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# **TRAFFICKING FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION INTO SOUTHERN THAILAND**

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## PREFACE

Human trafficking has been one of the most challenging problems of nation states across the globe since the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thailand has lately turned into a country of origin, destination, and transit for human trafficking. So far, the degree of human trafficking into Thailand is still unknown. Studies on human trafficking into Thailand have been mostly carried out in the Mekong Sub-region. The south of Thailand is an under-researched area, particularly when dealing with trafficking for sexual exploitation.

This manuscript provides key findings of the research project entitled Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation into Southern Thailand, under the joint support of the Alliance Francaize Bangkok and the IRASEC. Carried out during December 2006 – December 2007, the study was expected to fill the gap of research in the problem of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Thailand along a qualitative approach. It was designed towards fact-findings for a better understanding with the most updated information on the problem there.

In all, the highlight of the contribution of this study is two folds. *First*, it enriches literatures on human security from the perspective of people on the move through a qualitative study of human trafficking for sexual exploitation into areas of marginal investigation - - southern Thailand. *Second*, it contributes in terms of policy impact for further strengthening of the collaborative efforts at the national and district levels within Thailand as well as at the regional level.

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The gratitude also goes to Professor Dr. Suchada Kirananda, the President of Chulalongkorn University, Dr. Sunait Chutintaranond, the director of the Institute of Asian Studies (IAS), Chulalongkorn University, Professor Dr. Supang Chantavanich, the director of the IAS' s Asian Research Center for Migration (ARCM) and all the IAS staff for all their support and facilitation throughout the period of study. Special thanks are extended to Mrs. Arunothai Supalermongkolchai and Ms. Montakarn Chimmamee, who never withheld their efforts in rendering all kinds of assistance to the research team.

Last but not least, as the director of the research project, I would also to express my deepest gratitude to the research team. Without them, this research project could not come to fruition. I am solely responsible for all factual errors and shortcomings.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY\*

The study on Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation into Southern Thailand was carried out during December 2006 – December 2007. The study was designed to provide a better understanding of the overall picture of the situation of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Southern Thailand, to identify and to understand the victims there, to understand the factors, conditions, routes and process of trafficking in persons into Southern Thailand, and to identify the role of governmental and non-governmental mechanisms there.

Covering the pre-departure stage, the route and process of trafficking, as well as the entry and post-entry dimension of human trafficking into Southern Thailand, four areas were selected as case studies. They are: Muang District - - or Ranong District - - in Ranong Province; Sadao District in Songkhla Province; Sungai Kolok District in Narathiwat Province; and Betong District in Yala Province. The study is based on archival and field research with in-depth interview of key informants - - the stakeholders from local authorities in charge of and an NGO dealing with human trafficking as well as victims so as to obtain first-hand information.

This study argued that there was a changing face of sex trade in Thailand with unabated continuation of people making their fortunes via sex trade, despite intervention measures. Among others, these were key points:

- Sex trade was expanding in form. The current sexual services are not limited to direct and indirect sex services, but also included freelance, and those in the guise of mistress.
- Brothel-based sexual services no more dominated the scene.
- Sex services became more mobile in nature, either with or without employers.
- There was less force being used in human trafficking for sexual exploitation into Southern Thailand.
- Soft tricks proved to be more effective in trafficking strategies.
- More routes of trafficking were being used, including expensive ones with relatively easy transportation.
- There was better communication between sex workers and their people back home via mobile phones than in the past few years.

In the meantime, the trend of trafficking women and girls from hill tribes in Northern Thailand and its neighbouring countries continued - - particularly from Myanmar.

Six routes of trafficking for sexual exploitation into Southern Thailand was found: a flight-land-water-land transport route from Myanmar's Yangon via Kawthaung into Ranong, the first southern province bordering the southernmost Myanmar; a land-water-land transport route from Mawlanyine and Dawei in Tenasserim via Kawthaung into Ranong; a land-transport route from northern Thailand; a land-transport route from Northeastern Thailand; a land-transport route from China via the Shan State of Myanmar and Chiang Rai, the northernmost province of Thailand bordering the Shan State, and Central Thailand into the southernmost provinces of Thailand; and a flight from China to the south of Thailand.

