**From the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy to Sustainable Development Goals January 25, 2019**

Good evening to you all.

Again, we meet on Friday. There are a lot of good news that I would like to share with you. I want to share this happiness with you all. For instance, the “War Elephant” national soccer team reached Asian Cup last 16, whereas Ratchanok Intanon, aka Nong May, won her second Malaysia Masters.

Atiwit "Jazz" Janewattananond triumphed at the SMBC Singapore Open. In addition, the United States returned nearly 50 historical artifacts to Thailand, with most of them dating back 1,500 years or in the Baan Chiang era.

The current administration has been able to retrieve 8 batches or 750 pieces of ancient artifacts smuggled out of the country. We took this matter seriously. These good stories are Thailand’s happiness and pride. These are our mutual success.

Moreover, the World Bank has expressed its confidence in Thailand’s economic growth over the next two years, thanks to the continuous increase in domestic consumption as well as government and private investments, not to mention the Government’s policies and approaches to prepare Thailand for global economic head wind comparing to other countries.

The Government has compiled a report of its 4-year achievements. The report highlights what the Government and the National Council for Peace and Order have done to resolve problems as well as established strong fundamentals for sustainable development. The report can be downloaded from the Government website and the website of the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, as shown on your screen.

Next week, the Government will be hosting “Thailand’s Future, Our Future” fair from January 31 to February 1 at Central World shopping center. We would like everyone to learn and understand about global affairs, concerns, and challenges including our national strategies and the thought behind them and work together in order to move Thailand forward towards stability, prosperity, and sustainability. I’m inviting you all to visit the fair and asking members of the media to help move this country forward by explaining to the people what is Thailand’s first national strategic blueprint.

Fellow Thai citizens, this week, the issue of country reform is in the spotlight. Therefore, please allow me to share with you the Government concept ideas in relation to management towards sustainability in two areas.

First is about land management. Land resources are limited. The question is how do we make the most out of our limited resources while upholding the principle of good governance. We must utilize our land and national resources to maximize our returns while, at the same time, improve our human capital through education and technologies such as Agri Map which enables us to grow crops compatible with its surroundings – soil, water, air, and market. Also, we have upgraded our farmers to smart farmers using the “Pracharat Internet” project and the agricultural productivity center, helping them produce more at a lower cost.

Farmers shall no longer walk down on the unproductive paths. For some areas, we might have to promote other activities so that they can create more economic value, jobs, and income to meet the public demands or so-called “growth from within”. We must focus on public participation.

New organizations will be established to oversee the management of land in the same way the National Water Resources has carried out its works to ensure proper management of both public and private land. Farmers and low-income earners will be able to make use of their land together with government supports including professional training. This way, communities will be able to co-exist with forests and nature.

The second topic: Medical supplies for treatment and medical services will be listed as control products and services in 2019 to ensure that such products and services are met with required standards, transparent, and fair. A committee will be established to set prices of medicines and medical supplies, medical service fees and other service fees of infirmaries.

The committee consists of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Public Health, Comptroller General’s Department, Office of the National Health Commission, National Health Security Office, Thai General Insurance Association, Private Hospital Association, Foundation for Consumers, and experts in economics. They will sit together to set appropriate/fair measures.

The subcommittee is responsible for studying, analyzing, developing guidelines, mechanisms, methods, as well as providing appropriate measures in calculating fair drug prices for all concerned parties both consumers and entrepreneurs.

It must have a ground for calculating drug fees, medical supplies, medical expenses, while prices must be clearly labeled in order for people to check or inquire before deciding to receive treatment. The law already exists but it has to be enforced strictly. We must be able to meet public expectation. For private hospitals, we must make sure that they do not lose the ability to compete, especially in the quality of medical care. I would like you all to look at the issue with a realistic viewpoint that we need both public and private hospitals to provide choices for people. However, it is necessary that we must improve on standard and fairness. Sometimes the price of drugs and medical costs are too high. Prices should be reasonable.

We need a reform on public healthcare service. It must meet required standard and wildly reach the general public by focusing on prevention rather than treatment.

It must also accommodate our aging society in the future, while private hospitals can support the medical hub policy linked to medical tourism, which has an economic value of tens of billions of baht per year, with the potential to bring in a large number of foreign customers. Therefore, the provision of medicines and medical supplies as well as medical treatment services as control products can create a balance between price and quality, which will create satisfaction among patients and hospitals and lead to sustainable solutions.

**Lastly,** I would like to share with you the Government progress on human capital development which is the most important foundation in the development of the country in 2 areas, namely (1) creating a quality society for all such as the newborn child subsidies program, community welfare fund, and housing for low income people etc.

and (2) raising the quality of life of Thai workers through social security funds and compensation funds that have been modified to add more benefits to the workers. I ask that you watch the video that will air right after this program. It’s about 7 minutes long.

