

Volunteer Tour to Mae Chang Tai Aka Tribal Village, Cheng Rai

23 January (Saturday) – 24 January (Sunday) 2021

1. Background:

Thailand has achieved a remarkable economic growth in recent past. However, the bottom 8-10% of the total population is still suffering from poverty, primarily due to a lack of sufficient income and employment opportunities. Indigenous people living in mountainous hill areas constitute one of the largest poverty groups in Thailand and Southeast Asia. For example, over 60% of the total poor people are those living in mountain areas in Laos. They do not have sufficient lands to grow crops, lack of good roads, transport, markets and telecommunication facilities, and limited opportunities for employment, income generation, education and health care. To meet these challenges, a new project “Community Base Sustainable Livelihood Development in Mae Chan Tai Village in Chiang Rai Province” was formulated with an aim to building up a self-help capacity of indigenous communities in Thailand and identify a replicable model for community based sustainable livelihood development of mountain villages in Thailand and beyond. More specifically, the project assists an Aka tribal village (39 households) with an objective to improve the livelihood of the villagers through promotion of community-based enterprise for quality coffee production (including other products), processing and marketing, and enhancing their income, employment and living conditions.

Against these backgrounds, this volunteer tour is aimed at to provide an opportunity to the participants to familiarize themselves with the living conditions of hill tribes in deep remote mountain, to connect them with the village community through assisting village farmers in harvesting coffee beans, to enhance their knowledge on the issues associated with the sustainable development of mountain villages, and to promote a sense of solidarity, mutual understanding and friendship among participants/ villagers.

2. Location of the Volunteer Tour:

Mae Chan Tai Village, Moo 25, Tambon Thakor,
Mae Suay District, Chiang Rai Province, Thailand

(altitude 1,392 meters, no electricity, cold at 10-15C in January)

3. Dates and Tentative Programme:

Starting on 23 January 2021 (Saturday)

- 10:15 gathering at Chiang Rai Airport , domestic exit gate
- 10:30 departure for Mae Chan Tai Village by a chartered bus
- 11:00 visit White Temple in Chiang Rai
- 12:00 lunch at White Temple (individually arranged)
- 12:30 departure for Mae Chan Tai Village
- 14:00 change to small 4WD vehicles at Royal Project Office near
Mae Suay School
- 14:30 arrival in Mae Chang Tai Village and meet with village
community members for orientation
- 17:00 visit to Home Stay families as per the accommodation plan

18:00 welcome dinner
19:00 cultural show
21:00 end of schedule of the day

2nd day 24 January 2021 (Sunday)

08:00 breakfast
am individual work schedule assigned by respective farmer
12:30 farewell lunch
13:30 traditional coffee processing demonstration
15:00 departure for Ching Rai
16:30 stop over at the lanner hot spring
18:00 departure for Chiang Rai Airport
18:30 arrival at Chiang rai Airport and end the tour

Remarks: Those who are not in a hurry and can spend extra days in Chiang Rai, it might be an option to arrive Chiang Rai 1-2 days earlier or/and depart 1-2 days later.

There are different ways of transport from Bangkok to Chiang Rai. Night buses or night train would be available at a reasonable price which would arrive Chiang Rai in the morning. Those who wish to travel by air, I suggest to use Thai Airways (Thai Smile) for return trip from Suvarnabhumi Airport Departing at 8:30 and arriving Chiang rai at 10:05, and departing Chiang Rai at 20:45 and arriving Bangkok at 22:15.

4. Minimum/Maximum number of participants and eligibility

A minimum number of participants will be 6 and the maximum number is 15 participants (including accompanying staff/teachers). There is a possibility that the volunteer tour might be cancelled/rescheduled if participants are less than 6 ,or if the COVIT-19 situation worsens at that time.

The target participants are university students or employees in general public at all age groups, who are interested in the aims of this programme and who can participate fully as per the tentative programme, and arrive to /depart from Chiang Rai at their own expenses.

5. Financial Support and Liability of the Organizer (GIAPSA)

GIAPSA will provide free transport (mini bans) for return trips between Chiang Rai Airport and Mae Chang Tai Village, free one night accommodation (Home Stay) and local traditional meals at Mae Chan Tai Village and other associated expenses including the organization of cultural show. Lunch on 23 January at White Temple is to be arranged individually at their own expenses. Liability for any accident or illness during the programme will rest with respective participant. Participants are advised to join own insurance as desired.

6. Pre-departure Orientation/ debriefing meeting

Once participants applied and accepted for the participation by the organizer, a specific Face Book Group will be created by the organizer to facilitate a better communication and team work.

There will be an orientation and debriefing meeting and participants will be asked to participate if available:

- An orientation will be held in mid-January 2021 for about 1-2 hours to provide background information on the village, Aka tribes, project, etc.
- A debriefing gathering will be held during February 2021, which will focus to exchange experiences and lessons learnt during the volunteer tour.

