
Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/07/03 19:08

HERE I WILL REGULARY REACT TO ASIA NEWS

To see the last post, click on END on the page line <http://www.asiaobserver.com/images/fbfiles/images/SOLDIAR111-f06cf5e1c555db3be64281858b55265a.GIF>

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/07/03 19:27

July 3, 2007

JAPAN, Shinzo Abe slow going down to Hell

After the gaffe of the Japan minister of Defence, Fumio Kyuma and his forced resignation, the Prime minister Shinzo Abe is in a more and more difficult posture before the July 29 election.

After the scandal of the loss of pension records affecting millions of cases and the suicide of the Agriculture minister, his poll rating has been a free fall to a 27 % record. To name a woman as Defence minister will not change a lot.

Even weakened, the LDP is no to losse his majority in the diet, but the political future of Shinzo Abe is more and more endangered.

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/07/04 22:13

July 4, 2007

First, I wanted to talk about the Red Mosque in Islamabad, but the case is not yet finish tonight. I will come back to this topic tomorrow. So today it will be :

ONCE MORE THE MALAYSIAN JUSTICE IS THE POLITICAL POWER'S PUPPET

Once more, Anwar Ibrahim has his case thrown out

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6268108.stm>

Anwar was the deputy of the ex-prime minister Mahathir in the running party, the UNMO, and in the government as vice-prime minister and minister of Finance. But when came the financial crisis in 1997, the two men differed on the way to solve the problem for Malaysia.

The following year, during the annual UNMO congress, a pamphlet named Fifty reasons why Anwar Ibrahim cannot be Prime minister accusing him of corruption and sodomy. Few after, in early September 2008, he has been epulsed from the government and from the UNMO.

He then launched his own party, the People's Justice Party, the first inter-racial party and reformist party in Malaysia. But he was arrested and condemned in a highly polically motivated try that provocated a lot of protest of officials in Asean and elwhere in the world.

On september 2 2004, he was cleared of sodomy charge and freed but he continues to be barred from office until 2008, after the next general election because the High Cour refused to reconsider his appel against his corruption sentence for corruption.

Despite the fact that Anwar has been cleared of sodomy in 2005, Mahathir talking on Anwar in late 2005 said "Imagine having a gay prime minister, Nobody would be safe" When Anwar filed his diffamation suit, Mahathir then submitted a petion to the High Court to prevent it from going to trial.

Today, a judge granted Mahathir that application, saying tha the former prime minister's remarks were fair comment made in the public interest !!!!

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/07/04 22:16

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/07/05 21:18

To complete what I said on July 3, 2007 on Japan's prime minister Shinzo Abe slow going down to Hell, look at Chris Hogg article on "the sinky popularity of Japan's Abe"

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6270104.stm>

... and he finely resigned on September 12

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6990519.stm>

http://www.asiasentinel.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=699&Itemid=31

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/09/12 10:11

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/09/16 23:45

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/07/09 12:18

July 9, 2007

TOWARDS THE END OF MONARCHY IN NEPAL ?

For his 60th birthday, the king Gyanendra felt very isolated. On more than 1000 guests invited, only 200 came. All the members of the government and the diplomats declined.

The very impopular king came to power in June 2001 when prince Dipendra killed his father the very loved king Birendra all almost the members of his family before killing himself.

Gyanendra, the brother of the king, was a businessman dealing mainly with largely hated India. The night of the killing neither him or his relatives were in the palace. Rumours was runing in Khatmandu that he was the one who organized the killing.

Very authoritarian, he suppressed the democracy before to be obliged to restore it under massive street demonstrations. After 10 years of civil war with 12,500 deads, the maoist guerilla signed a peace accord and, in April 2007 joined a provisional government.

The communists want the abrogation of the monarchy. The king has been striped of almost his powers, including on the Army.

Ether the new constitution will maintain the monarchy with a king with no power at all, or the proclaim the Republic.

The problem for the royalists is that Paras, the son of Gyanendra is even more hated in the country than his father.

In addition this article published on 9 september 2007

http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticleNew.asp?xfile=data/subcontinent/2007/September/subcontinent_September348.xml&ion=subcontinent&col=

http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/2004_03_05_contre_roi.jpg

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/09/10 22:16

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2008/03/03 01:25

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2008/03/04 14:47

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/07/10 09:03

July 10, 2007

HOW TO FIGHT CORRUPTION IN INDONESIA ?

Indonesia files a civil suit against former president Suharto accused of stealing US 441 million from foundation.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6283322.stm>

How to stop the running corruption in Indonesia. During the 32 years of when Suharto was in charge it got a very high level. Mrs Suharto was nickname 'Mrs 10 %'. His two successors, Habibie and Sukarnoputri made nothing to stop that.

But maybe the first question could be : Who will judge the judges ?

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/07/12 23:06

July 12, 2007

WHAT AFTER THE RED MOSQUE ?

So, the Red Mosque has been taken by the Pakistan forces.

A lot of thing have been said or written about that.

Sure, we have now wait the next revenge attacks. But the victims number has not been too high and except in the traditional islamist areas, the majority of the Pakistaneses sided with president Pervez Musharraf's decision.

What is for me an enigma is why so many girls are engaged in the radical islam. Yes, I can understand the weight of the fathers and brothers, but when we saw what the condition of women was under the Taliban in Afghanistan (and even now when they recently killed small girls going out from a school)

Is that their ideal ? to be banned from education, obliged to wear the gurga and to go outside only if accompagnied by their husband or a male member of the family.

Do they agree to be raped for the honor of a family or a clan, and also been given as the paiement of a debt ?

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/07/17 11:59

July 17, 2007

THE BUSH'S FAULT ON NORTH KOREA

At the end of the presidency of Bill Clinton, the US and NK were closed to an accord and to establish diplomatic relations, but after GW Bush has been elected, he wanted to come back to the starting point and put NK on a list of evil states.

After a grave naval incident between the two Koreas on 29 June 2002, Pyongyang for the first time since 1953

apologized for the incident and asked to resume the inter-korean dialogue.

The talks were working well and in September the border has been symbolically opened and a northern soccer team went to Seoul. Also, the Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi, on 17th September 2002, made the historic first trip of a Japanese PM to Pyongyang.

Just a month after that, on October 17, James Kelly, in charge of Asia, announced to the US Congress that NK was not playing with the rules established in October 1994 and was secretly continuing its military nuclear secret program.

So started the second nuclear crisis and five years after just one nuclear reactor has been shut down and instead of obtaining 500,000 t. of oil a year, Pyongyang in February got an amount of 1 million t.

For giving up totally its nuclear program, it is sure that NK will rise more and more demands.
http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/Image1.jpg

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/07/23 18:17

Jacques wrote:
Jacques wrote:
22 July 2007

AFTER 60 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE, INDIA CHOOSES A WOMAN AS PRESIDENT

For the 60th anniversary of its independence, India has chosen a woman as a president, Mrs Pratibha Patil.

This event has been largely praised. Certainly it is a good news in a country where the women condition is generally so bad.

But we have to revitalize the importance of that event because in India the president has just a ceremonial power. As in almost all ex British colonies, the power belongs to the Prime Minister, and this happened in India on 24 January 1966 when Indira Gandhi, the daughter of Nehru (the first Prime minister after independence) was elected PM.

And today, the more powerful woman in India is her daughter in law, Sonia Gandhi, president of the Congress Party who rules the country.
http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/Indira_Gandhi.jpg

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/07/25 00:15

24 July 2004

THE DEATH OF KING ZAHIR SHAH OF AFGHANISTAN

I have been sad to learn the death of the French educated last king of Afghanistan Zahir Shah. He did so much for his country.

He has been ousted in a coup by his cousin and Prime Minister Mohammad Daoud with the help of the People Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), in fact the communist party.

But Daoud didn't take advantage of his bad action. On 27 April 1978 PDPA did a coup against Daoud who was killed.

It was on 27 December 1979 that the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan for giving its support to Babrak Karmal, its favorite inside the Communist Party. So started the ten years occupation of Afghanistan by the Soviet. The USA helped all the ones fighting against the Soviet occupation. Among them was a certain... Ben Laden

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/2333833.stm

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/2333833.stm

Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/08/02 14:52

2 August 2007

IS MALAYSIA AN ISLAMIC COUNTRY ?

I have been very shocked to read that 2 weeks ago, the vice Prime Minister Najib Razak that "Islam is the official religion and we are an Islamic State"

First : that is wrong. Malaysia is officially a secular contry.

Second : In a country where 40 % of the population are not muslims, why to hurt or to provoke them ?

