

**National Broadcast**  
**by**  
**General Prayut Chan-o-cha, Prime Minister**  
**September 19, 2014**

Greetings Dear Thai citizens,

This past week was extremely delightful for all Thais as we were able to see Their Majesties return to Klai Kangwon Palace, Hua Hin following a visit to Siriraj hospital for physical examinations. Crowds of Thai subjects lined both sides of the street to greet Their Majesties waving national and royal flags as they rejoiced in unison with “Long Live the King and Queen”. It was especially most touching when Their Majesties smiled and waved to the crowds; further bringing happiness to all Thais.

The past week was also the first week for the Cabinet to fully perform its duties following the Policy Statement to the National Legislative Assembly. Assignments to the 5 Deputy Prime Ministers have already been made. Gen. Prawit Wongsuwan will be responsible for security affairs (Ministry of Defense; Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment; Ministry of Interior; Ministry of Labor). M.R. Pridiyathorn Devakula will be responsible for economic affairs (Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives; Ministry of Transport; Ministry of Information and Communication Technology; Ministry of Energy; Ministry of Commerce; Ministry of Industry). Mr Yongyuth Yuthawong will be responsible for educational affairs (Ministry of Social Development and Human Security; Ministry of Science and Technology; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Public Health). Gen. Tanasak Patimapragon will be responsible for foreign and other related affairs (Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Tourism and Sports; Ministry of Culture). Dr. Wisanu Krue-Ngam will be responsible for judicial affairs (Ministry of Justice, and judicial organizations and offices). I have also handed down policies to high-level executives of public offices yesterday. All of us in the government, public officials, civilians, police, and military, will perform our duties for the best interests of the people with equality, transparency, and impartiality.

## **National Reform**

- Regarding Reform issues - on September 12 Selection Committees for the National Reform Council (NRC) met to discuss guidelines and criteria on the selection of NRC members in each field. On September 15, the second meeting was held. A few more meetings are expected to be held to finalize 50 shortlisted candidates from each field for further nomination to NCPO for final consideration. I have been reported that the compilation of information on provincial NRC member nominations has already been complete. From now a meeting will be held to shortlist five nominees from each province for the NCPO's consideration. After this, the NCPO will make the final selection out of 550 shortlisted candidates from 11 areas, and 385 names from all provinces (five for each province). A total of 250 finalists will be selected, 173 of whom are experts in the 11 areas, and 77 are provincial representatives. The National Reform Council will then work according to set procedures in order to mobilize national reform in all necessary areas; from which we will then build a stronger nation.

## **Heavy rainfall situation**

Regarding heavy rainfall in the kingdom - since 26 August, 29 provinces, 77 districts, 204 sub-districts, 826 villages, and almost 20,000 households have been affected by floods. Currently, the situation has alleviated in 25 provinces, but the floods are still ongoing in four provinces, 10 districts, 45 sub-districts and 241 villages, namely, Sukhothai, Phitsanulok, Phichit, and Nakhon Sawan. The Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM), civil volunteers, the military and other related agencies have continued to provide assistance. The weather situation still remains a concern as there is vulnerability for floods, storms, landslides, and high seas. Let me assure you that the government and related agencies have been closely monitoring the situation. The people are also urged to follow up on weather forecasts and information to ensure precaution by all sectors. We have ordered concerned agencies to alert the people in advance before immediate mitigation and assistance. During 15-18 September the DDPM issued warnings to 18 coastal provinces along the Andaman Sea and the Gulf of Thailand. Please keep the people informed and closely monitor the situation. Fishing boats, small ships, and tourist boats in particular, must safeguard themselves from any possible water accidents.

On 12 September 2014, I went to visit flood victims at Kong Krai Lat District, Sukhothai Province. Concerned government authorities took the trip with me, in particular General Chatchai Sarikalya, Minister of Commerce, who is responsible for water management issues; Dr. Royol Chitradon, Director of Hydro and Agro Informatics Institute; the Director-General of the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (civil division); the Sukhothai Governor, and other concerned authorities. We visited the site and studied a number of problems. Related resolutions were suggested by the Governor and the local people on four approaches of water management, that is: increasing and developing Kaem Ling areas, reviewing regulations on water tunneling in Yom and Nan rivers, reviewing the reporting system for rainfall in each province, and increasing river capacity through dredging.

