

Friday, December 7 2012

The soul of a nation

*Reigning with righteousness for the benefit
and happiness of the Siamese People*

Few Thai faces are as well known around the world as that of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. The world's longest serving current head of state and the longest reigning monarch in Thai history, the King ascended to the throne on June 9 1946. The coronation ceremony came later on May 5 1950, where the King promising to "reign with righteousness for the benefit and happiness of the Siamese people." Having celebrated his 85th birthday on December 5, Thailand is taking advantage of the occasion to commemorate the King's lifelong contributions to nationhood and community. Throughout his reign, the King has earned the respect and loyalty of the Thai people.

Since he was crowned at the age of 22, King Bhumibol has served as the face of the nation abroad, maintaining diplomatic relationships with the international community while exerting a stabilising force at home. He has helped Thailand see its way through moments of political uncertainty, like the 1973 uprising and 1992 coup, and natural disasters, such as the 2004 tsunami in Phuket, which also claimed the life of the King's 21-year-old Thai-American grandson, Prince Poomi Jensen. Seeking democracy not intervention, the King has been on hand to guide the nation when the state machinery failed to put an end to bloodshed, throwing open the palace gates to take in street demonstrators in the 1973 uprisings, for example, when confrontations led to armed repression by the authorities, and acting as a mediator between opposing sides after the military coup some two decades later.

In the televised meeting between the opposing parties in 1993, which the King arranged, he implored the two leaders to think of the country first. "There has been an unfathomable loss of public confidence and morale, as well as of credibility in the nation's economy. Can there ever be a winner? Of course not. There will only be a loser. Each side in the confrontation is a loser," he warned.

The King has spent much of his life travelling throughout Thailand, visiting village after village, where he inquired and looked after the needs of each particular community, devising innovative solutions to their social, climatic, geographical and agricultural problems. As a result, the King, who is a globally-renowned pioneer in natural sciences, has developed over 4,000 different projects covering a broad range of areas, including agriculture, water resources, environmental conservation, occupational



promotion, public health and welfare and communication, all aimed at enhancing the quality of life of these communities.

The monarch's unique development approach was created over two phases. He developed his New Theory of Agriculture in the 1950s, whose policies sought to help farm families help themselves, and in many cases, ended up increasing family incomes by more than 10 times. After gaining more experience, the King proposed his Sufficiency Economy theory in 1974, which elevated many elements of the New Theory to the national level, serving both urban and rural needs. Tenets of the philosophy provide guidelines for people at all levels on how to conduct themselves in life, in essence adhering to the Buddhist concept of the Middle Path in that it enjoined citizens to avoid extremes, practice frugality and moderation, and avoid being lured by greed into taking big risks. Sufficiency Economy requires be-

ing constantly aware that while conditions are good today, they could change tomorrow, and a subsequent adjustment to lifestyle and spending habits. It envisages gradual development, making sure one is secure in one stage before moving on to the next.

"Development of the nation must be carried out in stages by ensuring the majority of the people have their basic necessities," the King explained. "Once a reasonably firm foundation has been laid, higher levels of economic growth and development should be promoted. If we were to concentrate only on fast economic progress without allowing the plan of operation to harmonise with the conditions of the country and people, an imbalance would be caused and may bring about failure in the end."

Although few foreign readers would have a true understanding of the reverence and deeply rooted love Thais have

for their King, the Thai monarch's contributions have been recognised in a multitude of honours, including more than 30 international awards and more than 20 honorary degrees. In 2006, the Secretary General of the United Nations awarded him the first and only United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Lifetime Achievement Award, in recognition of King Bhumibol's "dedication to developing and industriously uplifting the living conditions of Thai people all through his 60-year reign." In 2009, the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) awarded him the first WIPO Global Leaders Award in recognition of his remarkable contribution to intellectual property both as an inventor and as an active proponent of intellectual property as a tool for development.

King Bhumibol's dedication to public service is a trait that is also evident in the other members of the Thai royal family.

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**HIS MAJESTY KING
BHUMIBOL ADULYADEJ
OF THAILAND**

Queen Sirikit's interest in the welfare of Thailand's rural communities closely parallels that of the King. Her Majesty is a keen proponent of finding sources of supplementary income for farmers in the off-season, or when crops are affected by natural disasters such as droughts or floods. Queen Sirikit is also at the forefront in promoting traditional Thai arts and culture, as well as the rich and exotic beauty of Thai silk.

