



The NHRCT warns about the risks of child safety and welfare and recommends parents not to bring small children to a protest

On 1 December 2020, Mrs. Prakairatana Thontiravong, Acting Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT), said that the NHRCT has assigned a National Human Rights Commissioner and officials to observe and monitor the demonstrations and has been informed of the information on the situation of children and youth involving in protest. Lately, the photo of young children participating in the demonstration widely raised public concerns regarding consequences for the children.

The NHRCT considers that a child, who means a person under the age of 18 as defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), has the rights and freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly as guaranteed by the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560 (2017) and the CRC to which Thailand is a party with obligations to comply with. Children can also form their own views and freely express the views in matters affecting them, and the government has to recognize their rights and gives due weight to those views in accordance with their age and maturity.

Nevertheless, children with different ages have joined the rallies, some of whom are too young and thus vulnerable. They can be easily influenced to act dangerously and inappropriately, or even in conflict with the law. Therefore, all parties, especially parents who bring their children to the rallies, rally organizers and goers, including government officials have to place importance to their protection. Children's maturity and the situations of safety, risks or other factors must be taken into account when they are in demonstrations.

“The NHRCT urges all parties to give importance to the best interest of children during the demonstrations that their safety must be put as top priority. Parents should not bring small or young children to a protest because they are unable to take care of themselves and are in risk situations. In some circumstances, they can be affected by violent and aggressive behaviors.” Mrs. Thontiravong said.

Office of the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand
1 December 2020