The UMNO has to remind that it is the Chinese businessmen that save Malaysia economy after the 1997-1998 crisis and also that it is their Chinese partner MCA who, in the 1999 national election saved UMNO (after the inside UNMO crisis about Anwar Ibrahim expulsion)

MCA (the Chinese party allied to UNMO) reaction has been very shy? They could pay that in the next general elections

http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/IG28Ae01.html

http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticleNew.asp?xfile=data/opinion/2007/July/opinion_July93.xml§ion=opinion&col=

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/08/02 17:10

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/08/02 17:13

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/08/02 17:20

Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/08/08 16:04

8 August 2007

So today ASEAN IS 40 YEARS OLD

Ten years ago, the anniversary was celebrated in Kuala Lumpur and the then Malaysian Prime Minister Mahammad Mahathir wanted the three missing Southeast Asia countries to join the Association for this opportunity : Mynmar, Laos and Cambodge.

In 1967, the non-aligned Burma refused to join the founding meeting by the first five members (Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines) because they were too closed with the USA. Brunei, at that time was not yet a souverain country.

In 1997, against the US and EU wish who are partners of Asean but apply sanctions against the military junta, Mynmar was invited to join, so was also Laos. Just Cambodia failed to join because a coup lead by Husen against the First Prime Minister Rannaridh. Cambodia joined two years later.

1997, has been also the year when started the financial crisis which affected so much Southeast Asia. Asean members din't try to solve the problem in concertation. It was everyone for itself and for the first time the 1976 declaration, critics where exchanged between members. The direct foreign investments in the Asean countries fled to Northeast Asia.

The problem of what Asean has to be is not really solved and the recovery of a strong economy is searched in a way called Asean + 3 (China, Korea, Japan). Another problem is the big disparities between the member-states.

Here is a non-optimist declaration by the Singaporean Prime Minister

<http://www.asianewsnet.net/news.php?aid=11501>

http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/1997.jpg

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/08/08 16:12

Re: Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/08/10 09:19

10 August 2007

Just a technical test, read below

B)

Re: Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/08/15 22:10

15 August 2007

INDIA AND PAKISTAN

These two countries, yesterday for Pakistan and today for India, have celebrated their 60 years of independence.

They had stormy relations. They knew three wars (two for Kashmir and one in 1971 when India helped Bangladesh to get its independence).

After the first two wars, Kashmir was divided in two parts, one on the Pakistan side and the other remaining to India, separated by a Line of Control. In 1989 started the Indian Kashmir uprising with the support of the Pakistan Kashmiris.

Worse, in 1998, India, immediately followed by Pakistan, tested its first nuclear bomb. The world was very worried. So, under the pressure of the USA, the two Prime Ministers, Atal Behari Vajpayee and Nawaz Sharif met in Lahore for an historic summit in February 1999. It was also the symbolic opportunity for the opening of the first bus line between the two countries.

Unfortunately, in May a short new war started because the Pakistani Army was helping the Indian Kashmiris to take and keep positions on the Indian side of the Control Line, in the Kargil area. Under the pressure of Bill Clinton, Nawaz Sharif ordered the Pakistanese to withdraw to the Pakistani side of the line. That provoked tensions between Nawaz Sharif and Army commander General Musharraf and the conclusion was the military coup of 19 October 1999.

For the US, at that time, Pakistan was the black sheep. It was responsible for the Kargil war. It was the support of the Taliban and international Islamist terrorists that had their sanctuary there. In addition, democracy had been suppressed. It's why, when Bill Clinton visited South Asia in 2000, he snubbed Pakistan.

After the Al Qaida attack against the US, George W Bush asked the cooperation of Pakistan for fighting Ben Laden and the Taliban who protected him. If Musharraf had refused, he could be considered as an accomplice of Al Qaida and also leave the way to an alliance between USA and India. The worse for Pakistan.

On July 2001, a summit between Vajpayee and Musharraf gave few results, but on 5 January 2004, at a meeting of the Saarc, India for the first time agreed to have talks on the Kashmir question. Since, the tensions between the two countries have slowed down, but with no progress.

http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/Cachemire_caricature.JPG

Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/08/17 00:35

17 August 2007

Thank you for the more than 1000 who have agreed to see my "Eye on Asia"

Today is the INDEPENDENCE DAY IN INDONESIA

Indonesia has a particular situation among the ex-colonized countries. For what I know, it is the only one country who celebrated its independence at a date that is not the one of the Independence granted by the colonial puissance. Two days after the Japanese capitulation who occupied Indonesia, Sukarno unitarely proclaimed, on 17th August 1945, the Republic of Indonesia and himself as the president. But the Dutchs wanted to recover their colony ang fought for that.

In fact, it is only, under the strong pressure of the United State, that on 2 november 1949 was signed the accord for Independence and that on 27 december that the queen Juliana officialy transfered the sovereignty to the United States of Indonesia.

http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/Indon_sie_ind_pendance.jpg

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/08/21 18:07

21 August 2007

ON THE MALDIVES AND ITS PRESIDENT

On 19 August, The Maldivians were called, by a referendum to choice between a presidential regime or a parliamentary one. Their president, Maumoon Gayoom (70 years old) was trongly supporting the first option. That the way he is leading his country for 29 years, been the most long time leader in Asia.

Since he became president in 1978, the second one after the establishing of Republic in 1968 when Ibrahim Nasir deposed the Sultan, three years after the full independance from the British, Gayoom leads his country with an iron wist. His power was just threatened by a coup attempt involving Sri Lankan mercenaries but quickly repressed by an Indian military intervention.

For the foreigners, the Maldives, with their 1200 tiny coral islands, the most of them uninhabited, is the heaven for diving and sunning. They don't see the nature of the regime. They just could be obliged to leave at the airport the non-muslim religious symbols as statues of Bouddha they purchased in Sri Lanka, the first step of their trip. They don't see how the opposition has always been repressed.

However, The Maldives, and his 300,000 inhabitants is a moderate muslim country, during the first Irak war, in 1991, he belonged to the 30 countries coalition against Sadam Hussein and he authorised the US and French military planes to refuel on his airport, a thing denied by the Sri Lankan gouvernement.

Here is the country profile of the Maldives

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/country_profiles/1166511.stm

A short history of the Maldives

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/country_profiles/1166518.stm

A 2003 profile of Maumoon Gayoom

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/3140826.stm

http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/Gayoom.jpg

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/08/21 18:08

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/08/21 18:14

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/08/28 06:23

28 August 2007

I am sorry to have not given my opinion on Asia events this last days, I was so busy preparing the new forum

"On that day" starting tomorrow.

WHAT THE NEXT TO THAILAND ?

So, after approving the new constitution, the Thailand people will, on december 23 elect a new parliament,
but what will be the change ?

Thaksin is allways strong in the countryside and specialy in the northeast of the country. His ex-Thai Rak

Thai members of the parliament will challenge again under another party name.

And what will be the Army role in the future, particulary the one of general Sonthi ?

http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/Sonthi_Boonyaratglin.jpg

Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/08/31 05:08

31 August 2007

MALAYSIA

So Malaysia is 50 years old, but what kind of country is it ?

Dispite the Malays are only 65 per cent of the population they keep for themselfe alll the polical, army and administrative power. As in islamic countries a Muslim cannot change of religion

According to the old New Economic Policy, the chinese strong minority is forbidden to have a politic role even if they are the main actors of the economic succes of that country.

Long time Dr Mahathir Prime Minister was very anti-Occident and anti-semitic oriented. His choised successor and current Prime Minister Baddawi is more flexible but Malaysia missed the opportunity to have a genuine reformist leader : Anwar Ibrahim http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/2004_09_02_Anwar.jpg

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/08/31 05:35

Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/09/01 16:45

1st September 2007

NGO ENGAGING GOVERNMENTS AGAINTS THEIR WILL

At last, the South Korean hostages in Afghanistan have been freed except two males who have been killed by the Taleban.

But, for their freedom, Seoul has been obliged to declare the withdraw of its soldier from Afghanistan before the end of the year and probably to pay a 2 million USD ransom, plus the diplomatic raw with the Afghan government.

NGO have to be aware that by sending member in risky areas, they endanger the life of their volunteers, but they could also involve their country authorities

It is specially criminal to send christian oriented NGO members in countries where there are islamist insurgents, they automatically become the main target of this insurgents.

Here two other comments

http://www.eitb24.com/noticia/en/B24_63732

<http://www.asianewsnet.net/editorial.php?aid=11993>

http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/South_Korean_hostages_freed.jpg

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/09/01 16:47

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/09/01 16:57

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/09/02 10:38

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/09/02 11:57

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/09/02 23:30

3 september 2007

ON CHINA MILITARY EXPENDITURES TRANSPARENCY

So, China has announced that she will take steps to increase the transparency of its military expenditures and its arm sales by reporting to the United Nations.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6974797.stm>

But, for all the Asia defence watchers China usually official defence expenditures are between 2 and more generally 3 times more than the official claim.