Although he does not hold constitutional authority, King Bhumibol has guided by moral suasion and example, through his words and his writings. Numerous NGOs and foundations have been formed in response to his example to deal with small but important elements of development. His books and articles reveal a knack for telling stories which illustrate a larger point, conveying in a few words a portrait readily accessible to a broad spectrum of the population. As a practicing Buddhist monarch (King Bhumibol was ordained as a Buddhist monk at the age of 29), he adheres to the Theravada form of Buddhism observed by 94.2 per cent of the Thai population, and his annual televised birthday address is watched by millions throughout the kingdom each year.

Speaking of the King in 1995, US Senator Max Baucus stated, "Thailand today is one of the anchors of the modern, prosperous Southeast Asia. Bangkok has become one of the world's great cities and commercial centres. Much of this extraordinary success is due to the wise guidance of King Bhumibol. The King has led by example... Together, King Bhumibol and Queen Sirikit have devoted decades to improving the lives of Thai people in rural and impoverished regions... The results are obvious."

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Queen Elizabeth II and King Bhumibol's long-standing good relations cement the solid ties shared by their two kingdoms

A lifelong friendship

The world's two longest reigning monarchies showing stronger bonds than ever

A constitutional monarchy since the promulgation of the kingdom's first constitution in 1932, the Thai monarchy today continues to gather deep, universal respect and serves as a guiding light and unifying force for the country, a focal point that brings together people from all backgrounds and shades of political thought and gives them an intense awareness of being Thai.

While King Bhumibol has done much to earn the high esteem of the Thai people during his reign, it is also rooted in national history and in the succession of impressive rulers stretching back seven centuries, who continue to serve as models for the current royal family.

In similar fashion, although his upbringing is evident in all of his acts, King Bhumibol's ideals also reflect more than 700 years of Thai history and cultural development.

The Thai monarchy is unique in that it has not lost its relevance in the contemporary world. During the first Thai kingdom, King Ramkhamhaeng carved the following on a stone: "In the fields there is rice, in the water there is fish. The faces of the people shine brightly." Many hundreds of years later, this philosophy is reflected in King Bhumibol's lifelong work to improve the living standards of the poor, to stimulate rural economies, and to encourage sustainable living throughout the country.

King Bhumibol's open style of kingship and cosmopolitan outlook can be traced back to both his great-grandfather King Mongkut and his grandfather, King Chulalongkorn. King Mongkut (Rama IV, 1851-1868), who was ordained as a Buddhist monk at the age of 20, spent 27 years as an important ecclesiastical leader. As a religious reformist, he managed to bring religion firmly into the mid-19th century and made it, once again, a vital force in Thai daily life.

King Chulalongkorn (Rama V, 1868-1910) reigned during some of the region's most tumultuous history, leaving the stage in 1910 as one of the kingdom's longest-reigning monarchs. King Chulalongkorn brought all parts of the kingdom under the central government and initiated far-reaching development projects – an interest shared by his grandson.

The Rangsit Canal project northwest of Bangkok is a perfect example of this. Crisscrossing more than 100 square kilometres of rice land with a grid of canals for irrigation and transportation, the project nearly single-handedly restored Thailand as the regional rice bowl.

It was also King Chulalongkorn who ordered that Bangkok's city walls be removed, in an act that reflected the king's desire to reach out to the rest of the world. He was the first Thai king to travel extensively on state visits, and all of his

sons were educated abroad, primarily in London. After their studies, they returned home to oversee a team of foreign advisors engaged in modernising the structure of the Thai government according to international standards.

That King Bhumibol has maintained this special relationship with Britain is evidenced by the fact that Thailand has received two official visits from Queen Elizabeth II (in February 1972 and October 1996) and addresses His Majesty King Bhumibol as her brother.

On the occasion of her second visit, King Bhumibol's 50th Jubilee, the Queen said, "We are particularly glad to visit you on Your Majesty's 50th anniversary, and to witness first hand the respect and devotion of the Thai people for the world's longest reigning monarch."

