

Gen Surayud appointed as the 24 th prime minister

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Dear friends,

Update the situation in Thailand:

A: 24th Thai PM.

You all may be know by now that the after many names have been mentioned after the few days of 19 September's Coup. Finally, the 24th Thai Prime Minister was appointed by the Coup is the former Military Chief, Gen Surayud Chulanont.

The Nation reported that:

General Surayud Chulanont, a respected retired army officer and advisor to Thailand's king, becomes Thailand's 24 th prime minister Sunday.

HM the King endorsed Surayud who was nominated by the military council that deposed Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra when he was in the US. [Source: http://nationmultimedia.com/2006/10/01/headlines/headlines_30015100.php]

You can see the report from BBC <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/5396208.stm>, and the Bangkok Post, <http://bangkokpost.com/>

B: General Action:

Closing down of Midnight University Website:

Chanida Bamford from Focus on the Global South reported that ""www.midnightuniv.org is visited by over 2.5 million users per month. The closure means the loss of access to over 20,000 pages of 1,500 or so papers and articles in the fields of Science, Social Science, and Humanities, including 1,300 items on the Bulletin Board. This major encroachment on academic freedom and curtailment of freedom of information of a great number of the Thai population cannot be tolerated. See the statement below for more details. [On ESSF website: [Appeal for website closure protest: Midnight University \(Chiang Mai\)](#)]

Action - "to denounce the website closure, please send your full name to midnightuniv gmail.com, attention: Mr Somkiat Tangnamo, Webmaster"

Protest in Seoul

About 100 activists in Seoul gathering in front the Thai Embassy on the morning of 29 September, condemning the Coup in Thailand and demanding that 1). The military junta immediately stop its political intervention! 2) Immediate restoration of the Constitution of 1997. 3) Protection of basic democratic rights including the freedom of press. and Guarantee of safety to the demonstration on

October 6 and the Thai Social Forum.

Protests in Thailand continue:

A number of Action Plans in Thailand protesting and denouncing the Coup still go ahead as it plans even though the Prime Minister has been appointed. Most of these activities organized by student activists and academics from many big universities in Bangkok and Chiangmai.

- 1 October — Seminar on “The Law and the Coup”, at Thammasart University
- 2 October, 5 PM - 6.30 PM - Civil disobedience action “Why we have to protest against the Coup?”, in front of the Army Head Quarter, Bangkok
- 4 October, 1 PM - 7 PM, “Hidden dictatorship on the name of Thai’s democracy”, Chulalongkorn University.
- 5 October, 4 PM - 6 PM, “Why we protest against the Coup?”, Ramkhamhaeng Open University
- 6-14 October, Thammasart University, “30 Years memorial of the 6th October 1976 Crackdown”

C: 1st Statement Denouncing the Prime Minister:

- Giles Ji Ungpakorn, from Peoples Coalition Party, Thailand, issue statement shortly after the official announcement at 5 PM on 1st October. This is the only statement so far denouncing the Appointed the Former Military Chief Prime Minister.

Thai Prime Minister is just a military leader of a military dictatorship

The Thai military junta, which staged a coup, tore up the 1997 constitution, and destroyed democracy, has just appointed one of its own to be Prime Minister. This military Prime Minister, together with his illegitimate government is just a ghastly shadow of the junta itself. This is not returning the power to the people and everything this government does will be done without a mandate from the people. It is simply a military dictatorship and any so-called “political reform” carried out by this illegitimate government will be done by the elite; for the elite. There will not be any real and meaningful reform process involving the majority of the population.

According to section 65 of the 1997 Constitution it is the duty of all Thai citizens to resist a military coup. According to internationally accepted principles of democracy, citizens are under no obligation to follow the orders of a self-appointed military junta which does not have a democratic mandate.

We demand the return of the 1997 Constitution along with all basic democratic rights. We demand a free press and media and an end to censorship. We condemn the closure of the Midnight University website by the military junta. As part of the Peoples Movement we shall be part of the real reform process which takes place at the Thai Social Forum 21-23 October. We urge all social movements and NGOs to join this reform process and to reject this illegitimate military government.

Junya Lek Yimprasert

Thai Labour Campaign

P.O. Box 219, Ladprao Post Office

Bangkok 10310

Tel: + 66 1 617 5491

Fax: + 66 2 933 1951

www.thailabour.org