Can we think that with UN China will be more honest than before ?

http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/APL_garde.jpg

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/09/08 06:37

7 SEPTEMBER 2007

THE STRANGE CHINA-PHILIPPINES MILITARY COOPERATION

On September 3, Caroline shared one article

<http://e.sinchew-i.com/content.phtml?sec=2&artid=200709030008&sdate=>

In that article, it is said that China is Beijing to give USD 6.6 million grant to Philippine military and that exchange of military students was on discussion after a five day goodwill visit by the Chinese Defense minister Cao Gangchuan.

That is a funny thing. For what that money ? The Philippines military have two kinds of problems :

- 1) To keep the Philippines sovereignty, and the main is with China in the Spratly island
- 2) To fight the inside insurrections and one of the main ones is the communist one.

On April 1967 (At the peak of China Cultural Revolution), the maoist Jose Maria Sison was expelled from the pro-Moscow PKP (Partido Komunista ng Filipinas) and on December 26, 1968 (the Mao 75th birthday) founded (he said

restored) the Communist Party of Philippines (CCP) based on the Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong Thought.

On 1969, to follow the Mao strategy of a protracted people based on peasantry, he founded the NPA (New People Army), maoist oriented, but independent from Beijing, always very active in the Philippines even weakened by splits after Cory Aquino restored democracy (I met JMS at that time of truce)

Two points :

- 1) At the difference of other southeast Asia insurgencies, the NPA was independent from Beijing
- 2) Following Cao visit, is it a link ? on September 5 2007, President Macapagal-Arroyo signed amnesty proclamation 1377 for the CCP and NPA members for crimes committed on political beliefs.

Here a recent picture of Jose Maria Sison in the Netherland where he took refuge

http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/Jose_Maria_Sison_2.jpg

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/09/08 06:42

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/09/08 10:10

Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/09/11 05:31

11 september 2007

THE US-KOREA RELATIONS ARE WORSENING

The meeting between presidents Bush and Roh in marge of Apec summit in Australia show how two historic friends are separating.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6982820.stm>

During his early political life, the current president of South Korea, Roh Moo-Hyun was an anti-US activist. When he became the president of his country he softened his position but he was not the one the US hoped as chief of state.

The main problem between Roh and Bush is what attitude to have towards North Korea. Contrary to the US position, in spite of the provocative attitude of Pyongyang, Roh Moo-hyun, as his predecessor Kim Dae-jung, is for a soft approach. It is because he did not see an anti-US Seoul as the second nation militarily involved with the US in Iraq after UK

Two things are irritating for the US authorities

- 1) Seoul accepted the Taleban conditions to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan
- 2) The coming second inter-korean summit starting on 2 October. The US are afraid that Roh Moo-hyun could give a lot to Pyongyang without anything in exchange from the North.

With the coming presidential elections in the two countries, we could see a more US democrat president and a more hardline one in South Korea

PS : In addition, see this article published on 14th September in Asia Time
<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Korea/1115Dg01.html>

http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/USA_2007_09_07.jpg

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/09/17 00:02

Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/09/12 22:50

12 SEPTEMBER 2007

EX-PHILIPPINES PRESIDENT ESTRADA JAILED FOR LIFE

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6989998.stm>

So, finally Joseph Esercito Estrada has been found guilty of corruption and jailed for life. Born in 1937, he was president of the Philippines from 30 June 1998 to 20 January 2001.

His real name was Ejercito, but he adopted the name of Estrada and as a popular movies actor actor he was nicknamed Erap.

In the 1992 presidential elections, he was elected as vice-president and in 1998, he played a campaign "Erap for the poor" and became president on June 1998.

In a country where a small number of lordlands have the high hand on politics, with the poor people left aside, he was the hope of million of peoples.

It is sad, that he just take advantage of his new position only for himself and his closed friends with who he was womanizing, drinking and gambling.

Betrayed by one of his ex-accomplice who revealed that he was getting payoff from illegal gambling profits, the House of Representative, in November 13, 2000 voted his impeachment, but the Senate where his friends were in majority refused to look at the proof. Finally, on January 19, 2001, the Armed forces withdraw its support and the following day the Supreme Court declare the seat of presidency vacant.

What need the "Masa" is a genuine political and honest man, not a popular artist. Imelda Marcos was a Miss Philippines.

http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/Estrada_Zamora-f68695caeeaeab9bf1b4fda6908ba58c.JPG

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Re: Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/09/13 16:08

13 SEPTEMBER 2007

AFTER ERAPS, WHO WILL BE THE NEXT ?

When Gloria Arroyo succeeded to Joseph Estrada, I was very happy.

She was petite with a husky voice as I like :P Look at her picture at that time. I fell in love (but since I change for Linsy :kiss:)

She was an economist, so a long time, I thought that she was the good person to save the Philippines from poverty.

She disappointed so many peoples, not only in her country, but in all the world, including me :sick:

The Eraps condemnation is maybe not a good news for her

http://www.asiasentinel.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=696&Itemid=31
http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/Arroyo_1.jpg

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/09/13 16:09

Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by linsi - 2007/09/13 17:04

http://i95.photobucket.com/albums/l125/penthium_seven/122811_1.gif

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/09/18 02:34

18 SEPTEMBER 2007

WHAT COULD THREAT THE BURMA MILITARY JUNTA ?

Even if, on September 3, the military junta put an end to the National Conference who since 14 years was supposed writing a new constitution maintaining the power of the Military and putting aside the leader of NLD Ang San Suu Kyi, the main threat for it is not the last month doubled fuel price increase and the following demonstrations, often politically oriented, but the involvement of the Buddhist monks in the demonstrations against the military government.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6975631.stm>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6999357.stm>

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/09/18 02:35

18 SEPTEMBER 2007

WHAT COULD THREAT THE BURMA MILITARY JUNTA ?

Even if, on September 3, the military junta put an end to the National Conference who since 14 years was supposed writing a new constitution maintaining the power of the Military and putting aside the leader of NLD Aung San Suu Kyi, the main threat for it is not the last month doubled fuel price increase and the following demonstrations, often politically oriented, but the involvement of the Buddhist monks in the demonstrations against the military government.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6975631.stm>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6999357.stm>

And in addition :

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7002732.stm>

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/09/18 02:41

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/09/19 21:01

http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/2007_09_19_monks_demonstration.jpg

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/09/19 21:09

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/09/26 22:40

26 SEPTEMBER 2007

BURMA CRACKDOWN

As I told in another forum, I am very afraid of what the Junta could react. Now they are firing to the monks and pacific demonstating people.

There was nothing else to expect from them. They crushed the 1988 demonstrations. they refused to ackwnnowledge the result of the elections they have organized.

Why expecting a more soft attitude this time ? they are challenging all the world democracies for almost 20 years with no bad concequences for them.

In Asia, they have the support of China and Singapore for economic reasons and I am always waiting for an Thailand and Asean reaction.

For me, for the monks, the most efficient move could be, not to be killed in the streets but to refuse the religious ceremonies for soldiers and for all to the Burma population to start an non-cooperation with the military

That have worked with Gandhi

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/09/26 22:42

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/09/28 15:36

28 SEPTEMBER 2007

The Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN, expressed in an unusual strongly-worded comdamnation od a fellow member.

On the sidelines of UN General Assembly, the nine (on ten) foreign ministers od ASEAN have expressed revultion at the violent crackdown on anti-government protestors in Burma.

It was a tradition, since 1976, of no comment about internal affairs, even if there have someones during the 1997-1998 financial crisis.

Maybe it could be a good sign form the new ASEAN Chart to be approved at the next ASEAN summit on next November and supposed to include democracy as a principle for membership.

<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/CB8D900A-6EFE-4963-843E-4BE73F8B80C3.htm>

http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/2007_09_28_r_pression.jpg

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/09/28 15:38

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/10/04 00:10

3 OCTOBER 2007

So, on October 1, general Sonthi has resigned from his position of leader of the Thailand Defense National Council, as the military junta decided to be call after the 2006, 19 military coup want to be called.

That's only meansz that one more time a retired Thailand general officer will enter in politics.

Is his purpose to confront the Thaksin remained strong influence in Northen Thailand or to become a new political army oriented leader as Thailand knew a lot ?

What to think about his assignment as the the deputy of the Prime minister he chosed as the boss ?

<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/E946ABB0-5A54-444D-997C-D776866F5BCC.htm>

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/10/04 00:11

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/10/04 00:57

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/10/09 22:17

9 OCTOBER 2007

to see my last post, click on End on the page line

So, general Musharraf has been easily reelected by an restricted numbers of personns. But the problem is what is the next.

His party will probabely lose a lot of seat in the next assembly and he need an arrangement with the Benazir Bhutto PPP

But who will be the boss ? It is sure that by promoting recently closed allies at the top positions in the armed forces, he will keep his hand on the military.

But following the Pakistanese constitution, currently suspended since 1989, the political power boss of the country is the Prime minister.

Why to deny Sharif to return to Pakistan if it is for opening the way to Benazir Bhutto who has been twice dismissed for corruption including by a president belonging to her own party ?

