

**Take Into Account People's Input In Solving Flood Crisis - Yingluck
Bernama
November 23, 2011
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BANGKOK, Nov 23 (Bernama) -- As the conflict between authorities and communities grows in addressing the four-month flood crisis, Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra has instructed the authorities to take into account the people's input.

She said both parties needed to settle their differences at the negotiating table and the authorities should adjust their strategies in accommodating the needs of the communities.

"I understand them. For example, some don't want their areas to be flooded again while some want flood in their areas to be drained out quickly," she told reporters here today.

However, Yingluck cautioned that the flood problem could not be solved in a holistic manner if every community merely looked at their respective community's interest only.

Tensions rose lately as some communities were fed-up with the authorities' strategies of handling the flood crisis in their respective areas as they suffered from the month-long flood.

To make matters worse, they believed the authorities' strategies were to sacrifice their areas just to keep other areas dry.

This led to incidents where communities forced open sluice gates, tampered with the flood barriers and gave an ultimatum to the authorities, as well as put forward concrete solutions and demanded higher compensation.

Yingluck said authorities needed to find ways to divert the floodwaters into the sea and not merely block the floodwaters from reaching certain areas.

"If certain areas are able to divert the floodwaters and make the situation moderate, please do it as the nature of water was such that it cannot be drained if it was blocked," she said.

About a quarter of the country remains inundated by floodwaters, affecting about five million people from 17 provinces in the northern and central regions, since the worst floods in five decades hit the country in stages on July 25.

The death toll rose to 610 today.

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