

# THE ROLE OF THAI GOVERNMENT TOWARDS PROSTITUTION PROBLEM

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## ABSTRACT

*This undergraduate thesis aims to address the problem of prostitution in Thailand, because it relate with the image of the country. Thailand as a country of famous about tourism and tourism is the best factor that will increase the number of prostitutions, because it lead the people around the world come to Thailand in various of the numbers. Nowadays, there are many factors that make people choose to be prostitutes, such as economic, social culture, and political. From this problem the government tries to do and solve it the different ways even also cooperate and signing the MOU with other neighboring country in other to catch the people who involve in the trafficking women to sell them in the brothels, and also the protect the victims from trafficking groups, for example Laos and Myanmar. Training the police and giving the knowledge to women to know well about the prostitution problem. Giving fund is also the way to support the officers to solve this problem. The government is not only cooperates with the government but they are cooperate with other NGOs, and UN as well.*

**Keyword:** *Prostitution, Thai government, Tourism, Trafficking, Sex industry, Policy*

## **Introduction**

For centuries, Thailand has been the country that people around the world know and Thailand has become a popular destination country to travel. Thailand is always a good choice for tourists to visit. Time by time, the number of tourists who visit Thailand is increasing. Many people around the world have come to visit Thailand. Because, Thailand has many beautiful and amazing places to travel, such as, beaches, waterfalls, and mountains. Tourism is one of important sectors in Thailand and it has also the border near other countries like Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, Malaysia, and Cambodia. It is easy for tourists to go around those countries. Because of that, it establishes the issues of human trafficking. Human trafficking is one factor that creates the industry of prostitution, because some of the prostitutes come from the group of human trafficking. Victims of human trafficking can be found in the common forms of sexual exploitation all over the world. They who are trafficker catch the women and children from other countries and send them to the other countries and sell them to the prostitution industry. They force them to be prostitute and work for them, but there are some women become prostitutes by willingness.

Prostitution has existed in Thai culture for centuries, but the current level of prostitution is a new phenomenon that is spawned by the Vietnam War. During the 1960s, the Thai government secured a contract with the United States to provide rest and relaxation services for American troops in Vietnam. The entertainment sector played a major role in the rapid industrialization of Thailand's economy in the 1970s. Since that period, the Thai government began

promoting the expansion of tourism and, since 1982; tourism has been the country's largest earner of foreign exchange<sup>1</sup>.

During the last decade there has been an increase in international sex-tourism, the sex trade is likely any other trades – it is about supply and demand. For the past few decades, a lot of attention has been given to Southeast Asia, where there has been rising numbers of women in prostitution. Thailand is one country that has obtained particular focus as the sex industry has become highly visible. Approximately 60% of the country's National Income comes from tourism, and sex tourism encompasses a large part of Thailand's tourism industry.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, only within the past decade has the government given much attention to the social costs, such as the spread of HIV and the growth in human trafficking that the sex industry creates.

Even though a majority of clients of prostitutes are Thai men, foreign tourists significantly add to the sex industry in Thailand. Each year, around 10 million tourists arrive in Thailand.<sup>3</sup> In Thai society, boys begin to buy women when they are around 13 years old; 50 percent of 16-year-old boys and 90 percent of university students go to brothels.<sup>4</sup> Human not only mate but also marry.

Prostitution and trafficking begin with the demand for victims to be used in prostitution. It begins when men go in search of sex that can be purchased. In countries where prostitution is illegal, it begins when pimps place orders with their criminal networks for women and children. In countries where prostitution is

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<sup>1</sup> Ryan Bishop and Lilian Robinson, *Night Market*. 1998, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> The Bangkok post

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Economic Report for Thailand 2003, online. In 2002, 10,872,976 tourists arrived in Thailand.

<sup>4</sup> Matsui, Yayori, *Women in the New Asia*. 1996, p. 34.

legal, it begins when brothels places job ads with government employment agencies. In places where buying sex acts is popular and profitable, pimps cannot recruit enough local women to fill up the brothels, so they have to bring in victims from other places.