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/10/12 22:48

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/10/13 21:29

13 OCTOBER 2007

ALL THAT FOR THAT ?

Last September, the Thai military took the power in a bloodless coup with the non-official approval of the Throne. It was supported in urban areas, but not by the countryside for which Thaksin did a lot.

The Army commander, general Sonthi is a muslim and was supposed to solve the southern Muslim insurrection. Nothing happened.

He was supposed to prove that Thaksin Shinawatra was corrupt. Very few has been provide justifying a coup d'état.

Worse, the current Prime Minister, the very respected retired general Surayud Chulanont, is himself accused of illegally acquiring land by the military established National Legislative Assembly.

All that makes the game for Thaksin whose partisans will challenge the upcoming elections under the People's Power Party (PPP) after his Thai Rak Thai party has been forbidden.

Do we return to the 18 september 1999 situation after the 23 December elections ?

Http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/IJ13Ae03.html

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/10/13 21:30

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/10/16 00:42

15 OCTOBER 2007

HOW TO FORCE THE BURMANESE JUNTA TO GIVE IN ?

Because of the opposition of Russia, and mainly to China, the United Nations in lieu of condemning the military junta crackdown, just "strongly" deplored it.

On 15 October, the European Union has imposed an import embargo on timber, gems and precious metal from Burma.

If more countries were effectively doing that, first US, Japan and mainly Asean partners, it could be efficient

But some countries are officially condemning, but in fact don't restrict their business activities, such as Singapore.

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/10/16 00:44

Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/10/21 02:07

ON THE LESE MAJESTE IN THAILAND

Thailand has some of the most severe lese majeste laws in the world.

But, often, the government used it against opponents or newspapers which criticized him. One of the best example is the Thaksin action against the very respected Far Eastern Economic Review.

The king himself is worry of the abuses under his name. For instance, in his annual birthday speech in 2005, he has indicated that lese majeste laws put him in a tough spot.

http://www.asiasentinel.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=757&Itemid=31

Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/10/24 16:52

24 OCTOBER 2007

HU JINTAO SUCCESSION

The list of the politburo standing committee, the only one giving a hierarchy order in the CCP show that, finely, Xi Jinping, the new boss of Shanghai, beat out the protégé of Hu Jintao. That show that Hu Jintao has not yet a free hand on the CCP.

He has been obliged to compromise with the Jiang Zemin Shanghai faction : the retirement of Zen Qinghong in exchange of Xi Jinping promotion. When somebody is in the SCPB, he normally never be downgrade.

That means that normally, Xi will be the next general secretary of the CCP. But, in fact, for Hu, Xi is not an unsuitable person. They together came from the Communist Youth League.

One thing, very expected fact is sure : Wen Jiabao will be reelected as Prime Minister, next year in March.

Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/11/02 01:53

2 NOVEMBER 2007

MUSHARRAF DILEMMA

On one side, general Musharraf is criticized by the US for not doing enough in the fight against al-Qaeda and the Taleban

One the other side, almost the entire North West Frontier Province and Federallly Administred Tribal Areas have revolted against the state of Pakistan inn favor of the Taliban

It is not the interest of the US to press him too much because if he resigns it his not Benazir Buttho who could give them a more support against the Taliban.

It is under her government that this islamist movement has been created with the help of Pakistan intelligence services

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/11/10 17:19

10 NOVEMBER 2007

WHAT IS MUSHARRAF STRATEGY ?

I really don't understand what game is playing General Musharraf.

On 18th September he announced that if he was elected president, he would resign as army commander. But going to the election as an active officer is against the constitution.

The presidential election system is so that in any case he was sure to be reelected with zero risk.

So, after naming his military closed allies to the key posts in the Forces, why he did not resigned just before the 6 October presidential election ?

Yesterday, he made the same mistake, repeating that he will resign from Army if confirmed as reelected president.

But how can the new Supreme Court, named by him, decide against the constitution ? He has to resign before it give its decision.

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/11/10 17:22

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/11/18 21:58

18 NOVEMBER 2007

ON CHINA DEMAND TO THE US TO STOP ARMS SALES AND MILITARY COOPERATION WITH TAIWAN

On 13th November 2007, China urged USA to stop arms sale to Taiwan and any military cooperation with Taipei after the announcement of planning to sell 3 sets of Patriot II anti-missile equipment upgrade system.

After the Tian'anmen massacre, western nations took sanctions against China and had a more opened mind towards Taiwan. In these circonstances, France, for the first time dared to sale some navy ships and 60 Mirage 2000 to Taiwan.

China strongly reacted and closed the new established French general consulate in Guangzhou and did nothing against the same time announcement of US sale of 150 F-16 to Taiwan.

So why a such different attitude ? I remember well because I was involved in that clash.

When on January 1st 1979, USA and China established formal diplomatic relations, it was decided that the US troops would leave the Taiwan territory in on eyear but that USA could continue to sail arms to Taiwan.

In a 1982 common declaration, USA was supposed to slowdown its sales to Taiwan in quantity and with no upgrated ones, that US never did.

The interest of the 13 November 2007 demand is that for the first time, China want a full halt to any sale and cooperation

<http://www.asianewsnet.net/news.php?aid=13377>

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/12/01 16:48

1 DECEMBER 2007

ON THE MILITARY PUTSCH IN MANILA

One more time Manila, on 29 November knew a new putsch attempt by an handle of soldiers

One more time the military din't follow the mutiners, but one more time the Philippines appear as an unstable country, plus the corruption problem. Two facts that are not encouraging the foreigners to invest there

I know that GMA administration has been plagued by scandals and that she was accused of fraud in her last election, without speaking of the campaign of assassination against leftist opponents, the numerous suspicions against her husband, and that het approval ratings in opinion polls are at record lows.

But I continue to think that, even if some filipino friends wrote me the contrary and justify the "People war", that the military have not to interfere in the political life of a country.

The Philippines have democratic institutions, gained in dramatic circonstances. They have to be respected. Time will come for justice if justified

http://www.asiasentinel.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=907&Itemid=31

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/12/01 16:52

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/12/08 15:23

DO WE HAVE TO CONDEMN CHEN SHUI-BIAN

During his last visit to China, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, condemned any move from the Taiwanese President for obtening a UN seat or organizing a rederendum on Taiwan independence.

The Taiwanese want to change the constitution, change the name of the country, the flag and passeports and also to join United Nations as a different country than China.

Why to oblige Taiwan to keep as a flag the one of a political party : the KMT ?

Why not to recognize that the Republic of China, only controls the Taiwan island and not all China as its name suggests ?

If we talk to China in favor of Taiwan, for instance about the hundred of missiles directed to it, Beijing answers that it is an internal affair. Why in this case play its game and to support its positions on Taiwan ?

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Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2007/12/28 16:58

To see my last posted paper, click on End on the page line

28 DECEMBER 2007

On Benazir Bhutto killing

After being a fan of Benazir Bhutto, I withdraw my support when I discovered her corruption and mainly the one of her husband. But today I have just to praise her for her courage who led her to this fatal day. The dramatic saga of the Bhutto family is terrible. For Pakistan, it is not only Benazir who have been killed, it is also Democracy.

Everybody is guessing who was behind the killer. The use of a human bomb drives to think it is the signature of Al-Qaida which claimed this fateful action. She declared war to the fundamentalists.

But suspicion is also on General Musharraf entourage. If he pardoned Benazir Bhutto and made a deal with her, it was on the pressure of the United States. In a way, her death is a relief for him

But, now, the main question is the future of Pakistan? Just one day after the killing and the following riots, it is too early to said. One thing is sure: Pakistan need a quick return to democracy and there just one way for that, to organize general elections for a new parliament and a new genuine civil government. The legal parties have to agree on that and not engage themselves in actions or decisions which could bring the country to anarchy.

To maintain or not to maintain the January 8 elections is the question. I think that it is to the PPP to answer the question. If it need one or two weeks to reorganize it hierarchy, it could be fair to grant it this time, but not too much time. Don't forget that today is the anniversary of the 28 December 1984 Indian elections. The killing of Indira Gandhi caused an historic victory for the Congress Party lead by Rajiv Gandhi which wins 400 on the 508 seats

http://www.asiaobserver.com/components/com_fireboard/uploaded/images/Benazir_Bhutto_1.jpg

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/12/28 18:00

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2007/12/28 18:02

Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/01/04 19:17

4 JANUARY 2008

ON BURMA'S 60th ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE

Today, Burma was supposed to celebrate the 60th anniversary of its independance from Britain, but it was at a very low level. Nothing to compare with Malaysia (See "On that day", dated 30 August 2007)

Even the chief of the military junta was not at the ceremony. No flag waving, no holyday, and even, Aung San, the hero of the independence has not been mentionned in the official speech.