Those routes of trafficking for sexual exploitation were shared by migrant workers for other laboring services. The most common method of migration and/or trafficking along those routes was through agents or brokers. The latter were mostly experienced sex workers from the same place of origin as the migrant sex workers, sent by sex establishment operators or owners to deliberately recruit girls and women who were looking for a life change to replace a constant turnover of workers in sexual service business, while guaranteeing customers with new attractions. In many cases, they were relatives and friends to the victims or their family. It was an untold story if any of them were a person of authority who ran a syndicate. To lure the prospective victims into sexual services, most of them made themselves appeared as successful sex workers with a happy life changing.

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\* By Patcharawalai Wongboonsin

The sex workers traveled along those routes in a small organized group, accompanied by the agents/brokers. This reflected a changing trend from the past when a big organized group dominated the trafficking ring. There was a transfer of responsibility from one group of agents/brokers to another along the way.

The victims of human trafficking were brought into sexual services business in Muang District - - or Ranong District - - in Ranong Province; Sadao District in Songkhla Province; Sungai Kolok District in Narathiwat Province; and Betong District in Yala Province. Those areas did not limit themselves as destination but also served as transit points to other destinations within and outside Thailand. This was particularly the case for Malaysia, which may have also been either a receiving area or a transit point to Singapore and elsewhere.

The pattern of the sex trade at Dan Nok linked with that in Sungai Kolok and Hat Yai. The latter was the major district in Songkhla province, a relatively fast booming city in trade, business and a popular tourist spot, while serving as a transportation and communications hub of the South, linking with various destinations in neighboring provinces as well as in Malaysia.

Most of the victims in the study sites were tricked rather than forced to get into this lucrative business in Thailand. Poverty was not the only driving force for engaging in prostitution. Materialism and the problem of uncertain and/or insufficient income - - fear from want - - were among key driving forces in most cases. The problem of community insecurity - - fear from threats, i.e. from being killed, persecuted or abused - - also added for those from Myanmar. Besides the social, economic and political conditions in Thailand, the pulling factors included the growing tourism, the demand for sex trade in the study sites as well as the possibility that sex trade offered fast and more money than other labouring services.

To be liberalized from the varied human insecurities back home, a decision was made either to take the risk of venturing in a new pathway of life or to take a new pathway of life chosen by the parents. Such a decision was made unknowingly if it was a winning formula or if it was a choice towards another aspect of human insecurities. The case study of sex trade in the four study sites in southern Thailand suggested that engaging in sex trade was expected to be a part of life to lead towards a better life or a relatively human security thereafter once an opportunity avails.

Direct sex service establishments belonged to the lowest socio-economic status with the lowest rate of services and involved foreign sex workers rather than domestic ones. Indirect, freelance and mistress sex services involve more domestic than foreign sex workers. Rather than getting out of the business, sex workers tended to prefer moving up from a lower status of sex trade into a new market of a higher status that chargeed more for the services with more luxurious working conditions. This was particularly for the native migrant workers since the new markets of freelance sexual services and those in the guise of mistress are not readily open for illegal foreign workers. The latter rather tended to uplift their status into brokers to earn more money and even to set themselves as partners of sex business owners.

Rather than physically locked up in a premise, sex workers in the study sites were debt bondage. The case was relatively serious for those from Myanmar with high cost of transportation. Sexual transmission diseases were a major problem. This was despite the official campaigns, a '100% condom' program enforcing a mandatory use of condoms in brothels, and an MOU between the public health office in the area and entertainment venues there to bring service workers for medical check-up at least once a month. An irregular use of condom was the major problem of those sex workers. The risk behavior increased among those using drugs.

