

Q&A: Thailand lifted martial law

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Q1: When was the martial law invoked in Thailand, and why?

The martial law has been invoked since Thailand was placed under the administration of the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) on 22 May, 2014. The NCPO's focus is to bring peace to the country, introduce national reconciliation and reform, and reinstate democracy, as Thailand suffered months of political impasse.

Q2: But a military coup and military ruling is no democracy in the eye of the international community.

We understand the concerns by the international community, but we would like to explain that the situation in Thailand is unique. As you are aware, the military coup took place after months of political impasse. Since then, Thailand has been seeing a number of positive developments. Trade and diplomatic ties with many foreign countries have been strengthened and expanded. We are moving in the right direction.

Q3: With Thailand plans to lift martial law and replace it with Article 44, which is said to give the Thai Prime Minister absolute power, how would a military coup in Thailand be different than other countries?

According to Thai Prime Minister General Prayut Chan-o-cha, Article 44 would be applied in a constructive way to solve security issues as well as matters hindering the country's growth and development.

Q4: Is it then safe for tourists to travel to Thailand, especially once Article 44 is invoked?

Thailand is a hospitable country and has welcomed international visitors with open arms throughout its history. But we would like to also say that unfortunate incidents on the local people and tourists may happen like anywhere else in the world. We encourage people to use their common sense as a norm and avoid doing anything which may break the law or create a negative situation.

With regard to the invocation of Article 44, we would like to clarify that the current government's intention is to solve national issues.

Q5: How would TAT, as Thailand's main tourism promotion bureau, bring yourself to tell the international community that it is safe to travel to your country when negative news about the country being under a dictatorship is widely reported in the media?

We would like to clarify that no matter how many changes there have been in Thailand's administration, past and present, all Thai governments recognise the huge importance of tourism. As you may have been aware, the government has been introducing several measures aimed at better facilitating tourists as well as improving their experiences while travelling in Thailand.

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