What did Burma of its independence ? It has spent much of the past decades under military rule. Because of its "neutralist" stand, it missed to join the Asean whent it was created in 1967 and after the bloody days of 1988, the last September crackdown on pro-democracy protests is in everyone mind

Today, even if Burma is one of the richest country in South-East Asian thanks to rice and teak production, and a very highly educated population, it continues to be one of the poorest Asia's nation and ranked world's most corrupt country in 2007 Transparency International index.

How to change the country situation. Someones think the solution may comme only by... the young officers :S

Re:Jacques eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/01/15 18:35

15 JANUARY 2008

To see the last post, click on End on the page line ;)

IN TAIWAN, KMT VICTORY IS NOT A VOTE FOR REUNIFICATION

The huge victory of the Kuomintang party (KMT) in Taiwan is the worse defeat in the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) history since it was founded. In the mind of Taiwanese people, it is more a sanction against President Chen Shui-bian, with all the corruption charges against his entourage and himself, than his party objectives

With fewer citizens born in main China, the population of Taiwan is less and less interested in a reunification with communist China, but they don't want to pay their official independence by a war. It's why they prefer the maintenance of the status quo current situation.

If the victory of KMT will ease the relations with Beijing who refuses to government to government talks in favor of party to party talks, that don't mean that KMT will have a free hand for what many said is sailing Taiwan to main China
The Taiwanese voters like to balance.

So, if Frank Hsieh, the DPP representative, has few chance to win the presidential election, his score will be a good warning to KMT : don't go to much with China

Post edited by: Jacques, at: 2008/01/15 18:42

Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/01/31 18:25

31 January 2008

Suharto left before paying for his crimes

I have not been shocked that ex-dictator Suharto got a call to fly the national flag at half-mast and that he was buried with full honors because, as he had never been tried, he is supposed to be innocent.

If the funeral ceremony is not the moment to criticize the dead, I am not sure that President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was obliged to said "We offer his body to the nation" and mainly "his service is an example to us" If for SBY, Suharto is an example we can understand why his promised fight against corruption has so far has so limited success

The dead of Suharto has been announced in the international media as the one of the most corrupted leader in the world. According to corruption watchdog International Transparency International, Suharto and his family embezzled up to \$35bn during his 32 years in power. Indirectly his eldest daughter "Tutut" recognize the facts when she declared "May he be absolved of all his mistakes" Her father has to be absolved, and her to keep the money

Suharto should have to pay not only for corruption but also for worse for human rights abuses

The fact that ten years after his fall, Suharto had never been tried is a shame for Indonesian justice

Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/02/17 22:14

17 February 2008

IN THAILAND, ONE MORE COUP FOR NOTHING

The coup-makers, who ousted the Thaksin regime on charge of mass corruption, dividing the nation and mining democracy, have obviously failed in their prime objective of making Thailand Thaksin-free

On 30 May, a Constitution Tribunal disbanded Thaksin Thai Rak Thai party from politics on charge of committed electoral fraud and barred Thaksin and 110 executives from five year

But in their 15 months in power, the military failed to dent Thaksin's popularity in rural Thailand, neither proving the allegations of corruption against him, nor providing the governance they had promised. The charges against Thaksin are the one after the other abandoned.

In the South, general Sonthi, the first Muslim to become Army commender, was supposed to solve the Islamic rebellion, but no improvement has been got. On the economy aspect, also Thailand dind't knew any improvement.

The new, after restoration of democracy, elections have been largely won by Thai Rak Thai, under the resurgence name of People's Power Party (PPP) led by Samak. His cabinet members have been chosen by Thaksin, even if Samak had to fight to include some of his closed friends

If we look at the cabinet list approved by the king on 6 February (see below)
http://www.nationmultimedia.com/2008/02/07/headlines/headlines_30064620.php

the first vice-prime minister is the brother-in-law of Thaksin, another was his spokesman and now Finance Minister. His lawyer is now Foreign Minister... and so on.

For the 110 TRT executives banned from politics, they continue to be in the local bosses and even in the cabinet represented by their wife, brother, father, son or other relatives, keeping their grip on the power (and the money)

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Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/02/28 23:45

28 february 2008

On the New York Philharmonic Orchestra concert in Pyongyang

One the most eminent US orchestra has given a concert in North Korea, the first time since the foundation of the Communist Korea which is always officially at war with the USA

For the first time, at the opening of the concert, the US anthem has been played, applauded in a standing ovation by the North Korean officials

It is easy to compare that event with the ping-pong diplomacy (exchange of ping-pong teams between USA and China) which preceded the February visit of US president Richard Nixon to China or the performance of the Boston Orchestra to Moscow in 1986 with a 10-minute standing ovation at the opening of the concert.

But, contrary to these events with China then Soviet Union, are Washington and Pyongyang ready for a such reconciliation ? That could be a so much good news !!!!

But in fact, the invitation sent by New Korean authorities to the New York Philharmonic Orchestra was at a time when Pyongyang at a time when Pyongyang had signed a commitment to dismantle its nuclear facilities before the end of 2007, but it didn't. That's why the US secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who was supposed to attend the concert, didn't come

Some peoples suggest that North Korea could use this concert (and they have already invited a British star singer) for their propaganda. Despite everything, I think it is a good step. If they had wanted, the US could have cancel the concert at the last moment

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Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/04/19 18:24

19 APRIL 2008

ANTI-FRENCH RALLIES ACROSS CHINA

On 18 and 19 April, there were anti-French rallies across China. The protestors demand a boycott of French products and in particular of Carrefour hypermarkets, because the fiasco of the Olympics torch in Paris.

In China, no demonstration can be held if the government don't agree or push it. We saw that with in anti-Japanese demonstrations in May 2005. So the question is why against France ? The Olympic torch had problem in Germany, France, Great Britain and the United States. The German Chancellor has already said she will not attend the opening ceremony of the Games as the French president has not yet given his decision.

Beijing did not appreciate that Paris asked Beijing to resume negotiations with the Dalai Lama and proposed to be a go-between. The main activist movement against the game is Reporters Without frontiers based in Paris. The French president, Nicolas Sarkozy , will be the president of European Union. If he will not attend the opening ceremony, it could be a slap for the Chine government.

In China, while there is a lot of French corps, the protestors were only targeting Carrefour distribution company, accusing it of supporting Tibet independence. That is completely wrong. Carrefour, which has more than one hundred hyper markets in China and is the leader in China is sponsoring the Games. So we can think that Chinese rival companies could be pushing behind the protestors. Maybe there is a blackmail of the Chinese authorities on Carrefour, that has already happened in the past.

. http://www.asiaobserver.com/images/fbfiles/images/2008_04_19_manif_against_France-9aba6073cc2efd1040238895f2ee9683.jpg

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Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/04/21 11:53

21 APRIL 2008

A picture, supposed to have been taken by satellite, is largely circulating on the net. It shows Chinese policemen with Tibetan monks cloths in their arms. The comment says that they are ready to wear these cloths to make provocations in Tibet.

In fact, this picture was taken in 2003 for a movie when the PLA provided soldier as extra actors. I know what organization put this picture on the net.

A good cause has not to be defended cheating people. The reality is hard enough

. http://www.asiaobserver.com/images/fbfiles/images/Policiers_habill_s_en_bonzes.jpg

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Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/05/18 17:56

19 MAY 2008

To see the last letter, go down at the bottom of this page

On China and Myanmar

These last weeks, these two countries have been severely hit by natural disasters. If I am not a supporter of the Chinese dictatorship, I have to honestly recognize that, this time, the Chinese authorities have played transparency and accepted international aid.

In the contrary, in Myanmar, the paranoiac military junta continue to refuse international aid, as around two million of people are possible victims of famine or disease. They prefer their people to die than accept foreign aid. So, a French ship, with 10,000 tons of urgent aid is waiting from three days the authorization to enter in a Myanmar's harbor

Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/05/22 17:27

22 MAY 2008

ASIA OBSERVER AND ME

I think I have to make clear some points

- 1) I don't belong to Asia Observer. I am an ordinary member, just very active
- 2) Sandvand, the founder and owner of A.O. proposed me to help him, accepting to be moderator on some topics and I accepted
- 3) After that an violent insurgency movement in the Philippines used A.O. for its propaganda, I was shocked and attracted Sandvand attraction on that. He answered me that A.O. was a free forum and I accepted it. It is why I OKed that for instance anti and pro Myanmar military junta members could exchange their differences on A.O. and finely, I founded it interesting
- 4) As you can guess, I am not a supporter of the Mynmar military junta, but I respect them and in some circonstances I used private messages for not agressing its supporters publicly. But realy, when I see that a French ship is waiting since a week to deliver 10,000 tonnes of help which could food 100,000 people during 15 days, I am very upset
- 5) But what I want to said tonight is that what I write on A.O. is just my personnal point of views, engaging nobody else and in the respect of anybody who is not sharing my opinions

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<http://www.asiaobserver.com/images/fbfiles/images/SOLDIAR111-df7e45245efacef49e54d89a5349b5bb.GIF>

Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/05/23 13:11

To see my last paper, click on End on the page line

23 MAY 2008

Two days ago, it was the tenth anniversary of the fall on Indonesia dictator General Suharto, whose regime was nicknamed KKN for Corruption, Collusion and Nepotism.

