



Highlights of major works of the NHRCT in 2020:

Complaints on the right in the administration of justice at top rank, emphasis on monitoring human rights impacts related to political demonstration and the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing regional human rights centers to enhance people's accessibility and decision to establish the first regional office in the South

Mrs. Prakairatana Thontiravong, Acting Chairperson, summarized major works of the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT) in the Year 2020 as follows:

1. Cases of complaints

The NHRCT received a total of 568 petitions with the top 3 human rights issues which are: (1) *rights in the administration of justice* accounted for 24 percent, some of which included delays in the proceeding of inquiry or investigation, allegations of assault during the arrest, ill treatment without gender consideration at police checkpoints; (2) *civil rights* accounted for 18 percent, some of which were undue troubles received from political demonstrations and quarantine requirement during the COVID-19 pandemic, freedoms of expression and assembly, privacy intrusion from being tracked by authorities, alleged maltreatment of new inmates; (3) *the right to property* accounted for 11 percent, which included the unfair compensation on land expropriation by authorities, conflicts related to overlapping land-use between public and arable purposes, and disputes between people and authorities over tenure right.

2. Cases being coordinated or referred to relevant authorities

A total of 136 cases were referred to or coordinated with various relevant agencies for complainants' prompt solutions. Among those cases, they included the right in the administration of justice, labour's right, the right to legal status of the individual, human rights defenders. A number of cases were referred and followed up with the Royal Thai Police, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security and the Ministry of Justice.

3. Reports on the findings after human rights investigation

In the year 2020, 203 cases were investigated and the reports on findings were accomplished. Some important cases included (1) the right to life and security of person when the suspects were allegedly assaulted by officers during their detention (2) the right of community that people were environmentally impacted from several public and private projects (3) the right to property related to the competing claims over the land-use between State agencies and people together with the right to land tenure. After human rights investigation, the allegations were found both grounded and ungrounded, and the reasons were explained in the reports on findings submitted to complainants and authorities concerned.

4. Recommendations to the parliament, the cabinet and relevant authorities

The NHRCT submitted recommendations on 21 major issues to the parliament, the cabinet and relevant authorities in 2020. Among those recommendations, they were concerned with (1) the promotion of human rights education by preparing and introducing the NHRCT's Human Rights Basic Education Handbooks from the levels of pre-school to high school students with an aim to provide educational personnel with tools to promote human rights knowledge for students at all levels (2) policy formulation and legislation regarding human rights of older persons (3) the impacts on the public caused by the construction of "pink line" mass rapid transit project (Khaerai - Minburi section) (4) the law amendment relating to medical termination of pregnancy (5) policy formulation and law amendment to end the grave situation of sexual violence against students by teachers or educational personnel (6) rights protection during the ongoing situation of political demonstration.

5. Following up the implementation of the NHRCT's recommendations

Through the internal mechanism and provisions established by the organic law, the recommendations made by the NHRCT were followed up and well responded by authorities concerned. For example, the Cabinet issued resolutions commanding relevant authorities to follow the instructions made by the NHRCT to resolve human rights problems as found in complaints investigated by the NHRCT. By the end of the year, as many as 11 out of 12 issues were complied by the government, which included recommendation to end the unfair discrimination against people with HIV in hiring policy of private companies, recommendation to

safeguard the rights of older persons, recommendation on human rights education, recommendation on business and human rights related to the alleged human rights violation caused by investment of Thai private company abroad.

Apart from these major works as mentioned, the NHRCT closely monitored two specific situations which may have great impacts on human rights of people, which were the continued political demonstrations and the COVID-19 pandemic. Two working groups were set up to follow the situations and periodic recommendations were made to authorities when circumstances allowed for human rights violations.

“In order to enhance the NHRCT effectiveness to protect and promote human rights of people in all regions widely and timely, the NHRCT resolved to establish our first regional office in Songkhla Province in the south as the pilot area. In addition, the NHRCT also established six additional regional human rights education and coordination centers attached to the local universities in Chantaburi, Kanchanaburi, Ubon Ratchathani, Yala, Phayao and Phuket. In sum, together with the 6 existing regional human rights education and coordination centers, the NHRCT then will have 12 regional human rights education and coordination centers around the country. These centers will enable people to conveniently get access to the NHRCT to protect their human rights protection.”, the Acting NHRCT Chairperson said.

Office of the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand

30 December 2020