

State Formation and Pre-1932 Institutional Order: Monarchy, Bureaucracy, and Modernization

Politics and Government of Thailand

AUGUST 15, 2025



Topics

- Line Group & What's happening in Thai politics
- Thai Politics and Government before 1932
- In-class group activity: What's the form of government?

What's happening in Thai politics (#WHiTP)

- Starting today, **all students should be active in our LINE group** by engaging in **daily discussions about Thai politics**.
- We're calling this activity “**What's Happening in Thai Politics**”.
- Each day, please **share important news about Thai politics** and **exchange your thoughts** and **opinions** with your classmates in the group.
- To deepen our understanding of Thai politics and governance, every Friday **during the first hour of class**, we will select **one or two key terms** to study in detail together in the classroom.

Example

What's happening in Thai politics today?



อภิปรายงบประมาณ = Budget Debate

A process where elected representatives (MPs) review and question how public money will be spent, to ensure it is used effectively and transparently.



Government Budget Process in Thailand (2017 Constitution)

1. Drafting
(Executive)

2. First Reading
(House)

3. Committee Review

4. Second Reading
(House)

5. Third Reading
(House)

6. Senate Review

7. Royal Assent

8. Implementation
& Oversight

The process for **preparing, considering, and approving** Thailand's annual budget is outlined primarily in Sections 140–144 of the 2017 Constitution, supplemented by the State Fiscal and Financial Discipline Act B.E. 2561 (2018) and parliamentary rules.

Budget Preparation (Executive Stage)

- **Initiation:** The process begins with the **executive branch**. The Cabinet, through the **Bureau of the Budget** (under the Prime Minister's Office), prepares the **Annual Appropriations Bill**.
- **Guidelines:** The Cabinet sets budgetary priorities in line with the national strategy, development plan, and fiscal discipline law.
- **Drafting:** Ministries, departments, and agencies submit their budget requests. The Bureau of the Budget reviews, adjusts, and compiles them into a draft appropriations bill.
- **Timeframe:** The bill must be prepared in advance so it can be submitted to the House of Representatives **before the start of the fiscal year** (October 1).

Parliamentary Consideration

- **First Reading (Principle Approval)**
- The **House of Representatives** debates the bill in principle.
- If approved, a **Budget Scrutiny Committee** is appointed to examine details.
- Under **Section 144**, MPs may not propose any amendment that increases expenditure beyond what is proposed by the Cabinet, except for internal reallocation with Cabinet consent.
- **Committee Stage**
- The Budget Scrutiny Committee reviews each ministry's allocation and can recommend adjustments (within the constitutional limits).
- Ministers and agencies defend their proposals before the committee.
- **Second Reading (Section-by-Section Approval)**
- The House debates and votes on each section of the bill.
- **Third Reading (Final Approval)**
- The House votes on the bill as a whole. If approved, it is sent to the **Senate**.

Senate Consideration

- The Senate examines the bill but cannot amend it (Section 140).
- The Senate must complete its consideration within 20 days. If it does not act within this period, the bill is deemed approved.

Royal Assent

- Once both Houses approve, the bill is submitted to the **King** for Royal Assent and publication in the **Royal Gazette**.
- Upon publication, it becomes the **Annual Appropriations Act**.

Budget Execution and Oversight

- The Cabinet implements the budget according to the Act.
- The **State Audit Office** and parliamentary committees monitor spending for legality, efficiency, and transparency.

Key Constitutional Constraints (Section 144)

- MPs and senators cannot increase budget amounts.
- Any proposal that may increase expenditure must have the Cabinet's approval.
- The aim is to ensure fiscal discipline and avoid populist or unsustainable spending.



Thai Politics and Government before 1932

- Why 1932?
- What the periods should we start from?

