

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THAILAND

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To understand the system of local government in Thailand, it, first of all, is necessary to know the history and the development of the Government of Thailand. Besides, it is true that the system of local government in any country depends upon the political system of its country.

So, in this book, to describe the local government in Thailand, the author will illustrate the history and the development of Thailand in the following:

History and the Development of the Government

Discussing about the historical background and the development of the government will help understand the government efforts, the Thai administrative behavior and the role of the people participation in local government in Thailand. Then it is necessary to discuss the government efforts and the social background of the Thai society.

Thailand is situated on the Indochinese Peninsula in Southeast Asia. It is bounded on the north by China and Laos, on the west by Burma and on the south by Malaysia. Thailand has the area of 518,000 square kilometers. The history of the government of Thailand was characterized by absolute monarchical regimes. In the Sukhothai period, King Ramkamhaeng ruled with justice and sympathy. He governed the people as members of his family. He was so kind to the people. The most important was that his government combined both politics and religion to provide honesty and justice for all. Thai people paid him great respect and called him "The Father King": Paw-Kun.⁽¹⁾

It should be noted that during the reign of King Ramkamhaeng of

Sukhothai the country was peaceful. The people was happy and this was the reason why Ramkamhaeng's rule was a paternal government.

King Ramkamhaeng of Sukhothai died in 1317 and after that Sukhothai lost its power with the beginning of Ayudhaya period. The pattern of paternal government was also changed.

There was a great change of government system because of the predominant influence of Hinduism and the Khmer which had already spread over the Ayudhaya Kingdom. The King became supreme, absolute and divine. Some of Kings' names and the ways the people addressed them will help clarify the Kings' absolute and divinity such as "Lord of Land" (Pra-jow-paen-din). "The Great King of the Three Worlds" (Pra-borom-trai-lohk-nahd).⁽²⁾

The political system of the Ayudhaya was Autocratic Government. The King of Thailand at that time became an autocrat because of the Cambodian or Khmer influences. With the pattern of autocratic government, the King became supreme, absolute and divine. Either paternal or autocratic government had greatly affected the social values of the Thai people for long. This is the very important impact to the Thai local self government at present. The social values of the Thai people under the absolute and divinity of the kings kept people respectful to superiority or elders. Most of the initiatives had to come from above. All of these behaviors would have been the obstacle of the role of the people in the political participation both at the national and local levels.

From Ayudhaya to Ratanakosin the form of government was more or less still the same until a great change took place by the Revolution or the Coup d'Etat in 1932. This revolution turned the absolute monarchy into the limited monarchy under the democratic regime.

In general, the democratic regime would be useful to the system of local self government and the way of the political participation but looking at Thai society and social values inherited by the traditional government it is said that the social values must be slowly changed to fit the system of democracy.

The Sukhothai Period.

To describe the system of local government in Thailand it should be necessary to study the evolution of government at the Sukhothai period, the Ayudhaya period and the Rattanakosin period respectively.

During Sukhothai period, the country was ruled by Kings of so called paternalism. The country was divided into provinces. The King stayed in the capital. The province or the provincial administration was in the hand or the power of the governor who was appointed by the King. The governor was called "Paw-Maung" meaning "Father of the Province." The governor was so called because he governed the people in the name of the King. He must behave the same way as the King did to rule the

people: the father of the people. The King did not interfere the governors because most of them were his sons or nephews and appointed by himself to rule all the provinces. It can be said that the power of ruling the province was entirely in the hand of the governors.

The Ayudhaya Period.

During Ayudhaya period, there was some change in the structure of Government and Administration. It was not only a change in the structure of government but also in the pattern of relationship between the King and the people. The new pattern, characterized by the system of "Master and Servant" instead of that of "Father and Son." At this point, it was a great change in the system of Government and Administration as well.

As the subdivision of the country was divided into Provinces. In the Province, there was a Governor to rule the province but in the Ayudhaya period the role of the Governor was changed. His status changed to be the "Chow-Maung" or the "Master of the Province."

During Ayudhaya period, the Government was under the control of three important posts: The Smuha Nayok (Prime Minister of Civil Affairs), the Smuha Kalahom (Prime Minister of Military Affairs) and the Pra Klang (Finance and Foreign Affairs Minister).⁽³⁾

The changing of Government and Administration pattern in the Ayudhaya period took more and more control over the province. This provided the strong and powerful control for the central government.

