

WORLD NEWS | Fri Oct 14, 2016 | 2:46am EDT

Thailand faces uncertainty, grief without King Bhumibol

TRENDING STORIES

- 1 Thailand faces uncertainty, grief without King Bhumibol
- 2 'Absolutely false,' Trump says defiantly after women's groping allegations
- 3 U.S. military strikes Yemen after missile attacks on U.S. Navy ship
- 4 Putin ally tells Americans: vote Trump or face nuclear war
- 5 Syria's Assad says taking Aleppo from rebels key to pushing 'terrorists' back to Turkey

Thailand in mourning

01:07

By **Andrew R.C. Marshall** and **Patpicha Tanakasempipat** | BANGKOK

Thousands of weeping Thais on Friday lined the route the [body](#) of their beloved King Bhumibol Adulyadej will take to the riverside Grand Palace ahead of a funeral and a traditional royal cremation that will need months to prepare.

The world's longest-reigning monarch, who was worshipped as a father figure during his 70-year reign, died in a Bangkok hospital on Thursday. He was 88.

The king stepped in to calm crises on several occasions during his reign and many Thais worry about a future without him. The military, which took power in a 2014 coup, has for decades invoked its duty to defend the monarchy to justify its intervention in politics.

Many people sheltered beneath umbrellas on the route from the hospital to the palace or cooled themselves with fans along the narrow, sun-seared pavements.

Military government leader Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha said on Thursday security was his top priority and he ordered extra troops deployed around the country.

Security was tight on Friday in the city's old quarter of palaces, temples and ministries with soldiers at checkpoints, government offices and intersections.

The king had been in poor health for several years but his death has shocked the Southeast Asian nation of 67 million people and plunged it into grief.

Most people in the capital and in towns across the country dressed in black but shops opened for business.

The cabinet declared a government [holiday](#) for mourning but the Stock Exchange of Thailand and other financial institutions opened as normal.

PICTURES

ORDERLY SUCCESSION

The stock market's benchmark index [.SETI](#) rose at the open and was up 4 percent at 0600 GMT while the baht currency [THB=TH](#) strengthened about 1 percent against the dollar, on hopes that there would be an orderly succession. The central bank governor said there had been no abnormal speculation.

Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn is expected to be the new king but he does not command the same adoration that his father earned over a lifetime on the throne.

At the Grand Palace, thousands of mourners, some sobbing, lined up to kneel before a portrait of the king and make a ritual pouring of water as part of royal funeral rites.



People hold portraits of Thailand's late King Bhumibol Adulyadej at the Siriraj hospital in Bangkok, Thailand, October 14, 2016. REUTERS/Chaiwat Subprasom

"I still feel like I'm dreaming. I can't believe it happened," said Supawan Wongsawas, 64, a retired civil servant.

Suthad Kongyeam, 53, said it felt like losing a father.

"He was [the heart](#) of the whole country," said Suthad. "Everything is shaken. There is nothing to hold on to anymore."

Thailand has endured bomb attacks and economic worries recently while rivalry simmers between the military-led establishment and populist political forces after a decade of turmoil including two coups and deadly protests.

Military government leader Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha said on Thursday the country was in "immeasurable grief ... profound sorrow and bereavement".

He said security was his top priority and called for businesses to stay active and stock investors not to dump shares.

'DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK'

Thursday's crush of mourners in the grounds of Siriraj Hospital, where the king died, had gone by Friday, but about 100 people, most dressed in black, prayed there before a statue of the king's late mother.

"I'm scared and don't know what to think. If I go home I can't think," said Jirawat Wayaphan, 64.

The hospital was open and busy, but all visitors froze and stood at attention as the national anthem was played over loudspeakers as usual at 8 a.m.

Black-and-white footage of the king playing jazz on the saxophone has replaced regular transmissions on television channels since shortly after the king's death was announced.



Photos of the day

SPONSORED TOPICS

- [Are Robo Advisors Regulated?](#)
STOXX PULSE ONLINE
- [Robotics, Virtual Branches and Data Analytics](#)
J.P. Morgan
- [How can institutional investors can adopt SRI in their investments?](#)
STOXX PULSE ONLINE
- [Structured Retail Products Report on STOXX](#)
STOXX PULSE ONLINE
- [Asia300 - News and Analysis On Listed Philippine Companies](#)
Nikkei Asian Review

dianomi

Prayuth said Prince Vajiralongkorn wanted to grieve with the people and leave the formal succession until later, when the parliament will invite him to ascend the throne.

"Long live His Majesty the new king," Prayuth said.

RELATED COVERAGE

As Thais mourn, tourists cautioned against behaving badly

Thailand's strict lese-majeste laws have left little room for public discussion about the succession.

