**Thailand’s Parliament Officially Invites Prince to Be King**

Thailand’s parliament has officially invited Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn to become the country’s next king.

The parliament acted after Thailand’s cabinet named the prince to be the new king.

The president of the National Assembly, Pornpetch Wichitcholchai, officially nominated the prince. He urged legislators to “give their blessings” to the new king. Parliament members then stood up and replied, “Long live the king.”

Thailand’s King Bhumibol Adulyadej died last month at the age of 88. He was the world’s longest serving monarch and served as king for 70 years.

The process for choosing a new king is described in a 1924 Thai law. The law gives the king power to choose who should succeed him. In 1972, Bhumibol chose Vajiralongkorn – his second child and only son - to be his successor.

The last step is for the prince to meet with leaders of the National Assembly before being formally named king. Government officials said that meeting is expected to happen soon.

The 64-year-old prince spends much of his time outside Thailand. He is often in Germany, where he owns property.

The prince has yet to gain the same respect in Thailand as his father. King Bhumibol was greatly beloved across Thailand, a mainly Buddhist country. He was known as ahumble leader who directed many social and economic development projects.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha said shortly after Bhumibol's death, the prince told him he did not want to immediately become king. He said he needed more time to mourn his father.

The government declared a full year of mourning for all public offices after the king’s death. Many Thais have dressed in black or white since then to honor him.

The king's remains have been on display at the Grand Palace in Bangkok so Thai people can pay their respects. His body will be cremated in a special ceremony likely to take place a year or more after his death.

The official coronation of Vajiralongkorn will happen after the cremation.

I’m Bryan Lynn.

**Words in This Story**

**blessing** – n. approval that allows something to go forward

**monarch** – n. a king or queen

**humble** – adj. not proud or believing you are important

**cremate** – v. to burn a dead body

**coronation** – n. a ceremony to officially crown a king or queen