Many agencies were involved in the prevention and suppression of prostitution as well as providing assistance to victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Thailand. Local actions in the study sites were part of the policy agenda at the national level. Key actors included the

police, immigration, social welfare, public health, NGOs as well as embassy and the ministry of foreign affairs. In practice, those were major shortcomings in policy implementation.

Due to the dominating mobile nature of sex services in the study sites, this study was still unable to reflect the tip of iceberg of the actual number of women and children who were involved in the sex industry, trafficked into sexual exploitation, and abused in the study sites. It was also unable to outreach mobile freelanced sex workers, those in the guise of mistress, migrant sex workers with HIV/AIDS. They represent issues in need of further investigation.

Besides the dominant approach of intervention measures to focus on the destination or receiving areas of human trafficking, this study encouraged a proactive approach to reach the socially vulnerable segments of the population in the light of human security in the places of origin with a highlight on empowerment. That is to make the people prone to vulnerability the best agents for protecting and improving their own lives, rather than just passive recipients of policies made elsewhere.

Given the changing faces of human trafficking and sex trade in Thailand, this study suggested that empowering individuals and communities to respond the challenges of uncertainty through mitigation and adaptation is an important strategy against human trafficking for sexual exploitation. Based on the notion that trafficking in persons is an international crime, governments concerned are encouraged to strengthen their coordinating efforts to address this problem. Existing legislation should also be strengthened and strictly enforced. Feasibility of establishing of a regional convention on combating the crime of trafficking in women and children for prostitution should be examined.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION\*

### 1. Rational of the Study

Thailand is a source, transit, and destination country for trafficking. As a center of economic prosperity in Southeast Asia, Thailand has received trafficked persons from poorer neighboring countries, China and beyond into many sectors, including sexual industry. This is in addition to internal trafficking for sexual exploitation. They may add to or even be a fraction of the estimated 800,000 to two million prostitutes currently working in Thailand.<sup>1</sup>

In the early 1990s, Thai NGOs estimated a minimum of twenty thousand Burmese women and girls being trafficked and sold into sexual exploitation in Thailand, with about ten thousand new recruits came in every year. They are moved from one brothel to another, and often end up being sent back to Burma after a year or two to recruit their own successors. This is according to a preliminary study by Asia Watch and the Women's Right Project.<sup>2</sup>

At present, trafficked persons can be seen in most part of Thailand. This is despite the recently estimated reduction in number due to the economic crisis and stringent law enforcement.<sup>3</sup>

Among all places, border areas have become a critical concern in recent years. They are focal points for trade, commerce, and services. Besides, they have turned into sources of, and transit points for trafficking in persons for prostitution. Border areas often become neutral zones, where law and order may be lax, and where entrepreneurs catering to the itinerant populations lead to such places becoming heavens for activities such as illicit gambling and sex. Some border areas that have been known sites for gambling have recently established casinos with hotel and shopping complexes. Increasing trade, the construction of more buildings, and infrastructures adds to the ease of travelers and other types of mobile people reaching remote border points and spending time there.

The Thai-Myanmar and Thai-Malaysian borders contain sites that are among the most riskiest border areas in the Greater Mekong Sub-region and in Southeast Asia.

According Supang et al. (2000), along the Thai-Myanmar border, out of 77,500 migrants in the Muang District of Ranong, which slightly exceeds the 73,361 local residents in early 2000s, about 38 per cent of the migrant workers there are women employed in various occupations including sex work and in entertainment venues. Ethnically, most of them are Burmese (57%) and a relatively smaller number Mon, Dawei and Karen.

