



NHRCT SUBMITTED A REPORT WITH RECOMMENDATIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACTS OF NEW COVID-19 OUTBREAK TO CENTER FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SITUATION DUE TO THE OUTBREAK OF THE COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CORONAVIRUS 2019 (COVID-19).

On April 1 B.E. 2564 [2021], Mr. Suwat Theparak, Human Rights Commissioner, Acting Chairperson, revealed the NHRCT report on human rights impacts of the new COVID-19 outbreak. Last week the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT) submitted the report with recommendations to the Prime Minister in his capacity of the Director of the Center for the Administration of the Situation Due to the Outbreak of the Communicable Disease Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19), stating that since the new COVID-19 outbreak beginning mid-December B.E. 2563 [2020], the government had been able to implement mechanisms and measures to control and limit the disease spread effectively.

The NHRCT has monitored the situation arising from the COVID-19 and considered related issues, such as the duty of the state to protect basic rights of people, namely the right to health, the right to minimum standards of living, as well as other measures to prevent and contain the COVID-19 pandemic that affects the rights and freedoms of people in general, including the implementation of measures and the law enforcement. The NHRCT, therefore, presented the following recommendations related to measures or guidelines for promoting and protecting human rights in case of human rights impacts of the new COVID-19 outbreak for the Center for the Administration of the Situation Due to the Outbreak of the Communicable Disease Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) to assign relevant authorities for actions.

1. More measures should be in place to build an accurate understanding of the COVID-19 outbreak so that the society does not stigmatize those affected by the outbreak as well as for a respect for their right to privacy.

2. It is important to take into account thorough and equitable access to vaccines for groups that may be neglected as well as to build sufficient understanding of vaccines and procedures that will allow the public to inform their requests for vaccination. This should take

into account easy-to-understand patterns and language, as well as the ability to access information of various groups, such as those with disabilities, the elderly, ethnic groups, aliens, etc. Their wishes should be explored, and vaccination trips to hospitals or government-

designated locations should be facilitated, taking into account the physical accessibility, which can be difficult for such people as the elderly, the disabled or those in remote areas, etc.

3. Additional survey by area-level agencies should be conducted to determine whether there still are those affected who are omitted or unable to access assistance following state remedial measures, such as those who lose their jobs after the termination of the remedial measures, to provide widespread and accessible assistance to those who truly are in need. Students, particularly poor ones affected by the COVID-19 outbreak, should also be provided with assistance or remedies in education and other aspects in terms of access to school supplies, additional online teaching, self-protection equipment, etc.

4. Serious and ongoing actions should be taken to prevent and suppress corruption, which has affected the rights and freedoms of many people during the new COVID-19 outbreak, and results of investigations into corruption in cases of illegal smuggling for labors into the country and gambling establishments should be disclosed to the public to build confidence in the problem handling.

5. Laws that restrict rights and freedoms in emergency situations should be enforced as carefully as necessary, such as restriction of freedom of assembly and the ban on activities vulnerable to the COVID-19 spread. Details of the enforcement of measures should be set out more clearly so that officials do not use their discretion to enforce laws too differently or offensively.

“The NHRCT will monitor the COVID-19 outbreak that may affect human rights of the people continuously and encourage health workers who show their dedication during the pandemic crisis. It is hoped that agencies that receive the recommendations of the NHRCT will carry out the prevention and the control of the COVID-19 outbreak with due respect to the principles of human rights and benefits of the society as a whole”, said Mr. Theparak.

Office of the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand

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