Since this May 21, 1998, what have been the great changes in Indonesia ? This country had four presidents : Habibie, Guz Dur, Megawatri and the current one Yudoyono. Habibie was an honest man, but because he agreed a referendum in East Timor on independence, he was ousted from the country political life. Guz Dur (Abdurraman Wahid) was bizarre, Sukarnoputri did nothing against corruption. Only the current president tried to fight corruption but very timidly.

How to fight corruption in a country where the juges are the most corrupted in the world ?

Here is an article where the Jakarta Post warns on another May tragedy possible

<http://www.asianewsnet.net/columnist.php?aid=16964>

Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/08/13 14:45

13 AUGUST 2008

What act of cruelty ! On August 8, during the Olympic Games opening ceremony, a wonderful small girl (right)sings a nice

song, but in fact she is miming. The voice is from another small girl with a golden voice(left). But it was decided that she was not cute enough to sing directly

. http://www.asiaobserver.com/images/fbfiles/images/2008_08_13_girls.jpg

Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/08/19 14:14

19 August 2008

Tribute to General Musharraf

So, Finally, General Pervez Musharraf has resigned as Pakistan's president. While news agencies show people celebrating this event, I should like to remind some points

I was moved that he quited in dignity saying :

"I did nothing wrong and the charges against me cannot be proven but I am resigning in the larger interest of the nation. I want to save Pakistan from destabilization..." "For me it is always Pakistan first", but it not the main reason

I am not in favor of military coups, but when he throwned out PM Sharif, I was happy. Pakistan was in a period where Sharif and Benazir Bhutto had been twice dismissed for corruption. He was a moderate Muslim in a country with so many extremists

For him, the big problem was how to deal the Afghan problem after September 11. He had no choice. If he had continued to support the Taliban, the USA would has shift their regional ally to India. In this case, there are clear indications that elements within the Pakistani Intelligence Services (the ISI) support the resurgent Taliban. We have not to forget that the Taliban have been raised and trained by General Babar, under Benazir Buttho rule, and that Sharif tried to get the support of Islamists at the end of his tenure

Musharraf also succeded in slowing down tensions with India on Kashmir without giving up the sacred cause for Pakistanis

He is accused of two bad things : to have removed the Chief Justice, Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry and 60 others judges and to order the storming of the Red Mosque

I agree on the first point. For the Red Mosque, in what country a government can accept that people, with weapons challenge its authority?

Sure Musharraf has failed, but now we are coming back nine years ago. Corrupted people leading the country and, for the ones who think that Musharraf was a puppet of USA, where Pakistan will look for aid if it wants to survive?

Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/09/06 12:02

6 September 2008

A corrupted president for Pakistan

So, an assembly of national and provincial legislators has chosen Asif Ali Zardari, the widower of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, whose murder put him on the front line, as Pakistan's new president. This man, labelled "Mr 10%", spent several years in jail on charges of corruption

In 1990, two years after his wife became Prime Minister, he was arrested on charges of blackmail, based on allegations that he attached a bomb to a Pakistani businessman, Murtaza Bukhari, and forced him to withdraw money from his bank account. However, the charges were dropped when he was released from prison in 1993 when his wife's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) took power and forced the charges out
In 1996, he was again arrested under the Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance. He found himself charged with the murder of Mir Murtaza Bhutto, his wife's brother.

Among the mainly cases against him (In Great Britain, Switzerland..), the most lucrative deal involved the effort by Dassault Aviation, a French military contractor. French authorities indicated in 1998 that Zardari offered exclusive rights to Dassault to replace the air force's fighter jets in exchange for a five percent commission to be paid to a corporation in Switzerland controlled by him.

My today purpose is not to enumerate all the corruption cases against Zardari, but to express my deep concern for Pakistan. During the last twenty years, the Pakistan's presidents were the ones who dismissed the corrupted PM, Bhutto or Sharif. Who could now dismiss the president ? In any case, not the weak PM Yusuf Raza Gilani. So Zardari is in position to improve his position with no threat from "Mister 10 %" to "Mister 20 %"... Poor Pakistan!!! and good luck to the USA with their new ally

Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/09/12 11:18

12 September 2008

To see my last paper, click on End on the page line

Lucian Pye died on September 5. He has been, after Jacques Guillermaz, one of my masters when I was a young sinologist

"As a Sinologist, Pye advised the U.S. State Department and the National Security Council and was considered a peer of the great China experts of his generation. Pye was a leader of the National Committee on United States-China Relations when it laid the groundwork for the U.S. table tennis team to visit China in 1971, and he later served as acting chairman.

He advised Democratic presidential candidates, including John F. Kennedy, urging a muscular foreign policy.

But Pye was first and foremost an intellectual who wrote or edited 25 books and led his profession as president of the American Political Science Association in 1988-89. He was among the pioneers in the 1950s and '60s in developing theories about how poor nations develop politically. In contrast to political scientists who seek universal, overarching explanations, he delved into the vagaries of cultures, countries and peoples in search of more individualized interpretations"

See the full obituary published in the International Herald Tribune<http://www.iht.com/articles/2008/09/12/america/obits.php>

Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/09/18 18:46

18 September 2008

Who is Thailand's new helmsman ? Thaksin or Somchai ?

Today, Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej officially endorsed the premiership of Somchai Wongsawat. Somchai is the fourth prime minister in two years, and, given the country's continuing instability, some analysts expect his tenure to be short.

The ruling People's Power Party and its governing coalition hold 306 of the lower house's 480 seats and Somchai won 298 votes, while opposition leader Abhisit Vejjajiva took 163 votes.

The new prime minister, 61, has long experience as a judge and senior bureaucrat, but he has a big handicap : his marriage to Thaksin's younger sister, Yaowapa Wongsawasdi, which is likely to ensure that protests by anti-government activists who have occupied the prime minister's compound for more than three weeks will continue.

The anti-government People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) – a pressure group of royalists, businessmen and union activists – had opposed Samak's leadership, accusing him of being a Thaksin puppet. So to see his brother-in-law succeeding Samak is like a provocation. "He might have a gentlemanly nature, a soft-spoken style, and he might have a better reputation than anyone else," said a spokesman for the protesters, Somsak Kosaisuk, referring to other members of the governing party. "But blood is thicker than water."

Worse, Somchai's wife is politically close to her brother; she was one of 111 Thaksin-linked politicians banned from politics for five years in 2007 on grounds of electoral fraud by Thaksin's party, which was shut down.

But what is now the power of Thaksin from his London exile ? "I think that his impact and influence within the PPP are still considerable," said Thitinan Pongsudhirak, a leading political analyst with Chulalongkorn University, "but nowhere near what they used to be." Others say that passing time and shifting alliances may weaken Thaksin's political influence. His funds are shrinking, with \$2 billion in assets frozen by the courts, and the corruption cases he faces could put him in jail if he returns. In anyway, a lot of the PPP members of parliament have made their choice after telephone call with Thaksin.

Despite his close connections to Thaksin, Somchai is deemed a compromiser who is best suited among the PPP candidates to smooth over Thailand's political crisis. So... wait and see

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Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/10/15 16:37

15 October 2008

To whom belongs the disputed temple Preah Vihear between Thailand and Cambodia ?

Today, Thai and Cambodian soldiers exchanged fires and two Cambodian soldiers have been killed while ten thai soldiers have been captured by the Cambodian forces.

It is clear that this temple belongs to Cambodia. It has been constructed during the reigns of the Khmer kings Suryavarm I and II and is dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva.

In the 1904 Franco-Siamese boundary treaty, it was put on the Cambodian side, but occupied by the Siamese after the 1954 French defeat. But, on June 15, 1962, the International Court of Justice, decided that it was on the Cambodian side of the border.

<http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/index.php?sum=284&code=ct&p1=3&p2=3&case=45&k=46&p3=5>

Even the Thai daily web newspaper Prachatai admit that the temple belongs to Cambodia

<http://www.prachatai.com/english/news.php?id=690>

<http://www.prachatai.com/english/news.php?id=686>

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http://www.asiaobserver.com/images/fbfiles/images/Preah_vihear_temple_2.jpg

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Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/10/21 13:08

21 October 2008

THAILAND IS GOING BAD

After the September 2006 military coup, with the royal approval, who ousted the corrupted prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, the democracy was restored by the 23 December 2007 General Election in which the PPP won 228 seats, sufficient to win the election ahead of the Democrat Party but short of the 241 seats needed for a majority of the 480-seat house, but it was able to form a six-party coalition. The problem is that the PPP had become the party of Thaksin supporters, and on 28 January 2008, Samak Sundaravej, chairman of the PPP was elected Prime Minister.