During an earlier visit to the UK by King Bhumibol and Queen Sirikit in 1960, the British monarch underscored the strong relations between the two countries.

"I am confident that throughout Your Majesty's present visit evidence of our respect and friendship for your country will be everywhere apparent and that this occasion will serve to bind still closer the ties which unite our two countries in friendship," she affirmed in a speech during a state banquet thrown in the Royal visitors' honour at Buckingham Palace.

Moved by the warm reception of Queen Elizabeth II and the British people, King Bhumibol confirmed this strong connection in his reply.

He said: "In my country, the British character has been very much admired. The sense of fair play, the sporting instinct and the unwavering fortitude – these are the qualities that attract and inspire. For this reason, my grandfather, King Chulalongkorn, chose England as the first country to send the first group of Thai students for study abroad. His choice was fully justified. These students distinguished themselves in their various fields of study; they made valuable contributions to the modernisation, progress and advancement of their country.

"Years of friendly association have created an atmosphere of mutual respect and esteem. There has been very close and beneficial co-operation."

United by the fact that they are now the longest reigning monarchs in the world, King Bhumibol and Queen Elizabeth II have also seen fit to send their children on official visits. Prince Charles and Princess Diana visited Thailand in 1988, while Prince Andrew visited in 2006, 2009 and 2012. Also this year, which marks 400 years of relations between the two countries, Princess Sirindhorn has visited the UK twice – once for the Queen's Jubilee and another trip for the opening of the Olympic Games.

THE CHAKRI DYNASTY (1782–PRESENT)



**BUDDHA YOT FA
CHULALOK**
1782-1809

Born 20 March
1737, crowned 10
June 1782, died 7
September 1809.



**BUDDHA LOET
LA NABHALAI**
1809-1824

Born 24 February
1767, crowned 7
September 1809,
died 21 July 1824.



NANG KIAO
1824-1851

Born 31 March
1788, crowned 21
July 1824, died 2
April 1851.



MONGKUT
1851-1968

Born 18 October
1804, crowned 6
April 1851, died 1
October 1868.



CHULALONGKORN
1868-1910

Born 20 September
1853, crowned
11 November
1868 and 16 November
1873, died
23 October 1910.



VAJIRAVUDH
1910-1925

Born 1 January
1881, crowned 11
November 1911,
died 25 November
1925.



PRAJADHIPOK
1925-1935

Born 8 November
1893, crowned 25
February 1926,
abdicated 2 March
1935, died 30 May
1941.



ANANDA MAHIDOL
1935-1946

Born 20 September
1925, crowned
2 March 1935,
died 9 June 1946.



**BHUMIBOL
ADULYADEJ**
1946 to date

Born 5 December
1927, crowned 5
May 1950, current
ruler of Thailand.



The late Princess Mother of Thailand

King Bhumibol's mother led an accomplished life with inspiring devotion to her children and the Thai nation

In 1913, Sangwan Talapat was just 13 years old and two years under the minimum age requirement for studying at the Siriraj School for Midwifery and Nursing. But her qualifications more than made up for her age, and the school allowed her to enrol. A scholarship student, she was required to work for the hospital for three years after her graduation in 1916. A year after joining the nursing team there, she was singled out again to further her studies in the United States, and in 1918, Sangwan Talapat joined other Thai students travelling to Boston, Massachusetts.

The Princess Mother later registered for graduate work at Simmons College, a university in the heart of Boston, in nursing and economics. She was a delicate, charming young woman who entered into college life with the eagerness and friendliness of any young student.

At the same time, Prince Mahidol of Songkhla, a member of Thai royalty, though far down the line of succession for the throne of the Thai kingdom, was reading medicine at Harvard Medical School with the idea of returning to Thailand and practice medicine in a Thai hospital. As Sangwan Talapat's wagon pulled into Boston train station on 21 September 1918, Prince Mahidol welcomed the scholarship students. Sangwan, a commoner, had no idea who Prince Mahidol was. Yet, her presence made a great impact on the young Prince.

The couple wed in 1920 and had three children: Princess Galyani Vadhana, Prince Ananda Mahidol and Prince Bhumibol Adulyadej. Like their father, the royal infants were not in direct line of succession to the throne, and no one thought at the time that 18 years later young Bhumibol would become King of Thailand.

