

Dumping our coal plants in Cambodia is a terrible idea

Re: "Let's build our next coal-power plant in Cambodia", Editorial, February 9.

The Nation's editors should be ashamed of the editorial published on Friday. In the same issue that carries a Page-5 report about coal-fired power plants contributing to Bangkok air pollution, the main editorial proposes a "win-win" solution for the controversial coal-fired plants in southern Thailand: let's build them in Cambodia



instead, so our neighbours can earn some income, and we transport the generated power to southern Thailand, about 1,000 kilometres away. For a brief moment I thought the editorial was being sarcastic, but no, it was dead serious. This way of thinking is a "lose-lose" solution for all parties involved: in Cambodia excessive air pollution would put people's livelihoods at risk, while Thailand would miss an opportunity to promote power generation from renewable resources.

While most of the world is rightly outraged about the "America first" wind that blows through global climate change discussions, Thailand could choose for the future and emphasise power-saving measures and implementation of distributed, small-scale power generation – such as rooftop solar panels, biogas from municipal waste, small-scale wind-farms, and so on. Be creative, think "Thailand 4.0" (even better would be to prepare for Thailand 5.1), not a throwback to imperialist attitudes where you let the poor do the dirty work cheaply for the benefit of the rich.

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