Good evening to you all.

Thailand is a multicultural society. We have lived peacefully for hundreds of years with King as the head of state. Thailand is a democratic country where everyone can live together in harmony, despite differences, through acceptance and understanding. This is the beauty of democracy. If everyone thinks the same way, it would be like a one-colored rainbow, which of course is not as magnificent as a seven-colored rainbow.

If we think of Thailand as one big family, this family, like other nations, is socially and economically classified into 3 levels, or 3 brothers. The eldest brother is the richest. This group consists of large enterprises. Even though they can look after themselves, the government, the parent, would still need to facilitate their businesses.

The second brother or the middle class has a stable job and steady income. But once hit by illness, accident, or natural disaster, it would take people in this group some time to recover. In this connection, the government would have to minimize the impact of these unfortunate incidents.

The last brother or the low-income earners which comprises the poor, farmers, freelancers, and manual labor which make up for the majority, as well as SMEs and startups, is still in dire need of the parent’s support. The two other brothers also have to help the parents take care of the youngest.

Like I’ve always said, everyone is in the same loop, depending on one another. The government has to make sure every party from upstream to downstream are healthy and can support themselves without leaving no one behind. We can no longer be ignorant of self-development.

Following government updates is a good way to keep ourselves updated. There are more than 70,000 news distribution towers across Thailand. Also, you can follow government updates through the G News application or other reliable channels such as the government website <http://www.thaigov.go.th/>, the Facebook pages of the Spokesperson’s Office and the Prime Minister’s Office, the Public Relations Department’s Line account, and the application “G News” of the Digital Government Development Agency (Public Organization).

Throughout the past four years, the Government has put its attention on the long-standing issue of social inequality which has hindered the country’s growth and competitiveness. In this regard, the Government has prioritized its efforts on developing basic infrastructure including transportation (land, rail, water, and air) and communications and information technology. The area where we have not seen any new development for 10 years.

Our goal is to increase opportunities and distribute wealth across provinces, especially through the promotion of the local economy (the youngest brother) by rolling out various programs such as land allocation and agricultural career promotion which has benefited 47,000 farmers and 400,000 in 61 provinces, the Smart Farmer development program boasting more than 1 million members, the famer support program i.e. the 40 billion baht program to help 3.6 million rice farming families and the 30 billion baht program to help 2.2 million rubber families etc. Also, we have been able to sell 17 million tons of rice from the rice subsidy program, resulting in higher prices.

In relation to justice administration, we have established the Justice Fund to remove the phase that “prisons are for the poor.” The fund opens up doors for the poor to access the judicial services such as providing bail money and money required for legal proceeding such as the lawyer fee, transportation, accommodation, trial fees, and other related expenses.

The fund is provided through the community justice network, community leaders, village headsmen, and Damrongtham centers. During this past two years, around 200 million baht were paid through this channel to assist 9,000 people approximately.

In addition, the Government has always focused on lifting the livelihood of people, so that people can have a decent living. We have done this by helping the low income earners to be able to get a better access to government assistance programs such as the social welfare card scheme which has assisted around 14 million people, the launch of the Blue Flag shops campaign which now has 60,000 shops, the Thung Ngern Pracharat application at 40,000 shops, home loan and maintenance programs under a 60 billion baht budget, the eradication of informal debts by helping to mediate for 540,000 borrowers, the wellbeing development program to mobilize the local economy under the Thai Niyom Yangyuen (200,000 baht per community) covering 80,000 villages/communities, totaling 92,000 projects, the establishment of nearly 80,000 village and urban funds to generate income and promote savings.

This includes career development and lifting the quality of life for stability, well-being, and happiness. Even though the ratio of household debt to GDP has started to slightly increase.

Moreover, the outstanding amount of personal consumer loans consists of mortgages which accounts for 50.4% of total loans from all commercial banks.

These are collateral loans. Collateral loans can help increase people’s asset.

For health, the Government has raised the level of the National Health Security Fund by increasing contributions to 3,600 baht per person, created the UCEP hotline 1669 according to the "Free 72 hour treatment for emergency illnesses" policy, given priority to primary care doctors such as "family doctor teams” that focus on prevention and close consultation, and "community caregivers" to accommodate the aging society and the increasing amount of bedridden patients so that they won’t need to be burdens to their families.

As for "long-term" assistance measures, the Government has encouraged the production of agricultural products to be in line with market demands through the development of 4,600 large plots of agricultural land on an area of 5.4 million rai, using agri-maps to adjust the production of agricultural products to be suitable to the potential of the area, including "marketing, leading production" planning, increasing the value of products of the community through the implementation of OTOP program and promoting GI products to be available in the international markets by creating opportunities for business matching. OTOP products shall be made available for purchase on the airplane.

This policy has helped increase the value of the products and continue to generate more income for the people in the community from 98 billion baht in the first year of this administration to 190 billion baht last year (an increase of nearly 100 billion baht.)

