

**THAILAND UPDATE****Emergency Decree lifted in three more provinces as steady progress made on reconciliation plan**

- On August 16, 2010, the Thai government revoked the use of the Emergency Decree on Public Administration in Emergency Situation, B.E. 2548 (2005) in three more provinces, namely, Chiangmai, Chiangrai, and Ubon Ratchathani. The Emergency Decree now remains in effect in seven provinces where its use is still deemed necessary. These are: Bangkok, Nonthaburi, Samut Prakan, Pathumthani, Khon Kaen, Udon Thani, and Nakhon Rachasima.
- On August 3, 2010, the Independent Fact-finding Commission for Reconciliation submitted its progress report and recommendations to the Thai Cabinet. The Commission also put forward preliminary recommendations including using the Emergency Decree only as necessary and in accordance with conditions prescribed by the law so as not to disproportionately affect rights of the people. The Commission also set up 3 working groups to facilitate its work; a working group on fact finding, a working group on prevention of recurring conflict, and a working group on remedies and reconciliation.
- Regarding the National Reform Committee, 14 issues have been identified for work plans as to be formulated, namely, 1) housing; 2) wages, quality of life, labor; 3) social welfare and protection; 4) education; 5) debt; 6) state budgetary process; 7) decentralization and roles of local administration; 8) community building; 9) civil service, especially abuse of power; 10) justice process; 11) water resource management; 12) health care system, especially disparity between the rich and poor; 13) mafia influence; and 14) economic management for fairness.
- The National Reform Assembly has established 14 working committees to push forward the reform agenda, involving various networks or groups of people, such as local administrative bodies, civil society networks and community leaders, unskilled laborers, women's groups, youth, disadvantaged persons, business sector, and artists. There are also committees dealing with such issues as higher education communications, resource distribution, justice and provisional communities. The role of these working committees would be to generate a driving force for reform within society, promote public participation and strengthen the various civil networks and get them involved in contributing ideas for reform.

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