What Is Political News?

Political news covers such political events or issues as elections, no-confidence or censure debates, political parties, parliamentary meetings, corruption, impeachment, social welfare for children and women, political campaigns, lobbies, coup d’
éat, foreign policy, the national budget, political protests, riots, labor issues, strikes, and political activities performed by government officials.

Related Vocabulary:

People: attaché, politician, Premier (Prime Minister, PM), deputy prime minister, Cabinet, (Cabinet reshuffle, Cabinet shake up, Cabinet line-up), ally (alliance), candidate, government, coalition government, political party, core member, Democratic party, Conservative party, Labor party, Communist party, opposition party, majority party, coalition party, faction, government spokesman, House Speaker (president of the parliament), minister, senator, party leader, party member, parliament member (MP), dissident, secretary-general, delegation, delegate, diplomatic corps, charge d’affairs, lobbyist, village headman, sub-district headman, voter, ghost voter, guerrilla, rebel terrorist, separatist, junta, troop, trooper, Khmer Rouge, peace keeping force, top brass.
**Places:** polling booth, Government House, House, Parliament, Congress, ministry, exile, asylum, sanctuary, buffer zone, constituency, congregation, assembly, National Assembly, safe house, closed-door meeting, party’s executive board meeting.

**Actions:** amnesty, allegation, agreement, accord, pact, treaty, deal, talk, peace talk, contract, agenda policy (a stick or carrot policy), general election, by-election, electioneer, dispute, row, debate, nationally televised debate, House debate, House deliberation, election campaign, budget, conspiracy, grass root activity, demonstration, international sanction, boycott, corruption, land reform, committee, commission, joint communiqué, landslide victory, expatriation, legislature, poll, revolution, political reform, turmoil, disturbance, political unrest, May Bloodshed, vote-buying, canvass, lobbying, bloodshed, dissolution, dissolvement, issue, election result or outcome, international sanction, pro-democracy, anti-democracy, fiasco, state visit, post, position.

**Relevant Items:** ballot, ballot box, bill, act, regulation, law, credential, motion, urgent motion, leaflet, statement, scandal, controversy, topic, constitution, draft charter.

**Expressions:** to vote to agree to vow to ally with
to elect to lobby
to cast a ballot to cast a vote/ to vote
to be in charge of to run for
to come into operation/ use/ force/ service
to merge to sweep all the seats
to be transferred to an inactive post
to keep a low profile to urge
to step down to negotiate
to appoint to be newly appointed
to stage an election to denounce
to announce to campaign
to take an oath of allegiance to be sworn in
to voice opposition to to reform
to disqualify to discredit
to schedule to investigate
to snap to rap
to snub to find fault with
to discuss to oust
to strengthen the relations between the two countries
to review the honour guard to get green lights
to chair a meeting to petition

**Adjectives:** mandatory, parliamentary, eligible, current, military, civilian, martial, neutral, extreme, bilateral, newly-appointed, newly-elected, rural, remote, urban, leading, eminent, prominent, executive, competitive, contradictory, aggressive, controversial, ministerial, deligatory, standard, sub-standard, *scandulous*, presidential, deadlocked, identified, unidentified, nationwide, worldwide, high rank.
**Adverbs:** unanimously, bilaterally, simultaneously, nationally, internationally, globally, actually, properly, wrongly, deliberately, individually, unnecessarily, eventually, initially, recently, finally, mutually, significantly, importantly, generally, commonly.

**Political Headlines**

The following are some political headlines. Pay attention to the number and choice of words in each headline.

*Sanan hints at year-end polls* (6 words)

*NAP hits back at PM over vote-buying charges* (9 words)

*Chuan to advocate recovery plan and foreign aid strategy* (9 words)

*MP denies guilt in hit-and run-charge and refuses to quit* (12 words)

*Vetoed bills cleared by the cabinet* (7 words)

*Prapat spurns indirect toll cut proposal* (6 words)

*Unregistered supplies used in health scam* (6 words)

*Investigation leads to 30 corrupt officials* (6 words)

*Samak looks for ways to expel rebels* (7 words)

*NAP top brass likely to retain their posts* (8 words)

*Suthep, Snan defend airport* (4 words)

*PM to boost lendings to farmers* (6 words)

*Academics asked to help govt* (5 words)

*Surin in bid to end “non-interference”* (6 words)

*Anand wants govt to seek new solutions* (7 words)
Pongpol asks for respect of park laws

Identifying Political News

The Cabinet

Premier denies reports of Cabinet reshuffle

The Nation. Reuters

Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai yesterday denied reports that a Cabinet reshuffle was imminent, saying none of his coalition partners had expressed any intention of changing its ministerial line-up.

"I have checked with all government parties, and they seem surprised by such reports," Chuan said.

He also denied knowledge of reports that some MPs were planning to defect to his Democrat Party. However, Chuan hinted his party was ready to help MPs from the Prachakorn Thai Party's "cobra "faction who faced expulsion from their party.

"They have supported the government, so we will have to take care of them when problems occur," Chuan said.

(From The Nation, Monday, June 15, 1998)
Reports say that there would be a Cabinet reshuffle and PM Chuan Leekpai denied it. He also said that he was ready to help the “Cobra” faction from Prachakorn Thai Party.