In addition, the National Savings Fund (NSA) was established to promote the making of household accounts. We also promote the establishment of community banks or public financial institutions to help strengthen the community as a source of funds, allowing people to break off from the informal debt cycle and minimizing the problem of not having access to commercial banks.

This includes pushing the Debt Act to protect people from being bullied or exploited by some borrowers and some powerful people.

In relation to the promotion of development to regional areas for a better income generation and quality of life, the Government has developed 10 special economic zones in all regions of the country and the EEC, with over 3,000 SME entrepreneurs expressing their interest in setting up. There are requests for nearly 9 billion baht investment capitals submitted to the BOI.

This has helped create jobs, distribute income to various areas of the country. As a result, people do not have to leave their hometown and can keep their values. The elderly and children will be cared for and will not fall into social problems as happened in the past.

The Government has also implemented the framework of the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) to develop the southern region and focus on maximizing the potential of the area in a sustainable fashion.

In the future, this would create a "value chain" of production - processing - marketing, spreading and connecting things together. More local materials will be used and processed in the production line.

Domestic and International markets as well as online markets will be better connected, thanks to the communication infrastructures invested by this Government.

All of these measures are only part of the effort to raise the country's local economic foundation, not only focusing on "short-term" assistance alone but also lay the foundations to increase production capacity as well as value of products and services in the long run too.

Having the 20-year national strategy is also an important key factor. One of the key issues to be promoted urgently is the promotion of local economy.

Therefore, it can be seen that the Government has implemented plans to support all people in the community in all dimensions for a healthier and a more sustainable local economy.

I would like to urge concerned parties to speed up the aftermath rescue operation to help people who affected by the Tropical Storm Pabuk. This includes home repairs and reconstruction etc.

The affected areas shall include Bangkok, Samut Prakan, and Samut Songkhram too.

Lastly, I would like to say that over the past 4 years, the Government has solved the problems that have piled up for decades and has laid the foundations for development in the future.

Today, I would like to bring to your attention what has been done in relation to “national resources”, especially in areas that most people rarely see, namely (1) the fund for educational equality for the promotion of our "human resources" and to eliminate educational disparities.

Did you know that each year, there are more than 670,000 Thai children dropping out of the education system because of poverty? and (2) the reforestation project according to the King's Philosophy to preserve the country’s deteriorating mangrove and prevent coastal erosion.

This project returns the ecosystem to the community, helps reduce PM2.5 particles for urban residents. These areas can be further developed into an ecotourism sites for all of us in the future.

I would like you to think about how this Government has managed to solve problems that most people have overlooked in a sustainable fashion.

With regard to the adding more public parks or green spaces, the Government will be working harder on the matter in both Bangkok and all provinces. This is a project that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment as well as the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration are pushing forward in full stream. The Government is paying attention on all topics.

I now invite you to watch this 10 minute video clips about the topics I have just mentioned.

Thank you. I hope that all Thais take care of each other and seek to develop both themselves and their country for the country as well as abide by the justice system under the King’s grace. Sawasdee krub.

**VTR 1 The Equitable Education Fund (EEF).**

Every year, up to 670,000 students drop out of school because of poverty. Only 5% of children born to a poor family are able to pursue higher education degrees. The rest cannot afford to go to college because of the higher fees and related expenses comparing to household income. The knowledge and abilities of 15-year-old students in remote provinces are 2 academic years behind children in urban schools.

The Government sees that the problem of inequality requires equality-based solutions. Children and youths have different need s and don’t have equal access to quality and proper education. Therefore, the actual distribution of educational resources carried out on an equal basis may not be enough to address the issue. The issue must be addressed on the principle of equality while taking into consideration the actual needs of the learners and the context of their areas.

The Equitable Education Fund is one of the main organs established to improve education in a sustainable fashion, with its Research Institute for Educational Equality producing and providing knowledge and needed information technology, in cooperation with international research institutes, for better and higher innovative efficiency, so as to enable related agencies to improve educational policies while seeking cooperation from all sectors of society.

Recently, the Cabinet approved in principal a decree governing the donations made to the Equitable Education Fund. Donations are allowable deductions for income tax purposes. The deductible amount for personal income taxes will be twice the actual amount donated. For cooperate tax, the deductible amount will be seen as expenses and will be twice the actual amount donated. The tax break scheme was proposed by the Ministry of Finance and is now being reviewed by the Office of the Council of State.

Some notable achievements in this regard are the cooperation between the Equitable Education Fund and the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC) in screening poor students and allocating funds for “specially poor” students for the 2018 academic year. 1,600 baht per student. These needy students numbering 517,004 from 26,557 schools under the supervision of OBEC. This year, the campaign is planning to reach out to schools in rural and border areas numbering more than 2,200 countrywide.

This is considered a push for reform in fund/budget allocation for the purpose of eradicating inequality gap in education, especially among the poorest of the poor. OBEC is the first organ founded to manage Thai education and distribute funds under the demand-side financing concept and according to students’ needs.