In 1928, Prince Mahidol obtained his medical degree with cum laude, after which his young family returned to Thailand. A little later, Dr Mahidol started his residency at McCormick Hospital in Chiang Mai, in the north of the country, but died of kidney failure within a year.

The grief-stricken young mother, Sangwan took up residence in Bangkok, later moving to Switzerland, where her children continued their studies on the shores of Lac Leman in Lausanne.

The Princess Mother taught her three children in Buddhist principles. Going beyond the meek explanation of what was right and wrong, she gave them reasons with life lessons in terms that children could easily understand. She also taught them that they had a responsibility to help the poor and less fortunate. Again, it was her dual-purpose teaching of morality and rationality that is clearly visible in her son King Bhumibol's lifelong dedication to the social development of the Thai people and provinces.

Mae Fah Luang Foundation

Real socioeconomic development rooted in a firm belief in self-sufficiency and pioneering people-centric principles

In 1987, Princess Srinagarindram, the late Princess Mother, initiated the Doi Tung development project. She was a pioneer in people-centric principles and adapted post-harvest processing of farming activities to Doi Tung in order to transform the illicit opium crops of the infamous Golden Triangle into alternative crops.

At 87, she worked in a holistic and integrated manner gaining support for the project from all stakeholders: the government as well as non-governmental organisations, the private sector and local communities. The various hill tribe people, to whom she was a special patron, called her Mae Fah Luang: "Royal Mother from the Sky", or "The Heavenly Royal Mother".

The Mae Fah Luang Foundation gradually grew from these beginnings. Established to preserve the work of the Princess Mother in improving social and economic development while supporting local art and culture, the foundation went on to represent one of the world's foremost promoters of sustainable alternative livelihood development.

M.R. Disnadda Diskul, Secretary General of the Mae Fah Luang Foundation, comments, "From the 1960s to the 1990s, everyone knew about the Golden Triangle and the border between Myanmar and Laos. But who actually solved the issues there? The UN had discussions with the King, after which he initiated this development

work himself in the hills, exactly where the King's mother was, with the introduction of the substitution crop. So, the King started that, but his mother learnt from him, and she introduced substitution work. She started with the alternative livelihood development approach."

Trying to determine the skills each community had, the Princess Mother found that many women in the region were accomplished at cross stitch. Though missionaries in the past had taken the women's work to market, returning later with their earnings, the Princess Mother set up a fund so she could pay cash. The cross stitch work was then taken to Bangkok, where it was converted into placemats, cushions, blouses and so on.

"Today we have about 300 people working on the looms. The Foundation is self-sufficient too—we do not receive any money from donations. You have to operate your business in a social manner, otherwise how will you remain sustainable? The King's mother was a pioneer in social enterprise," says Mr Diskul, adding that education is also a central precept in the foundation's development work. "The Princess Mother was also involved in education, and that is what sustains the entire project and helps these communities to help themselves, which is key. Once you solve the more immediate problems, the priority is education. But health comes first, followed by food, and then education."



Chaipattana Foundation

The King's commitment to improve the quality of life of the underprivileged and the disenfranchised

After more than 30 years of the development work that would define his life, King Bhumibol founded the Chaipattana (Victory of Development) Foundation in 1988 in order to accelerate the development of rural areas by circumventing the institutional constraints of bureaucracy and budgets that he felt were delaying the implementation of projects in the country.

Chaipattana would fast become his most important foundation. Among the foundation's achievements to date are the establishment of an agricultural development centre, a type of think tank for irrigation where farmers and officials meet to plan, discuss and envision better ways of meeting the region's irrigation needs. The centre was one of the foundation's first endeavours, and was built near a temple in Saraburi province—a location that King Bhumibol felt would favour the centre's development as monks have traditionally been educators and local community leaders in Thailand. Foundation funds were also made available to Khon Kaen University for technical experiments on combating water pollution.

The foundation's emphasis on education is also evident in the interest-free loans it provides for occupational development and rural education, while its focus on innovation helped raised the monthly income of local farmers in Sakon Nakhon Province Dairy Farm Project

by six times within four years of the project's launch. In addition, an aerator invented by the king (which was patented in 1993, and which has allowed communities to clean their waterways and ensure a livable habitat for fish) is now being used in Bangkok's Dusit Zoo, Phra Mongkutklao Hospital, Wat Bovornives, Marble Temple, and within the grounds of Chitralada Villa, Dusit Palace.