The People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) who by street demonstrations got the ousting of Thaksin and the intervention of the army, restarted its demonstration, this time again Samak, considered as the Thaksin puppet, in May

On June PAD and supporters made through police blockades and successfully gathered in front of Government House, an effort to pressure the government to resign and reached critical level in late August when Government House and several ministries were seized. A state of emergency was declared in Bangkok on 2 September.

On September 9, 2008, ruling on complaints by Senators and the Election Commission received in the summer of 2008, the Constitutional Court removed Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej from office because he had inappropriately been involved in commercial enterprises, taking part in a TV cooking show.

After the PPP unsuccessful bid to rename Samak as prime minister, on September 17, Somchai Wongsawat was ratified by the National Assembly as new prime minister. But that was not to calm down the situation because Somchai is the Thaksin's brother-in-law.

Thousands of PAD forces soon surrounded Parliament to prevent the Somchai government from announcing its policies to the legislature within 15 days of swearing in, as mandated by the Constitution. The PAD closed off the building with razor wire and steel barricades.

On October 7, police loudspeaker lorries issued a warning that the PAD should disperse as they would be attacked, and teargas would be fired. PAD forces did not disperse and soon after, police shot a barrage of teargas grenades and clashed with protestors, some of whom were armed with guns, machetes, steel pikes, petrol bombs, and improvised explosive devices. Clashes continued into the night. Some 500 people were injured, some ones badly and two persons were reported to be killed.

The question was : what is the attitude of the royal court and the army on that situation ? The answer from the monarch came on October 13, when, in a rare appearance, the Queen Sirikit presided over the cremation of Angkana, 28, who died when police dispersed anti-government protesters near Parliament. she praised her as a "good girl" and "protector of the monarchy and the country" and was accompanied by Princess Chulabhorn Valayalaksana and Army chief General Anupong Paochinda. In addition, the latter, on October 17, has indicated that Somchai Wongsawat should step down to take responsibility for the violent clashes between police and anti-government protesters in Bangkok.

The following day, Thailand's Police General Salang Bunnag revived his threat to "retake" Government House from the anti-government protesters, saying that his planned operation would begin after a religious ceremony to be held nearby on October 22

The Thai press is divided. As The Nation is balancing on the PAD side, the Bangkok Post looks to be on the government side, calling the protests "unjustified, unnecessary, provocative and illegal," adding in an editorial, "If the PAD really wants to bring down the government, it should do so through the Parliament."

That rises my personal problem. In one way I don't like to see relatives and friends of Thaksin Shinawatra acting as his puppets, but on the other side, the PPP and his government are legitimate, elected in free elections, even there was some rigging votes. So, what a solution for Thailand problem ?

In addition see the comment of excellent and Asia Observer friend journalist John Le Fevre (Photo-journ)<http://photojourn.wordpress.com/2008/10/20/thailand-political-crisis-worsens-further-bloodshed-forecast/>

. http://www.asiaobserver.com/images/fbfiles/images/Thaksin_Somchai.jpg

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Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/11/02 10:26

2 November 2008

At last, the European Parliament Sakharov freedom of thought prize is given to a Chinese

On October 23, 2008, bravely, just one day before the opening of the Asia Europe meeting (Asem) and despite the Chinese threats, the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought has been awarded this year to Chinese political activist Hu Jia, The prize ceremony will take place in Strasbourg on 17 December but without the winner

Hu Jia is a prominent human rights activist and dissident in the People's Republic of China. He has embraced a wide range of causes, including environmental issues, HIV/AIDS advocacy and a call for an official enquiry into the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre. He has also acted as a coordinator of the "barefoot lawyers movement".

Mr Pöttering said: "By awarding the Sakharov Prize to Hu Jia, the European Parliament firmly and resolutely acknowledges the daily struggle for freedom of all Chinese human rights defenders."

In addition, what is a strong symbol is that it happened for the 20th anniversary of Sakharov Prize named in honor of the Soviet physicist and political dissident Andrei Sakharov. It has been awarded by the European Parliament every year since 1988 to individuals or organizations who have made an important contribution to the fight for human rights or

democracy. This year's prize, consisting of a certificate and a check for €50,000, will be awarded in Strasbourg on 17 December, but Hu Jia will not be there.

I remember that in 1999, the Nobel Prize was supposed to be given to the most mafous Chinese dissident Wei Jingsheng, twice condemned to 14 years in jail. Because the strong pressure of the Chinese government on the Swedish government, he did not get it. The following year, the Nobel Prize committee took a revenge by giving the literature prize to a Chinese, the first one for a Chinese writer, but one living in exile in France where he got French citizenship in 1988, Gao Xinjiang.

To please to the Chinese government, French president avoided to meet the Dalai Lama when he came in France, but before, Germany chancellor Merken did it. That din't changed the high economic level between China and Germany

Hu Jia

. http://www.asiaobserver.com/images/fbfiles/images/Hu_Jia_3.jpg

Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/11/09 14:09

9 November 2008

I will not cry for the Bali bombers execution

The bodies of three of the Bali bombers have been buried in their home villages in Indonesia after they were executed by firing squad. The attack made 202 victims. The men had been executed by firing squad along with fellow bomber Imam Samudra shortly after midnight, on Saturday November 8, 2008, on a prison island off southern Java, claiming to want to die as "martyrs" and having shown no remorse for the attacks.

They were members of the Jemaah Islamiyah regional terror group blamed for a series of attacks around the region, part of a "holy war" to create an Islamic caliphate spanning much of Southeast Asia.

Hundred of Indonesian spilled onto the streets for the funerals. The crowds clashed with police, calling for Jihad. Hardliner cleric Abu Bakar Bashir, suspected to be the Jemaah Islamiyah brains and who was jailed on a conspiracy charge related to the bombings before being released in 2006 attended one of the ceremonies

The bombers said they launched the attacks against packed nightclubs on the resort island of Bali -- killing 202 people, mostly foreign tourists -- to defend Islam from Western aggression and avenge US action in Afghanistan and Iraq.

But what have these innocent people killed in the attack to do with their problem? They just came here to enjoy sun and beach in Bali. The Islamists, are right when they condemn the killing of civilians by US troops in Afghanistan. So how they can be proud of the killing of innocent tourists?

. http://www.asiaobserver.com/images/fbfiles/images/2008_11_10_Bali_Bombers-88ad374b586daebec968d8d1d9201858.jpg

Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/11/12 16:11

To see my last post, go to the bottom of this page;)

12 November 2008

Crazy Burmese generals

Nay Phone Latt, a young blogger who has been held since 29 January in Insein prison, was facing a possibly seven-year sentence after new charges were brought against him on 7 July under the article 5 (j) of the 1950 Emergency Provision Act, article 505 (b) of the criminal code (which punishes defaming the state) and article 33 (a) of the Electronic Act. He was originally charged under article 32 (b) of the Video Act, which would have limited his maximum detention to six

months

The new charges were approved by a special court in Insein prison, where his lawyer has never been allowed to see him since his arrest. Another court appearance was scheduled for 16 July, but Nay Phone Latt told his mother it has been postponed. Meanwhile, he has contracted an eye problem but the prison authorities are not letting him see a doctor

A year after thousands of monks took to the streets of Burma's towns and cities to protest against the tyrannical rule of the Military Junta were broadcast across the world via the internet, the Junta has shown that it will not tolerate any semblance of critical opinion being voiced over the World Wide Web.

Finally Nay Phone Latt has been sentenced to a total of twenty years and six months for possession of a banned video and having a blog to express his concerns about the increasingly difficulty of Burmese people to voice their opinions since the protests last year

Nay Latt's mother wasn't allowed into the courtroom to see her son get sentenced. The blogger's lawyer was himself jailed for criticizing the special court's procedures

These Burmese generals are crazy. If the sentence for writing a blog is more than twenty years in jail, what could be the one for rapists, killers... and corrupted generals ?

. http://www.asiaobserver.com/images/fbfiles/images/Nay_Phone_Latt_3.jpg

Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/11/15 18:06

16 November 2008

On Chen Shui-bian arrest

I have been very shocked to see the former Taiwan president, Chen Shui-bian, taken in handcuffs from the prosecutors' office to the Taipei district court.

The former Taiwanese president Chen Shui-bian has been formally arrested over money-laundering and corruption allegations which he has described as political persecution.

Taipei's district court ordered his detention on suspected corruption, bribery, forgery, money laundering and illegal possession of state assets. "The court, after questioning the suspect, believes the suspected crimes to be severe," it added in a statement. "And there are enough facts to believe there was buried evidence, fabrication, altered evidence and conspiracy among suspects or witnesses."

The 57-year-old former president denies all charges.

The prosecutor's office said Chen could be held indefinitely before charges are filed, but there was no intention to delay. The first three charges carry minimum prison sentences of five years on each count.

