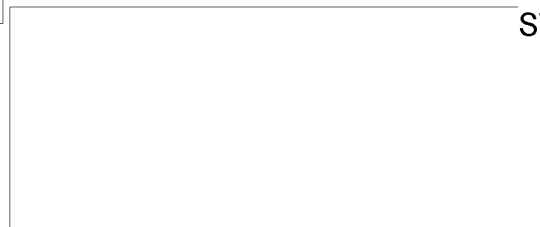
V. OTHER

[redacted] were feted at a 28 January reception by the pool at the bureau chief's apartment. Ambassador John Gunther Dean is hosting a cocktail reception for [redacted] at the Embassy residence on 12 February.

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Chief
FBIS, Bangkok Bureau

AEB:mk
Attachment:
Production Report

BANGKOK BUREAU PRODUCTION REPORT FOR JANUARY 1983

I. TOTALS FROM ALL SOURCES

TOTAL PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH:	635,020 (507,020)
TOTAL NON-PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH:	225,770 (215,270)
TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLISHABLE ITEMS FILED DURING MONTH:	1,386 (1,186)

	<u>BROADCASTS</u>	<u>PRESS AGENCIES</u>	<u>PUBLICATIONS</u>
II. <u>INPUT OF REGULAR COVERAGE:</u> (minutes or issues per week)	15,095 (15,095) min.	20,085 (20,085) min.	200.23 (200.23) issues
III. <u>OUTPUT FROM ALL SOURCES:</u> (publishable words per month)			

AFGHANISTAN

Kabul KABUL NEW TIMES in English			0 (0)
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AUSTRALIA

Melbourne Overseas Service in English	6,730 (7,740)		
Sydney THE AUSTRALIAN in English			0 (0)
Sydney THE BULLETIN in English			0 (0)
Sydney THE WEEKEND AUSTRALIAN in English			0 (0)

BANGLADESH

Dhaka Domestic Service in Bengali	0 (910)		
Dhaka Domestic Service in English	4,800 (3,600)		
Dhaka SANGBAD in Bengali			0 (0)
Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English			190 (1,010)
Dhaka Overseas Service in English			

BURMA

Rangoon Domestic Service in Burmese	4,040 (1,550)		
Rangoon BOTATAUNG in Burmese			0 (0)
Rangoon LOKTHA PYEITHU NEZIN in Burmese			0 (150)
Rangoon MYANMA ALIN in Burmese			0 (110)
Rangoon WORKING PEOPLE'S DAILY in English			0 (160)

CHINA

Beijing in Bengali to India and Pakistan	0 (0)		
Beijing in Burmese to Burma	400 (0)		
Beijing in Cambodian to Kampuchea	6,120 (8,480)		
Beijing in Hindi to South Asia	300 (0)		
Beijing in Indonesian to Indonesia	0 (0)		
Beijing in Lao to Laos	0 (490)		
Beijing in Malay to Malaysia	0 (0)		
Beijing in Thai to Thailand	0 (0)		
Beijing in Urdu to India and Pakistan	0 (0)		

	<u>BROADCASTS</u>	<u>PRESS AGENCIES</u>	<u>PUBLICATIONS</u>
<u>CLANDESTINE</u>			
(Clandestine) Voice of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian to Kampuchea	31,780 (25,260)		
(Clandestine) Voice of Malayan Democracy in Malay	4,610 (1,350)		
(Clandestine) Voice of the People of Burma in Burmese to Burma	410 (3,560)		
(Clandestine) SSPT in Thai to Thailand	13,730 (4,850)		
<u>HONG KONG</u>			
Hong Kong AFP in English		45,950 (34,270)	
<u>INDIA</u>			
Delhi General Overseas Service in English	2,030 (4,570)		
Delhi Domestic Service in English	25,380 (22,680)		
Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English		4,680 (3,010)	
Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English			7,680 (6,860)
Delhi NATIONAL HERALD in English			1,470 (0)
Delhi PATRIOT in English			2,480 (4,330)
Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English			3,440 (0)
Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA in Bengali			0 (350)
Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English			1,030 (2,560)
Madras THE HINDU in English			0 (370)
Delhi Domestic Service in Hindi	300 (0)		
<u>INDONESIA</u>			
Jakarta Domestic Service in Indonesia	10,830 (4,970)		
Jakarta ANTARA in English		4,360 (4,350)	
Jakarta KOMPAS in Indonesian			0 (0)
Jakarta THE INDONESIA TIMES in English			1,740 (0)
Jakarta OANA in English		3,630 (6,290)	
<u>KAMPUCHEA</u>			
Phnom Penh International Service in English	0 (0)		
Phnom Penh International Service in Thai	0 (0)		
Phnom Penh Domestic Service in Cambodian	32,250 (16,120)		
Phnom Penh SPK in French		38,190 (33,110)	
		0 (0)	STAT
		0 (0)	
<u>LAOS</u>			
Vientiane Domestic Service in Lao	53,640 (36,460)		
Vientiane KPL in English		15,920 (16,880)	
		0 (0)	STAT
		0 (0)	
		0 (0)	
			0 (0)

