

Thailand Election Meeting Aborted As Two Anti-Government Protesters Killed

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BANGKOK, May 15 (Bernama) -- Thailand's upcoming general election faced the possibility of further postponement as anti-government protesters continued to oppose the plan, hardened by two fatalities in an attack on one of their protest sites Thursday morning.

The election has been set for July 20, but no royal decree has been issued to allow it to be held, and with increasing violence recently, it is likely to be postponed.

The Election Commission (EC) and the caretaker government representatives were supposed to have had a meeting at the Royal Thai Air Force Academy Thursday morning to discuss the matter about the election, but anti-government protesters made their way into the academy.

EC secretary-general Phuchong told reporters the meeting today could not be held and had to be postponed as the protesters made their way into the academy and gathered only 50 metres away from the meeting room.

People's Democratic Reform Committee leader Suthep Thaugsuban led his supporters to the academy Thursday morning, and he even went inside the meeting room which was empty as none of the EC members and caretaker government representatives had turned up because of safety concerns due to the protest.

The protesters even had lunch in front of the meeting room before returning to their rally site at Ratchadumnoen Avenue.

Meanwhile, two people were killed and 21 injured after M79 grenades were hurled at anti-government protesters near the Democracy Monument area around 2.45 am, according to the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration's Erawan Emergency Medical Services Centre (EMS).

The two people who succumbed to their injuries in hospital were identified as Narayon Chanpet, 21, and Somkuan Nuankhanai, 51.

Since Nov 30, twenty-four people have been killed and 783 injured in Bangkok while three died and 43 were injured in other provinces.

Thailand's political conflict continues to be in a stalemate as the anti-government protesters continue to press for reforms and removal of the current caretaker government which is still considered to be under the influence of Thaksin Shinawatra although his sister, former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, has been removed.

Meanwhile, the ruling Pheu Thai Party is eager to have a general election as soon as possible and is a favourite to win it.

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