At the end of this month, the water management plan will be proposed to the cabinet. Meanwhile for immediate action, a FY2014 budget of about 10 billion Baht from the previous administration will be reallocated to mitigate flood disaster in Yom River basin and other area by ways of: 1) accelerating water drainage from the main river to the Kaem Ling, and; 2) dredging the river to speed up drainage and store water in deep retention areas. I have also discussed with the Sukhothai Governor about digging drainage tunnels near multiple roads that are blocking waterways. Construction of a dam in the Yom River basin and others has not been discussed nor implemented. This will take some time as we need to discuss with concerned agencies to what extent constructing a dam would resolve flooding problems; how much the people would benefit from it; and whether they are happy about the construction. Please do not prematurely make reference to things that have not happened, otherwise it may disrupt problem solving for the whole system.

**Regarding the tragedy of foreign tourists traveling in Thailand at Koh Tao -** I have ordered the people in charge to search for the culprit to bring them to immediate justice. Currently, it is unclear who the murderer is. However, progress has been made continuously. Related authorities and government officers have been assigned to ensure safety at tourist attractions. The people and volunteers must also engage in assisting and monitoring for the sake of safety.

### **Economic progress:**

Regarding investment promotion and marketing - the Government's economic policy implementation will be divided into three phases: the urgent phase that needs immediate actions, the intermediate phase that will deal with pending fundamental problems, and the long-term phase in which we will lay a foundation for sustainable and strong growth. We have stimulated investment by expediting the approval process for potential investment projects. In the first eight months of 2014, from January to August 2014, a total of 886 investment proposals worth 416.5 billion baht were submitted to the BOI. It is obviously a positive trend compared with those during the previous 7 months. Among the proposals seeking investment support in the first eight months of 2014, 458, or 52%, were new projects that had never been invested in Thailand. This reflects confidence of new investors towards investment in Thailand.

**Regarding improvement of public services** – the NCPO and government have set a policy to improve public services by establishing one-stop service centers to provide advice, useful information, and assistance to the public in which ever areas needed. The Damrongdhama Centers, set up by Ministry of Interior, has been well supported by other ministries and government units and have thus yielded concrete results in many provinces and districts. Concerned authorities and agencies are very much appreciated for their efforts. Thank you.

However, some services need to be further improved for more efficiency. I was informed that the Ministry of Interior is organizing the “Training Program for Grievances Data Entry Officers and Call Center 1567 Officers of Damrongdhama Center” at the TOTs training center. Participants include 200 Damrongdhama Center officers based at central and regional offices. I hope that the Damrongdhama Centers would be able to continuously provide quick help and services to the satisfaction of people.

**Regarding the issue of migrant workers** - based on the reorganization of the registration system implemented by NCPO, a total of 1,088,306 migrant workers (1,024,686 of whom were workers and 63,620, their dependents), and 206,678 employers have registered since May 22.

The top three provinces where migrant workers were registered are Bangkok (230,119 people), Chonburi (76,330 people), and Samut Sakhon (75,659 people).

The top three business categories having the most number of registered migrant workers are construction business (451,564 people), agriculture and animal farming (209,024 people), and services (127,631 people).

**Legal framework and important judicial procedures:**

The Anti-Money laundering office (AMLO) has established the AMLO Financial Information Cooperation System (AMFICs) in order to reduce excessive burden and expedite transferring of financial information from Financial Institutions to related government agencies. I have also urged the banking industry, particularly, the Thai Bankers' Association to cooperate by sending us information concerning financial transactions, upon request through legal channels. The purpose is to prevent and suppress money laundering, illegal transactions related to narcotics, and financial crimes involving corruption. The Ministry of Justice intends to amend the Anti-money Laundering and Prevention Law in accordance with international standards. An issuing of the drafted Financial Transaction Evidence Law is aimed to accelerate the processes in accumulating evidence and for government agencies in tracking criminals in complicated cases whether it be economic crimes, narcotics crimes or crimes from corruption. These are the NCPOs and Government's core agenda.