The Rattanakosin Period.

After the Ayudhaya period came to the Rattanakosin period, there was again some change in the structure of government and administration.

The great change or the administrative reform was during the reign of King Chulalongkorn (1868–1910). At that time, the provincial administration was placed under the authority of a single ministry: the Ministry of the Interior. The status of the Governor was down graded from the Master of the People or "Chow-Maung" to the ruler and was called "Poo-Wa-rachagarn-changwad" or the governor of the Province.

Under the system of the Provincial Administration, the province was reorganized and grouped together to be circles or "Monton" and hereby there were many provinces downgraded to be districts under the circles.

So the change of Government and Administration made the structure of the country divided into circles and in the circles divided into provinces. The circles were the largest sub-division of the country. The Administration of Circle was under the control of "Lord Lieutenant" or "Smuha Tesapiban." The Lord Lieutenant was appointed by the King to rule the circle.

In a circle, there were many provinces. The province was under the control of the provincial governor and divided into districts. The districts were sub-divided into communes which were further divided into villages. The chief of commune was "Kamnan" or commune headman who was elected by people and the head of the village was "Poo-Yai-Ban" or village headman.

It is noticed that the Administrative reform under the initiative of King Chulalongkorn was the reorganization as in the matter of democracy and that of the efficiency in Administration. So, it can be said that King Chulalongkorn had tried to introduce the system of democracy and the system of good management to Thai Government and Administration.

All mentioned above will prove that the structure of Government and Administration in the Sukhothai, Ayudhaya and Rattanakosin periods was the system of Deconcentration of Local Government and it was the local state government because the systems of circles or provincial administration were of the same technique of deconcentration with its delegation of authority to provide administrative decision on behalf of the central administration for public servants working in the field.⁽⁴⁾

The Establishment of the Sanitation Districts

However, under the Administrative reform of King Chulalongkorn, the system of local self government had been introduced in Thailand also. The first local self government unit was Sukapiban Krungthep in B.E. 2440 (1897) and after that the second Sukapiban, as a local self government unit was Sukapiban at Tachalorm district, Samud Prakarn Province in B.E. 2448 (1905).⁽⁵⁾

The word "Sukapiban" means "Sanitation" (in English). It was a separate governing body from the district administration in the province. The primary aim of Sukapiban was to serve the special needs of the local people in its area, especially sanitation programs.⁽⁶⁾

The Administration of Sukapiban was operated by a board consisting of ex officio members namely; a commune headman as the chairman, and the other village headmen within the boundaries of the Sukapiban. The board was authorized to collect and spend a certain amount of money, largely from local house and building taxes, under the advice and supervision of the circle or Tesapiban, the Governor of the circle or Monton.⁽⁷⁾ The functions and responsibilities of Sukapiban were to maintain public roads, bridges, lights and other activities connected with local health and sanitation programs.

The establishment of the municipal government

The second local self government unit in the history of Local Govern-

ment in Thailand was the municipality or in Thai "Tesaban."

The municipal government was established in 1933 according to the municipal Act B.E. 2476 (1933). It is accepted by the people that the municipal government is the real local self government unit in Thailand. The purpose of the establishment of the municipal government was to serve as a school of political participation and democratic practice.

The system of municipal government or "Tesaban" is divided into three categories namely city municipality, town municipality and township municipality. City municipality (Tesaban Nakorn) must have 50,000 or more inhabitants and average of 3,000 persons per square kilometer plus enough revenue. Town municipality (Tesaban Maung) must have 10,000 or more inhabitants with a similar average of person per square kilometer and revenue. Township municipality (Tesaban Tambol) could be established without rules or regulations except the consideration of the provincial administration and the Ministry of the Interior.

The Provincial Authority

The other kind of local self government in Thailand is the Provincial Administration Organization or the Provincial Authority. It was established by the Provincial or Changwad Government and Administration Act B.E. 2498 (1955). It is believed that the Provincial Administrative authority would be separated from the Provincial Administration because the provincial authority was a local self government unit to serve the policy of government under field Marshal P. Pibulsongram, the Prime Minister at that time. He determined to educate the people to participate in Government and Administration in Thailand as a democratic government.

