

## Thailand to Reopen Border With Laos

Bangkok

Thailand will reopen its border with Laos tomorrow as a new year's gift to the Laotian Communist regime and to the three million people of Laos, Foreign Minister Chatichai Choonhavan announced yesterday.

Chatichai said the Laotian government has promised that its forces will refrain from shooting at Thai gunboats on the Mekong River, which forms the 800-mile border between the two countries.

The Thai government stopped traffic from Thailand across the river on November 18 following a two-day exchange of fire in which a Thai patrol boat was badly damaged and grounded and a Thai naval officer was killed.

The closing of the border cut off one of Vientiane's major sources of supply. The Soviet Union, China and North Vietnam are reported to be sending food and other supplies by truck and plane.

*Associated Press*