There would be no Cabinet shake up because none of the government coalition partners had shown any sign of changing their ministerial posts. Also Chuan wanted to help the “Cobra” faction because its members had supported the government.
The news of the Cabinet reshuffle came from some unidentified reports. PM Chuan Leekpai checked with the government parties to make sure that none of them wanted the ministerial line-up.

**A No-Confidence Debate**

*Opposition raps government in no-confidence debate*

**Bangkok —** Opposition leaders last night accused the government of ignoring corruption in land distribution, police promotions and skytrain construction, calling for a vote of no-confidence in the entire cabinet.

“This government has sold the nation, sold its face and robbed every taxpayer in this country,” Prachakset Party leader Arun Damnerncheep said in a nationally televised debate in the National Assembly.

Opening the debate on a motion of no-confidence in the government, Arun focused on corruption in the land department which he said has allowed large agribusiness corporations to purchase huge tracts of land set aside for small farmers.

“Land reform under this government has benefited only the big companies, The small farmer has been cheated of his land and turned into a wage slave of agribusiness,” he said.
He said Prime Minister Chairat Champasiri should resign to take overall responsibility while Interior Minister Tirapol Tongrakdee and Agriculture Minister Chirikul Na Sukhothai should be charged with corruption.

In reply to accusations, Chirikul demanded documentary proof, saying he would be happy to launch an investigation if “the charges are anything more than hot air.”

(From English by Newspaper, p. 126)

Vocabulary:

Nouns: opposition (party) corruption police promotions the Cabinet motion accusation hot air

Verbs: to rap to sell to focus on to reform to be cheated to charge no-confidence debate land distribution skytrain construction taxpayer wage slave documentary proof reform to accuse to rob to purchase to turn into to resign to demand
to benefit to launch

Idioms and expressions:

to accuse someone of something (of doing something)
to rob someone of something
to focus on to set aside for
to be cheated of to turn into
in reply to anything more than hot air

Who: Opposition party.
Prime Minister Chairat Champasiri, Interior Minister Tirapol Tongrakdee and Agriculture Minister Chirikul Na Sukhothai

What: Opposition party, Prachakaset leader Arun Damnemcheep accused Prime Minister Chairat Champasiri and his two ministers of ignoring corruption in land distribution, police promotions and skytrain construction. Thus he should resign. Agriculture minister Chirikul Na Sukhothai wanted documentary proof from the opposition to confirm his corruption charge. He said he was happy to be investigated.

where: In a no-confidence debate at the Parliament.

When: Last night when the censure debate was nationally televised.

Why: The opposition party wanted the PM to resign to show his overall responsibility. Minister Chrikul Na Sukhothai demanded documentary proof so that he could set up an investigation team for the accusation.
How: The opposition called for a vote of no-confidence in the entire Cabinet. Minister Chirikul Na Sukhothai was happy to set up an investigation over the charges.

Activities

Exercise 1

Arrange the following information in the correct order to make a good political news story by writing 1,2,3… in the space provided.

Thanusak said he submitted a recording of the meeting to prove that the party leader and executive board violated party regulations and to show that the meeting did not comprise 40 to 50 members as claimed by some party members.

Prachakom Thai MP Thanusak Lekuthai of Uttaradit said the party’s executive board meeting on Monday violated party regulations, the political party law and the Constitution.

Prachakorn Thai rebels petition election panel

Thanusak ruled out seeking emergency protection from the Civil Court, saying that would be unnecessary since he believed the Election Commission would take the group’s complaint into consideration.

The party’s Regulation 43 stipulates that punishing any party member needs the consent of at least 20 party members. The meeting on Monday, however, was based on only Sanit
Srisamdaeng’s proposal. Monday’s meeting also violated the party’s Regulation 45 which states that accused member must be given the chance to prove their innocence.

(From The Nation, Thursday, June 11, 1998)

Exercise 2

From the political news above, identify the 5 Ws and H.

Who: ...........................................................................................................................
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What: ...........................................................................................................................
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Where: ...........................................................................................................................
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When: ...........................................................................................................................

Why: ...........................................................................................................................
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How: ...........................................................................................................................
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Exercise 3

Remove all the unnecessary words in the following sentences. You may need to rewrite some of them.

1. The Cabinet held a meeting for the purpose of checking plans for the new budget.

2. PM Chuan Leekpai decided to make a journey to Malaysia to join the APEC summit.

3. The no-confidence debate will be held beginning at 9 am. in the morning.

4. Voters are asked to bring I.D. cards with them.

5. The committee gave its approval.

6. It was the consensus of opinion that the debate was cancelled.

7. When PM Chuan Leekpai delivered his speech, all the representatives in the Parliament were in silence.

8. At this point in time, the government can solve the traffic problem.
9. The government is now in a very unique situation.

10. For a period of one month this year, the Democrat Party had its office renovated.

Exercise 4

Choose the best headline for the following lead.

A group of “young blood” New Aspiration Party MPs plans to quit and set up a new political party if their recent push for party reforms fails.

........ Young blood New Aspiration Party sets up new political party
........ Young MPs leave NAP
........ NAP expels young blood group
........ Young blood NAP reforms party
........ Young reformers likely to quit NAP

Saraburi-- The Chat Thai Party yesterday held its annual meeting with its leader, Banharn Silpa-archa, emphasising the party’s role in developing the agricultural sector to help the country out of the economic slump.
CTP holds annual meeting

Banharn meets with CTP members

Banharn develops agriculture

Agricultural sector causes economic slump

Banharn lays emphasis on agricultural sector