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<sup>1</sup> Supang Chantavanich (2000). *Mobility and HIV/AIDS in the Greater Mekong Subregion*. Bangkok: Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University; Patcharawalai Wongboonsin (2006) "Asian Labour Migration and Regional Arrangements," pp. 201-217. In Kristof Tamas and Joakim Palme (Editors). *Globalizing Migration Regimes: New Challenges to Transnational Cooperation*. Hampshire, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2006; Patcharawalai Wongboonsin (2005). "Globalization-Migration Nexus." Presented to Session I: Globalization and Current Migration Trends (With a Special Reference to Southeast Asia), UNHCR Roundtable on Migration and Refugee Issues, Kuala Lumpur, 13-14 June; Patcharawalai Wongboonsin (2002). "Migration Along International Borders." Paper presented at the Meeting on Development of Health Collaboration Along Thailand-Myanmar Border Area organized by the World Health Organization and the Ministry of Public Health on March 11-12, at Mae Sot District, Tak Province, Thailand.

<sup>2</sup> Asia Watch and the Women's Rights Project (1993). *A modern form of slavery: trafficking of Burmese women and girls into brothels in Thailand*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

<sup>3</sup> Supang Chantavanich (2000).

According to Supaphan and Shakti (2002), along the Thai-Malaysian border of 506 kilometers long, there are areas with strong economy and relatively lack of manpower. They attract migrant labors from other parts of Thailand and neighboring countries. They are also an important tourist destination, particularly for those from neighboring Malaysia. The number of arrivals from Malaysia is consistently high during the past several years. According to local authorities there, tourists constitute over 80% of the total population movement from Malaysia to Thailand. Other important mobile groups are traders and truck drivers. They enter through Sadao and Padang Besar in Songkhla, Sungai Kolok in Narathiwat, Betong in Yala, and other border crossings in several provinces. On any Friday evening or Saturday morning, thousands of Malaysians cross over to Thailand and spend their weekend in the city of Hatyai, or such border town as Sadao and Sungai Kolok before returning on Sunday evening or Monday morning. This constitutes a tremendous flow of people across the border. Statistical data from the Department of Employment indicates the provinces with registered workers including those bordering Malaysia, i.e., Songkhla, Satun, and Narathiwat. In addition, it is also reported that a large number of undocumented migrant labors from Bangladesh and Myanmar are in the Southern border areas. Some of them seek to enter Malaysia for jobs and many others have been forced out of Malaysia following police crackdowns on irregular labor. Given their irregular status, many of them remain hidden and it is difficult to track their locations.

According to Supaphan and Shakti (2002), Sadao is a relatively quiet border crossing with a thousand of Malaysian tourists and primarily migrant workers from Myanmar coming to the area. Most of the Malaysian tourists visit there regularly. Some of them visit entertainment venues, while some seek massage service. Others visit sex workers. Some have Thai minor wives there. Most of the migrant workers have settled for some time and do not intend to return to Myanmar. The large number of sex workers and many tourists leads to conclude that Sadao is a popular sex tourist spot. Meanwhile, there are more hotels in Sungai Kolok than in Sadao. The main customers are Malaysian. Most of them visit there for rest and recreation – drinking and visiting sex establishments. As in Sadao, the number of Malaysian tourists increases during the weekend and holidays, such as New Year, Hari Raya, Songkran and Chinese New Year. Most of the hotels have cafes, karaoke and discotheques. All these venues have women who are willing to accompany clients to their hotel rooms.

To encourage appropriate anti-trafficking strategies, one needs to recognize that trafficking of persons is multi-causal factors and a multifaceted problem. They are widely debated. The above notion represents an aspect of the demand side of trafficking of Asian women into the Southern part of Thailand. Besides the demand, one needs to look into the supply side and impunity. According to the Human Security Network (2005), poverty and lack of education on basic human rights principles were identified as the main root causes of human trafficking. The supply side may also include unemployment, access to resources, discrimination against women, dreams of a better life, intra-family violence, lack of information about migration risks. It may also include cultural and psychological factors as well as social de-structure. Meanwhile, impunity includes insufficient laws, poor law enforcement, insufficient penalties, corruption, complacency, invisibility of issues, etc. Some argue that the criminalization of those who solicit sexual services would help reduce the demand. Others view that this could only be effective in cases where the relevant laws have been updated to address the issue specifically. One may also note that there are desperate people that are prepared to take the risk of falling into the hands of traffickers.