The provincial authority is composed of the executive and the legislative bodies. The executive is the provincial governor who is responsible for the provincial administration of local state government. It can be said that the provincial governors in Thailand have to play dual roles in local state and local self governments. Assistants to the provincial governor to administer the Provincial Authority as the chief of the division and other employees can be hired by the Provincial Authority according to rules and regulations of Changwad Government Act of 1955. The number of assistants and other employees depends on the budget and necessity of each Provincial Authority.

The legislative body is the Provincial Council or Changwad Council. It consists of members who are elected by the people in the province. The term of councillors is four years. They have the power to pass Changwad ordinances. Moreover they have the power to control the Administration of the Provincial Authority.

The present Provincial Authority was once established and called the Provincial Council or the Sapa Changwad. The Provincial Council or the Sapa Changwad in 1933 was established to serve as advisor of the Gover-

nor in the Provincial Administration. The functions of the councillors were to advise and approve the budget of the province.

However, the Provincial Council as mentioned was not a real local self government unit. Consequently, the provincial council was abolished in 1938. Any way the Provincial Authority has been established again since 1955 and still exists at present.

The Commune Authority

In 1956, the Commune Authority was established as a unit of local self government. It was the policy of government at that time to let the people govern themselves in the form of local self government. The power and functions of the commune authority were the same as those of the commune municipal government.

The Commune Authority consists of two bodies: the council and the executive committee. The councillors are elected by the people in that commune, one from each village for a five year term and the commune headman and village headmen of the commune who are members ex officio. The council elected its president and vice president among its members. The executive committee comprises of the commune headman as chairman, the commune doctor, all the village headmen and not more than five other members who are appointed by the district officer from the principals of local schools or from competent men of the commune.

Any way, the Commune Authority was abolished in B.E. 2514 (1971). It should be noted that the units of local self government could not have developed themselves and it was the recess of the political development of Thai Government and Administration.

The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration

In B.E. 2518 (1975), the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration was established by the Krung Thep Maha Nakorn legislation for Administration Management Act B.E. 2518. According to this Act it made the Administration of Bangkok Province become a special Metropolitan Administration. Krung Thep Maha Nakorn or the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration is a local self government unit with a juristic person status. It composes of two bodies: The legislative body and the executive body. The legislative body is the Metropolitan Assembly, consisting of elected members whose number depends on the ratio of the population of the Bangkok Metropolitan: one Assemblyman for every one hundred thousand people. The Assemblymen stay in office for a four year term. They are authorized in controlling the executive in the Administration.

The executive body comprises of the Governor and four Deputy Governors elected by the people of the Bangkok Metropolitan for a four year term. The executive body will be elected in the same day of the legislative body. The structure and form of the government of the Bangkok Metro-

politan Administration provide the separation of power. The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration is divided into districts or Khets, and a khet is sub-divided into Khwangs or Communes.

The problems of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration are those of a big organization. It has many functions and responsibilities but less revenue.

The Establishment of the City of Pattaya

The City of Pattaya was established in B.E. 2522 (1978) under the City of Pattaya Administration Act 1978. The City of Pattaya took the place of the municipality of district of Pattaya or Tesaban Maung Pattaya. The government's policy of setting up the City of Pattaya Administration was to introduce and to try the system of local self government in the form of the Council and Manager or the City Manager as in the United States.

The City of Pattaya Administration is a special form and unit of local self government in Thailand.

The structure of the City of Pattaya Administration consists of two bodies: the executive and the legislative body. The executive body is the clerk or the Manager or Palad Maung who is hired by the council for two year term. The clerk or the manager will administer with his deputy manager appointed by himself. The manager must be responsible for his duty to the council. The legislative comprises of members elected by the people for a four year term. The council has the power to control the budget of the City and the power to enact the by-laws. The councilors will select one among themselves to be the president or the chairman and he is called the Mayor also. The Chairman or the Mayor has no power in the administration but he is the ceremonial head or the symbol. He sits to preside the meetings of the council.

Conclusion

The study of the History and the Development of Government of Thailand is divided into three periods, namely: The Sukhothai, the Ayudhaya and the Rattanakosin periods. It is clear that the systems of Government and Administration have great influences on the structure of local government.

The local government in Thailand can be classified into 2 categories: local state government and local self government. Local state government is divided into provinces and a province is divided into sub-divisions namely districts, sub-districts, communes and villages respectively. The administration of these local state government units shows the system of deconcentration. That is to appoint officials to work in the field, and to administer under the budget, the policy determined by the central government.

