

[illegible]

Prem met with Chinese leaders, including Chinese President Xi Jinping and former Chinese premier Wen Jiabao, and showed friendliness to China on many occasions, Song Qingrun, a research fellow at the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations, told the Global Times.

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Prem said in a meeting with Wen in Bangkok in 2012 that Thailand would work with China to promote cooperation, noting that China had provided valuable assistance to Thailand during the 2011 flood.

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Song added that friendly Sino-Thai ties would not be affected by Thai politics.

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Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha said Thursday Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn had asked for time to mourn his father with the public before being enthroned.

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Xiaosong, an expert on Southeast Asian studies at the Guangxi Academy of Social Sciences, said that the revered king's death would to some extent affect the country given the major role he played in society and politics in the country, referring to some uncertainty, including the heir to the throne.

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However, "Thailand will not face turbulence," Gu said, noting that bilateral cooperation between China and Thailand will continue, including Thailand's first standard-gauge railway project.

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Construction on the 845 kilometer-long rail line was likely to start at the end of this year, Xinhua reported in September.

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The line from Kunming, Yunnan Province, will connect Thailand's Nong Khai Province with Bangkok and Rayong Province. It was launched in December 2015, about a year after the two countries agreed to develop Thailand's transportation infrastructure in 2014, according to Xinhua.

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Construction was delayed over negotiations on a few details, including cooperation models and responsibility share, Song said.

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