

Thais warned to stay off Twitter -- or face jail

July 3 2011



Thai policemen and officials give a final check to ballots and ballot boxes prior general election day at stadium in Bangkok. Thai police on Saturday warned election candidates and citizens not to use websites such as Facebook or Twitter to continue campaigning on the eve of the national vote -- or risk going to jail.

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"Police will work with hundreds of ICT (information and communication technology) officials to monitor all types of social media activities after 6:00pm," said national police spokesman Major General Prawut Thavornsiri.

"Any candidates or even ordinary people who convince others to vote for

someone face a six-month jail term or a 10,000-baht fine (\$324) or both," he said.

Thai election law prohibits all political campaigning from 6:00 pm (1100 GMT) the day before a vote.

The ban will be lifted at midnight on Sunday. [Alcohol sales](#) are also forbidden during those hours.

Thailand's political parties have taken to online social networking like never before during their campaigns, using an array of platforms including Twitter, [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) to reach voters.

Polls will be open from 8:00am Sunday until 3:00pm, with the first unofficial nationwide results expected by 9:00pm.

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Citation: Thais warned to stay off Twitter -- or face jail (2011, July 3) retrieved 11 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-07-thais-twitter-.html>

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