Members of Chen's family and former aides are also under investigation. Chen led the country from 2000 until spring this year, when his pro-independence Democratic People's party suffered a landslide defeat at the hands of the Nationalists.

Members of Chen's family are suspected of sending at least \$30.4m to Japan, the United States, the Cayman Islands, Singapore and Switzerland, among other places, local media have reported.

Prosecutors said they wanted to determine whether the funds were donations left over from political campaigns - as Chen says - or whether bribery might have been involved.

I don't know if Chen Shui-bian and his family used this money for themselves or if it was a part of the dollar-fight against China to buy diplomatic links with small countries. The court will say. But he is not a dangerous gangster. So it was possible to charge him with no arrest and any case with no handcuffs

. http://www.asiaobserver.com/images/fbfiles/images/2008_11_11_Chen_Shui_bian.jpg

Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/11/26 09:51

25 November 2008

Today is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

What will be the fate of this young Afghan girl, so happy today ?

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http://www.asiaobserver.com/images/fbfiles/images/Young_Afghan_girl.jpg

Asia Observer picture on Flickr

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Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/12/02 14:49

3 December 2008

On Mumbai attacks

I think that the Indian government is wrong in involving the Pakistan's government in the terrible attacks in Mumbai. You know that he a very little control in some parts of its country and that it cannot to be responsible of what do everyone of its citizen.

It is like after the September 11 attack in the United States. All, except one of the attackers, where from Saudi Arabia. The US authorities did not accused this country to have organized the attack

In another way, It is stupid, has we can read in Asia Observer forums that the Mossad is implicated in the Mumbai terrorist attacks. This disinformation action is contradicted by the fact that the Jew Center in Mumbai has been attacked and several people killed. What could be the interest of Israel give an help to islamist terrorists who want Israel to be destroyed ?

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Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/12/09 11:35

9 DECEMBER 2008

Pakistan will not hand over to India any suspects they have arrested in connection with the Mumbai attacks

Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said that Pakistan will not hand over to India any suspects they have arrested in connection with the Mumbai attacks, but will try them under its own laws. He said on December 9, 2008 that. "The arrests are being made for our own investigations. Even if allegations are proved against any suspect, he will not be handed over to India," said "We will proceed against those arrested under Pakistani laws."

I think he is wrong. The criminals have to be extradited to the country where their crime occurred. That is the international rule. But the country that wants somebody to be extradited has first to give hard evidences that this person committed these crimes on its soil.

The only exception is that the countries which have abolished the death penalty can demand guaranties that the criminal will not be condemned to death, but at a maximum life sentence

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Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/12/19 16:05

20 DECEMBER 2008

Hard time for Abhisit Vejjajiva

Thailand has been stricken by months of political deadlock as anti-government protesters from the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) mounted a campaign to topple the PPP. The PAD accused the PPP of being a proxy for Mr Thaksin, who was ousted in a coup in 2006.

On December 2, the Thai PM, Mr Somchai's brother-in-law of exiled former PM Thaksin Shinawatra, and near of 40 of the PPP members of the parliament have been ousted of politics for five years and the PPP dissolved for fraud.

After having persuade some of the small parties and even some MPs of the PPP to rally him, the president of the Democratic Party, Abhasit Vejjajiva was elected the new Thai PM

Mr Abhisit's appointment has at least temporarily brought calm to Thai politics. But many say his image as an upper-class elitist - from a wealthy family, born in England and educated at Eton and Oxford - could hinder his attempts to end the turmoil. But he is untainted by corruption or conflicts of interest, which is almost unheard of in Thai politics, especially for someone who has been in parliament for 16 years.

The 44-year-old Oxford graduate faces an enormous challenge trying to unite the country largely split between the middle class that is his base and the rural poor who backed Thaksin Shinawatra and manage an economy buffeted by Thailand's political turmoil and a global slowdown.

The furious reaction of the ousted government's supporters outside parliament, when they hurled metal barriers at the gates and smashed cars belonging to Democrat MPs, may foreshadow further violent opposition to the new administration in the pro-Thaksin heartland of the north and north-east.

For its part, the PAD says it will resume its protest campaign if there is insufficient progress towards its concept of "new politics", which includes a partly appointed parliament, something the Democrats oppose.

His may be the fresh new face, but behind him the wheeling and dealing for the Democrats is done by veteran party godfathers, in particular Secretary General Suthep Thaugsuban, a politician whose public image is far removed from the squeaky clean Mr Abhisit. It was Mr Suthep who did all the hard bargaining to win over defecting factions from the Thaksin camp. It is not sure that these new supporters are so clean that Abhisit

The potential instability of Mr Abhisit's coalition will also make it hard for him to drive through effective policies, at a time when the country is crying out for them. His margin of victory in parliament was 37 votes, out of a total of 436; that could shrink after by-elections in January for the 29 MPs banned in early December's court ruling against the former government

I hope that Abhisit will succeed, but he will do it only if he gains the trust of the peasantry which is the majority of the electorate and if is can solve the economic crisis of the country

. http://www.asiaobserver.com/images/fbfiles/images/Abhisit_Jejjajiva_4.jpg

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Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2008/12/30 15:04

30 DECEMBER, 2008

POOR BANGLASHESH

So, an alliance led by Sheikh Hasina Wajed, the former Bangladeshi prime minister, has won a landslide election victory in the country's first poll in seven years. The Awami League, in alliance with a smaller party called Jatiya, won a more than two-thirds majority in Parliament even if the begum Zia, leader of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party said that if the election was fair, she would win stressing that "We have reports that BNP supporters were barred from coming to the polls and also were driven away from polling stations in many places," Previous elections have been marred by violence and widespread accusations of vote-rigging.

But the margin is so large and election officials and monitors said the polls were mostly peaceful, that the elections mark a personal triumph for Sheikh Hasina, whose political career seemed at an end last year when she was jailed on charges of corruption. Ms Hasina's Awami League alliance has won more than 260 of the 300 seats in a poll mostly praised by

media, monitors and the international community.

Reporters were planning questions on how Ms Hasina planned to tackle rising prices, Islamist militancy and the issue of corruption that has dogged both her and her main defeated rival Khaleda Zia. They point out that the BNP and its alliance won a two-thirds majority in 2001, and produced what many people considered to be the most corrupt government in the country's history.

Most of all, in its bid to clean up politics, the caretaker government sought to drive the two women who head the country's two principal parties out of politics forever: Khalida Zia of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and Hasina. But the leaders refused to go into exile even after they were jailed on corruption charges; they fought to be let out and campaign for office. The government relented, releasing both women this year on bail as their cases wound through the courts. After two years of military rule, Bangladesh comes back to the prior situation. The two ladies, the orphan (Hasina) and the widow (Zia) are in a hating fight with no consideration for the poor population, just taking advantage of their position, even if the candidates have pledged to lower food prices, and to tackle corruption and terrorism. It is funny that although jailed by the interim military government on charges of corruption, both Zia and Hasina campaigned on promises to fight endemic graft

In prior most balanced elections, the loser party had the capability to paralyze the parliament. It is not the case this time. So Hasina has a last opportunity to prove that she can help her country, but I have some doubt

http://www.asiaobserver.com/images/fbfiles/images/Sheikh_Hasina_2008_12.jpg

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Re:Jacques de Goldfiem eye on Asia

Posted by Jacques - 2009/01/02 15:10

2 JANUARY 2009

THE END FOR SRI LANKA'S TAMIL SEPARATISTS ?

So, the Sri Lankan military troops have taken the northern town of Kilinochchi, the headquarters of the Tamil Tiger separatist group. Sri Lankan troops have been on the outskirts of Kilinochchi, about 580 km (360 miles) north of Colombo, for more than a month. They took a key highway junction and a town outside the city Thursday.

Mahinda Rajapakse, the Sri Lankan president, hailed the capture of Kilinochchi as an "unparalleled victory".

The Tamil Tigers ran a parallel administration from Kilinochchi with their own police force, courts, prisons and taxes, and they had declared government plans to retake the city a "daydream." But after Sri Lanka launched a new offensive against the rebels in the fall, the insurgents moved their nerve center and logistics bases to Mullaitivu, on the northeastern coast.

After Jaffna, the loss of Kikichochni is a big blow for the LTTE. If after more than 25 years of civil war the Sri Lankan forces at last win after more than 70,000 dead, the Colombo authorities have to take care: no revenge against Tamil people. The start of the problem was when the new independent Ceylon government decided that Sinhalese language will be the only one for all the country.

When I was living in Sri Lanka, My maid was a Sinhalese and my driver a Tamil. Many times, Sinhalese officials expressed their annoyance and I each time answered that for me, I just gave a job to a Sri Lankan citizen

. http://www.asiaobserver.com/images/fbfiles/images/2009_01_02_Kilinochchi.gif

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