

Thailand: Lese Majeste Law Gone Amuck

January 20, 2024

January 20, 2024: Bangkok, Thailand: A Thai Appeal Court has extended a man's prison sentence to a record 50 years for insulting Thailand's **King Maha Vajiralongkorn**. This is believed to be the toughest penalty ever imposed under the country's draconian Lese Majeste Law.

January 19, 2024: Thailand's **King Maha Vajiralongkorn** commuted the eight-year prison sentence of former Prime Minister **Thaksin Shinawatra** to 12 months, since the 74-year-old billionaire had '*accepted his crime and shown remorse*', the Royal Gazette journal said on Friday.



Thaksin Shinawatra

23rd Prime Minister (9th Feb 2001-19th Sep 2006), Thailand

Thailand has some of the world's strictest Lese Majeste Laws, and criticizing the king, queen, or heir apparent can lead to a 15-year prison sentence for each offense. Hundreds of people have been prosecuted in recent years under the law.

The man, **Mongkol Bas Thirakhot**, was originally sentenced in 2023 to 28 years in prison for social media posts deemed damaging to the king. “On Thursday, the **Court of Appeal in Chiang Rai** found Mongkol guilty of more violations of the Law and added 22 years to his sentence,” said **Thai Lawyers for Human Rights (TLHR)** in a statement. The Law has a unique feature, whereby for each offense, like a facebook post, considered to be an insult to the king, it imposes a minimum sentence. The Court, in fact, awarded a lighter sentence because **Thirakhot** cooperated with the Court during its proceedings.



Mongkol Bas Thirakhot, 30, an online clothes vendor and political activist

This month, a court is expected to deliver a verdict against Pita Limjaroenrat, the former opposition leader who had led the **Move Forward Party** to 151 seats in the lower house in the elections held in May 2023. He is accused of seeking to end Thailand’s constitutional democracy with the king as head of state through Move Forward’s election campaign to amend the royal defamation law.



Pita Limjaroenrat, Leader of the Move Forward Party

EDITORIAL COMMENTS: On 22nd January 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is to be the “Yajman” at the 'Pran Pratishtha' ceremony for Shri Ram Lalla' ceremony at Ayodhya, India. (A rough translation can be that PM Modi is to inaugurate the consecration ceremony of Lord Ram.) January 22, 2024 is considered to be a day of Renewal for Indian Civilization when the temple, which was destroyed in the year 1528 by a Muslim invader is being rebuilt. For more than 7,000 years, Ram has been the ideal, to be emulated by everyone and he has been considered to be the ideal ruler. There is not a village or city in India, where every year, his stories are not recited in temples and outside and where plays on his life are not enacted.

In Thailand, King Maha Vajiralongkorn calls himself as Ram X. In Thailand, www.DiGiNews360.com found highways named as Ram 1, Ram 2 etc, after the names of King Vajiralongkorn's forefathers. www.DiGiNews360.com also found that the old capital of Thailand is called Ayodhya.



King RAM X

Reign from 13th October 2016; Coronation: 4th May 2019

King Vajiralongkorn, 74, changed the Rules in 2018 to manage \$43 Bn, the Royal wealth of the Kings, directly under himself to manage and use. He has 2 elite army units in Bangkok, which report directly to him. He lives in Bavaria, Germany in a resort and he has acquired the reputation of a playboy.

*www.DiGiNews360.com calls on Prime Minister **Srettha Thavisin** to soften the Lese Majeste Law so that it permits a reasonable debate on the King, his role and how well the King is able to fulfil the expectations of the people.*

www.DiGiNews360.com also wants all the political parties to modify the constitution to ensure that the will of the people, as expressed through a General Election is not jeopardized by an upper house, packed with Military Officers, as is the case, at present.