

Thai Seeks Talk On Haze
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BANGKOK, Oct 6 (Bernama) -- Thailand seeks bilateral and regional discussions over the haze problem as a result of open burning in Indonesia which now have affected the southern part of the country, including the top tourist destinations such as Phuket and Hat Yai.

As this year it (haze) is more serious than the previous years, I have instructed the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to discuss with the country of origin about the problem and how they would resolve the problem," said Thai Prime Minister General Prayuth Chan-ocha at a press conference after the weekly cabinet meeting here today.

In the areas affected by the haze, the relevant authorities were assigned to spray water to reduce the haze and face masks provided to the people in affected areas, said Prayuth.

The open burning believed to originate from Sumatra, Indonesia, resulted in unhealthy level of air in Phuket and Hatyai at 2pm this afternoon with air pollutant readings of 146 and 156 respectively.

The highest reading recorded was in Muang district of Satul province at 210 at 8.00 am, according to the Pollution Control Department today.

Thai Minister of Foreign Affairs, Don Pramudwinai said Thailand was ready to join discussions on the haze problem if invited.

"If there is a talk, it would be helpful (to resolve the problem)," he said after he was asked if there would be a possibility to have urgent discussions among the affected countries.

He said at the moment he was not aware of any initiative to hold a meeting on the matter among the probable countries of Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia.

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