

## **Background and objectives of the Study Tour to Mae Chang Tai Aka Tribal Village, Cheng Rai , 13-14 January (Saturday-Sunday) 2024**

### **1. Background and Objectives:**

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 underserved groups suffering from poverty in Thailand and Southeast Asia.

For example, nearly 60% of the total population suffering from poor in Laos are those living in mountain areas. They do not have sufficient agriculture lands to grow crops. They usually do not have good roads, transport, markets and telecommunication facilities, and limited opportunities for employment, income generation, education and health care.

In case of Mae Chan Tai Village (Akha tribe) in Chiang Rai which locates in high mountainous area at an altitude of 1300-1500 meters, villages have been suffering for a long time from a lack of public electricity, good roads (only 4WD vehicles can reach the village) and other public facilities such as school and health post.

To meet these challenges, the Japan-based international NGO; General Incorporated Association for the Promotion of Self-reliance (GIAPSA) formulated a pilot project “Community Base Sustainable Livelihood Development in Mae Chan Tai Village in Chiang Rai Province in Thailand.” The project is funded from GIAPSA’s own financial resources and started in 2018 with an aim to assist villagers in building a self-help capacity in improving their living conditions, and identify a replicable model for community based sustainable livelihood development in mountain villages in Thailand and beyond. More specifically, the project assists the Mae Chan Tai Aka tribal village (40 households) through building a community enterprise for quality coffee production (including other products), processing and marketing, and enhancing their income, employment and community-based development efforts.

In 2021, GIAPSA jointly with the Mae Chan Tai Community Enterprise had opened an outlet antenna coffee shop in Sathorn, Bangkok aiming to promote marketing and branding of Mae Chan Tai Arabica Specialty Coffee.

Against these backgrounds, this study tour is aimed at 1) to provide an opportunity to the participants to learn the living conditions and the life of hill tribes in deep remote mountain, 2) to promote a sense of solidarity, mutual understanding and friendship between the participants and the village community through dialogue and working together for community works (such as coffee beans hand picking and tree planting), 3) to facilitate the participants in enhancing their knowledge on coffee production and processing, and 4) provide opportunities to the participants to promote a better understanding on the issues and challenges associated with the sustainable development of mountain villages and hill tribes as a part of SDGs.

#### **Related web links:**

GIAPSA            <http://asiaselfreliance.org>

Coffee shop       <https://akhamaechantaicoffee.com>

#### **2. Location of the Study Tour:**

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

(altitude 1,392 meters, no electricity)

#### **3. Dates and Tentative Programme:**

13-14 January 2024

The tour will start at 9 am at the Chiang Rai Airport on 13 January 2024 and complete (dis-assemble) the tour at around 6:30 pm on 14 January 2024 at the Chiang Rai Airport. Participants may wish to choose and book own means of transport either by air or train or bus or other means to fit to the above schedule.

#### **4. Minimum/Maximum number of participants and eligibility**

A minimum number of participants will be 15 and the maximum number is 25, who are healthy and fit to travel and interested in the project activities.

The target participants are those living in Thailand, Japan and other countries including university /high school students, and those who like Mae Chan Tai Coffee and who can participate fully as per the tentative programme.

In particular, following criteria would be applied as a priority in selecting the participants:

- 1) those who have no experience in visiting Mae Chan Tai village nor similar hill tribe villages in past two years
- 2) those who love Mae Chan Tai Coffee and who are the regular customers of Akha Mae Chan Tai Coffee Shop in Sathorn, Bangkok
- 3) those who can self-finance the travel costs between their home place and Chiang Rai Airport.

#### **5. Financial Support and Liability of the Organizer (GIAPSA) /participants**

The organizer : GIAPSA (一般社団法人 (非営利) アジア自立支援機構) will finance the cost of:

one-night free accommodation (Home Stay) and free all local traditional meals at Mae Chan Tai Village and other associated expenses including the organization of cultural show and other events/activities at the village.

Participants would be asked to contribute the cost of local transport between Chiang Rai Airport and Mae Chan Tai Village (min-vans and 4WD vehicles which will be hired for the trip) at the maximum contribution of 1,000 baht/person and the lunch (optional) on the first day at the White Temple (if wish to take lunch there).

Liability for accidents or illness during the trip will rest with respective participant. Participants are advised to join own insurance scheme if so desired.

## 6. Pre-departure Orientation

Once participants submit a signed application/declaration form (registration form) and the organizer accepts their participation through screening based on the criteria and the priority, a specific Line Group will be created by the organizer to facilitate a better communication and a team setting.

There will be an orientation meeting 1-2 weeks prior to the travel date, and participants will be asked to participate, if possible.

Participants would be asked to provide brief comments describing the experience and views about the study tour within 2 weeks after the completion.

For any inquiries, you might wish to contact by email at

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