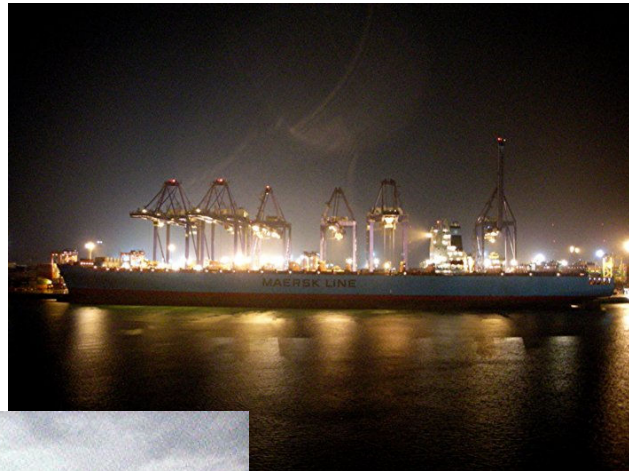


Day 30 (Sunday 10/19/08) Laem Chabang, Thailand

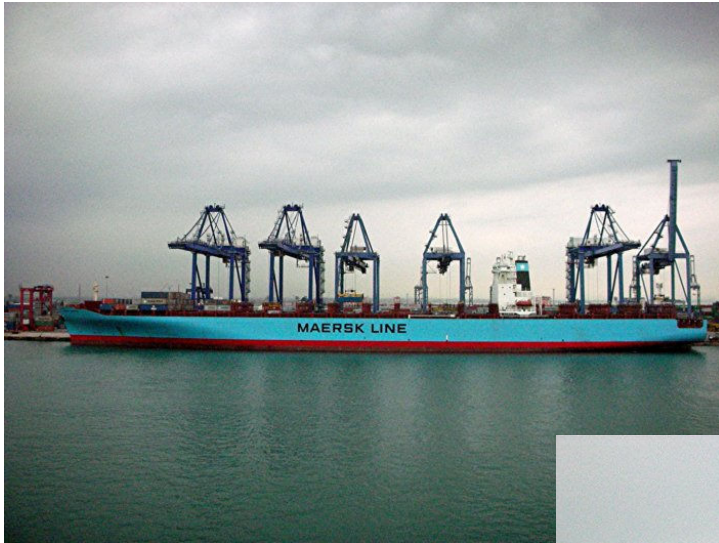
Today started with a lightning and rain storm before daylight in the harbor at Laem Chabang, Thailand. This is the rainy season and it is living up to its name. We had signed up for another all-day tour to Bangkok for shopping in several markets. Both of us were still fighting cold symptoms and not feeling great. We decided to skip the tour and stay on the ship for a day of rest.

The Amsterdam was docked across the inlet from container ships that were being unloaded by large cranes made for efficient loading and unloading of containers. The Maersk Line ship nearest to us had been unloaded and was in the process of being loaded with containers. This may be something only an ex-sailor or engineer would be interested in. The operation went on through the night and morning hours without stop. The photo on the right shows how the operation looked in the dark of early morning hours with rain pouring down. Later in the day the loading



was still going on. Since the containers were being put below deck we couldn't see the progress that had made. In the photo on the left the second and fourth cranes from the left have empty container grippers returning to the dock for reload while the fifth crane has a container being lowered into the ship's hold.

Finally, about 5pm the forward hold apparently was filled and, as shown in the photo on the left, they started loading containers directly on the top deck. Back at the third crane from the left the loading of containers into the amidships hold was still going on.



The fact that containers were being loaded on top of the forward deck is more obvious in the photo below.



Before we could witness the complete loading of all the decks along the length of this ship, the Amsterdam got underway.

Presumably when the Maersk ship is completely loaded it will sink down with the added weight until the water line is near the top of the red band on the hull.

It reached 92 degrees F in temperature at noon today and the humidity was high. In our kick-back mode we rested up and finished writing yesterday's blog. We also took a short walk off the ship over to the Cruise Terminal where local merchants had set up some stalls to display and sell their wares as shown below. Prices were not great. Orlin got a couple souvenir Thailand polo shirts for \$12 each.



By evening we were feeling much better. Good news from the home front that daughter-in-law Becky is continuing to make good progress in recovery from back surgery helped us along. The Amsterdam got underway about 6pm in the midst of a tumultuous lightning and rain storm. The ship is now headed for the island of Ko Samui. Ko Samui is part of Thailand and it is located about half way down the Malay Peninsula few miles off the eastern coast. We will be landing in the harbor at Na Thon in the morning.