

Authorities to prevent further expansion of unlawful protests

On April 18, 2010 at 20.00 hrs., Dr. Panitan Wattanayagorn, Deputy Secretary General to the Prime Minister and Acting Government Spokesman, met with the press following the meeting of the Centre for the Resolution of the Emergency Situation (CRES), chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Thaugsuban, earlier in the evening. A representative from the Metropolitan Police was also present.

Dr. Panitan reiterated the government's position in prohibiting the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD) from expanding their demonstrations beyond Ratchaprasong Intersection, particularly by setting up another stage in the Silom area as proposed by some UDD leaders. In this regard, additional police forces will be deployed in the Silom area and nearby areas in order to ensure safety of people living and working in the vicinity, as well as to prevent access into the area by demonstrators. The spokesman also called upon all parties to cooperate with the government in enforcing the law.

Road blockades and checkpoints set up around Bangkok by security forces have been functioning well in monitoring and controlling the Red Shirts demonstrators who were travelling from other provinces into the capital, particularly, into the zone where the demonstrations are held. Various legal actions have been taken against incoming protesters such as vehicle confiscation, personal data registration, and issuance of warnings. These measures are aimed at preventing them from joining the unlawful demonstrations.

Up to today, Dr. Panitan further noted that 21 persons have reported to the CRES in accordance with the summons issued under the Emergency Decree. However, there are still 31 persons who have yet to do so. In this regard, should their absence prove to be intentional, arrest warrants would be issued. On the news released by the spokesperson of the Phue Thai Party that the CRES is preparing to issue additional summons for 300 more persons, Dr. Panitan said that the CRES is still considering additional action.

In addition, the spokesman noted that the Department of Special Investigation (DSI)'s investigation on the "terrorists" has proceeded with satisfactory progress.

19 April 2010