

(unofficial translation)

Announcement
by the
Office of the Prime Minister

On this day (23 January 2019) the Secretariat of the Cabinet has submitted the Royal Decree to hold general elections for members of the House of Representatives in 2019, for announcement in the Royal Gazette, with immediate effect. As a result, within 5 days from today, the Election Commission will announce the following in the Royal Gazette: the date of general elections, the date for registration of constituency elections, the number of members of the House of Representatives for each province, the number of constituencies for each province, and the location for political parties to submit their rosters of Party-list candidates. All this is in accordance with Article 12 of the Royal Act on the Election of the Members of the House of Representatives 2018. In addition, the parameters of election campaigning and the time-frame for calculating election expenses will need to be observed from this day forward, in accordance with Article 173, which should end any further doubts on the holding and timing of general elections.

The setting of the date for general elections is within the powers of the Election Commission, while the coordination of work between the government and the Election Commission is the responsibility of the government. In this aspect, the government has had the duty to inform the Election Commission of certain activities and schedules related to the Coronation Ceremony, so that the latter may consider certain undertakings related to general elections, including those subsequent to the day of general elections, to not unnecessarily coincide or overlap with the scheduling of the Coronation Ceremony or other annual Royal Ceremonies, such as the Royal Ceremony for Songkran, the Royal Ploughing Ceremony, and the Royal Merit Making Ceremony for Visaka Bucha. As well, the government has duly kept the public informed of the events related to this auspicious occasion, so that the Thai people can extend our collective goodwill and solidarity throughout the country, as we are all joyfully united in looking forward to witnessing and taking part in this extraordinary and rare historic event for our nation, which has not been seen since the Coronation Ceremony of King Bhumibol Adulyadej in 1950.

The government believes that the date of general elections set by the Election Commission will not be too close so that it affects the campaign time for political parties and their candidates, or cause any disadvantages for any persons, nor will it be too late to the extent that such a delay will have detrimental effects on the country and the Thai people. Nevertheless, it will not exceed 150 days from the date of promulgation of the Royal Act on the Election of the Members of the House of Representatives 2018, which is currently in effect. This means that a House of Representatives and a new government, under a democratic system with His Majesty the King as the Head of State, will be in place by the middle of this year, which is in accordance with the schedule that was laid several months ago.

The government asks that all Thai people help maintain a constructive environment of orderliness, civility, and unity over the duration of general elections and the organisation of Coronation Ceremony, for the auspiciousness of our nation. Political campaigning and the presentation of policy platforms can be undertaken through democratic processes, so that the soundest and most viable proposals are presented to the people. However, conflicts or disputes that can create a political crisis, similar to those which have happened in the past, should not be allowed to reoccur. At the same time, Thai people who have the right to vote should come out to do so in the highest possible numbers, with sufficient knowledge about the candidates and an understanding about the new election system.

The government hopes that the Election Commission and all concerned will use the time from now to create understanding and awareness about these issues, so that the public is well-informed and that the upcoming general elections can take place smoothly, honestly, and fairly in accordance with all of our intentions.

Office of the Prime Minister

23 January B.E. 2562 (2019)