**As for the next phase of the Government and NCPO;** this is considered to be a crucial phase that includes public administration, reform, and reconciliation - all of which I have already mentioned before. Our key objectives are: permanently reducing inequalities in society/ promoting reconciliation and building national unity; suppressing corruption in every dimension; creating sustainable reform; meeting the public's expectation as much as possible; instilling the 12 core Thai values; promoting loyalty to the nation, religion, and the Monarchy; raising income for citizens from every sector and every group, through means that are just; enhancing the quality of life by applying the Economic Self-Sufficiency Philosophy; strengthening fruitful relationships with neighboring countries and the international community through mutual trust, seeking all kinds of cooperation with transparency and equity; building trust among government/ private sector

/civil society / and the public with government officials as supporting mechanisms and outstanding government officials of His Majesty the King, who have devoted themselves to public service, as the key driving force.

In steering our nation forward, the country relies on three pillars that would need to be robust and equivalent to advanced nations. We have both crisis and opportunities; we are a partner and a competitor in the global market. We need to take action quickly on this issue, especially by enhancing the country's competitiveness in sectors such as agriculture and industry, as well as the promotion of large business and SMEs.

As for ways to resolve productive land use problems - there are many lingering problems, including the encroachment of forests, national parks, and crown property lands. We need to resolve this through integrating the legal framework, revising rules and regulations to be more appropriate and fair. We will urgently assist those without land to make their living.

On the matter of **the media**: This is an important issue. Certain newspapers and news agencies have yet to improve themselves. There continues to be false information reported in the news. Let me reiterate what has happened before and expand on what is important and what had given rise to all the divisions in society, whether it is through newspapers, magazines, cable TV, social media, or local radio. Some of them have tried to justify their position by saying that they have done was patriotic and based on fairness, for democracy and other reasons. However if another confrontation were to happen again because of this misleading news reporting, we cannot reform the country. You have to join us in being responsible and accountable because these conflicts stem from false/corrupted information. I ask for your cooperation, please do not force us to use more laws as there will be inconveniences to journalists, the press, radio channel, and television channels. In the past, we have all suffered as the press violated the rules that were agreed upon, including an agreement with the controlling agency.

Some media have started condemning and providing false information again, with some truths omitted, some issues exaggerated, and some news reported without scrutiny. Several legal cases have marred by irresponsible new reporting causing damage to the accused before the judicial process has been completed. We must

wait until the judicial procedure takes its course. This is a major challenge for the government. However those who have proposed improvements to this situation have already been denounced. Let us all listen to what we have to say, how we want to solve the issue and then examine the procedures to see whether it was carried out correctly. We will never make progress if all government proposals are denounced before they are even discussed. Our problem will never be solved. I urge all of us to help thwart this behavior, especially those who do not intend to improve our country or help in reconciliation.

At present, according to Dusit Poll, people don't want to see any more conflict and they are satisfied with reconciliation and the initiative to build Thai values and ethics while joining forces to strengthen democracy for Thailand. Some say military officers are too good at public relations. Let me say that the military, according to our doctrine, is based on taking real action before proclaiming any achievement, which is better than some who say a lot but do nothing.

**As for the populist policy terminology,** I have no problem with it if it does not create more problems in the future. But if what was done causes the Government to be in further debt and having to seek loans through increasing public debt or having an individual receiving more benefit than others from corruption, without transparency, with citizens receive only minimal benefit - this would have to be eliminated. We also need to see whether investors have benefitted more than the public; or whether it is corrupted officials who have benefitted. We need to see what has been done and if this will cause problems in the long-run.

As for the four basic needs for better living standards – this policy must not turn out to be populist in the sense that purchased items eventually cannot be paid back through installments thus causing further debt. Today we would have to consider these problems - public debt and household debt. We cannot create unbalanced demand in production, because it doesn't reflect reality.

Some would say I am speaking more like a politician. Let me explain that I think like a soldier. Soldiers think of results first because we have limited time and financial resources. Therefore, what I am highlighting now are the real needs and concerns of the people, not the needs of a political faction or interest groups, or an obligation to fund political parties, other issues of this sort such as the need to

maintain a support base. We are here to mobilise every agency to perform - with expertise from professionals, and experts in various fields, all of us. Let us put our heads together and take action and coordinate with government officials from every sector. We need to listen to the people; we will not use the taxpayer's money or official budgets that would cause long term problems. We will not create a huge public debt that will never be paid, or one that prevents future budgets from developing the country or looking after all our citizens.

This government will prioritize its duties according to urgency. What is done first, will be tangible; will be done immediately and effectively. These then would be handed over to the next government, so I ask that future politicians prepare themselves. What cannot be done in a short term, you would have to continue. Citizens will need to evaluate, monitor and be mindful of government performance. For politicians who cannot prepare themselves, or are unwilling to change their behavior - if you are elected to manage the country again, you will continue to cause problems in the future. You need to prepare yourself.