Five kinds of local self government units exist at present namely, the Provincial Authority, the Municipal Government, the Sanitation district,

the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration and the City of Pattaya Administration. All these governmental units are of the system of devolution which the central government transfers the political and administrative power to local people to govern themselves.

This chapter tries to make clear that Thai local government and administration is a hierarchical relationship of units. It is the system of inter-governmental relations and hereby it is the agency of central government rather than a unit of local self government. All of the local government units in the past were initiated by the government.

The major problem of local self government in Thailand is the insufficiency of people's political participation. People have been playing only little role in local self government because of their political apathy as well as the unsuitable forms of local governments themselves.

NOTES

- (1) Choop Karnjanaprakorn, *Municipal Government in Thailand: As an Institution and Process of Self Government* (Bangkok; Thailand: The Institute of Public Administration, Thammasat University, 1962), pp. 3–5.
- (2) *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5.
- (3) Thai Government, "Provincial and Local Government," *Thailand Official Year Book 1964* (Bangkok, Thailand: Government House Printing Office, 1964), pp. 71–74.
- (4) Brain C. Smith, *Field Administration* (London: Routledge and Regan Paul, 1967), pp. 22–23.
- (5) Pratan Kongridhisuksakorn, *op.cit.*, p. 140.
- (6) Choop Karnjanaprakorn, *op.cit.*, p. 7.
- (7) *Ibid.*, pp. 7–8.

In this chapter, the author will describe the present local government and its problems. Local government in Thailand consists of two distinct but closely related levels.

1. Provincial Government or Local state government
2. Local self government

I. Provincial Government or Local state government

Provincial government is the primary unit of territorial administration. It is local state government because it is a hierarchical unit administered and staffed by central government with the budget provided by the national or central government. Hereby it is under the system of deconcentration.

There are now in Thailand 73 provinces (Changwad) including Bangkok Metropolis. It should be noted that Province or Changwad is established by law.

The administration of the province is under the authority and responsibility of a governor. The governor is assisted by one or two vice governors or deputy governors. The governor and his assistants are appointed by the Ministry of the Interior. They are government officials of the Ministry of the Interior.

Each province is divided into Districts or Ampur which headed by a District Officer or Nai Ampur. The District Officer is a government official appointed by the Ministry of the Interior through the Department of Local Administration. He is responsible for the District Administration assisted by deputy district officers who are officials of the Ministry of the Interior. There are also government officials represented various ministries such as Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Finance, etc. due to the needs and necessity of the District.

It should be noted that both establishment and abolishment of districts will be accomplished by the Royal Decree. There are now, 616 Ampur or Districts in Thailand. Some of them are divided into sub-districts (King-Ampur). There are now 83 sub-districts. In general, a district is divided into communes or Tambol and Villages or Mu-ban respectively.

A commune is headed by a commune headman or Kamnan and a village is headed by a village headman or Poo-Yai-ban. They are elected by people but are under the directing and control of the district officer.

The commune headman is assisted by deputy who is chosen by the commune headman with the approval of the district officer and the provincial governor respectively. The commune headman and his assistant are

responsible for maintaining peace and order, keeping public records, collecting taxes, etc. in the commune.

In each commune, there is a special unit called the sapa tambol (Tambol council). It is not a local self government unit. It is under the control and supervision of the Province. The sapatambol has a committee comprised of the ex-officio members namely, the commune headman, village headmen and the commune doctors. The other members are elected by the villagers, one from each village. Any way the sapatambol does not have the status of a legal entity. It does not have the right to make its own budget either.

It should be noted that the policy of the government to establish the sapatambol is to let the people practice political participation.

A village is the smallest unit of Government and Administration. The village headman has the same duty and function as those of the commune headman and he is assisted by two assistants chosen by him and approved by the commune headman and the district officer respectively. There are now 6,184 communes and 55,772 villages in Thailand.

It should be noted that local state government is a field administration. It is a hierarchical unity or an agent of the central government. The Administration of Local state government is under the central government or the national policy. All of the personnel who administer in the field are appointed by the central government and the budget provided by the central government also.

II. Local self Government

The local self government in Thailand is now composed of⁽¹⁾

1. The Provincial Authority.
2. The Municipal Government.
3. The Sanitation District.
4. The Special Local self Government Units.
 - 1) The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.
 - 2) The City of Pattaya.