In other words, the issue of trafficking in persons, particularly for sexual exploitation, from the perspective of the destination or a transit country are expected to cover the pre-departure stage, the route and process of trafficking, as well as the entry and post-entry dimension.

## **2. Objective of the Study**

The objectives of the study were four-fold.

- 1) To have an overall picture of the situation of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Southern Thailand;
- 2) To identify and to understand the victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in

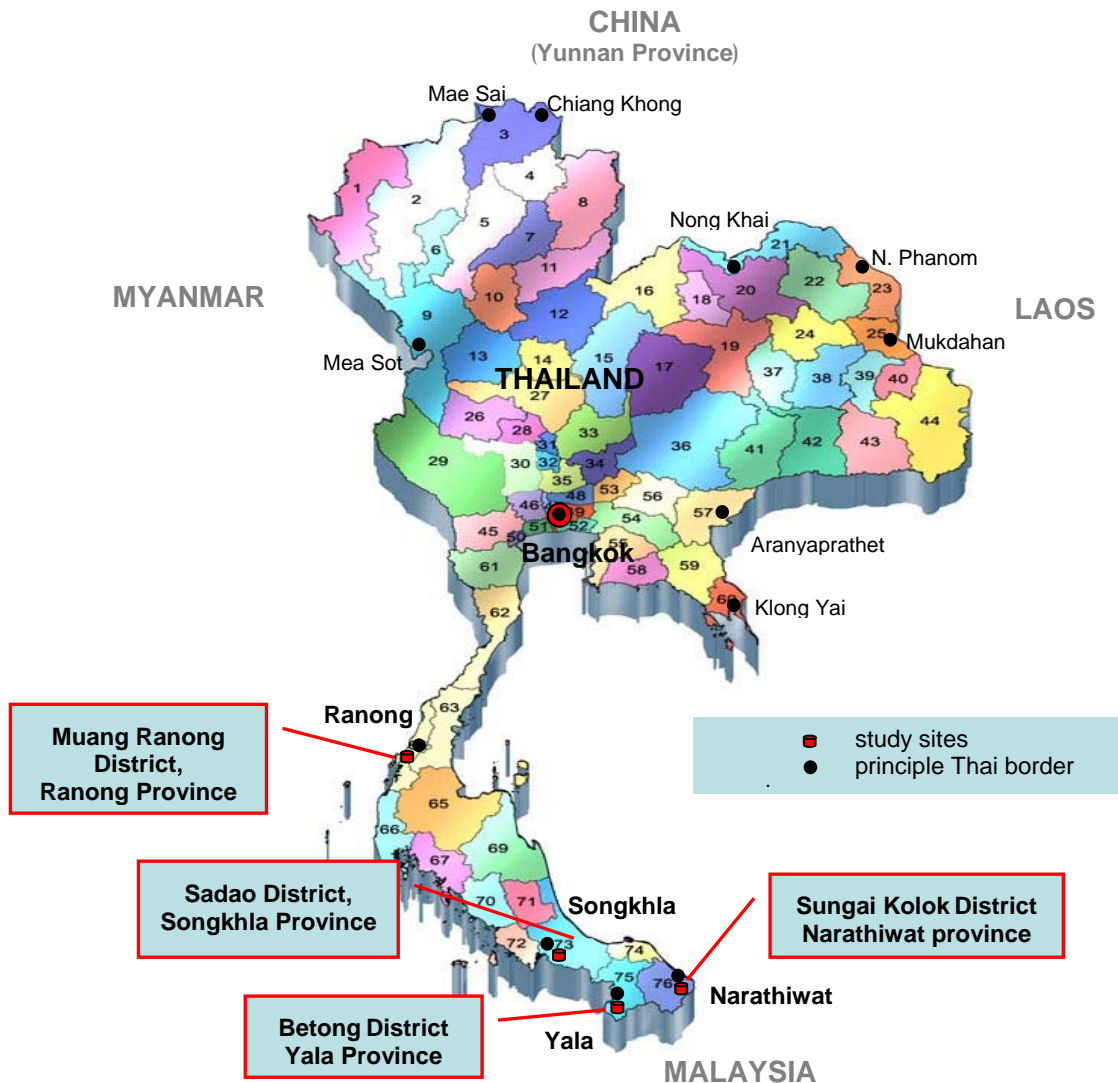
- Southern Thailand;
- 3) To understand the factors, conditions, routes and process of trafficking in persons into the Southern Thailand
  - 4) To investigate into the role of governmental and non-government mechanisms at the entry and post-entry stage of trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation in Southern Thailand.