The Program for International Student Assessment has found that 25% of Thai students (resilient students) with the lowest affordability in education are among the world’s top-performing students. And 3.33% of these students have the capability of conquering life obstacles. If we help fund their education, Thailand will see an increase of 18% in the number of resilient students.

The Government, through the Equitable Education Fund, launched the advanced vocational innovation project for 9th and 12th graders, and senior students of vocational schools who are in need of education funds but full of potential. Each year, 2,500 students will be granted scholarships to continue their education in targeted/demanded areas including STEM education and digital technology.

Participating schools and companies, Thai and foreign, will develop programs where students can be employed upon their completion. The move caters to the growth of the labor market and allows for Thai students to stay in a career path they are passionate about.

Not only does the project produce 2,500 new skilled workers on a yearly basis, it will also give the less fortunate students a better chance at pursuing higher education degrees, Also, the program focuses on reforming vocational education in the vocational institutes with the intention to advance vocational institutions to be able supply capable skilled workers to the labor market and businesses which will in turn increase the country’s competitive ability in accordance with the Thailand 4.0 initiative.

Theoretically, the advanced vocational innovation project is considered a worthwhile initiative. Assuming the first batch of 2,500 students enrolled in the project retire at the age of 60, they will have created a total of 10 billion baht in net present value (NPV).

Interested applicants can submit scholarship application for the advanced vocational innovation project between February 18 to March 18, 2019. More information can be obtained from participating schools or at [www.eef.or.th](http://www.eef.or.th).

**VTR 2**

After more than 2 years, the reforestation project according to the King’s Philosophy to prevent coastal erosion has helped return more than 210 rai of green space to become an ecological tourist attraction and returned clean air to people in Bangkok.

Mangrove forests along the Bang Khun Thian coast has been restored as a home for plants and animals after the Government carried out the reforestation project according to the King’s Philosophy with cooperation of government agencies, the private sector, and the public to plant mangrove trees using bamboo and electric poles to protect the coast from erosion. The project has planted more than 53,000 mangrove trees along with seedlings since 2017. Today, the Bang Khun Thian District Office was able to expand the area of forest plantation by more than 210 rai Originally, the Bang Khun Thian area was the only area of ​​Bangkok next to the Gulf of Thailand with a distance of about 4.7 kilometers. During the years 1968 to 1983, it was faced with a problem of seawater erosion, resulting in the deterioration of mangrove forests spanning a distance 4.7 kilometers. If left unaddressed, it was expected that the entire area would be destroyed in the next 10 years.

The government has implemented a policy to tackle the problem in a serious manner using the Pracharat mechanism according to the royal initiative on mangrove conservation by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej by requesting cooperation from all sectors to join together as a network partner of Bangkok in order to protect the mangrove forest and return it to its original state of ecological balance, providing nutritious soil for the natural environment and becoming an important ecotourism area of Bangkok The Bang Khun Thian seaside communities acknowledge that mangroves have helped increase the stability of their homes because the mangroves are helping to absorb the impact of the waves while the roots of the mangroves and the mangrove trees also helps solve the problem of land subsidence in coastal areas as well.

After the forest area was fully restored, tourists were able to come visit the mangrove forest routes and see the way of life of fishermen during the weekend.

Sang Arun Nimnoi, a Bang Khun Thian seaside community member said "The situation has since improved and benefitted us a lot. There is now a river bank to prevent damage from sea waves and strong winds.

The situation has improved. People have helped by installing rocks and wood to help alleviate the problem. During the weekend, there are tourists who come with their bicycles. Sometimes, there are hundreds of them."

The natural state of the mangrove forest provides a rich food source for aquatic animals, including shrimp, shellfish, crabs, and fish, that grow naturally, free of chemicals. Their delicious sweet meat sold to seafood stores creates jobs and more income.

Kwanjai Changcharoen, owner of a seafood restaurant in Bang Khun Thian seafood said "Most of the area breeds banana shrimp, tiger prawns, sea crabs which we receive directly from local fishermen who fish them naturally, not from farms.

When the aquatic animals fully mature, the villagers will catch and sell them. The taste, then, is better than normal"

When the mangrove forest is rich, the ecosystem has also improved, making this area an important eco-tourism attraction.

There are open spaces for people to participate in seedling and mangrove planting. Costal bike routes are opened to facilitate people and tourists.

Creating a Bang Khun Thian mangrove restoration network is done by bringing people in communities that live in the mangrove forest together as an important mechanism for the conservation and restoration effort in a sustainable manner.

More than restoring the mangrove forest, the area also serves as a “green lung” for people in the area, reducing carbon dioxide and greenhouse gas caused by industrial and human activities 4 times faster than normal forestland.

It is also an important place to help reduce PM 2.5 particles that affects people's health.

Bang Khun Thian mangrove forest is another option for people to help increase green spaces by planting mangrove forests. At the same time, they can enjoy roaming around while breathing Bangkok’s fresh air.