The income gained from prostitution comes indirectly mainly from tour companies, bars, hotels, massage parlors, member clubs, golf clubs and mail order brides. It seems as if even though prostitution is illegal the government efforts to curb it are weak. It is shown from their unofficial efforts to indirectly promote prostitution, through tourism with advertisements of beautiful Thai states that, police, military and government officials also are involved in the sex trade which really makes it a dilemma and discrepancy in the society. Thailand is facing with the issues of prostitution in the various numbers and it is still increasing. Whether prostitution can be accepted by some society, but it is depend on how people believe on it, and not all people are thinking in the same way. In general, prostitution is prohibiting in Thailand, because it will give the bad effect to the image of country. Anyway, the government has seen the problem that causes by prostitution in many ways, such as, broken family, HIV/AIDs and so on. Therefore, the government has to eliminate the prostitution following the rule or law of the country to control it. However, it is a few or a lot of effective they have to try hard to solve it.

#### **A. Research Question**

Based on the background and the understanding of the background problem's above, the research question is formulated as follows,

## *How the Thai's government response toward the prostitution problem?*

### **B. Theoretical Framework**

To analyze the mechanism or device, this paper will apply the theory of policing. The most of those concepts talk about prostitutes who are object and subject, how the government response on those issue.

#### **1. Policing**

Policing is the same word with policy that the government creates it to solve or control the entire problem which is emerged in their era. Prostitution is also one issue that the government has to solve it, no matter which ways they should use. Such as law, educate people, training police and so on. According to the theory of policing of Lynne Featherstone has said that. The enforcement of the law relating to prostitution is a key element of a local approach to the issue. While legislation applies nationally, precisely *how* it is applied is a matter of local policing policy determined by local priorities and circumstances. These will include local assessments of the risk, harm and vulnerability factors of those involved in prostitution, the community, and the exploiters. Having a specialized, strategic approach to local policing of issues around prostitution was a feature of every area visited and is a key element of the effective policing of prostitution. It is also an important aspect of ensuring the effective delivery of holistic support. As such, it is important that local policing approaches are developed as part of a multi-agency response. Communities will expect the police to enforce the law, but it is important that the way in which this is done takes account of the need for

support for those involved in prostitution, and that policing are sensitive to this balance. It is essential that policing is proactive and consistent, and communicates and liaises with specialist projects as far as possible so that disruption between activities can be minimized. It is also important that the police and specialist support services are linked in order to support those involved in prostitution.<sup>5</sup>

The nature of sex work makes those involved in prostitution particularly vulnerable to sexual and violent crime, including from serial perpetrators who may target them. The police's responsibility for public protection means that stopping attacks on those involved, including catching and convicting those responsible, is a core part of reducing the harm from prostitution. An important factor in responding to crimes against those involved in prostitution is increasing their confidence to report attacks. This may involve working with sex work support projects to communicate the message that these crimes will be taken seriously and investigated. Police training and attitudes in terms of how people involved in prostitution who that report rape and other crimes are treated will be important. Local police can also support „Ugly Mugs“ schemes where they operate, as well as other safety initiatives developed by specialist projects. Neighborhood Policing Teams can enable local community members to report their concerns, and can also provide additional intelligence on specific local issues.<sup>6</sup>

Apply to the case of prostitution in Thailand, the government is also finding good solution to solve this problem. Some of them really focus on this

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<sup>5</sup> Featherstone, L. 2009. Policing. *A review of effective practice in responding to prostitution*, p30.

<sup>6</sup> Featherstone, L. 2009. Policing: public protection and harm-reduction. *A review of effective practice in responding to prostitution*, p30

issue because it will give the bad effect to the country's image. However, it is a big problem, so the government cannot do alone, it should be other to help it also. Such as, non government organization, MOU with others, society also is the best influence to solve in this problem. The government is also combining to policy to the direct place, and this way is more effective than, because, it can immediately solve on direct issue.

## **2. Tourism policy**

Tourism policies significantly invite the tourists from around the world. Government is the main actor to control the system of tourism. Without government people cannot do anything because government is more powerful.

According to James Elliot "They provide essential services and basic infrastructure. It is only national government which can negotiate and make agreement with other government on issues such as immigration procedures or flying over and landing on national territory. Governments have power, but how they use will depend upon many factors including political culture, the political and economic power holders and their perception of the tourism industry. There are different types of government, including national, state and local, and they can be either active or passive in tourism management and in the use of their powers. Governments can assist tourism by the provision of service; they can also control the industry and its activities in order to ensure that activities and safety standards are maintained in the public interest. These are all legitimate functions of governments which they are expected to perform for the public good<sup>7</sup>."

