

Thailand buys Chinese tablet computers for schools

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A student browses through ebooks on a tablet computer in March 2012. Thailand on Thursday signed a multi-million dollar deal to buy hundreds of thousands of Chinese-made tablet computers for primary school children, an official statement said.

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The ruling Puea Thai party, linked to former Thai premier Thaksin Shinawatra, promised to issue free handheld computers to a million students as part of a raft of pledges that helped it to an election victory last year.

Other undertakings included a rise in the minimum wage and increased

rice prices for farmers, and Puea Thai -- led by Thaksin's sister Yingluck Shinawatra -- has been accused by the opposition of populism.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) minister Anudit Nakornthap inked a contract with [Shenzhen](#) Scope Scientific Development Co Ltd, one of four companies "suggested by the [Chinese government](#)".

"The first batch of 400,000 tablets, costing \$32.8 million, will be delivered within 60 days," he said in statement, adding that a repeat order would not exceed one million machines.

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