《英拉的大米补贴项目》

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Yingluck Shinawatra's rice subsidy program was a flagship policy of her administration. Her pledge to introduce it helped win her the votes of millions of Thai farmers. So how did it become part of a political crisis that ultimately led to her removal from office, and the possibility of a lengthy political ban?

In 2011, the Thai government began buying rice from farmers around $500 a ton -- 50 percent above market rates.But Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra’s flagship election policy soon ran into trouble, accumulating losses of more than 4.4 billion US dollars. It’s also been dogged by corruption allegations and rice storage has hit a 50-year-high.The program was strongly opposed by Thailand’s middle classes. Farmers growing other crops, such as rubber, were also resentful, citing the scheme as unfair.

In the face of huge political protests, Yingluck dissolved parliament in December. It meant her caretaker government lost its power to manage national finances.Around a million rice farmers didn’t get paid leading to more big protests.

In January, Thailand’s anti-graft commission formed an investigation team to look into the program.In February, the commission announced that there were enough grounds to show Yingluck may have abused her power, and even evidence of corruption in the program.

Yingluck denies dereliction of duty, and has said she’ll cooperate with the commission’s investigation.She could now pay a high political price for paying out high prices for rice.