

## Thailand's Troubled Political Situation Stabilises

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**Dec. 3, 2008** - [PRLog](#) -- The timing of the protest couldn't have been worse. With the onset of the tourist season this month and the world economic meltdown swirling Asia's way, the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) took over the international and domestic airports to force the prime minister to resign.

Today, the PAD started bidding farewell to Suvarnabhumi Airport, bringing an end to their eight-day siege that has caused incalculable damage to the country and the economy.

On December 2 the constitution court disbanded the three main coalition parties and banned their executives from the electoral process for five years. This led to the prime minister leaving office. With the PAD's "Pyrrhic victory" secured, they have today left both airports. However, Thai Airways International said it will sue the PAD for compensation, with losses of Bt20 billion during the 8-day closure of the airport.

Airports of Thailand Plc expects to reopen Suvarnabhumi Airport in a week at the earliest and two weeks at the latest, said the company's acting president Serirat Prasutanond.

Now in its third year, the PAD has been holding rallies to protest against government corruption and abuses of power, and points the finger at Mr Thaksin Shinawatra. It took a coup two years ago to ban Thaksin's government, the Thai Rak Thai party, from politics for five years. However, it was resurrected in the form of the People Power Party (PPP) which won fresh elections last December. The Thaksin government's policies of cheap health care and microcredit won strong support from rural voters. A new party, Puea Thai, has already been formed and members of the banned parties are due to migrate to it over the next week or so.

Suwannee Samrongwattana, deputy airport director, said several incoming and outgoing flights were operated by eight Thai and foreign carriers at the airport last night and officials from the airlines and the International Air Transport Association will today start checking security and other systems. An airport security team also started inspecting designated areas inside the terminal last night to ensure that all areas are safe to resume operations. AOT yesterday renewed air cargo services at Suvarnabhumi at 9am.

BBC correspondents say the airport blockade was becoming increasingly unpopular, so that Tuesday's court ruling against Mr Somchai offered a face-saving moment for the protesters to back down. On Friday it is the king's birthday and the courts moved swiftly, and for that matter the PAD, in averting any confrontation on that day.

Today, THAI also landed Flight TG2109 from Phuket. THAI said in a statement that it is considering to have more flights land at Suvarnabhumi. For more information, passengers can call 02-356-1111 or 02-545-4000 or check [www.thaiair.com](http://www.thaiair.com) or [www.thaiairways.com](http://www.thaiairways.com). Tassapon Bijleveld, chief executive officer of Thai AirAsia Co, said the airline would resume all of 108 daily flights at Suvarnabhumi Airport from December 5, 2008 onward. So, for now, tourists can safely resume their holiday bookings to Thailand.

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