

1. What was the most impressive moment for you, and why?

The most impressive moment for me was the speech of the leader of the progressive People's Party, Natthaphong Ruengoanyawut's, to the House in justifying why they voted for Anutin Charnvirakul, leader of the conservative Bhumjaithai Party, as Prime Minister. Natthaphong Ruengoanyawut justified his decision to elect Anutin Charnvirakul is not so that he can become leader to administer the country, but so that he could dissolve parliament, as per agreement. I find this statement very intriguing because he managed to balance political pragmatism and maintaining popularity with the supporters of the progressive cause. This is because he has to navigate between these two factors, and Natthaphong Ruengoanyawut framed the vote to initiate a government with greater legitimacy in the future to resolve the various issue pressing Thailand such as the tensions with Cambodia and the slow economic growth of the country in a snap election. Hence, he manages to justify both factors without sacrificing one and the other.

2. What was the most disappointing moment for you, and why?

The most disappointing moment for me was the decision of the Democrat Party to abstain from voting. This is because I felt like the Democrats have fallen from grace from being the leading right-wing party to a party unsure of its future as it would be logical sense for them to vote with the party most ideologically closest to them which is to vote Anutin Charnvirakul of the right-wing Bhumjaithai as Prime Minister. However, they abstained from voting, which shows that their political position is quite unsecure as they did not do their duties in Parliament to choose the country's leader. Despite this, it could also be a strategy for the Democrats to not vote for Anutin Charnvirakul as this would make them not to establishmentarian/conservative which could potentially attract voters from the progressive bloc to vote for them.

3. What do you think will happen in Thai politics over the next few months according to the outcome of today's House meeting?

It is most likely that Anutin Charnvirakul would likely pursue the agreements made with the People's Party as the Parliamentary arithmetic is not in his favour. This is because he heads a minority government that would be difficult to enact legislation without first acquiring the support of some opposition parties. Hence, it would be more advantageous for Anutin Charnvirakul to pursue promises made with the People's Party to host a snap election in 4 months' time, as he will most likely gain seats in the next general election as well, if he follows through with the deal because he would be seen as a candidate with integrity by the electorate. Meanwhile, the People's Party seem to suffer little from their arrangement with Bhumjaithai and hence they would likely maintain their large lead in Thai politics. Thus, with both factors in mind, we would likely see a two-party race between the progressive left, People's Party, and a broad right wing group of conservative right wing parties lead by Bhumjaithai with smaller parties like the Palang Prachrat Party, United Thai Nation Party, and the Democrats tailgating behind.

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