Thai government plays a significant role and the main actor of promoting tourism in Thailand. Thailand has special organ namely "Thailand Authority Tourism" to help the Thai government to promote the tourism. In addition, Thailand Authority of Tourism has a branch in about 27 countries such as

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<sup>7</sup> James Elliot (1997) *Tourism and politics and public sector management*, London: Routledge.

Singapore, Jakarta, Hong Kong, New York, and London, Paris<sup>8</sup> etc, in order to promote and make Thailand well known to the world. By the ways to promoting the tourism it makes the number of tourists more increasing and the numbers of prostitutions are also increasing. Tourism in this era is not about project to hold the economy but it is about organization. “James Elliot argues that tourism is more than industry and an economic activity, it is a universal dynamic social phenomenon touching most countries of the world and affecting their people”.<sup>9</sup>

Related to the issue, Thailand is the best destination to travel. That is why Thailand has many of tourists come to travel, and the government is always promoting about tourism. Inside of supporting the tourism, and make tourist come to Thailand in several of number, it is always influence to the country. Because, some of tourists come to Thailand not only for travel but also for sexual activity, and it will make Thailand has bad image. Therefore, the government build the tourism policy to take back their image, and changes the people mind that the reality Thailand has very good-good place for travel. The government also does not promote about the women, but they are only promoted and give suggestion for tourists to go to good place like what they want exactly. Moreover, the government does not stay quiet and watch this problem happen, but they are also creating the policy, particular to solve this problem.

## **The factors that caused of prostitution problem**

### **1. The Economic causes**

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<sup>8</sup> Thai.tourismthailand.org/about-tat/tat-oversea-office

<sup>9</sup> ibid



Many of causes, that is make people to be prostitutes. As the moment economic of the country not going well and many people are unemployment. So, it makes some family get worst, they do not have money to buy food for their family and it will be the beginning of prostitute in Thailand still existed. It is estimated that as of 2010 the Thai sex industry employs 150,000 to 200,000 young girls and women, although the exact number remains unknown.<sup>10</sup> The number of prostitutes currently in Thailand could be as high as 2 million.<sup>11</sup> It is also estimated that one in ten of these sex workers were forced into sexual slavery.<sup>12</sup> Each year, thousands of women are forced into the sex trade, driven by their most important needs, to survive and to earn an income.

Actually the people, who involved in the sex worker, mostly are poor because they need income to survive. Many of them from the impoverished Northern regions of the country to cities like Chiang Rai and Mae Hong Son. These poor areas are home to the hill tribes and other ethnic minorities, and are where Thailand's poorest population lives, lacking some of the most basic necessities like clean water and electricity. Typically the victims are less educated and without occupational training. From the rural areas, the girls are sent to the urban areas of the country, where prostitution is mainly found, especially in Bangkok and in the central regions where the average prostitute makes around 3,000 baht (about 100 U.S. dollars a month), which is about three times the pay in

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<sup>10</sup> Louise I. Shelley, *Human Trafficking: A Global Perspective* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 162.

<sup>11</sup> Thomas G. Bauer and Bob McKercher, *Sex and Tourism: Journeys of Romance, Love, and Lust* (New York: Haworth Hospitality Press, 2003), 186.

<sup>12</sup> Siddharth Kara, *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 176.

an agricultural job.<sup>13</sup> In some rural areas fathers sell their daughters for money to help the family survive economically.

Another major cause of human sex worker is the lack of education or training for women, particularly in the rural parts of Thailand. Women without training or skills are easy to lie by others, since they have no other job alternatives and are desperate for income. Meanwhile, the economic causes of sex worker in Thailand have allowed the sex trade to become a very lucrative business. Since the sex trade in Thailand is linked to its tourism business, sex worker reap huge profits by offering sexual services to tourists. Thailand has already earned a reputation for providing cheap and exotic sex to travelers. The customers are men with high incomes who seek entertainment, escape activities, and inexpensive sex. Typically, tour coordinators will offer all-inclusive packages that feature airfare, hotel accommodations, and the main attraction sexual services from prostitutes.<sup>14</sup> These tours to Thailand are easy to locate. An Internet search of the words “adult travel” pulls up numerous websites offering consumer’s sex tours that package together leisure and sex with young girls.