### 3. Study Period and Sites

The study was conducted during December 2006 to December 2007. The study covered four study sites:

- Muang Ranong district, Ranong province
- Sadao - Dan Nok, Songkhla province
- Sungai Kolok district, Narathiwat province
- Betong district, Yala province.

**Figure 1 : Map of Thailand and Study Sites**



Source: Author

#### **4. Methodology**

This study adopted a qualitative approach of investigative survey, based on observation and information from primary and secondary sources to obtain information and to support interpretation of information. The primary sources included:

- 1) Victims of trafficking: trafficked persons. They could be female or male, adult or children, non-Thai or Thai, depending on availability and cooperation obtained during the survey.
- 2) Key informants:
  - a. NGO staff,
  - b. Health and medical care providers
  - c. Law enforcement officials: immigration, police

The study relied on in-depth interviews along with semi-structured qualitative questionnaires. The structure of the questionnaire varies according to target, while clustering around the stages of the trafficking process: pre-departure; route, travel and transit; entry and post entry stages.

Relevant secondary sources covered data collected from local health and law enforcement offices, NGOs as well as other research and program reports.

This was to obtain the following information:

- 1) An overall picture of the situation of trafficking for sexual exploitation in each area of investigation;
- 2) The characteristics, socio-economic and cultural background, perceptions of the victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, the linkage between trafficking and their bodies, personal, social and work life as well as perspectives;
- 3) The factors, conditions, routes and process of trafficking in persons into the areas of investigation;
- 4) The preventive and protection roles of governmental and non-government mechanisms at the entry and post-entry stage of trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation in the areas of investigation.

#### **5. Report of the Study**

This report of the study is divided into six chapters. After the introduction, report of the trafficking in sexual exploitation into Ranong is provided, followed by that into Sadao, Sungai Kolok, and Betong, respectively. Each chapter on the trafficking for sexual exploitation contain information on geographic and socio-economic background, situation of migration and trafficking, area and form of sex industry and intervention mechanism and role at the provincial level. A synthesis and evaluation conclude the report.

## Chapter II

# Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation into Ranong\*

### 1. Introduction

This study was based on archival and field research with in-depth interview of key informants - - the stakeholders from local authorities in charge of and an NGO dealing with human trafficking as well as victims - - during 14-18 December 2006.

The local authorities included those from Ranong Provincial Social Development and Human Security Office, Provincial Labour Employment Office, Provincial Welfare and Labour Protection Office, and Provincial Health Care Office. NGO key informants are staff of World Vision Foundation in Ranong.

The victims included twelve sex workers in Ranong, to whom the interview was carried within their workplaces - - including Karaoke shops and sex sevice shops - - at Paknum subdistrict, Muang district. All of them were female at age of 15-33 years old. Seven of them were single, four married, and one widow. Eight of them were Burmese from Yangon, three were Karen from Mawlamyine and one Mon from Dawei. The size of household at the place of origin ranged from two to ten person. Most of them have carried an identity card from the orgin country, compared to two without any documents from the country of origin. All of them had entered Ranong with a border pass, overstayed and had no work permit.

