

Thesis Title

The Role of The Tak Chamber of Commerce
in Thai-Burmese Border Trade

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Abstract

The main objective of this thesis is to study the status and the roles of the Tak Chamber of Commerce in relation with Thai-Burmese border trade. Moreover, the study will analyze and examine the nature and the effects of 3 influential groups upon the afore-mentioned border trade. The 3 influential groups are: the group of businessmen who are members of the Tak Chamber of Commerce, the group of Tak provincial officials and the group of Tak politicians.

The study is based on the hypothesis that the Tak Chamber of Commerce plays crucial supporting roles in the border trade between Thailand and Myanmar by operating through government and non government organizations.

The data which are used in this study derived from personal interviews, documentary data and field observation. The size of the interviewed samples is 30 persons. The interviewed samples are

divided into 4 groups which consist of the group of 10 businessmen, the group of 10 provincial officials who are members of the Tak Joint Public-Private Consultative Committee (JPPCC.), while the other 2 groups are: 5 politicians and 5 other related persons.

The results of the study indicate that :

1. The Tak Chamber of Commerce has the status of being a kind of interest group ever since its inception by Tak businessmen from many businesses on September 6, 1984. The Chamber is a legal entity according to the law of Chamber of Commerce, 1966. Consequently, the Chamber has to operate accordingly to the regulations which are later formulated to be the framework of its committee operation. The Chamber's administrative committee is elected by the meeting of its members and its administration has a clearly defined structure.

2. The Tak Chamber of Commerce has played supporting roles towards border trade between Thailand and Myanmar by operating through G.O. and N.G.O. as hypothesised. Besides, at the same time, the Chamber also operates through politicians and mass media by using the following methods of operation :

- 2.1 By promoting consultative meetings to discuss problems concerning Thai-Burmese border trade through JPPCC., Thai Chamber of Commerce and Chambers of Commerce of Thai-Burmese bordering provinces.

- 2.2 By organizing seminars so as to convey the requests which are related to border trade to the consideration of the responsible offices or organizations in order to develop regional economy and the bordering Thai-Burmese Provincial Chambers of Commerce.

2.3 By establishing close and cordial relationship

with important persons in national politics and in provincial administration, this is done by operating via members of House of Representatives, members of Municipal Council, including via JPPCC at both provincial and national levels.

2.4 By giving political support to President of the

Tak Chamber of Commerce to run for election and become a member of House of Representatives.

2.5 By promoting the dissemination of information

concerning the Thai-Burmese border trade via various channels such as JPPCC at both provincial and national levels, Thai Chamber of Commerce and the mass media.

3. The Characteristics of the inter-relationships between

the group of businessmen of the Tak Chamber of Commerce, the provincial officials who are members of Tak's JPPCC and the group of Tak politicians, concerning the issues of Thai-Burmese border trade, can be summarized as follow:

3.1 The group of businessmen of the Tak Chamber of

Commerce has formal relationships with the group of officials of Tak's JPPCC in performing their tasks as representation of public and private sectors.

3.2 The group of businessmen of the Tak Chamber of

Commerce has relationships with the group of Tak politicians, but the relationships are private in character most of which are deemed to be personal affairs in terms of business joint venture projects, in giving mutual support, in business co-operation and, including, inhaving family relations.