

Southeast Asia can't afford to meddle with nuclear energy

3A Another large electricity provider has decided to abandon the nuclear option. Duke Energy Corp announced it was ceasing plans to build a nuclear plant in Florida. The utility company instead plans to invest \$6 billion in solar panels. It is also going to set up hundreds of electric vehicle charging venues. The new plan involves the installation of 700MW of solar power over four years.

How does that relate to Thailand? Thai electric utility companies have not yet sworn off nuclear. So there's still a possibility of Chernobyl-like or Fukushima-like reactors getting built in Thailand in the future. Who wants those types of time bombs in their villages? Thai people should demand that EGAT and other electric providers swear an oath to never build nuclear power plants in Thailand. Anything less is vacillating.

Indeed, all of Southeast Asia should be a nuclear-free zone. Southeast Asia is a relatively small region, so any serious breach would likely adversely affect neighbouring countries. It wouldn't be good for relations if, for example, Vietnam or Indonesia had a Chernobyl-type breach, and radioactivity spread over neighbouring countries. Radioactivity knows no national boundaries.

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The mothballed Bataan Nuclear Power Plant in the Philippines. None of the 10 Asean countries is currently hooked up to nuclear power.