### 2. Geographic and Socio-Economic Background of Ranong

Ranong is a southern province bordering by Myanmar and the Andaman Sea, the Indian Ocean to the west. It is located about 568 km southern from Bangkok, north to Chumphon, south to Phang-Nga (Takua Pa district), east to Chumphon and Surat Thani and west to Myanmar and Andaman Sea. Ranong is a long narrow and compact area covering 3,298 square kilometres extending 169 km from north to south; the narrowest part of Ranong is 9 km. Like much of southern Thailand, it under goes two monsoons.

Ranong is administratively divided into five Amphoes (districts): Kra Buri, La-un, Muang Ranong, Kapoe and Suk Samran, respectively from north to south.

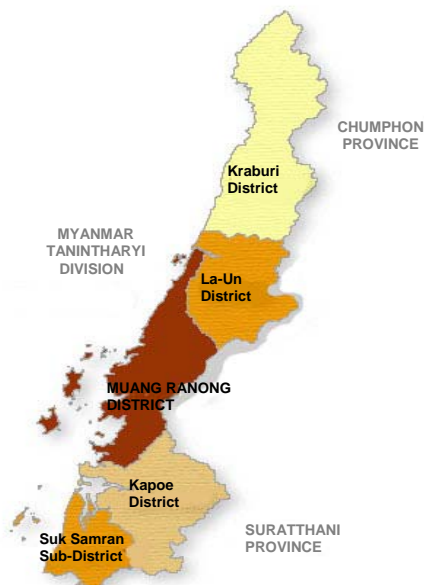
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\* By Samarn Laodumrongchai, Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University.

**Figure 2: Map of Ranong Province**

Boundary

- § North: Connecting with Amphoe Tha Sae (Chumphon Province) and Myanmar.
- § South: Connects with Amphoe Khirirat Nikom (Surat Thani Province) and Amphoe Khura Buri (Phang Nga Province).
- § East: Connecting with Amphoe Muang, Amphoe Sawi and Amphoe Pha To (Chumphon Province).
- § West: Connecting with Kawthaung (or Kawthoung, formerly known as Victoria Point) (Myanmar) and Indian Ocean.



Source : Patcharawalai Wongboonsin et al. (2007)

Ranong was the least populated province of Thailand, 179,850 people in 2007. 94,139 of them are male, and 85,711 female. The majority (85.23 %) of population were buddhists, followed by Muslims (12.98 %).

### 3. Situation of Migration and Trafficking into Ranong

#### Documented or Undocumented

Bordering with Myanmar, Ranong set up a permanent immigration checkpoint at Kawthaung on the Myanmar territory, with Thai immigration authorities to check immigration documents. Nevertheless, a number of migrant workers from Myanmar entered Ranong on a clandestine basis through certain parts of the mountainous border area.

According to the Thai immigration office in Ranong in 2006 (January to December), there were 300,338 people crossing the border from Myanmar with a border pass. Nevertheless, there were only 265,698 people returning to Myanmar. There were 6,668 migrants from Myanmar being repatriated during January to December 2006. 5,100 of them were male, compared to 1,588 female.

Of the twelve sex workers interviewed during the period of investigation, only a few were part of those migrants entering Ranong and overstayed their border pass. Others have entered the territory 1-2, 6-7, 9 and 10 years earlier. It was the first time to have entered Thailand for 10 of them compared to two having been to Thailand several times already.