## **2. The Socio-cultural causes**

Believe is always powerful, because if people believe something then they will make it and follow it, especially about religion. The way of life is following by religion. There are many socio-cultural factors that contribute to sex worker in Thailand. One is the lower social status of women, due to Theravada Buddhism,

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<sup>13</sup> Lin Lean Lim, *The Sex Sector: The Economic and Social Bases of Prostitution in Southeast Asia* (Geneva: International Labour Office, 1998), 162.

<sup>14</sup> Vidyamali Samarasinghe, *Female Sex Trafficking in Asia: The Resilience of Patriarchy in a Changing World* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 176.

which considers men as more valuable. In Thailand, around 90 percent of its citizens are Theravada Buddhist, a stricter sect of Buddhism than Mahayana Buddhism.<sup>15</sup> This lower status of women is linked to early Theravada Buddhist views of women, which historically viewed women as subservient to males.<sup>16</sup>

There are even some Buddhist writings, which indicate that prostitution is acceptable because women are supposed to satisfy men's sexual needs. Theravada Buddhism also puts great importance on the hierarchy of rebirth as a sign of spiritual progression with females placed on a lower level of rebirth than males. On earth, there is the king, then the monks, the wealthy, the men, the women, the crippled, the destitute, and the animals. One Theravada Buddhist view of women is that the greatest achievement they can have is to obtain enough karma to be reborn as men so that they may one day become monks and achieve *nibban*, or

Another socio-cultural factor contributing to an increase in sex trafficking is the issue of gender inequality in Thailand. One example is the insufficient job opportunities available to women. Men have better educational and career openings than women and typically receive higher wages than women, especially in industries like information technology and engineering. Women, on the other hand, usually work in low paying jobs, in hair salons and restaurants.

Gender inequality is also a major factor in Thailand when it comes to Thai wives, who, because of their subservient nature, do not stop their husbands or sons

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<sup>15</sup> Andrea Parrot and Nina Cummings, *Sexual Enslavement of Girls and Women Worldwide* (Westport Conn: Praeger, 2008), 96-97.

<sup>16</sup> Kaoru Aoyama, *Thai Migrant Sex Workers: From Modernisation to Globalisation* (Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 129.

from going to visit sex establishments.<sup>17</sup> Even after polygamy was declared illegal in 1934, Thai society still found it acceptable for a male to seek out sex from prostitutes. An alarming 90 percent of Thai men have visited a prostitute at least once and about half of them had their first sexual experience with a prostitute.<sup>18</sup> This, along with the low Theravada Buddhist perception of women, objectifies women as only tools to satisfy men. There are three traditional Thai proverbs that reflect how women are looked at as subservient to men: “To have a daughter is like having a toilet in your front yard”; “A woman is only worthy when she has a husband”; and “Women are buffaloes, men are humans.”<sup>19</sup> Gender inequality is rooted in Thai history with women being regarded as subordinate to men.

A third socio-cultural factor behind human trafficking in Thailand is the deep obligation to the family. In Thai culture, obligation to the family is also known as filial piety, or “*bhunkun*,” in which the youngest daughter is expected to provide financial support to her parents.<sup>20</sup> In this custom, women are sold or sell themselves into brothels to provide for their families, with the idea that they can buy their freedom once they pay back their debt. Young girls feel it is their responsibility to support their parents and they thus resort to selling their bodies for money. In Thai families, men will show gratitude to their parents by working hard and becoming ordained monks for a temporary period of time before marriage. This ensures that their parents receive karmic merit. Since women

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<sup>17</sup> Kathryn Cullen-DuPont, *Human Trafficking* (New York, NY: Facts on File, 2009), 25.

<sup>18</sup> Kara, *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery*, 176.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 173.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

cannot become monks, they show appreciation by caring for their parents financially or by acting as their caregivers.

### **3. The Political causes**

Besides the economic and socio-cultural causes of sex worker, there are also the political causes that involved in prostitution. Many Thai police do not have sufficient understanding or training about anti-sex worker laws, making them unable to properly identify victims of the sex trade. Moreover, some law enforcement officials are apathetic to the plight of the sex worker's suffering in the sex trade.

