

The Analysis of Current Foreign Immigrant Situation in Thailand and Its Influence to Sino-Thailand Cooperation under “One Belt and One Road Initiative”

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- As a country of origin, transit and destination for large numbers of migrants from across the region and throughout the globe, Thailand immigration flows are dynamic and complex. In recent decades, we have seen that Thailand has evolved into one of the world's major hubs for migrants. With hosting 3.91 million international migrants in 2015, Thailand ranks 2nd among the largest destination countries in Asia.

- The growing complexity of migratory patterns, its intertwining with extremism and terrorism in Thailand and the construction of ASEAN Community, have all contributed to international migration issue becoming a priority for the Thai government and society. And the complex immigration situation has some influence to Sino-Thailand Cooperation under “One Belt and One Road Initiative”.

Current Foreign Immigrant Profile in Thailand

- The current foreign immigrants residing and working in Thailand are primarily consisted of migrant workers, refugees and other categories.

- It is estimated that there are 3.25 million foreigners are working in Thailand, of whom 1.17 million with work permit, in both professional and low-skilled occupations as of 2013.

- Among the foreigners holding work permit in Thailand, only 92,000 persons are working in professional and skilled occupations. They comes from Japan, India and the US.

- the vast majority workers come from Thailand's neighbors, which are backward countries- Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar (Myanmar are the largest group with 2.7 million), working in low-skilled occupations, comprising of 1.08 million with work permits and 1.59 million in irregular status.

- A key factor in the demand for foreign workers in Thailand is the declining number of persons in the younger working ages.
- And the neighboring countries's development level is below Thailand.

The Challenges on Immigrants in Thailand

- (1) Trafficking, Smuggling and Corruption
- The majority of the trafficking victims identified within Thailand are migrants from Thailand's neighboring countries in the Greater Mekong Sub-region, but also come from farther away such as Uzbekistan and Fiji

- (2) Refugee Settlement and International Pressure
- The rising ruthless human trafficking networks have triggered Thai authorities to launch a crackdown on smuggling rings in 2015, but Thailand got international pressure.

- (3)Immigrants Integration and Public Security Threat
- The perception of migration as a threat to national security has certainly heightened in recent years. Security is a persistent theme in immigration debates, particularly after media coverage of crimes perpetrated by migrants, or acts of terrorism involving these groups.The Uighurs extremists leading transnational trafficking network set off explosion at the Erawan Shrine in Bangkok on August 17, 2015, to revenge Thailand's people-smuggling crackdown and forced repatriation of 109 Uighur Muslims to China in July, having shocked the entire nation, with killing 20 people and injuring more than 120 others.

- International terrorism is, because of its cross-border dimensions, a migration issue.

- Moreover, in October 2014, two Myanmar workers killed a pair of British tourists on the island Koh Tao at southern Thailand, dealing a heavy blow on the country's tourism industry, which had been struggling to recover since the army staged a coup and imposed martial law in May “Suspects claim innocence in court over Erawan bombing”,

- A study by the Thailand Institute of Justice in 2014 has revealed that Thailand allowed easy entry into country to accommodate foreigners, as a result, more than 20 major transnational gangs are plaguing Thailand, including Russian and Romanian credit card skimming gangs and Latin American thieves and bank robbers.

- Some illegal Chinese immigrants in Thailand conducts fraud crimes.

Thailand's Immigration Situation's Influence to Sino-Thailand Cooperation under "One Belt and One Road Initiative"

- **1. Influence to Sino-Thailand Cooperation under "One Belt and One Road Initiative"**
- First, the legal Chinese immigrants to Thailand are good for bilateral relations development, and they are good to the Sino-Thailand Cooperation under "One Belt and One Road Initiative". Now, in Thailand, there are many Chinese immigrants from several hundred years ago until now, these legal immigrants have done a lot of contributions to Thailand's development, Sino-Thailand relations and Sino-Thailand Cooperation under "One Belt and One Road Initiative".

- Second, some illegal Chinese immigrants to Thailand, including illegal Chinese smugglers to Thailand, have cast shadow to bilateral relations. Some of them have conducted crimes in Thailand, such as telecommunication fraud, bombing attack, and these crimes have not only damaged Thailand's people's interests and lives, but also have damaged Chinese people's interests and lives.

- Third, legal and illegal Myanmar, Cambodia and other countries' immigrants to Thailand, some of them contributed to Thailand' development, but some of them also have conflicts with Thailand' businessmen, and some of them have conducted serious crimes in Thailand, which influences Thailand social stability and safety.

- Total speaking, the complex immigrant situation in Thailand has some influence to Thailand, and also have complex influence to Sino-Thailand Cooperation under “One Belt and One Road Initiative”.

- First, Thailand has attracted many foreign immigrants, it shows that, Thailand's economy performs relatively well. And some of the immigrants performs positively to Thailand's economic and social development. So, some of the foreign immigrants will also benefits Sino-Thailand Cooperation under "One Belt and One Road Initiative". In the future, Sino-Thailand Cooperation under "One Belt and One Road Initiative" will be broader, and there will be more factories and projects in Thailand, and they will need more workers, including the legal foreign immigrants to Thailand.

- Second, we also should notice that, there are still many illegal immigrant to Thailand, which damage Thailand's social stability, some extreme immigrants have conducted serious crimes in Thailand, and threatens Thailand's social safety, and damage the environment to Sino-Thailand Cooperation under "One Belt and One Road Initiative".

2. Further Consideration and Suggestion

- The migration in nature is the flow of human capital caused by unbalanced development among countries. Compared with Europe and United States, Thailand responds to immigration in a more tolerant way, reflecting their different stages of economic development. As a developing economy based on labor-intensive production, Thailand's prosperity relies greatly on large-scale of inflow of labor. Whereas Europe and United States have advanced to the post-industrial era with mainly science & technology-intensive production, thus tending to control the immigration, to ensure the domestic employment and avoid cultural and ideational conflict.

- Given that the outcomes of migration are not automatic, it is important to consider what the government can do to support the positive development outcomes of migration, including investing in decent work and social protection for migrants, ensuring their health, promoting fair recruitment practices and empowering them to build communities and participate in civil society.

- But, on the other hand, Thailand should also protect national security, the people's security and their daily work and life.
- Thailand should make a balance of national citizen's interests and immigrants' interests.

- It is also necessary to set up ASEAN level mechanism for managing transnational workers by giving directions, execution and labor work mechanism involving the civil society in the ASEAN Senior Staff Talk on Labor and the committee for complying with ASEAN Charters regarding the protection and promotion of the right to labor movement in ASEAN.

- And Thailand and China also should strengthen bilateral and regional cooperation to crack down some illegal immigrants' crimes in Thailand.

THANK YOU
THE END