#### Voluntary or Trafficking

Rather than forced, most of the interviewed sex workers were tricked to come with the traffickers into Ranong. The latter were mostly acquaintance or friends who had come to work as sex workers in Thailand, and returned to their place of origin several times to pursue persuasion and recruitment mission. Most of them made their own decision to come to work in Thailand, compared to one by her family. The reasons behind the decision included the following :

- In the place of origin: unemployment, low wages, insufficient income to support a big

- family
- In Thailand: False information given by the traffickers about better income and working conditions

According to one of the interviewed sex workers:

*« I got relationship with this friend in village when I was teenage. My friend came to Thailand for a long time. Last year, she told me to come to Thailand and work with her. My friend said that it was a good work place, good job, good employer and that I could have free time for shopping. After that I decided to come to Thailand with her. When I came to Ranong, I found that I was cheated by the friend to work as a prostitute. At the very first time, I didn't want to do this job. But I had no money to get back and the employer forced me to do it because the employer had paid to my friend around 5,000 Baht. I had no choice to avoid doing this job.»*

*(Ms. Som, fictitious name, 17, Burmese women, interviewed on Dec.14, 2006 at an unidentified address, Paknum subdistrict, Muang Ranong District, Ranong)*

The above notion does not mean that there was no case of involuntary engagement in the sex trade. A few cases were identified during the interview that they and/or their family had been informed that they would be recruited to engage in jobs allowed by the Thai government for migrant workers from Myanmar, including domestic workers. They finally ended up in a brothel in Ranong.

According to one of the interviewed sex workers:

*« I didn't want to do this job. I was bought from Chiang Kung. A broker told my parent that I would be taken to work in Thailand and that I would have a good income. Given that the family was poor, I decided to come to Thailand with the broker. At first, I thought that I would be working as a domestic worker in a premise of the Thai people. I was instead brought to work in this brothel. At first, I resisted in sexual services. Yet, the pimps said that my parents had sold me to them; that my parents had got the money from them already; and that they had advanced for my travel, accommodation, and food. Altogether, they had spent several ten thousands baht for me to be here. If I wanted to leave here, I had to pay them back all the money first. I myself had no money to return home at all. So, I had no other choice but to do the job. »<sup>4</sup>*

*(Ms. Yu- - fictitious name, 19, Burmese women, interviewed on Dec.14, 2006 at an unidentified address, Paknum subdistrict, Muang Ranong District, Ranong)*

### **Routes of Migration/Trafficking**

Based on first-handed information from the interviewed sex workers, three routes of migration/trafficking into Ranong were identified :

- From Yangon city to Kawthaung by airplane, followed by a boat from Kawthaung in Myanmar to a fishery pier called Tha Saphan Pla in Ranong, Thailand, then by a motorcycle or taxi to the workplace in Ranong.
- From Mawlanyine to Kawthaung by a bus to cross the sea by a boat to Tha Saphan Pla in Ranong, Thailand, then by a motorcycle or taxi to the workplace in Ranong.
- From Dawei to Mawlanyine to Kawthaung by a bus to cross the sea by a boat to Tha Saphan Pla in Ranong, Thailand, then by a motorcycle or taxi to the workplace in Ranong.

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<sup>4</sup> Translated by Patcharawalai Wongboonsin



Photographed by Samarn Laodumrongchai, on December 15, 2006.

Kawthaung, a Myanmar's Island is opposite to Tha Saphan Pla, Ranong. There is a Thai Immigration Checkpoint on Kawthaung.



Photographed by Samarn Laodumrongchai, on December 15, 2006.

Tha Saphan Pla, a pier in Ranong where most of fishery and commecial boats lie up. Migrant workers tends to come to this place.

Most of the research samplings found it quite easy to travel to the workplace. They found no problem nor obstacle in their trip from the place of origin in Myanmar. Some of them were investigated by the Thai immigration authority before the border pass being issued to enter Ranong.

All of them came to Thailand in an organized group of migrant workers, accompanied by recruitment agents. Besides coming to Rayong, some of the group went beyond to other provinces, including Samutsakorn and Bangkok. This was either by local transportation or on foot through the forest and the mountains in another district of Ranong, called Kraburi, so as to get transportaion to other places. The transportation to those other places in Thailand could be a bus, van, boat, motorcycle and taxi.



















































































































