Corruption is another political cause of the sex trade. There has been evidence of both low and high-level police involvement in aiding the seller, by accepting bribes for favors and by letting brothel owners operate openly even though prostitution is illegal in Thailand.<sup>21</sup> There are several reasons why Thai police turn to bribery and corruption. Many of these Thai police officers are paid low salaries, making it easier for them to be tempted by payoffs. There also seems to be a blatant disregard for the law, with numerous reports that local police protect brothels and other sex businesses against periodic raids. They will often accept money from sex trade operators in exchange for tipping them off about government raids. The Thai police take an apathetic approach to prosecuting cases of sex worker that involve Thai officials and law enforcement.

Another political cause of sex worker is the various crime syndicates working with drug and prostitution rings in Thailand. There are at least seven

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<sup>21</sup> Anna M. Troubnikoff, *Trafficking in Women and Children: Current Issues and Developments* (Hauppauge, N.Y.: Nova Science Publishers, 2003), 135.

“families” in Bangkok that are involved in the recruiting, and soliciting of women from all over the world to work in the sex industry.<sup>22</sup>

There are many different economic, socio-cultural, and political factors associated with why sex worker occurs in Thailand. Of these three, the most important is the economic problem. Within the economic causes of sex worker, poverty is most important because women need monetary resources in order to survive. Extreme poverty makes women desperate enough to seek out work in the sex industry. The sex trade in Thailand has been driven by the wide economic gap in Thailand between the rich and the poor and by limited training and job opportunities for women. The poor people always are the main victim in the sex worker.

### **The response of government towards prostitution problem**

There are several policies that were made by the prime minister in the different eras. All of them are trying to against the sex trade that influences Thailand and gives Thailand a bad image of a country full of prostitutes or sex worker.

#### **1. The effort in the era of Chuan Leekpai**

Chuan was known as “Mr. Clean,” because he was recognized as being free of corruption. During his first administration, he was preoccupied with dealing with the country’s financial situation, promoting rural growth, and lessening government corruption. However, he did take some initiatives to reduce

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<sup>22</sup> Gilbert King, *Woman, Child for Sale: The New Slave Trade in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (New York: Chamberlain Bros, 2004), 206.

sex trafficking from 1992 to 1995, like announcing a nationwide crackdown on child and forced prostitution and clamping down on government corruption through brothel raids. Regarding the nationwide crackdown on child and forced prostitution, on November 2, 1992, Chuan told seventy-five governors from various Thai provinces that they needed to pay more attention and take accountability for trafficking cases in their prospective areas, so less women and children would be victim.<sup>23</sup>

He also tried to persuade rural Thai families not to sell their daughters into the sex trade. Although fewer Thai families sold their daughters, the sex workers still exist because they also come from the trafficking groups that caught them from other places and sell them to sex industry. Most of them come from Burma, Cambodia and others. The brothels never get caught by the police, because in some cases, police also involved. The owners pay them money to protect them and the trafficking groups or others to stay away from law. The owners are never arrested but the prostitutes. This image of female sex workers show Thailand's negative side as a country and as tourist destination where tourists can purchase sex. On November 9, 1997, Chuan Leekpai was elected premier for the second time. This 1997 crisis left women and children seeking work wherever they could find it, making them more vulnerable than ever to prostitution.

In Chuan's second term, his administration signed six main laws and initiatives in order to take a stronger stance on curbing the sex trade problem. First, he signed the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking of Women and

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<sup>23</sup>Alicia N. Tarancon. B.A. *Thailand's problem with the sexual exploitation of women*, april 2013, p70

Children Act B.E. 2540 on November 17, 1997.<sup>24</sup> Under this Act, women and children under the age of eighteen can be considered victims and harsher punishments would be issued to who try to force them into the sex trade. Second, he put into effect on November 17, 1997 an important law, the Penal Code Amendment Act (No. 14) BE 2540.<sup>25</sup> In this law, it is also punishing for who specifically attempted to force and entice women and children into the sex industry. Third, Chuan founded the Center for Protection of Children and Women in the Royal Thai Police in 1998.<sup>26</sup> This center was aimed at helping sexually abused women, by educating the Thai Police about the issues of sex trade so that they would apply amore humanitarian approach for assisting victims. This program was effective because it pushed the Thai police to start aiding sex trade victims.

The fourth measure by Chuan against sex trade was in June 1999, when his administration signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the Common Guidelines for Agencies Concerned with Cases where Women and Children are Victims of Human Trafficking.<sup>27</sup> The main reason for this MOU was to develop strategies for government agencies to use to protect the human rights of trafficking victims, including immigrants. Chuan's fifth step against sex trade

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<sup>24</sup> ibid, p72

<sup>25</sup>“Thailand's Actions for the Prevention of Trafficking in Women and Children,” *The Royal Thai Embassy (January 2003)*,

[http://www.niew.gov.my/niew/contents/PDF/acts%20&%20regulations/Thailand/Trafficking\\_in\\_women.pdf](http://www.niew.gov.my/niew/contents/PDF/acts%20&%20regulations/Thailand/Trafficking_in_women.pdf) (accessed 10/11/2015).

<sup>26</sup>Yumiko Tanaka, “Trafficking in Persons in Thailand and Cooperation of Japan.” *International Development Studies Conference on Mainstream Human Security: The Asian Contribution*. 4-5 October 2007 (Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok)

<http://humansecurityconf.polsci.chula.ac.th/Documents/Presentations/Yumiko.pdf> (accessed 14/11/2015).

<sup>27</sup>“National Laws and Agreements: Thailand,” *United Nations Inter Agency Project On Human Trafficking*, [http://www.notrafficking.org/resources\\_laws\\_thailand.html](http://www.notrafficking.org/resources_laws_thailand.html) (accessed 14/11/2015).



in Thailand involved the adoption of several education programs aimed at girls staying in school longer. The first was the National Education Act in 1999, which lengthened their mandatory years in school from six years to nine years.<sup>28</sup> Under this Act, women were to receive career and vocational training. These steps were effective because the number of educational programs in Thailand had increased and there were now over twenty two educational programs offering under privileged women more career opportunities as a means to stay away from the sex trade. Chuan's sixth measure to curb sex trade took place when he signed the UN's TIP Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children in 2001.<sup>29</sup> This was an international agreement, which provided punish for traffickers and urged international governments to introduce national legislation against sex trafficking.

## **2. The effort in the era of Thaksin Shinawatra**

Thaksin was elected as the twenty-third Prime Minister of Thailand in 2001 and was reelected in 2005 after a landslide victory. Nevertheless, he took measures to lessen the sex trafficking problem in Thailand during his first term and he created five main goals used to help lessen the sex trade problem in Thailand. His first measure against sex trafficking was the National Plan and Policy of Prevention and Resolution of Domestic Cross-Border Trafficking in Children and Women 2003-2008, which had three important Memorandums of Understanding geared towards getting other governments and NGOs to work

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid ,73

<sup>29</sup>UN General Assembly, *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*, 15 November 2000, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4720706c0.html> (accessed 16/11/2015).

together in helping victims of sexual exploitation.<sup>30</sup> These were the MOU on Common Operational Guidelines for Government Agencies Engaged in Addressing Trafficking in Children and Women 2003, the MOU on Operations Between State Agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations Engaged in Addressing Trafficking in Children and Women 2003, and the MOU between the Government of Thailand and the Government of Cambodia on Bilateral Cooperation for Eliminating Trafficking in Children and Women and Assisting Victims of Trafficking 2003.<sup>31</sup> These agreements sought to strengthen the support between international government agencies and NGOs in helping in the protection and return of migrant sex workers to their country.

Thaksin's second preventive measure to protect sex trade victims was the establishment of the Witness Protection Act in 2003.<sup>32</sup> Under this Act, victims are able to receive a paycheck for living expenses for twelve months, a new identity, occupational training, and access to education and bodyguard protection. The family members of victims can also receive protection under this Act. Moreover, those who threaten or try to harm sex trade victims may face a jail time of one to three years or be fined 20,000 to 60,000 baht, this law, though, does not apply to illegal immigrants. Thaksin's third initiative to curb sex trade was to make the

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<sup>30</sup>Yumiko Tanaka, "Trafficking in Persons in Thailand and Cooperation of Japan." International Development Studies Conference on Mainstream Human Security: The Asian Contribution. 4-5 October 2007 (Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok) <http://humansecurityconf.polsci.chula.ac.th/Documents/Presentations/Yumiko.pdf> accessed on 16/11/2015

<sup>31</sup>Alicia N. Tarancon, B.A. Thailand's problem with the sexual exploitation of women in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Radhika coomaraswamy, and ambika satkunanathan, *anti-child legislation in asia: a six country review* (NA:ILO regional office for asia and the pacific 2007)

<sup>32</sup>ibid

issue of sex trade of national importance to Thailand. Accordingly, he created multiple courses of action to protect the victims.

For instance, he declared, “victims must not be treated as offenders.”<sup>33</sup> He also introduced new methods, such as the prevention, rescue, protection, and reintegration of victims. As a result of the 2004 TIP Report, Thaksin also increased government training on sex trade related issues and had more information to increase public awareness about sex trade. This included of setting up telephone hotlines for reporting all alleged trafficking incidents. During his second term in 2005, Prime Minister Thaksin’s fourth step against sex trade was setting up a grant of 500 million baht to have fund help initiatives for trafficking victims. A fifth step in curbing sex trade occurred in July 2005 when the Thai government signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Thailand and the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic on Cooperation to Combat Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.<sup>34</sup> This agreement was aimed at suppressing the exploitation of women and children and to stop organized crimes involved in sex trade. After more than five years in power, Thaksin was ousted from his role as prime minister in a military coup in 2006 after he was accused of abuse of power and political corruption. The government overthrew him while he was in the United States for a United Nations General Assembly meeting. The Thai military entered Bangkok

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<sup>33</sup>United States Department of State, *2004 Trafficking in Person’s Report –United States of American*, June 2004. <http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2004/>, (accessed 17/11/2015).

<sup>34</sup>“National Laws and Agreements: *Thailand*,” *United Nations Inter Agency Project On Human Trafficking*, [http://www.nottrafficking.org/resources\\_laws\\_thailand.html](http://www.nottrafficking.org/resources_laws_thailand.html) accessed on 17/11/2015

and took control of the government buildings and media on 19 September 2006, and it is the end of his era.<sup>35</sup>

In those two era of two prime minister were try hard the make decision to protect their own citizens, although they are children or women. They made the rules not only in domestic area but also with the international, whether with the government or non government to be achieve in against the sex trade.

### **Conclusion**

Thailand is a country which has a lot of tourism places to visit. Tourism is one aspect that has hold up the economy of the country, which causes number of prostitution to increase. For centuries, everything has been changing around but one thing never changed until nowadays. It is prostitution, sex worker, and sex trade. Prostitution is one of the old occupations in the world. It exists in all countries around the world. In Some countries, prostitution is legal, but in some other countries it is still illegal. Thai is one country that legalizes prostitution. In Thailand, prostitution exists and influences the society. Prostitution can be a good job and a bad job. It depends on how people see it. If they are wearing different glasses, they will see different things. Thailand once was legalized prostitution. Most people worked as prostitutes by their willingness. Based on Buddhism, prostitution is not a bad thing, because Buddhist is thinks that children should return favor to their parents. In poor families, they can do nothing, except being prostitutes, because this job does not require any knowledge. In Buddhist, women

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<sup>35</sup> Alicia N. Tarancon, B.A. Thailand's problem with the sexual exploitation of women in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. "*profile: thaksin shinawatra*" BBC asia, june 24, 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world.asia-pacific-13891650>

could not be monks as men. Therefore, parent let their daughters become prostitutes by willingness.

However, it is not only the factor why women become prostitutes. There are many factors why women become prostitutes. For example, they come from trafficking groups which catch women and send them to brothels. In this era, most prostitutes are forced by trafficking not by their willingness. Time by time, the number of prostitution is increasing and it gives bad effects and a bad image to the country.

Therefore the government should not take some actions. Every prime minister has their own decision to solve this problem. In the era of Chuan, he wrote six main laws against, the prostitutes, clients, agents (pimp) and also brothel owners. There are establishing domestic or international laws and administration signing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with some international government and non government. In the era of Chuan, he also gave trainings and workshops to the police and women about good and bad sides of prostitution. In addition, in the era of Thaksin the government took actions. Established five main laws to fight against and solve this problem. He was setting up the fund to solve it, by signing up Memorandum of Understanding with Laos's government and also with other governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

Both of them have worked really hard to solve this issue, because it is a national problem that has given bad effects to the country. Prostitution increases the country's income; however it is against human right, because some women are

forced by others to be prostitutes. Their life is their own decision to be what they want. They should not be threatened by others. Therefore, the government should be responsible to solve this problem, no matter how hard it is. The government should try to do find solutions whether they will be effective or not. When solving a problem, not all solutions will be effective. However, doing something is better than doing nothing. Nowadays, this problem still exists but the government did not stop doing their job. It just takes time, the important thing to make it a success is the cooperation between government and the society.