

Countdown to Thailand's coup



Jan 23, 2006: Prime Minister **Thaksin Shinawatra** sells 49.6% family stake in telecoms company **Shin Corp** to Singaporean **Temasek Holdings** for tax-free \$1.9 billion

Feb: Tens of thousands of protesters gather in Bangkok demanding Thaksin's resignation

Feb 24: PM calls snap election

Mar: Demonstrators march on Government House and take over Bangkok's main shopping district, protesting over Thaksin's alleged abuse of power and his handling of Muslim insurgency in south

Apr 2: Election boycotted by three main opposition parties. Thailand's **King Bhumibol Adulyadej** calls situation a "mess" and orders Constitutional Court to sort it out. Election result ruled invalid – Thaksin takes seven-week break from politics

May: Thaksin returns as caretaker prime minister

Aug: Thaksin accuses several army officers of plotting to kill him after police find bomb in car near his house

Sep 16: Simultaneous explosions in Hat Yai, southern Thailand, rock nation. Thaksin's deteriorating relations with military over handling of insurgency worsen

Sep 19: Army Commander-in-Chief **Sonthi Boonyaklin stages bloodless coup and declares martial law while Thaksin is in New York for UN General Assembly**

Sep 20: Thaksin flies to London to join his daughter **Pinthongta**. His wife **Pojaman**, son **Panthongtae**, and daughter **Paethongtae** are expected to join him in exile. **Gen. Sonthi pledges to hand over power in two weeks to interim civilian government**