Another issue - I realize sometimes I would say something to the public which may have used inappropriate words, some impolite, some with too strong phrasing. I am just expressing how strongly I feel about certain issues; how most of us feel about these issues. We must come together to solve these important issues. I have tried to improve myself continuously. I have been a soldier for almost all my life, 38 years in the army, spending most of my time with fellow junior officers. A gentleman must apologise if he has said things that are impolite or inappropriate. I respect and honour everyone.

On the subject that I mentioned about tourists and certain attire - I am not blaming you in anyway. That was not my intention. I was commenting about safety and how in some situations, there may be the need to take extra precautions. I am sorry that my words have caused anguish for many. I especially would like to convey my deepest personal condolences to the families of the tourist who have lost their loved ones. I am sorry for everyone. For what I said that was inappropriate or too strong, I would like to apologise. As a gentleman I take responsibility for my words and actions; I apologise to you.



I have to ask Ms. Kritsuda to please stop blaming government officials and making false accusations against them. As a gentleman, I am sorry that I have used strong words to you at times. I have expressed myself strongly because you have accused the armed forces of many issues over the years. And those accusations are untrue. I am sorry for such impolite sayings.

As for the attacks on foreign tourists and student gang clashes as a whole - this should no longer happen. Everyone must assist in fixing this problem, whether it is the government sector, the public or civil society. We must create knowledge about this and consider the nation's interests. Thailand must be a safe country for all visitors. Thailand must improve its tourism industry and service sectors as they play an important role for our country's development and progress. If this continues, we would waste our annual budget and efforts; we would have no future.

As for student gang clashes - you are wasting your own opportunities and tarnishing our international reputation. Today we are taking full legal action. What perplexes me is the fact that even with strong laws, things like this still happen; which means people are not afraid of the law. What should we do now once basic law is not effective? Should we seek for new measures? I don't want things like this to happen again and neither do the people of Thailand. I am very sorry to see casualties and deaths. Citizens in the country must be diligent and make this an issue of priority so as not have this happen again. We must begin with preventive and suppressing measures, because we are talking about lives being taken away.

Issues that need to be discussed, I shall keep referring to them. Today I apologize for having spoken too hastily and inappropriately/too strongly. I ask for cooperation from all sides. I apologise to you and respect you all. But with some media being cautious in publicizing my modified pictures, some with civilians taking part; these have caused offence to others and even our highest institution. All of this, I consider to be inappropriate. It is pointless.

As for taxes and other issues -we are still considering them, whether it be inheritance taxes, land taxes. They are still being examined by the National Legislative Assembly. I have just started to study the issue, by analyzing it and correlating it with information provided by government agencies. I have given

some guidelines on how it would be formalized and how it could be realized in every sector. Specifically for those who have low income, don't be afraid. You don't have to sell your land to pay for taxes, it is not like that. There are people who are trying to create misunderstanding. Let us wait to hear what needs to be explained and what needs to be revised.

Now that we have to solve corruption in every dimension - I have to monitor every sector. This must be reemphasized. How can we move our country forward if we don't do so? We have implemented our national strategy on how we will progress the next 5 years, 10 years, and 15 years, in accordance to the economic and national development plan. As for investment in infrastructure, fundamental development, or comprehensive reform - there needs to be continuity. Today we can only manage urgent issues and implement certain fundamentals to move Thailand forward. This is our national strategy, it would have to reflect our national objectives and follow national policy, along with national security strategy, economic strategy, social strategy etc. All of this would have to be strengthened and we need to work together so we can then implement our national strategy. We all want advancement; we all want to develop our country.

Soon, next year, the AEC take effect and will steer ASEAN's economies. The AEC will present us with many challenges. There will be strong competition. Mobilization of personnel and resources pertaining to commerce and trade will be unrestricted. We need to build security, foster unity. If we can do it today and be competitive, we can then compete with others. If not, then in the future, we cannot compete with anyone, whether it is in terms of human capital, knowledge capabilities, business operations, or innovation. All of this, we need to urgently bring forth. I see that there are a lot of businesses that are developing innovative products. We want to do what drives our country forward. Thank you very much, that is all I have to say for today.

Thank you very much.

Sawasdee.