The Provincial Administration Authority

The Provincial Administration Authority was established by the Provincial Administration Authority Act B.E. 2498 (1955)⁽²⁾ under the Government of Prime Minister Field Marshal P. Pibulsongram. According to the law, the Provincial Administration Authority has been established in every province in Thailand. The policy of the government in establishing this local unit was to promote the political participation of the Thai people. It was intended to be school of democracy.

The Provincial Administration is composed of two bodies, one is the legislative and the second is the executive body.

The legislative body called the Provincial council or the Changwad council is composed of at least 18 to 36 members up to the number of the people. The council members are elected from every district in the province for four year term of office. The council elects its chairman and vice-chairman among its members. It meets in regular session once a year for a period of not more than thirty days. But this period may be extended by the governor or the chairman. The chairman or the governor has the right to call a special meeting of the council and the special meeting must not last more than fifteen days.

The Provincial Council has the right to ask the governor in the affairs of the provincial administration or Changwad functions. The provincial councillors have the right to enact the ordinance. The important power of the provincial councillors is to be the committee whose right is to review or examine any activities of the changwad or provincial administration. The provincial council, by the chairman, will appoint 2 committees: one is the standing committee appointed from its members and the other is ad hoc committee which need not be composed entirely of council members.

The executive body of the Provincial Administration Authority is the Governor of the Province. In fact, the governor is the government official appointed by the central government, he is not elected person. So the structure of local self government in the form of the provincial administration authority is not really the local self government unit. Only the provincial council is the elected body. The provincial governor must have dual duties: one to work as the provincial governor, the second to work in the local self government.

The other personnel in the Provincial Administration Authority except the governor are the chiefs of various sections. The organization of the Provincial Administration Authority is divided into 3-4 sections up to the necessity of the activities of that authority. These sections are, for example, education, health, engineer and finance, etc. They are hired by the Provincial Administration Authority.

The power and duties of the Provincial Administration Authority will be as follows:

1. Providing clean water, markets, abattoirs, ports, ferries, burial grounds and crematoria.
2. Promoting occupations for local inhabitants.
3. Providing and maintaining medical services.
4. Providing and maintaining electric works or other lighting.

To administer all of these functions, the Provincial Administration Authority is allowed to get its budget and sources of revenue by the Provincial Administration Authority Act and a Royal Decree of the Provincial Administration Authority Revenues of B.E. 2499 (1956) including a business tax, a beverage tax, liquor and liquor license fee, a purchase tax, gambling, entertainment tax and a sales tax on gasoline purchased within the

province. Aside from these taxes and fees, the province receives income from provincial property and public utilities, bonds, loans, grant-in-Aid, money from donation, and other revenues as specified by law.

The Municipal Government

Municipal Government or Tesaban is one of the local self government unit in Thailand. The system of Municipal Government was introduced in B.E. 2476 (1933). It should be noted that⁽³⁾

... The primary aim at its inception was not merely to establish the municipal government to serve the local needs but also to familiarize the people with the system of parliamentary government. Therefore the organization of the municipal and central government was almost identical

The form of municipal government is the cabinet which differs from the system of Mayor and Council form of the municipality of the United States. The system of Thai municipal government is that of Mayor and Council, The Mayor has 2-4 assistants: the same system of the municipal government in France called "Mayor and Adjoint" which mayor has assistants like the cabinet.

All municipal government in Thailand have the same form. It is uniformity. Now, there are 120 municipal governments in Thailand. They are incorporated or established in the areas of urban, not in rural areas. They are divided into 3 classes of municipal governments: The city municipals or Tesaban Nakorn in Thai, the town municipals or Tesaban Maung in Thai, and the commune municipals or Tesaban Tambol in Thai. The class of municipals is determined by the density of the population in the area and the sources of tax revenue available for self government. It requires the population of at least 50,000 with an average density of not less than 3,000 per one square kilometer for a city municipal government. A town municipal government requires 10,000 or more persons with the density of at least 3,000 persons. Any way there is a special requirement that town municipal government must be set up in each area where the provincial administration office or the office of governor seat is located. So there must be a town municipal government in every city inspite of its inadequate revenue for self support. There is one of the problems of Thai municipal government. The commune municipal government will be established in any area according to the policy of the central and the provincial government.

