

Thai crown prince to be proclaimed King Rama X

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Thailand's Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn is set to be proclaimed King Rama X late today in a live television broadcast from the Grand Palace in Bangkok.

Beforehand, the 64-year-old prince will preside over a religious ceremony marking the 50th day of funeral rites which began at the palace the day after his father King Bhumibol's death.

Vajiralongkorn has been the heir apparent to the throne since 1972 and is set to become the tenth king in the 234-year-old Chakri dynasty, which began with King Rama I.

Thailand's parliament formally invited Vajiralongkorn to become the country's next king on Tuesday.

In today's broadcast, which begins at 6.30pm (1130 GMT), Vajiralongkorn will accept the invitation in front of the portraits of his late father and his mother, who is currently unwell.

He will then address his audience, which will include Regent Prem Tinsulanonda and Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha, before holding a private meeting with the regent and key government figures.

Vajiralongkorn, the only son of King Bhumibol, also known as King Rama IX, did not immediately ascend the throne following his late father's death as traditionally practised, instead requesting more time to mourn.

His coronation will take place in a year's time, after his father has been cremated.

Today's religious ceremony will continue tomorrow, with Vajiralongkorn presiding over the rites on both days.

The Grand Palace is closed for both mourners and tourists on both days.

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