

Alcohol Control Situation in Thailand

On 28 November 2007, the Alcohol Related-Harms Prevention Campaign Network with its 256 network partners of more than 1,500 people gathered in front of the Parliament to demonstrate their strong support to the National Legislative Assembly (NLA) on the alcohol control bill being considered in the third round. The Network kicked off its activities around 9.00 a.m. The youth groups showed their symbolic performance highlighting negative consequences of alcohol on Thai youth. They also called the Chairperson of the NLA for rescheduling the alcohol agenda from the 15th urgent agenda to the 1st urgent one. At the same time, the child networks from Foundation for Children lined up at the parliament's entrance to give flowers to the NLA Members.

The second activity began on the main stage at 10.00 a.m. by activists from Lampon singing songs concerning alcohol. After that, a group of campaigners arranged the ritual ceremony predicting a result of the NLA meeting on the alcohol control bill. The oracle was "The wish will come true". In addition, the activities on the stage were alternated with different campaigners from various networks, namely graduate study youth group, parent group and labor group. They made a speech and musical shows and performances. The networks jointly sang a soul-stirring (encouraging) song and an inexorable song to announce their intention.

Although they asked the NLA to move the agenda up to the 1st one, their request was ignored. Until 2.45 p.m., the bill was considered. Measure 31-34 related to a partial ban on alcohol advertisement were heavily debated. The consideration took many hours until early at night. The NLA eventually took an advice from the Chair of the commission who proposing a withdrawal of the bill from the NLA consideration. Measure 31-34 would be reviewed again quickly to be back to the NLA meeting next week in the 3rd round.

After the NLA reached a conclusion, the Network with great disappointment organized a symbolic activity mourning for the result of the NLA by showing the canvas with a message "NLA, Do not support the industry to kill Thai youth". The canvas was hanged on the fence in front of the Parliament and the campaigners declared to keep fighting until the NLA enforces the bill.