Thai king's death adds to uncertainty about Obama's faltering Asia pivot

The junta has promised an election next year and pushed through a constitution to ensure its oversight of civilian governments. It looks firmly in control for a royal transition.

TOURISTS ASKED TO RESPECT THAIS

grief.

Foreign embassies in Thailand advised tourists to respect the feelings of the Thai people at their time of

Tropical Thailand, with its beaches, Buddhist temples and infamous night life, expects a record 33 million tourists this year.

Most Thais have known no other monarch and King Bhumibol's picture is hung in almost every house, school and office.

Until his later years, he was featured on television almost every evening, often trudging through rain, map in hand and camera around his neck, visiting a rural development project.

His wife, Queen Sirikit, 84, has also been in poor health in recent years.

Prayuth warned against anyone taking advantage of the situation to cause trouble. Politicians from all sides will be in mourning.

Given a smooth transition, major economic disruptions are not expected, analysts and diplomats said.

(Additional reporting by Amy Sawitta Lefevre, Aukkarapon Niyomat, Andrew R.C. Marshall, Panarat Thepgumpanat, Robert Birsell, Pracha Hariraksapitak, Patpicha Tanakasempipat and Pairat Tempchairojana in Bangkok and Norma Galeana in Los Angeles; Writing by Amy Sawitta Lefevre; Editing by Robert Birsell and Raju Gopalakrishnan)

NEXT IN WORLD NEWS

Syria's Assad says taking Aleppo from rebels key to pushing 'terrorists' back to Turkey



MOSCOW/BEIRUT Syria's President Bashar al-Assad said on Friday that the Syrian army's capture of Aleppo, which has come under renewed bombardment in an effort to seize its rebel-held sector, would be "a very important springboard" to pushing "terrorists" back to Turkey.

U.S. military strikes Yemen after missile attacks on U.S. Navy ship



WASHINGTON The U.S. military launched cruise missiles on Thursday against three coastal radar sites in areas of Yemen controlled by Iran-aligned Houthi forces, after failed missile attacks this week on a U.S. Navy destroyer, U.S. officials said.

MORE FROM REUTERS

Obama smells hand, determines not a...

SPONSORED CONTENT

Trump's body language during debate

raises social media eyebrows

How Digitization is Changing the Game for Cash Management *J.P. Morgan*

Trump's missing donors: the people who...

How can institutional investors can adopt SRI in their investments? *STOXX PULSE ONLINE*

Trump adviser accuses U.S. of disregarding Russia's interests

Are Robo Advisors Regulated? *STOXX PULSE ONLINE*

Asia300 - News and Analysis On Listed Philippine Companies *Nikkei Asian Review*

Obama: 7-Eleven wouldn't hire Trump

STOXX – Best Index Provider for the Derivatives Industry 2016 *STOXX PULSE ONLINE*

Promoted by [Dianomi](#)

FROM AROUND THE WEB

Promoted by [Taboola](#)

Tiny Device Turns Old Computer into New Fast PC

Xtra-PC

Americans Shocked as Iraqi Wins US Lottery

theLotter.com

36 Incredible Military Photos

GeekVIP

Quelles sont les voitures les plus chères au monde ?

Zone-Numerique.com

U.S. Presidents Ranked from First to Worst

InsideGov – By Graphiq

The Ultimate Way to Get Cheap Hotel Rooms

Save 70

Follow Reuters:

Subscribe: [Feeds](#) | [Newsletters](#) | [Podcasts](#) | [Apps](#)

[Reuters News Agency](#) | [Brand Attribution Guidelines](#) | [Delivery Options](#)

Reuters is the news and media division of [Thomson Reuters](#). Thomson Reuters is the world's largest international multimedia news agency, providing investing news, world news, business news, technology news, headline news, small business news, news alerts, personal finance, stock market, and mutual funds information available on Reuters.com, video, mobile, and interactive television platforms. Learn more about Thomson Reuters products:

EIKON

Information, analytics and exclusive news on financial markets - delivered in an intuitive desktop and mobile interface

ELEKTRON

Everything you need to empower your workflow and enhance your enterprise data management

WORLD-CHECK

Screen for heightened risk individual and entities globally to help uncover hidden risks in business relationships and human networks

WESTLAW

Build the strongest argument relying on authoritative content, attorney-editor expertise, and industry defining technology

ONESOURCE

The most comprehensive solution to manage all your complex and ever-expanding tax and compliance needs

CHECKPOINT

The industry leader for online information for tax, accounting and finance professionals

All quotes delayed a minimum of 15 minutes. [See here for a complete list](#) of exchanges and delays.

© 2016 Reuters. All Rights Reserved. | [Site Feedback](#) | [Corrections](#) | [Advertise With Us](#) | [Advertising Guidelines](#) | [AdChoices](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)