**Thank you. I wish you all good health and happiness in days to come. Sawasdee Krub.**

**VTR 1.**

Building a quality society for better living standards for all. The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security is presenting its report on social situations in the fourth quarter.

1. In focus.

1.1 Development of newborns and pre-school children with government supported fund is part of the country’s national strategic plan to enhance human abilities starting from birth. The newborn financial support is basic welfare for young children. Poor families with children of younger than 3 years of age are entitled to 600 baht a month. This program is benefiting 525,728 children.

Research has indicated that return on investment on newborn in poor families will be 17-fold. Such investment will contribute to the development of children’s IQ and EQ. There is no denying that this is the highest-yielding investment for young children from the Government.

1.2 Not leaving anyone behind society is the result of cooperation from many parties in providing creative cooperation and welfare in many forms such as 1) “volunteerism” which encourage us to be kind to one another, uphold those who have contributed to the country, and spend time helping the elderly;

2) “social partnership” especially private organizations that have been lending a helping hand in resolving social problems; 3) “community welfare” which has a nationwide network of funding that looks after all ages, helping members live a better life. When we give, we give with our hearts. And when we receive, we receive with dignity.

1.3 Residential security under the 20-year housing development master plan including 1) the construction of 11,029 housing units for the low income earners, 2) 192 housing units for senior citizens, 3) the “Million Homes” project consisting of 843 units, 4) the establishment of a national data center for residential housing, 5) the Pracharat market project to stimulate the grassroots economy and employment, 6) the “Baan Mankong” project of 13,717 units on public and private land in urban and rural areas, 7) the renovation of 5,023 riverside houses and structures along Lat Phrao Canal, and 8) the sufficiency housing project of 35,916 units in remote areas. The goal is to build stable homes for stronger Thailand.

Some concerning issues are as follows:

2.1 The first concern is teen pregnancy. The rate of teenagers giving birth to a baby is still high. One factor contributing to the high rate is sexual behaviors of today’s teenagers. Teen pregnancy can hinder young mothers’ educational opportunities, disrupt the labor market, and lead to abortion and child abandonment.

To prevent teen pregnancy, we must first empower the family institution and build a stronger community; Second, improve the assistance system and link related data; Third, develop a database for children and youth, so as to provide appropriate assistance.

2.2 The number of social violence now ranges between 7 and 10 cases a day, and 90% of the victims are children and women. The Government has declared 2019 as the year for the eradication of violence against children, women, and family members, as well as social violence in all forms.

Therefore, we need support from all parties in order to fend off social and domestic violence. The effort must start from (1) family (2) raising social awareness about violence and (3) keeping a close watch on the issue through area-based cooperation.

The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security and all related agencies working hand in hand, in the hope of reaching the ministry’s goal of becoming an ASEAN leader in social affairs and building quality society.

The video can be downloaded from <https://youtu.be/J9VRuTHvhgk>

**VTR 2.**

**Second topic:** Raising the quality of life of Thai workers with the new Compensation Act, the Government, under the leadership of Prime Minister General Prayut Chan-o-cha, has set a national strategic framework by creating opportunities and equality.

The Ministry of Labor, under the supervision of Deputy Prime Minister Gen. Prawit Wongsuwan and Minister of Labor Gen. Adul Saengsingkaew has driven such policies by raising the quality of life of Thai workers through 2 funds, namely

1. The Social Security Fund which collects contributions from employees, employers, and the government. There are 15.8 million insured persons with an accumulated funds of 1.86 trillion baht.

2. The Compensation Fund, in accordance with the Compensation Act 1994, collects contributions from one employer has 10.49 million participating employees with a cumulative fund of 60.272 billion baht.

For employees of government agencies, non-profit organizations, and international organizations, which are groups of personnel that have not yet been covered as equally as employees in the workplace, as well as some provisions of the act that is still inconsistent with the current social situation, Ministry of Labor has proposed the amended Compensation Act of 2018 to expand coverage and increase benefits, effective from 9 December 2018, with the following significant clauses:

(1) Extending protection for employees of government agencies or non-profit organizations and employees of international organizations, covering more than a million employees.

(2) Increasing employee benefits, including for medical expenses, increasing funeral expenses, providing lifelong compensation for disability, and extending payout periods to family members in case of death.

(3) The employer receives a 2% reduction in monthly payments

(4) In the case of a disaster, the Minister has the power to reduce the payment of additional funds.

(5) Increase channels for filing - notifying contributions via electronic systems in order to provide more convenience.

The new Compensation Act will result in all groups of employees being thoroughly protected in an equitable and equal manner, so that the labor force can be an important backbone in driving the country's economy for a better quality of life with stability, prosperity, and sustainability.

You can download the video from: <https://youtu.be/zfOzEKrhRcE>

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