	<u>BROADCASTS</u>	<u>PRESS AGENCIES</u>	<u>PUBLICATIONS</u>
<u>MALAYSIA</u>			
Kuala Lumpur International Service in English	6,580 (8,650)		
Kuala Lumpur Domestic Service in English	1,800 (1,330)		
Kuala Lumpur Domestic Service in Malay	0 (0)		
Kuala Lumpur NEW STRAITS TIMES in English			3,180 (150)
Kuala Lumpur NEW SUNDAY TIMES in English			0 (0)
<u>NEPAL</u>			
Katmandu External Service in English	1,070 (360)		
Katmandu THE RISING NEPAL in English			0 (900)
<u>PAKISTAN</u>			
Karachi Overseas Service in Urdu	680 (1,740)		
Karachi Domestic Service in English	10,040 (6,650)		
Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu	14,360 (12,460)		
Karachi Overseas Service in English			
<u>SINGAPORE</u>			
Singapore Domestic Service in English	2,380 (890)		
Singapore THE STRAITS TIMES in English			610 (1,330)
Singapore THE SUNDAY TIMES in English			0 (0)
<u>SRI LANKA</u>			
Colombo International Service in English	860 (1,450)		
Colombo Domestic Service in English	1,040 (150)		
Colombo SUN in English			1,040 (600)
Colombo WEEKEND in English			510 (0)
Colombo Domestic Service in Hindi	280 (0)		
<u>THAILAND</u>			
Bangkok Voice of Free Asia in English	7,380 (4,660)		
Bangkok Voice of Free Asia in Thai	2,450 (3,290)		
Bangkok Domestic Service in English	3,340 (1,840)		
Bangkok Domestic Service in Thai	14,740 (6,030)		
Bangkok MATICHON in Thai			2,690 (3,810)
Bangkok MATUPHUM in Thai			2,460 (990)
Bangkok NATION REVIEW in English			44,120 (24,780)
Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English			54,220 (37,480)
Bangkok SIAM RAT in Thai			1,870 (2,510)
Bangkok SU ANAKHOT in Thai			1,450 (0)
Bangkok THAI RAT in Thai			1,950 (400)
Bangkok BANGKOK WORLD in English			3,990 (700)
Bangkok Television Service in Thai	570 (0)		
Bangkok SIAM MAI in Thai			460 (0)

	<u>BROADCASTS</u>	<u>PRESS AGENCIES</u>	<u>PUBLICATIONS</u>
<u>UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS</u>			
Moscow in			
Bengali to Bangladesh	0 (0)		
Moscow in			
Burmese to Burma	1,490 (0)		
Moscow in			
Cambodian to Kampuchea	0 (1,490)		
Moscow in			
Hindi to India	150 (1,210)		
Moscow in			
Indonesian to Indonesia	0 (0)		
Moscow in			
Lao to Laos	830 (780)		
Moscow in			
Thai to Thailand	0 (150)		
Moscow in			
Urdu to India	0 (0)		
Moscow in			
Urdu to Pakistan	0 (0)		
Moscow Radio Peace and Progress in			
Indonesian to Indonesia	0 (0)		
<u>VIETNAM</u>			
Hanoi International Service in			
Cambodian	0 (0)		
Hanoi International Service in			
English	5,260 (4,470)		
Hanoi International Service in			
Thai	2,250 (2,340)		
Hanoi Domestic Service in			
Vietnamese	70,750 (66,560)		
Hanoi VNA in			
English		1,430 (1,300)	
		0 (0)	STAT
Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in			0 (28,940)
Vietnamese			
Hanoi NHAN DAN in			36,480 (17,470)
Vietnamese			
Hanoi QUAN DOI NHAN DAN in			2,150 (1,360)
Vietnamese			

NOTE: Figures in parentheses are from preceding month