In every municipal government, there are 2 bodies: the municipal assembly or the legislative body and the executive body.

A municipal assembly is composed of members varied in number e.g. a city municipal assembly has twenty-four members, a town municipal assembly has eighteen member and a commune municipal assembly has twelve members. They are elected by the people for a four year term.

The primary functions of the assembly are to enact the by-laws, to approve the municipal budget and to control the executive in the administration. The assembly selects a chairman and a vice chairman among its members.

The executive body is composed of the mayor and his assistants, ranging in number from two in commune and town municipal governments and four in a city municipal government. The Mayor and his assistants must be the members of municipal assembly who are elected by the people. It should be noted after election of the members of municipal assembly, the party that won the majority will gain the right to form a group of executive. The leader of majority must be the mayor and he selects some in the group to be his assistants. Generally, Mayor and his assistants, in spite of their majority must be appointed by the provincial governor. The Mayor and his assistants have considerable authority in determining municipal policy and municipal administration.

The relationship between the legislative and the executive body is in the system of parliamentary government. The municipal assembly has the power to control the executive by means of questioning or debating any matters concerning the municipal administration. The assembly also has the right to control the executive by the appointment of two kinds of committees: standing and ad hoc committees respectively.

In the administration of the municipal government there is a career chief administrative official called a municipal clerk or Palad Tesaban who is responsible for municipal activities under the control and supervision of the mayor. The municipal government organization is required by law to provide the administrative organization in order to fulfil the duties and functions of the municipal government and hereby every municipality must have at least three departmental organizations: the office of the chief administrative official, the office of the treasurer and the office of the municipal engineer. By these mean all of these organizations must have officials or workers to perform the duty and all of these officials must be under the control and supervision of the chief administrative official. The personnel administration of the municipal government is under the control of the municipal service commission. The municipal service commission consists of the Minister of the Interior as chairman and the Under-Secretary of State for the Interior as Vice-chairman, the Director-Generals of all departments in the Ministry of the Interior, and Director of Local Affairs Division as the secretary.⁽⁴⁾

It should be noted that the system of personnel administration of the municipal government in Thailand is the unified local government personnel administration.⁽⁵⁾ According to this system it has the problem of the limitation of the freedom of each municipal government to hire competent men as required. It also effected pay system, promotion and hereby it causes problem to the administration of the municipal government in

Thailand to-day.

The duties and functions of the municipal government by the Municipal Government Act B.E. 2496 (1953)⁽⁶⁾ requires, in case of the city municipal government, compulsory and optional functions.

The compulsory are as follows:

1. Maintaining roads and waterways.
2. Keeping roads, pathways and public places clean and dispose of refuse and garbage.
3. Maintaining public peace.
4. Preventing and suppressing infectious diseases.
5. Providing fire engines and accessories.
6. Providing for abattoirs.
7. Providing for clean water.
8. Providing for schools.
9. Providing and maintaining drainage.
10. Providing and maintaining medical services.
11. Providing and maintaining public lavatories.
12. Providing and maintaining electric works or lighting.
13. Providing and maintaining child and mother welfare services.
14. Providing other services necessary to preserve public health.

The optional functions are as follows:

1. Providing for markets, ports, ferries, burial grounds and crematoria.
2. Providing and promoting occupation for local inhabitants.
3. Providing and maintaining child and mother welfare.
4. Providing and maintaining hospitals.
5. Providing for public utilities.
6. Other services necessary to preserve public health.
7. Providing and maintaining vocational schools.
8. Providing and maintaining sports.
9. Providing and maintaining parks and zoos.
10. Municipal enterprise.

All of the duties and functions above must be enacted in municipal by-laws. However not all of these duties and functions can be done because most of the municipal governments in Thailand have a limited budget not enough to do all the compulsory and optional functions.

For the town municipal government, they are required to perform functions in the item 1 through 12 above mentioned and permitted to perform some optional functions. For the commune municipal government it is required to perform functions in the item 1 through 6 and permitted the performances of the following.

1. Providing for clean water, water works, markets, abattoirs, ports, ferries, burial grounds and crematoria.
2. Promoting occupations for local populations.
3. Providing and maintaining medical services.