Chaipattana believes that changing times also call for flexible responses. Aware that farming cannot provide all a village family needs in today's world, the foundation has worked to partially incorporate these villages into the industrial world while attempting to prevent rural depopulation. Under one Foundation project, clothing manufacturers have supplied village women with sewing machines and piecemeal work so they are able to earn an income without moving to urban areas.

King Bhumibol has summed up the foundation's approach with: "Development must take account of the physical environment, the sociological environment, and the cultural environment. By the local sociological environment, we mean certain characteristics and ways of thinking which we cannot force people to change. We can only suggest. If we go in and find out what the people really want and then fully explain how they can best achieve their aims, the principles of development can be fully applied."



Well known and respected by all

A true pioneer and visionary for the social development of the Thai kingdom, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's work and dedication have set an example for leaders around the world

QUEEN ELIZABETH II

"I welcome you as the sovereign of a friendly and allied country with which Great Britain has enjoyed close ties for many generations. The first formal treaty between our two countries was signed over 130 years ago. But the origins of the friendly relationship between us must be sought in earlier times. For it was in the 17th century that British merchants first arrived in Thailand to open up the beginnings of trade between the two countries.

"From small beginnings that trade has grown. But our links today are not confined to trade... One of the happiest aspects of the long-standing friendship between Thailand and Great Britain is to be found in the number of Your Majesty's subjects who have come here to study and whom we warmly welcome as guests to our country. It is appropriate to remember too that His Highness, the Prince of Chanthaburi, the late father of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit, was no more than 10 years ago a distinguished am-



bassador at my father's Court."
(Speech by Queen Elizabeth II at the state banquet given in honour of King Bhumibol Adulyadej and Queen Sirikit at Buckingham Palace, July 19 1960.)

KOFI ANNAN

"His Majesty's Sufficiency Economy philosophy – emphasising moderation, responsible consumption, and resilience to external shocks – is of great relevance to communities everywhere during these times of rapid globalisation. The philosophy's 'middle path' approach strongly reinforces the United Nations' own advocacy of a people-centred and sustainable path towards human development. His Majesty's development agenda and visionary thinking are an

inspiration to his subjects, and to people everywhere."
"The Sufficiency Economy is an approach to life and conduct which is applicable to every level from the individual through the family and community to the management and development of the nation. Sufficiency has the dual meaning of 'not too little' and 'not too much'. The principle of moderation or middle way is a guide for finding the right balance between internal resources and external pres-



ures, between the needs of society at the grassroots, and the imperatives of the global economy."
Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations.

DR CHIRAYU ISARANGKUN

"It is quite amazing looking back 30 or 40 years, when everyone was so happy that Thailand was making rapid growth and they were talking about the Asian tigers, and to see what the King said at that time was 'being a tiger is not very important. It is much better to have balanced growth, and that most people have enough to live and to eat.' This became known as Sufficiency Economy. But initially most people did not understand what he was getting at. So after this statement, almost 20 years passed by until the 1997 crisis. At that time, the King said, 'I have talked about this before, that being a tiger is not very important.' This is what happened in that financial crisis, out of taking too much risk, being interested only in high growth without the foundation of the economy so everyone said: 'OK, now we can really take heed of his advice.' Without the 1997 crisis, no one would have paid all that much attention to the Sufficiency Economy. After that people decided to heed His Majesty's advice."
Dr Chirayu Isarangkun Na Ayuthaya, Crown Property Bureau.



ARSA SARASIN

"I think the Queen came here twice on state visits. Whenever the Duke of York comes here, he is treated like family. They are entertained by the King and the Queen. They get on very well. He represented the Queen when we had a 60th anniversary here. The two institutions are very close. We welcome 800,000 tourists visiting from the UK each year."
"There is a close relationship between our monarchies. Both of them are the longest surviving monarchies in the world. They have probably seen the greatest success in those terms. They also face common challenges to make themselves relevant to the present day's needs. I think that sense of individuality is what makes the two institutions rather close. We are doing the same kinds of things and experiencing the same challenges. At times, we go through common crises of confidence, but we remain above it all and become success stories. This year is the Diamond Jubilee, and for us it is 65 years of reign more or less, and I think we both have bright futures under the same system, constitution and monarchy." Khun Arsa Sarasin, Principal Private Secretary to King Bhumibol.



