

Bangkok Political Crisis Continues to Have Negative Impact on Thailand Tourism



Released on: April 28, 2010, 6:55

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Industry: [Travel](#)

Hotels emptying and travel services seeing steep drop in business as Thai capital remains dangerous for foreign tourists



28 April 2010 – The continuing clashes between government and demonstrators in the Thai capital of Bangkok and ongoing political instability have had a hugely negative effect on the country's tourist industry, reports leading Thailand travel website 1StopThailand.com.

While the protests have been limited to specific parts of Bangkok and have not directly affected visitors to the majority of the country's popular tourist destinations, the ongoing instability is still putting people off visiting Thailand. Since the beginning of April when the protests changed from being peaceful demonstrations to more violent

clashes, there has been a steep decline in visitors to Bangkok and users of travel services.

Hotel occupancy in Bangkok has fallen by between 40% and 50% for the time of year, meaning that accommodation occupancy stands at just 20% approximately. Four of Bangkok's largest shopping malls have been forced to close due to the protests and it is estimated that the political unrest is costing Bangkok businesses as much as \$30m per day.

Andrew Bond, editor of the 1StopBangkok.com website, commented, "The protracted political crisis arising originally from the 2006 coup has become a terrible drag on tourism and the Thai economy, tourists are still coming but the image of the country as a peaceful destination has taken a battering".

"Our 1StopBangkok.com website has seen a 20% fall in users since the unrest become more violent in April, and notwithstanding the end of the tourist season that's still a massive drop. So not only are people not visiting Bangkok in person, they're also not visiting Thailand 'virtually' either."

While certain areas of Bangkok such as the Silom commercial district and others continue to experience outbreaks of violence and remain dangerous to visitors, the majority of the capital is still safe to visit. There is some ongoing disruption to public transport in Bangkok too, so tourists should check in advance before travelling around the city. Thailand's famous holiday islands in south have seen no political problems at all while the trekking country in the north around Chiang Mai has also remained free of trouble.

Andrew Bond concluded, "The Thai authorities clearly recognise that there is a need for resolution of the current problems to encourage tourists back to the country, so we are hopeful that the unrest will not last too much longer. However anyone thinking of visiting Thailand and feeling put off by the situation should remember that the vast majority of Thailand's tourism destinations are as safe as they have ever been."

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About

1StopThailand.com

The 1stopthailand series aims to offer a 1 stop comprehensive tourist guide to online travellers, and includes more than 1000 content-rich pages across seven sites. Updated yearly, the sites also include more

than 2500 pictures, 150 video clips and detailed listings of tourist businesses and services. With our 'tell it like it is' policy we try to promote Thailand in a balanced and positive way, free of over-commercialised influence, or undue favouritism to advertisers, hotel affiliates or suppliers.

The sites are produced and managed by Insiteful Web Services, based in Chiang Mai, Thailand. All information on these sites is researched and written by us, using a well-developed network of travel writers in Thailand and several people work full-time to update and manage the site.

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