

National Broadcast
By
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29 August 2014

- Good evening, dear citizens. We meet again as usual. On the occasion of His Majesty's Royal Command appointing me as Prime Minister, I wish to express my deepest gratitude for His royal grace. This has been the highest honour of my life – and not only for myself, but for my entire family. I am conscious of the great duty before me. I thank the National Legislative Assembly and fellow citizens for their support and placing confidence in me to administer state affairs forthwith. I am happy to bear the responsibility in moving the country towards a sustainable future. From now on, I will be responsible for moving the country and the people forward and working together in national development for the benefit of all.

- In the second phase, the administration of the country by the government, Prime Minister and Cabinet will be in parallel with the NCPO's handling of immediate issues that require quick action. This will be determined through close consultations on the modes of operation while being careful not to infringe upon each other's responsibilities. There will also be mechanisms for checks and balances to ensure transparency, integrity and fairness. I wish to urge everyone not to be overly concerned about the individuals. Today, we have to work rapidly on strengthening every system to be more resilient against corruption, especially in our public service, be they civil servants, police or military, and the related private sector.

- Government agencies at the central, provincial and local levels must strengthen themselves in order to support the reforms that will ensure that the politicians will have a system of good governance in the administration of the country, so that they can work together to lead the country into the future. However, the people are the most important component to ensure that our current administration will be able to successfully solve the various problems that beset this nation – be they security, economic, social, cultural, and legal and justice systems. The economic sector in particular, is facing many challenges. Everyone, including public and private sectors, farmers, and the general public have to cooperate to overcome these challenges.

Problems facing Thailand

- Our nation has accumulated a host of significant problems that need to be addressed quickly in order to be ready for the ASEAN Community.

- **On security**, there are many problems as already mentioned before. Among them are the three Southern Border Provinces, violation of human rights, human trafficking and forced labour, and mafias and influential figures. There are also border problems, including border demarcation, illegal migrants, and smuggling. In addition, there are domestic security issues such as narcotics, crime, proliferation of war weapons, gambling, and foreign labour. We have already addressed some of these issues.

- **On the economy**, we must proceed in a concrete manner in accordance with the National Social and Economic Development Plan and in tune with global trends. Measures include the promotion of investments in various sectors, the narrowing of social inequality, generating income for farmers and those with low income, reform of the tax system in a just manner, and alleviation of the people's basic living needs.

- These are some of the important economic challenges, in particular how to develop our competitive capacity to equal that of other countries in our region and how to link our economy to the region to prepare for the ASEAN Community. We found that Thailand's competitiveness is average. Some of the key weaknesses lie in our administrative system, lack of infrastructure, effective education system and innovativeness. Our laws and services for facilitating the business sector remain a major obstacle to foreign investors. Judging from our present capacity, the Thai economy will require another 12 years to escape the Middle-income Trap to become a High-income country. At the same time, some of our neighbours will already have developed into High-income countries in the next six years. So Thailand will have to accelerate our efforts. Furthermore, the ASEAN Community that will emerge in 2015, which has the economy as one of the three pillars, will pose another important challenge for Thailand. We must raise our competitiveness to equal that of our neighbours, especially with some countries that can be considered to be both partners and significant economic competitors.

- In sum, our economic problems can be summarised as follows: (1) The Middle-income Trap, where we will be unable to compete with other countries with cheaper labour and countries with greater technological development; and (2) Our stagnant competitiveness level despite the greater liberalization and competition in trade and investment.

- **The social and cultural challenges** that face us include the education system, how to instil conscientiousness into our youths, how to sustain Thai culture in the long-term, how to safeguard our natural resources, how to instil values, solve environmental problems, and land-related problems.

- At the moment, a chronic problem – and one that seems to be growing – is the increasing disparity in earning opportunities, income distribution, wealth distribution that is unjust, especially in education. Many of the poor lack the opportunity to study in high school, college or university. The quality of Thai education also needs to be continuously developed. Access to financial services is

still limited though it is an important component that will help to expand earning opportunities. Consequently it is very difficult for people to escape the cycle of poverty.

- Today's aging society will also have a direct and negative impact on the nation's competitive edge, since it will limit our labour force, while the population of the elderly who rely on the labour force will increase exponentially. There will also be an additional burden on the nation's budget through the increased expenditure on the elderly via social security schemes. Therefore, Thailand must speedily adjust our state social welfare system, so that the needs of the elderly will be looked after in an appropriate fashion. It is an inherent Thai culture to take care of parents and the elderly as best we can. It is pleasing to note that people's longevity has increased in this day and age but we still need appropriate measures to take care of this group of people.

- **On the environment**, the problems include the encroachment and destruction of natural resources and the forest, waste disposal, pollution from the industrial sector and urbanization. Another clearly seen problem arises from the consequences of pushing for economic policies unfriendly to the environment, which has severely eroded our natural resources. In the past, the Thai economy has grown hand-in-hand with pollution. Thailand's carbon dioxide emissions have continuously grown, while the ratio between our use of energy and our energy imports to our national GNP has jumped. Although we have made use of recycled materials, which is starting to gain some popularity in the past few years, the proportion of our use of these materials has not grown significantly. Therefore, the state sector should persuade consumers and producers to change their behaviour to be more environmental friendly. Moreover, the problems of pollution and natural disasters are becoming more severe across the planet. Part of the problem comes from the widening pursuit of economic interests, which has increased the rate of destruction of natural resources. The state must, therefore, have a system to assist, ameliorate, and protect victims of natural disasters in a timely manner.

- **The challenges in legislation and the legal process** include the reform of archaic laws that do not conform to international laws and obligations. There are also laws amended by the public sector in order to facilitate the activities of the people and ensure greater fairness but were stuck in various processes under the previous governments. The NCPO has sent some of these drafts to the National Legislative Assembly for expeditious consideration. All of these drafts have already passed the due consideration of the related agencies, including the NCPO, acting in the capacity of the Cabinet. Foremost in our consideration has been to update archaic legislations and to solve the problems of the people.

- Corruption has been deep-rooted in Thai society. The problem needs to be seriously addressed now. In order to see concrete and rapid progress within one year, we require the cooperation of all sectors, including the state and private sectors, civil society, and the population at large. Anti-corruption values should be instilled and severe penalties be handed down for those guilty of corruption. The

procurement system, the process of transferring and appointing civil servants, the exercise of power by state agencies, and good governance in state owned enterprises should be looked at in conjunction with legislative reforms that will update our laws to conform to international norms. These legislative reforms may include consideration of whether or not corruption-related crimes should have a statute of limitations, increases in the penalties for corruption-related crimes that may extend to both the donor and recipient where, in the past, operators in the private sector who were involved in corruption were not prosecuted for offering bribes to state officials.

- I have also heard concerns from certain sectors that the NCPO has not included the prevention and tackling of corruption in the 11-point Reform Agenda. I wish to state here that the NCPO gives extreme importance to this matter and see it as one of the first issues that need to be tackled by reforms. The prevention of corruption is a massive, cross-cutting issue that affects everything. If we specified it as one of the main agendas for reform, corruption will not be covered in all dimensions. Therefore, we have decided to set corruption prevention as an important condition for every reform agenda, including political reform, administrative reform, legal reform, as well as reforms in the legal process, local administration, education, economy, energy, public health and environment, media, society, and other sectors. All sectors must be rid of corruption, as stated in Section 27 of the Provisional Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2557 (2014), which stipulates that the National Reform Council has the duty to study and give recommendations for reform in various sectors, so that the democratic form of government with the King as Head of State will be developed as appropriate for the Thai social context. This includes having an election system that is honest and fair, accompanied by effective mechanisms to prevent and eliminate corruption and dishonest behaviour, while eliminating inequalities and promoting socio-economic fairness for sustainable development. This system will ensure that state mechanisms will be able to serve the people in an inclusive, convenient and responsive manner under the strict and fair implementation of the law.

Issues of importance that is affecting the public and requiring urgent attention

- Development of a democratic system that is right, comprehensive, internationally accepted and appropriate for Thailand.
- The 11 main reform issues undertaken by the National Reform Council will also help in responding to current and future economic challenges. Part of our preparations include the establishment and working of several Policy Committees to address the problems of basic needs and other pressing issues endured by the public, as well as to lay the foundations of important infrastructure for national development will include a Committee on Rice Policy and Management, a

Committee for Water Policy and Management, a Strategy Committee for commercial viability of four Agricultural Products (corn fodder, tapioca, palm oil, sugar cane), a Committee on National Energy Policy, a Committee on the Management of Migrant Workers and Human Trafficking, and Committee on the for Special Economic Development Zone Policy, and a Committee to oversee the operations of state owned enterprises. The issue of corruption prevention will also be considered under these mechanisms and reform agendas.

- **On management of natural resources**, prevention of encroachment and addressing the issue of land productivity, we should consider making use of unused state-owned lands, including degraded forest lands that are currently unable to be restored and other neglected or unoccupied lands - by allocating them to the people to make use of in order to make a living. These will become land with economic benefits that the community will help look after and plant more trees. However, the ownership of the lands remains the state's. Such reforestation practices are in conformity with the concept of the Community Food Banks initiated by Her Majesty the Queen who has prompted us to look into how to make the people live in harmony with forests in way that they could also benefit from the forests. If we prohibit people from making use of the forest areas then there will be no one to look after the forests. So it is better to have people look after the forests by planting more trees while deriving benefits from the area. Through this approach Her Majesty envisions that forests will be healthier and the people will have a better living. So we have to balance the two elements.

- **Management and establishment of cooperatives** under the principle of good governance, which His Majesty the King has promoted throughout the years, will help to, raise the standard of living for farmers who make up the majority of the population. Cooperatives help to promote business partnerships between farmers; foster mutual assistance; resilience; knowledge; modernisation; and communal assistance. Cooperatives are guided by moral and ethical principles so as to improve the quality of life both in the economic and social dimensions.

- I would like to commend the case of a cooperative set up in Roi Et Province which was in the news recently. Farmers there have joined together to set up a rice mill and buy good quality jasmine rice from the local area at a rate higher than the market price. I consider this to be a pioneering project which is funded by the people and the private sector without having to wait for help. This is commendable and I urge others to study the operations from the cultivation, harvesting, milling, selling and packaging. The packaging reflects well known local designs. The rice is gaining popularity and widely sold in stores.

Country Strategy

- We have many national strategies covering various dimensions. We need to adhere to these strategies and make adjustments according to the evolving global situation as well as ASEAN. Therefore, in order to find concrete and tangible solutions to the problems, the Cabinet that is to be appointed will need to adhere to

the strategy for national administration and make adjustments accordingly. The country strategy will require plans of action, projects, and budgeting that reflects continuity. Short term and long term plans must be developed in line with the 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan and subsequent development plans for continuity and sustainability.

Progress on work carried out in the previous week:

- **On the Ebola outbreak** – the NCPO attaches high priority and in its meeting last Tuesday approved an urgent budget for improving the screening process for passengers arriving from risk countries. The NCPO has instructed that an additional budget be allocated to prepare dedicated treatment rooms, procurement of medical equipment and protective and anti-contamination gear for various hospitals. There is no need to panic. Health officials must also be careful not to get infected which may bring about cases where no one would want to receive treatment or the hospitals would not receive patients. I am very concerned and that is the reason for approving a budget of over 100 million baht to procure appropriate medical equipment. We will focus on areas where it is deemed urgent first before expanding to other areas.

- The NCPO has requested concerned agencies to provide regular updates and briefings to the staff, public health officials, and the general public in order to properly prevent an outbreak. The NCPO has instructed that every concerned agency monitor the situation closely at every conduit including by land, shipping, or air. Border check points must strictly monitor and observe the symptoms of possible carriers of the Ebola virus or other potent communicable virus. I would like the Public Health Ministry to provide information on potential harmful virus to all border check points, agencies and to the general public.

- I thank and commend the suspected patient who has returned from abroad for showing responsibility to society by cooperating and allowing herself to be monitored for a lengthy period of time until it was proven that she was not infected and has since been discharged. Thank you for being a good example and posed no burden on family or problems for other people. She visited the doctor to be under observation once she is aware of possible symptoms. So thank you once again for being a good example.

- **On the matter of finding a sustainable solution to informal debts to loan sharks** – the NCPO meeting has approved the measures that were proposed. The problem of informal loans has long been embedded in Thai society and there are many low income earners who have not had access to legal loan facilities. Previously, government agencies have tried to solve this problem but with not much success for several reasons, namely: no clarity in the criteria for solutions, uncooperative officials, no acceptable third party as negotiator for composition, and debtors without adequate collateral. The Ministry of Finance has come up with key measures to serve as sustainable solutions for addressing the problem of informal loans, including: allowing communities to have a greater role in finding

solution through community financial organisations; assigning specific financial institutions such Government Savings Bank and Agricultural Cooperatives Bank to deal with informal debts; and informal debt solving measures that takes into account the differences between urban and rural communities.

- **On the development of housing for low-income earners** – the NCPO has given approval to the investment plans for the housing development project at the 1st phase between 2014 – 2017, under the plan to revitalise the National Housing Authority. The NCPO has also approved the housing development project set 1 of 2014, which includes 38 projects in accordance with a resolution by the Committee on Economic Development of 3 October 2013. The details of the budget will be prepared by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security in cooperation with the Bureau of the Budget. Thus for collateral and payments of such loans, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security is requested to proceed according to rules and regulations and the Cabinet resolution. The development of housing for low-income earners must take into consideration matters that can facilitate those receiving such benefits, such as suitable areas to earn a living, access to markets and transportation facilities. Buses, trains and other means should be provided so that people can commute to make a living. However, such developments may take time.
- **On the restructuring of Thai Airways** – this past Saturday a meeting was held to discuss the company's business plans. Although Thai Airways is now operating at a loss, it is working on a solid foundation which should yield improvements in the future once there has been some restructuring and adjustments to the business strategy. The meeting was confident that the financial status of the company is not as problematic to the extent which has recently been reported in the news because there is an adequate level of cash reserves, shareholders holding over 46 billion baht worth of stocks, and a trend of passenger increase. Along with these many financial institutions have expressed a willingness to support the company and the Ministry of Finance stands ready to assist.
- **Regarding the NCPO's policy for farmers to have access to learning facilities in their own area about increasing productivity** – the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives has established Community Education centers to serve as a source of knowledge, with one center in each district, thus totaling 882 nationwide. Each Center will have varying information based on their own geographical differences such as types of soil, water resources, and climate conditions. This is so that they can effectively serve the community in which they are based. For example the Center in Bang Sai district in Ayutthaya Province will have knowledge on rice production since that area is most suitable for rice growing. This knowledge was selected from rice growers who had proven to be successful and can transfer know-how, while also serving as an example for other farmers. This transfer of know-how starts with adjusting previously held conceptions of farming to understanding the value of sufficiency in accordance

with the philosophy of sufficiency economy. From here this know-how is applied, thus leading to lower production costs and development of rice strains suitable to this area.

- Cultivation of crops should also correspond to the zoning of land that is being planned. Crop cultivation must be adjusted to be suitable to the geographic conditions of the area such as wet lands, dry lands and areas of sustained drought. I ask the Ministry of Agriculture to oversee this matter and the people to obtain information. If necessary, send representatives to the centers or invite experts to provide information and recommendations.

- **As for the scrutiny of state expenditures** by the Monitoring and Auditing Committee on Fiscal Expenditures and other bodies under NCPO, we have managed to reduce considerable budget for many projects without compromising the projects' core purpose and quality. This provides an example of when everyone and the state help in preventing corruption by monitoring potential collusion and conflicts of interest. Subsequent auditing by scrutiny teams can reduce the value of proposal estimates, procurement procedure, and TOR formulation.

Other Important Issues

- **On Local Administrations**, the NCPO encourages that improvements be made and organisational development is undertaken so that they will be better accepted by society. There has been no attempt to diminish your organisation's reputation or honour. There may be only a few that need improvement and development. We all should work together in this area as local administrations are closest to the people. Whether the benefits reach the people quickly or not depends on the performance of the Provincial Administration Organisations, the District Administration Organisations and Local Administration even though the budget may not be much.

- Thank you to those that have cooperated with the NCPO and moved forward with reform. The NCPO has not been unresponsive to your requirements. We are considering solutions for several issues such as selecting the right government officials to perform temporary duties in local administrations while local elections have been delayed. Other issues of concern for the local administrations could be brought before the National Legislative Assembly so that there is fairness and satisfaction for all sides. As for problems arising from action that has already been taken, we will try to resolve them so please be patient. The solution should be fair to all sides. If any urgent actions which had been undertaken upon the instructions of the NCPO were found to be in appropriate or pose further problems, you can submit proposals to the National Legislative Assembly. Other major structural changes could be brought before the National Reform Council. The people can then provide comments and suggestions.

I consider the participation of the people at the reform stage to be of utmost importance. NCPO can not push for every agenda.

- **On the matter of checks and balances in the judiciary processes** between the police, attorneys and administrative officials, we have initially addressed them to maintain order. We will then review and improve them so that they are on par with international standards by having the National Legislative Assembly further consider the matter.

- **Other reform movements, such that of the energy sector, the rubber industry or others**, should be brought before the reform agenda so that the entire system can be improved comprehensively. Matters such as adjustment of pricing structure of rice and rubber often involve many dimensions. So the overall picture should be addressed in the National Reform Council. As for issues requiring urgent resolution, the NCPO has consistently addressed them such as rice and energy. We have constantly worked with concerned agencies – Commerce, Industry and Agriculture ministries. The NCPO has never been unresponsive to the troubles and hardships of the people as we consider them to be of highest priority. We are considering how to prevent the problems from lingering into the future. Therefore I request for a break in protesting at this time.

- Yesterday, I met with several associations and we had great mutual understanding. Of vital importance is whether the full message is conveyed to others. My point is we need to come together collectively to resolve issues. If not the situation will return as happened in the past. We have been addressing problems in same manner for most of our lives and that is at the consequences rather than at the root causes. So we need to start tackling issues at the root causes and all the way until the consequences.

- We may face some legal limitations such as the continued application of martial law. The imposition of martial law was not meant to block anyone. I have not used martial law to block anyone but rather to ensure that peace and order of the nation is maintained. Do not worry if you have not done anything to create problems for peace and order and please make constructive proposals. Stop inciting people to protest and cause conflict otherwise the problem will not end. So I appeal for a break in protesting.

- Today we should tell people that martial law has brought peace and order to the country and not the other way around. Perhaps there might be some feelings of confinement. We always welcome foreign visitors. Actually, there is more safety and security now than before without martial law in effect. Please consider where the country stands at this juncture and what laws should be enforced, otherwise there will be disorder all over again. But it does not mean that we are blocking anyone. Feel free to make your proposals at the appropriate setting. We will provide a venue and officials to engage in genuine civil debate and discussions. We cannot correct everything immediately. This is an important matter for us.

and household sectors. This will help us decide on where and how the electricity power plants should be built. A clear and comprehensive set of strategies consisting of short- and long-term measures must be developed. The NCPO has approved urgent projects to replace those that are about to expire, for example, the Mae Moh Power Plant Units 4-7 Replacement Project as the Units will expire in 2017. Others include the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand's project to extend transmission lines Phase 12, transmission system development projects in the western and southern regions in order to enhance security of electricity supply and to prevent power failures and power shortages in the south. The NCPO also approved the Board of Investment of Thailand's promotion of investment in waste-to-energy facilities and renewable energy power plants. Last week, 3-4 projects had been approved to encourage the use of waste-to-energy supply and other renewable energy. We have clearly announced our policy to prioritize the consideration for projects that does not have environmental impact and are environmental-friendly. Government promotion will particularly focus on such projects.

- In the past, we have never clearly specify the criteria on where, how and when the projects will be carried out which caused conflict problems. The power plant operations will be conducted in line with the third revision of Thailand's Power Development Plan (2010-2030), which requires that Thailand generate electricity sufficiently enough to sustain the country's economic growth in the future. We have to specify how much energy we will produced domestically, how much will be purchased from abroad, and how much alternative or renewable energy will be used. We will have to move forward according to this plan. A 1-year or 5-year plan will be drafted. Actually, all projects should have a long-term workplan to ensure unsustainability and unfair treatment which lead to corruption. The construction of power plant will be distributed in every region and will not be centralized within the industrialized zone or the central region. In the next 5 to 10 years, there must be sufficient power plants in every region which could solve the issue of power shortage. We have to be more self-reliant in terms of energy even at places where we buy energy from abroad.

Society and Environment

- The NCPO has considered and approved the Ministry of Interior's waste disposal operations, with a pioneering project in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya. The project involves generating electricity from garbage with the waste-to-energy technology that uses incineration. Incinerators must have high temperature to ensure all waste is burned. According to data provided by the Environment Office, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya produces 1,200 tons of waste per day, but it has a waste disposal capacity of only 700 tons per day. Currently, there is a total of 300,000 tons of old and new piles of garbage produced. After the construction of a power plant, the province will have the capacity to accommodate another 300 tons of waste per day for electricity generation and a landfill site for the remainder of the waste produced has been provided. Because of the project, the province will have a waste disposal capacity of 760,000 tons. However, I have

emphasized that the facility must not spoil the atmosphere and cause pollution. People must also benefit from the project as it should create more jobs such as waste sorting and increase their income. I would like to ask for cooperation from people in the areas. With the waste management and materials recovery facility, electricity can be continuously generated. In other countries, waste management business helps generate income; many Thais also earn a living from it.

- The facility must take into account the community and people living in proximity of the construction. It should also have a strict waste disposal system/ measures for disposing of waste produced by the power plant effectively such as waste water treatment. I would like the Pollution Control Department and the Ministry of Industry to inspect both old and new facilities. If an old waste management facility does not meet quality standards, it must be shut down or redeveloped; what is important is that it must not create problems for people.

Other Matters

1. Moving towards Thailand's Democracy/Reform/Reconciliation

- Many of you are concerned about continuity of work in reform that is carried out by the NCPO and the Government. You would have noticed many changes since 22 May. I have come out openly to create understanding with you on every issue. Ministries, Bureaus, and Departments all have provided regular briefings on their work. Every working group has made efforts to explain their plans and budgeting. Government agencies have also worked in a more integrated manner. However, it is important to evaluate the effectiveness of such plans and budgeting, which require monitoring. If any plans do not work, they can be presented to the National Legislative Assembly and the National Reform Council for revision. These are some key changes from the past. People were unable to travel because of the protests and the use of weapons and conflict was present everywhere. Now the country is peaceful and order has been restored. Citizens respect the law. People traveling to Phuket now appreciate the beauty of Phuket and its white sands, which are not crowded by vendors who are mostly people with low income. However, it is important to find solutions for vendors such as providing areas for them to sell goods or pickup locations for tourists who want to go to a shopping center.

- Traffic congestion during rush hours is another problem, which is common in all big cities. Previously, the traffic was bad because of the protests and roadblocks. Now traffic congestion occurs due to a higher number of cars on the streets as more people can afford cars. The government must offer more public transport services and improve the public transit system. Bangkok Mass Transit Authority (BMTA) must consider whether a number of public transport vehicles should be increased and services in certain routes should be revised. Solutions to the problem should take into account all aspects from the metro transit system to parking space. If the government offers better public transport services, there will be fewer car users, therefore less traffic. Some people drive to a metro station in

order to take the train; therefore, there should be enough parking space. The rail transit system is the cheapest means of transport.

- People have learned to co-exist and live together peacefully even though some individuals and groups persist with inciting conflict. People are better informed, thereby not allowing others to mislead them or exploit them. This is our future, even before reforms. The reform process can be divided into phases – in the short term and in the long term. If we all unite no one can undermine us or find fault. Everything will progress naturally. There will be no need to be concerned about using special security measures. I have never said that all my actions have been correct, nor have I said that all of them have been mistakes. But I do take responsibility for all my actions. Why don't others take responsibility for their own actions? Yet they still continue to criticize the works we have done. Foreigners, other ASEAN countries and western countries today understand our predicament. They continue to trade with us and inform us that we are becoming more stable, even though they cannot come out to express full support in accordance with their principles. Those who have lived in Thailand for a long time do understand better and have more confidence.

- A former leader of our country, who is a democracy and human rights advocate, has remarked that no one supports a coup but understand that democracy in Thailand must be strengthened in a sustainable manner. There is no point to say if a coup is good or bad, especially after it already has taken place. It is better to help the country move forward and contribute constructively in this short period.

- The 11 main reform categories each have their own substantive details. For example, the issue concerning politics can be divided into 4-5 subtopics. Some have stated that there are other categories that are not included, which might make the reform process unsuccessful. However, the 11th main category, referred to as "Other Related Issues" comprise issues which the public have additionally proposed that does not fall into any of the predetermined topics. Do not worry about whether these issues will not be considered. It is more appropriate now to focus on how to complete these reforms and what measures need to be taken if they are not completed in time. This is up to the National Reform Council (NRC).

- Currently, there are approximately 600-700 applicants for the National Reform Council. The 250 who will be members of the National Reform Council will come from an initial selection of 550 candidates which will be cut down to 173; they will be joined by 77 more provincial representatives, making up a final total of 250 members. Rumours that candidates of the NRC have been selected beforehand are not true. The NRC's selection committee, which comprises governors and attorneys, was set up to oversee the selection process.

- For the main selection process, people, whose backgrounds and qualifications vary, are able to apply for the NRC selection process based on their qualifications that correspond to the 11 main reform agenda. With regard to the province-based selection process, each province will select one candidate who understands the 11 main reform issues or at least has expertise in one of the 11

issues. If candidates have one area of expertise, they can learn and obtain more information from the Damrongtham Centers and the Internal Security Operations Command.

- It is unlikely that an ineffective person will be selected. There will be the organization of those with particular knowledge and expertise into the appropriate 11 main reform issues. If there are more members needed for a particular issue, then they will be considered for another related issue. The NRC will choose a Chairperson on its own, and will proceed with their course of actions independently. Each group will follow up on each issue and present their plan to Chairperson of the NRC. Once members of the NRC arrive at conclusion, it will be presented to the National Legislative Assembly for consideration and to the government for further action. Members of the NRC can also submit information they obtain to the National Reform Council, the NCPO, the Damrongtham Centers and the Internal Security Operations Command.

- Reform and reconciliation will continuously proceed and in parallel to each other. There are 2 ways to apply for the NRC – by submitting application through the post or by directly handing applications in to the Election Commission. Inspection of credentials will be undertaken as applications are being submitted. There will be the nomination of Committees of no more than 50 members. If there are not enough members for a Committee, consideration will be given to a list of candidates for other Committees. On 4 September 2014, there will be a meeting of all Committees with the Head of the NCPO as Chair. The 3 subsequent meetings will be held during 13 – 22 September 2014. The Election Commission will submit a list of those selected from each province (first nominated by a provincial committee) with selection criteria based on candidates' strengths, experience, profession, acceptance by the public, and potential to contribute effectively to the NRC. In cases when officials from ministries, bureaus, and departments are needed to be involved with the NRC, then the Civil-Service subcommittee will select a representative for the appropriate reform issue. The Ministry of Interior and Election Commission shall provide information and answer questions on the selection process to the NRC by teleconference when needed.

2. Impact of reorganization of visa regulations/surrogacy laws

- There are several cases at present due to advancement in medical technology. Subsequently, there are legal implications. The expiration of temporary tourist visas has led to cases of visa runners, who have to leave the country for 1 day or for a certain period, and re-enter the country. The reorganization of the visa system has considerably affected certain groups such as English teachers and academics. Such problem is being resolved. Visas must be clearly categorized into different types. The NCPO has instructed the Immigration Bureau to be more flexible. Visa runners can register with the Immigration Bureau in order for the Bureau to find a sustainable resolution to the problem. This is an

ongoing problem that needs to be resolved, as it can lead to a shortage of English teachers and guides.

- On the amendment of laws regarding surrogacy. At present, the laws are not clear-cut. However, the inspections are still ongoing pursuant to existing laws, while a sustainable solution is being sorted out. Thai women who have agreed to be surrogate mothers will avoid seeing doctors in hospitals for fear of being prosecuted, and cannot return to clinics that have been shut down. The exception is possible on a case-by-case basis, if evidence is presented. Cooperation is needed from hospitals and public medical service providers. The Ministry of Public Health needs to look into this matter.

3. The operation of NCPO after the formation of a Government

- National Administration after the appointment of a Prime Minister, Ministers, and an establishment of a Cabinet, will be pursuant to the existing legal framework. However, there are many problems to be addressed, and many of which may not be done in due course. The NCPO and the Cabinet will come up with key policy measures to be carried out by relevant ministries and government agencies. The NCPO will use special authorities pursuant to the Provisional Constitution to solve urgent problems, or committees will be established to oversee issues such as problems of corruption, an increase the country's competitiveness, problems of poverty, narcotics, and natural resources encroachment and exploitation, and other matters.

4. Education

- Overall, there have been positive developments in the educational system, but they may not be concrete. The resolution of such problems must be expedited within a certain time frame. It must also be comprehensive and reflect the needs of the labour market. Improvements should be focused on the quality and quantity in all dimensions, and should be achieved within this academic year. I know this is not easy, but it must be achieved, so hold meetings, and try to reach an agreement. The Ministry of Education has been allocated a large portion of the national budget, more than any other ministries. Therefore, the resolution of the problems must be achieved.

- On Thai history and knowledge about our country, most children do not know the number of provinces in the country, or about world heritage sites located in Thailand. When they go abroad, they are asked to write about their country – be they history, cultures and traditions, but they cannot do that. The Ministry of Education has to include more teachings of Thai history into the school curriculum. I have been informed that children in several newly independent states know a lot about their history. Thai children need to know about their history as well as the monarchy and royal activities.

- Our children also have problems with basic written comprehension. We need to provide them with full information, instead of summaries, on topics such as Thai history and the monarchy. How, then, can they develop a sense of pride in themselves? This needs to be resolved. Other skills should also be taught such as mental maths skills. Moreover, children of all ages should be encouraged to develop an effective thought process, and to think about their future.

- Another problem is regarding businesses that provide writing service. Children who have money can hire people to do research or even homework for them. This problem needs to be addressed. There are also problems of public and private educational institutions. There are several private educational institutions that have produced a lot of graduates. However, this has led to an increase in the rate of unemployment. Such institutions should attempt to ensure that their students will be able to find jobs after they have graduated.

- **On Educational IT Management;**

- Advanced equipment should be used sensibly. The Ministry of Education should prepare people who have expertise in hardware, software and computer networks to oversee the whole system. More emphasis should be given to teaching contents as well as the development of teaching skills to be more appropriate for our children at specific levels of education, rather than focusing on acquiring new equipment. Distance learning programmes via DVDs and the e-learning system must be integrative. Everyone should have a chance to conduct self studies, and for their performances to be assessed.
- Teachers or peoples responsible for overseeing the IT system should be designated in each school.
- As for the schools in remote areas which have different teaching standards, the IT system will greatly enhance and develop the quality of teaching.
- The Ministry of Education has been instructed to oversee the Smart Classroom programmes. Firstly, the teaching contents and methods must be prepared, by adapting from the contents of the Distant Learning via Satellite programme of His Majesty the King. Everyone should be open-minded and each school should tailor the contents to suit their students.
- Therefore, relevant laws should be amended, in order for the responsible agencies on IT system to be able to provide effective support for education.

5. The Damrongtham Centers

- There must be expedition in resolving problems such as agricultural problems, prices of agricultural products, and preventive measures. Assistance and resolution of the problems have to be expedited and closely monitored. People

should be able to obtain information on the operation of the NCPO or the government.

6. Public Health

- It needs to be considered how to look after people of all ages. Those who have more income may voluntarily give up their right in the universal healthcare scheme for those with less income, so that the State can disburse budgets to help those in need such as the elderly. People who are willing to help should inform the Ministry of Public Health of their intention. We should perform good deeds. We all have rights as well as responsibilities, and must help each other as we are all Thai.

- As for education funds, they are still available. However, there are currently a large amount of outstanding loans, and the Office of the Auditor General of Thailand is investigating on the problems. Those who are able to support themselves in education should not apply for funding assistance to provide opportunities for those in need.

7. Energy and State Enterprise Issues

- There have been improvements in many aspects. Some people have said that nothing has been done. On the contrary, we have set up an Energy Policy Committee an Energy Policy Committee, a Super Board, formulated strategies and workplans, made changes regarding board members, amended regulations and addressed conflicts of interest. These were issues that could be addressed immediately. However, issues involving many dimensions such as pricing structure, production, energy sources and alternative energy are complicated. Reducing energy prices involves many factors and linked with many other issues. We cannot do anything in haste. There are been a lot of arguments. I have instructed that a clear understanding must be made. If not, it should be debated until the better reason and understanding prevail. Believing what appears on websites and social media could lead to more arguments. Everyone should listen to the rationale and understand with reason. Some comments are groundless. I have also been accused of favouring some companies. I do not know them as they are not my relatives. I buy petrol for my personal car at the same high rate as everyone else. So do not blame each other and try to find solutions. Be patient as the National Reform Council will have to deliberate on issues such as energy sourcing, production, distribution, interest of the state, and general public and private shareholders. If we want to reclaim enterprises currently under private ownership, then the state would have to buy more shares so that the state becomes a majority shareholder. The board members' privileges have been curtailed. But we also have to be fair to them. We are not saying that they are exploiting their status but their work may be exposed to risks of misunderstanding or mismanagement in disbursing expenditures. They have a duty to clarify. I sympathize with all members of various boards as they are governed by over 20 regulations. We must ensure how those regulations can exert control effectively. This should be clearly

discussed in the reform stage. Today we are solving priority issues. We have already addressed the issues of energy, water and others. So please listen to what we have said.

- **We have also addressed the grievances and misunderstandings of the public.** A lot of things have been distorted and exploited by certain groups. It takes time, transparency and just management to identify what belongs to the government, private sector or joint partnership. We have to address issues like percentage of shares that the government should hold to reclaim ownership of an enterprise. It is not right to ask NCPO to use special powers to seize enterprises and make them state owned. It should not be like that. Do not pass on such burden to NCPO because we are performing duties according to the laws. Special laws are applied only to expedite resolution of problems. We are not distorting anything because problems may arise again in the near future. So we are concerned especially on the sustainability of energy security.

- The current fluctuating external situation have impacted on domestic economic, social and psychological factors. Armed confrontations and security issues persist globally. We have covered all the problems including energy, transportation and services which are ineffective or do not receive sufficient trust and satisfaction from the public. We have addressed measures such as strategic frameworks, government policy, procedure, turnover, restoration, arrangement for the price adjustment and new investments. These can not be done in one time. People may question why there is no development, why energy prices have not come down. There are many binding obligations so we have to gradually untangle the problems. For instance, in the adjustment of the tax collection system, there will always be some who will benefit or lose more than others. I instructed that the adjustments will have to be just to earners with low income. We will have to think over it. So all the proposals for change will be taken up by the Cabinet, National Reform Council and the National Legislative Assembly. There have been critical comments appearing in various media on discussions behind closed doors or confidential issues. Some issues have not been initiated or ordered and some are under discussion but the details have been divulged. NCPO has been recriminated in a sense that we do not understand what we are doing. It is quite tiring. Some people say that NCPO have special powers to seize all property to become state owned. We need to identify ownership of these enterprises. I do not take sides but please deliberate until there is conclusion. Otherwise I would not be able to proceed. So I ask for your cooperation and understanding. Refrain from making damaging comments.

8. Cooperation/ Understanding Issue

- On the issue of meetings and critical discussions held by many groups, I have not prohibited them in such a manner that there is no room to maneuver. But I do not think it is right to discuss in secrecy or organize political gathering with tinges of opposition to NCPO. Please ask for permission and I will consider. Some people gathered in inconspicuous places and discussed about waiting for

NCPO to stumble and they will re-enter the political scene and ask their followers to be ready. I do not want to comment much. Some of them are former government officials, former politicians and controversial academics that face legal action. They continue to instigate incitements. I do not understand why as these people have many legal cases against them. Still they try to persuade other people to believe them.

- **I would like to ask for cooperation from the Subdistrict Administration Organization, Provincial Administration Organization and Village Headmen.** You are most important in leading the country out of this situation as you are closest to the people. Please do not gather to stage protests. We are now in the reform process. There have been comments about abolishing local administrations. I have never considered or said so. Please discuss them in the Reform Council. For example on police restructuring, it can not be done by a single order of NCPO. I could only amend some regulations to facilitate the work and in tune with the situation at hand. So those who wish for us to make changes should participate in the reform process. We need to talk with each other, to discuss and to develop ourselves, especially the local administrators, in terms of thinking and approaches in development for public benefit.

- The local administration must also sync with regional administration level and vice versa. The central administration has already allocated budget resources accordingly. So the steps in administration should be followed. The local level should proceed with their projects according to the budget plans. They should also have a strategic plan of what needs to be done in the first year such as repairing roads or renovating schools whereas other renovations could be done in the second year. New construction projects could be planned for the third year and so on. Consider using existing budgets for medical service centers, central markets, etc., so that the public have the means to make a livelihood. Avoid duplications of work as in always fixing the same things without any new projects. Formulation of long term plans of 5 or 10 years for your locality are necessary. If your budget is not sufficient, you can request additional budget from the provincial level or central level where ministries, bureaus and departments can provide assistance. We could utilize the central budget in covering the difference. There are 3 levels of budgetary allocations so depending solely on your budget may not be sufficient. The process would also act as an effective check and balance system. I do not intend to change the local administration system but you can discuss any changes and decide on the matter at the reform stage.

- **We have to reduce conflicts and influence within the area.** The local administrators must end such practices. Everything is under the consideration of the National Reform Council, all 11 areas. NCPO has not predetermined anything. We will only maintain conditions that will move the country forward. It is up to you to find long term solutions, be they 1 year or 4 years of the next government or 5 years economic plan. We would like to encourage all sectors to utilize your

thoughts and Thai wisdom to jointly resolve the problems in all dimensions rapidly. This is the fervent hope of NCPO.

- **Another important issue is the military and police reshuffle** of which there have been criticisms. No apologies were offered when the truth is far from the damaging comments. The reshuffles were done under principles and collective consideration of many people. One must maintain composure once reshuffle is made. The military and the police all have discipline so we do not fight over command appointments. One must accept the final decision. Candidates can compete by performing their duties for next year's reshuffle. Everything is done under rules and norms so do not comment based on personal opinion. I would rather use the word family to describe the military and police corps. We are one family having known each other and worked together. So please do not make damaging comments. Everything is according to rules, regulations, laws, and discipline.

- It has been quite exhausting for me. Thank you for listening to me. Whether you believe in me or not, please do not counter us yet. We know of the undercurrents but we do not wish to use violence against them. I feel tiresome to have to resort to law enforcement all the time as it could lead to problems in society. You must consider the truth. Do not look at the world only from one side or listen only to one side. We need to use both political and legal thoughts in working and administering the country as well as good governance in solving problems and move Thailand forward. Please join hands in reforming the country. We do not want to force anyone. I have already explained the rationale and necessity. All Thais, irrespective of which groups, should participate in making the reform process a success. As I told you, we do not intervene in the reform process. This is the national agenda which all Thais must help out.

- I have taken much of your time. Listeners may be tired, the speaker as well. My speed may have been too fast but please try to catch up. You will notice that I act upon my thoughts quickly but even then not fast enough for some of you. However some only criticize so we are moving in opposite ways.

- Thank you. Sawasdee Good night, "kit teung" (with my personal regards)