ANAND PANYARACHUN

"The Thai monarchy is a deeply-rooted institution in Thailand, which has managed to adapt relatively well throughout the years. Even to this day, the deep respect that the Thai people have for the King and the Queen is far higher than what you might find in other countries. It is very unique and personal. It might be difficult for non-Thais to understand the depth of our feelings for the institution, which has been an integral part of our history for almost 800 years... The King unites the country and provides it with stability. His many development projects have contributed to Thailand's economic and social advancement. Apart from that, the King provides continuity. Thailand is a country that has experienced frequent changes of government so the continuity in His reign is a stabilising force in our society... The King has himself told his subjects that he is not above criticism. He believes in consulting with the people. Before implementing his development projects, he would always conduct field visits and talk to his subjects about their needs and views." Anand Panyarachun, Chairman of the Board, SCB.



M.R. DISNADDA DISKUL

"You have got to give credit to the King's mother, who was both parents to him. She used her practical wisdom and was very protective of her son. The government wanted his brother to become king, but she insisted that if one of her sons had to be king, then they had to live like ordinary persons in Switzerland and prepare to become king, before going back home. She taught her three children invaluable lessons of humanity, simplicity and the importance of listening and understanding. She gave them pocket money, which they had to save if they wanted to buy anything. The Mae Fah Luang Foundation is the her foundation. She started it. She was a hands-on person, who went out and met people in the hills [to see] how we could help."
M.R. Disnadda Diskul, Mae Fah Luang Foundation.



KAMTHON SINDHVANANDA

"Thailand's history takes root from the gathering of the population in various nearby localities that share the common spirit in the pursuit of being free into a state that shares common culture."
"Our kings are not supernatural, but process ability and prowess to forge an alliance among people that share the same spirit, customs and culture as one society under uniform rules and laws that uphold the people's pursuit of being free... Many Thais are involved in agricultural activities for their livelihood. This is fortunate, since we can then produce the necessary food to live. We do not need to possess vast mineral or petroleum resources, but need to balance and optimise on the resources that we are endowed with. Being Thai implies that we can make the best out of what we have, that is being 'sufficiency'." Privy Councillor Air Chief Marshal Kamthon Sindhvananda.



DR SUMET TANTIVEJKUL

"I met the King on my first day of work. It's a day I remember very well. He called me to the palace, and he looked at me and said, 'Thank you for volunteering to help me but I would like to tell you on the first day that I have nothing to give you except I would like to give you the happiness from helping other people.' That was his first sentence and it has stuck in my heart and my soul. The happiness that comes from helping others."
"His Majesty told me one day that he had been taxed since he was a small boy by his mother. She gave him pocket money and asked for 10 per cent to give back to the world. Nowadays, [through the foundation], he does not give money, populism is not his policy, but he gives knowledge, how to fish and so on instead of giving money to people." Dr Sumet Tantivejkul, Chaipattana Foundation.



UPPER REACH WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE PRODUCTION OF THIS REPORT:

ANAND PANYARACHUN, former Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand; **ARSA SARASIN**, former Principal Private Secretary; **DR CHIRAYU ISARANGKUN NA AYUTHAYA**, Director General of the Crown Property Bureau; **MOM RAJAWONGSE DISNADDA DISKUL**, Secretary-General of the Mae Fah Luang Foundation under Royal Patronage; **DR SUMET TANTIVEJKUL**, Secretary-General of Chaipattana Foundation under the Royal Patronage of His Majesty the King; **HE ASIF ANWAR AHMAD**, former British Ambassador to Thailand; and **HE ACM KAMTHON SINDHAVANANDA**, Privy Councillor, The Privy Council of Thailand.

THE UPCOMING PART TWO OF THIS SUPPLEMENT WILL FURTHER HIGHLIGHT HOW HIS MAJESTY KING BHUMIBOL ADULYADEJ'S PRINCIPLES, ALONG WITH THE VALUES AND CULTURE OF THE THAI NATION, ARE CONTRIBUTING TODAY TO THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY