



Good evening dear Thai citizens.

As usual, I greet you on Friday evening. Over the week, The government and I have been preparing events for the auspicious occasion of His Majesty the King's 87th birthday anniversary. Meetings were held with all sectors in preparation for our celebration of the 5th of December, in honor of His Majesty.

I invite all Thai citizens to take part in the 'Love for Father' activities that will be held by state agencies throughout the kingdom. For Bangkok, the events will be held at the Royal Plaza and on Ratchadamnoen Klang Rd. during November 30 and December 6. Activities will include presentations about His Majesty's royal duties, His acumen and eminence, in addition to the royally-initiated projects based on the sufficiency economy philosophy. Other activities will include local cultural displays and sale of selected goods from all 77 provinces.

There are many ways to display our loyalty towards His Majesty. I would like to commend Mr. Sa-ung Hanprakhon, a 63-year-old resident of Phrae province, who traveled on foot all the way from home in Phrae to Siriraj Hospital, as a tribute to His Majesty and to wish the King a speedy recovery from illness. Mr. Sa-ung started his journey on October 12, 2014 and reached the hospital on October 22, 2014; the endeavor took eleven days to complete.

At the beginning of the week, I met with the executive director of the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), who is also the under-secretary-general of the United Nations. The executive director complimented Thailand's efforts to sustainably tackle the AIDS problem and cited Thailand as a good model that countries in the region can learn from.

Based on statistics, we have been able to effectively reduce HIV transmissions from mother to child. UNAIDS believe Thailand will be able to prevent new HIV cases by the year 2020. This is an achievement we should be proud of. I would like to express my gratitude toward all

agencies and personnel who have contributed towards this effort; in addition to caring for the patients, they have also helped with development of society and reinforced Thailand's international standing.

On this occasion, I reiterated Thailand's determination to tackle the AIDS problem with emphasis on access to treatment, access to medicine without regard to white blood cell count, the allocation of areas in 19 provinces for promoting the use of clean needles, the development of a healthcare scheme for migrant workers who constitute a risk group, carrying out programs to reduce transmissions among drug users, and allocating various budgets for use in tackling AIDS. However, I also stated that we still require funding assistance for efforts to combat AIDS, tuberculosis and Malaria. I also informed the UNAIDS' chief of Thailand's readiness to become the regional center for the propagation of data, skills, knowledge and experience on the reduction of HIV transmissions. This would help to increase the Asia and Pacific regions' capacity to handle the disease.

Another disease of concern is Ebola. We need to cooperate and collaborate to guard against this disease, while also raising public awareness.

The government has been trying to address many urgent issues for the past months.

There were a lot of distressing matters agriculturists were faced with before the NCPO took over national administration such as the overdue payments stemming from the rice subsidy program, decreasing prices and the oversupply of agricultural produce, and the world economic slump which forced the US and the EU to lower their agricultural imports.

The NCPO and the government have been working hard to help our fellow agriculturists, especially rice farmers who were facing hardship.

For example, the government, in September, approved a budget of 86 billion baht which has already been given to 800,000 farmers who took part in the rice mortgage scheme and did not receive their payments they were entitled to.

The government has also given a nod to the 2014 in-season rice insurance scheme. Under this scheme, rice farmers will only have to pay 60-100 baht for the premium, with coverage of as high as 1,111 baht per rai, should the rice plantations be damaged by disasters. As of now, more than 55,000 farmers or around 800,000 rai have registered for the privilege.

The next assistance is the 1,000 baht per rai per household fund, with a maximum compensation of 15,000 baht. This scheme first kicked off on October 20 and as of now, more than 837 million baht has been disbursed to 67,700 rice growers.

The next measure is to help rice farmers get access to financial resources such as the low-interest loans for in-season rice farming, the credit scheme for in-season paddy, and the credit scheme for value-added rice products.

The last measure is to help rice growers reduce production costs stemming from high prices of fertilizers, pesticides, seedlings, rent, and other elements required in rice planting.

All of the aforementioned measures and assistance are only short-term strategies. Therefore, I have instructed agriculture-related units to implement a long-term plan to ensure sustainability in the rice industry. This long-term plan ranges from the establishments of rice bank and fertilizer bank to educating rice farmers, agricultural zoning, organic farming, and finding water resources. Although these processes may take time, I believe that they will surely build a strong foundation for the Thai agriculture.

As for the situation of rubber, the government and the NCPO have been laying out strategies to improve the whole industry as a number of assistance measures have been approved to assist the farmers.

These measures include 1) A 1,000 baht per rai fund. Each family will receive no more than 15,000 baht in total. This measure is expected to help up to 850,000 households and cover 8.2 million rai of rubber plantations. 2) A 6 billion baht fund which is expected to help stabilize rubber prices. 3) 100,000 baht loans to part-time rubber growers. 4) Credits for future loans. And 5) Credits for processed rubber products.

All of these measures must assure that the rubber industry will grow in a sustainable way and on the condition that agriculturists have better access to financial resources and new markets. In addition to this, agricultural zoning must be adopted along with promoting more investments and innovation in this industry.

The government is now considering setting up a Rubber Industry Development Institute and seeking cooperation from other rubber producers in ASEAN region.

I have ordered all relevant agencies to speed up the process for assisting our fellow agriculturists and reaching out to those in rural areas as well as to assure that all transactions are conducted transparently and that low-income earners will not be taken advantage of.

Let's move on to our next topic which is the reorganizing of public vans, motorcycle taxis, and other public transport services as well as waste management. I would like to call on all responsible agencies to carry on their duties as usual and closely follow up on any development. What we have done or tried to do will benefit the society and its citizens.

I want all related personnel to work hard and live up to expectations. In order for us to live together in a society, every member must adhere to the rules and regulations. We must encourage self-discipline among each other, even small things such as cleanliness and waste sorting.

Everybody needs to understand that it is the responsibility of every Thai citizen to develop a social conscience and raise awareness of important social issues. Every member of the society – adults, children, rich, and poor – needs to play a part in both national and social developments. Those who would like to make suggestions or file complaints are encouraged to do so at Damrong Tham centers.

The government has been very flexible and open to all complaints and suggestions.

The government has been receiving complaints mostly about hardship, social inequality, poverty, and exploitation. These problems are deep-rooted and therefore we need integrated

mechanisms with participation from all units to tackle these issues. Previous efforts have not been so effective because governments were not able to make progress during political instability.

There is now a greater opportunity for members of the public to be able to monitor the government's work, especially through Damrong Tham centers which have been established throughout Thailand. Launched by the NCPO, these centers are intended to help alleviate people's hardships and solve social problems. Over the past 4 months, members of the public have been very satisfied with the operation. A total of 211,797 complaints were made while 191,797 of those cases, or accounting for 90.56%, have already been sorted out so far.

Most of the people making complaints at Damrong Tham centers only needed advice and access to various governmental services.

However, there were some cases that required time, investigation, and more effective inter-agency coordination measures before they could be rectified. An effective mechanism has been multi-agency rapid response teams comprising police and military officers who have worked together on urgent measures, many of which have yielded concrete results.

I can assure you that every complaint will be heard and the government will do its best to figure out a way to help its people.

Additionally, the government has increased the number of authorities stationed at the Government House's Damrong Tham center in order to ensure the quickness and the effectiveness of the service.

On Land management - There are those who do not own land where they can make a living and those who may have encroached national park areas, thus causing territorial disputes with the government. Then there are those who have said that the land allocation system by the ALRO was unfair and have thus asked for it to be adjusted.

Since the NCPO took over national administration, it has made the issue a national agenda and

set up a National Land Policy committee to look into the problem. The committee comprises authorities from six different ministries which include the ministries of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Social Development and Human Security, Finance, Interior, Defense, and Natural Resources and Environment. These ministries will act as secretaries of the committee.

The committee will oversee the management and the allocation of agricultural areas as land use permits will be granted to agriculturists who wish to generate income. The permits will be given to the community, not individuals. The permits will be categorized according to the residents' needs and the suitability of the land.

And most importantly, there must be alternatives for residents forced to move out of their respective areas following the land adjustment. As for members of the public, you must provide accurate information. The government needs your participation and honesty in order to ensure transparency. I hope to see this problem resolved as soon as possible. I have assigned the Ministries of Interior and Agriculture to have those who do not own a land registered for land use permits and force those encroachers out of all unauthorized areas.

All of the outdated laws will be modernized and adjusted to suit the current situation and to meet international standards.

The NCPO's committee in charge of law and justice system has already handed information regarding outdated laws gathered since May 22 to the National Legislative Assembly (NLA) for consideration as well as the laws that will truly benefit the nation. In addition, the government is planning to propose more draft laws to the NLA and is willing to open doors for the public and the business sector to take part in the process of law amendment.

The government is now trying to push for many laws to be enforced, 37 drafts are in the process of proposing, 49 drafts are being considered, 61 drafts are being deliberated by the national assembly, and four drafts laws have already been promulgated.

The government however needs to make sure that every sector involved understands the laws before they come into effect. It may take 60, 90, 120, or 180 days, depending on certain circumstances.

Let us turn to the work in progress of various state sectors.

The Army Commander in Chief and ISOC deputy director inspected the irrigation checkpoint in Nong Chik district of Pattani to follow up on the progress of the Thung Yang Daeng Model's implementation. An evaluation will be conducted in 3 months. If the result proves satisfactory, implementation will be expanded to other districts. This is a matter of synergy and collaboration, as well as clearly-defined responsibilities.

The Ministry of Education's Office of the Basic Education Commission has allocated roughly 4 million baht to construct 9 temporary buildings for Ban Nam Dam, Manangyong and Ban Khao Din schools in Thung Yang Daeng district, Pattani province.

The Office of Vocational Education Commission is implementing its 'vocational education prep' program at 3 vocational institutes in Samut Prakan and one institute in either Pathumthai or Nonthaburi. About 300 students are expected to participate in the program, which is aimed at curbing unfavourable student behaviours and violence among students.

Meanwhile, the Board of Investment met on October 21 to consider incentives for 115 investment projects that have a combined value of 102 billion baht. 24 of the projects are large-scale undertakings that have a combined value of roughly 90 billion baht. Some of these projects involve the 2nd phase of the eco car program and the generation of electricity from natural gas. 91 of the projects involve investments in small and medium sized undertakings that have a combined worth of 12.425 billion baht.

We now turn to the issue of fostering understanding in the reform process.

For reform in the 11 aspects, I would like to thank the NRC speaker and all NRC members for their work for the nation. They have the moral support of the Thai people, the government and the NCPO. I know it is hard to reform the country amid conflicts; there remain certain groups that still seek to maintain their own gains. We must all persevere and make sacrifices.

At the same time, there are many positive developments. I must again stress that for continuity, the temporary or short-term reforms must also lend themselves to those that will take place after one year, when the next administration is in office.

Every government needs to have long-term strategies and policies for the country, otherwise disputes will become protracted and policies have to be scrapped and re-initiated again and again, allowing corruption and illicit activities to take place. These illegal matters that have occurred in the past are being put through the judicial process. Penalties are in place. At the same time all of the current government's and NCPO's measures are being carefully scrutinized. As such, some honest civil servants have become concerned about taking actions, fearing that they would be accused of graft. You must be confident and do what is correct. So long as the action is in accordance with the policies then there is no need to be concerned.

I still fail to understand the ones who are still looking to perpetrate misconduct. These are groups claiming to have relations with the NCPO, the government, and prominent figures.

Society must help foster the sense that corruption is a despicable thing to ward off these groups.

Because of such claims of involvement by them, new projects cannot be initiated in a timely manner because they draw anti-graft comments even before they can be implemented. Development thus is slowed down.

I listen to both positive and negative comments, solutions have to be agreed on things that do not fall into place, or else time would be wasted and we would need to expend 2-3 times the effort on each initiative.

Please help to submit information about graft or positive and negative comments on the various initiatives.

Another matter of concern is shortcomings we face in human resource development. We need to develop our people so that they can live peacefully among themselves.

If this cannot be achieved, things will not be fixed no matter how many more reforms and how many more reform councils come about. If we only preach about rights and freedom and leave out the matters of social and civic responsibilities and national interest, the light at the end of the tunnel will not be seen.

I would like you to consider some minor adjustments within the current teaching and learning systems. Do not only teach about freedom without responsibility and respect for others. It would not matter how well the charter drafters do their work if nobody respects the law.

Other democracies have their laws and their peoples respect them. Will that not also be the case for us? We should design a democratic system in which the Thai people have awareness and base their beliefs on facts and reasons. We must no longer allow poverty and disparity to be exploited for political gains.

There are many more issues waiting for the government to address. They are all important issues that are paramount to the reform of the country.

Our efforts are aimed at preparing the country for the next administration - this is a work that would be difficult for a normal government to achieve due to matters of politics and vested interests.

This government will lay down a secure foundation for the next administration. The undertakings are as follows:

- Laying down national strategies on promoting relations with neighboring countries, and the strengthening of trade and the economy – for both imports and exports

- Laying down national strategies on issuing budgets in a manner that fosters synergy.

- The establishing of more than 11 committees to improve on work processes and use of the budget
- Promotion of mutual understanding in and the development of the civil service system.
- The drafting of plans for the taxation system and the management of energy.
- Tackling forest encroachment and lack of land plots for the poor.

These issues contribute to disparity; the rich are very rich and the poor are very poor. We strive to minimize the disparity between these two groups. Take care of one another, and we will be able to live sufficient lives, in accord with His Majesty the King's sufficiency principles.

This week, I am delighted and honored to have hosted a thank-you party for Thai athletes who brought back happiness and pride to the Thai people.

All of the athletes competing at the Asian Games and the Asian Para Games have shown that commitment can overcome all obstacles.

It is very common to have winners and losers in sports, but the most important thing in a competition is sportsmanship and that everyone in the competition respects the rules and the opponents. Athletes are very good examples and an inspiration for younger generation. I promise that the government will continue supporting all athletes and all sports.

More sports schools need to be opened up and youngsters who like sports need to receive more support from every sector, so that Thai athletes are able to compete with their counterparts in the international arena.

Another thing we can pride ourselves on is that recently Thailand has won 6 gold, 1 silver, and 4 bronze medals from the 10th ASEAN Skills Competition which was held in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Furthermore, other 12 individuals were awarded certificates for their outstanding talents. This shows that the skills of Thai youths are on par with those in the international stage. Once again, I would like to congratulate and praise them for their success.

Thai workers need to focus on improving their foreign language skills. Every nation praises us for our skills and commitment, but not much have they complimented us on our ability to communicate, especially in English which is the language that will be mainly used once the ASEAN Community is formed.

As the annual Loy Kratong Festival is approaching, I am urging all related units including the Interior Ministry, the Royal Thai Police, the Transport Ministry, the Tourism Ministry, and local administrative offices to draw up strict measures to ensure safety for all tourists during the famous festival. Places, public vehicles, and lifesaving equipment need to be inspected ahead of time for safety of the holiday makers. Fireworks and firecracker outlets will be asked to show their licenses and if they are found without a license, legal action will be brought against them.

Authorities will make sure that entertainment venues, public parks, hotels, and motels are not used for wrong purposes. Owners of these places who allow teenagers to loiter or use the service and then encounter any danger will be prosecuted. Meanwhile, police will be on high alert for drunk driving and drinking in public.

We need to strictly enforce the law of driving under the influence from now until New Year which is a long holiday in Thailand. And during this very period, we need to be extra careful when on the road. Preparations must be made to prevent casualties. Road fatalities caused by alcohol are normally high during New Year.

This should be a daily routine for all police officers to ensure safety and order in the society. We spend a lot of money and time on awareness raising campaigns which we shouldn't. We must prevent these problems from recurring.

Entrepreneurs and owners must be socially responsible while it is necessary that parents look out for their children, especially during the Loy Kratong Festival.

I wish you al