4. Providing and maintaining electric works or other lighting.
5. Municipal enterprise.

There are too many duties and functions of the municipal government in Thailand to carry out with less revenue, so most of the municipal governments can perform only some of their functions and duties. This is the reason why the people are not satisfied in the system of Thai municipality and do not play any role in the local government. This significant problem can be solved by revising or decreasing the duties and functions of the municipal governments to suit their budget.

The municipal government's sources of revenue are provided by the Municipal Government Act B.E. 2496 (1953), they are as follows:

1. Taxes and duties.
2. Fees and License fees.
3. Fines.
4. Income from municipal property.
5. Income from public utilities and municipal enterprise.
6. Bonds and Loans.
7. Grant-in-Aids.
8. Donations.
9. Other sources of income as provided by law.

The Sanitation Districts

The sanitation district in Thailand was introduced by King Chulalongkorn in B.E. 2440 (1897). The first sanitation was the sanitation of Bangkok. Eight years later the sanitation district of Tachalorm, Samudprakarn Province was established in B.E. 2448 (1905).⁽⁷⁾

The initiation of the establishment of the sanitation district was made by the King because he wanted to introduce the system of democracy in government and administration in Thailand. It was the system of parliamentary government which the people did not understand. They lacked experience so it was necessary to practice and educate the people in every way in democratic government as the King's speech quoted hereby⁽⁸⁾

"In our country, the King is the one who takes the initiative because he decides what should be done for the good of the country and the well being of the people in general. This is contrary to the practice in other country...to conform with the way of the European Kings in ruling over the country like Thailand impractical. For example, if we establish a parliament, there will be few persons who will be qualified as members: not all of them will understand governmental affairs because they lack knowledge and previous training. The people may be upset, because they do not understand: They think that, this is unnecessary."

Then the King or government agreed to delegate power to the people by establishing the first local unit which was the sanitation district.

The organization of the sanitation district at that time composed of a board consisting of ex-officio members, a commune headman as the chairman and other village headmen within the territory of that sanitation as members.

The duties and functions of the sanitation district were to maintain public roads, bridges, lights and other activities concerning health and sanitation programs.

The program of the sanitation district satisfied King Chulalongkorn and it resulted in the promulgation of the sanitation District Act B.E. 2451 (1908) and then there were a lot of the sanitation districts established in many provinces in Thailand.

After the death of King Chulalongkorn, the system of the sanitation district, a good idea of decentralization used for practicing the people to govern themselves in the democratic government, was stopped. It can be proved that the initiation and all of the development programs in government and administration always came from the persons on top. Consequently, the programs died away when the said persons died or were out of power. No one wanted to carry on the policy of other founders. This reflected the social values of Thai society that caused problem in Thai political and administration development.

Several years later, in 1952, the system of the sanitation districts was reestablished in Thailand.

The sanitation districts will be established, enlarged, reduced or eliminated by the orders of the Ministry of the Interior. The sanitation will be elevated to the status of municipalities by a Royal Decree.

The organization or the structure of the sanitation district is the committee system. It is composed of both appointed and elected members. The district officer who is a government official under the Department of Local Administration, Ministry of the Interior is appointed the committee chairman and another appointed committee are the deputy district officers, the local police chief of the district, the treasury officer of the district, the health officer of the district, and all of the commune and village headmen who are in that Sanitation District territory. There are four elected members who are elected by the people in that Sanitation District territory. All of the elected members are for four year term.

It should be noted that the board or the administrative committee of the sanitation district does not have a separate legislative body and executive body. The committee has dual functions: both legislative and executive. The functions of the sanitation district are the same as those of commune municipal governments such as providing of roads and waterways, cleaning roads and public places, providing clean water, markets, abattoiries, ferries, fire protection, refuse and garbage disposal, lighting and health. The financing of the sanitation district comes from house and land

taxes, fees and a portion of the provincial local development and motor vehicle taxes and the grant-in-aids.

More than a half of the sanitation district committee are government officials. They are not elected body, so it is not local self government which is governed by the people and therefore the people can play only a small role in these local units. This is the problem of the people lacking of the experience in politics and government. The other problem of the sanitation district is that since their establishment in 1952 up to now they have seldom been elevated to the status of municipalities. This is one of the limitation of the practice of decentralization and political development in Thailand.

The Special Local Self Government

At present, there are two special local self governments in Thailand: Bangkok Metropolitan Administration and the City of Pattaya.

1) The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration

The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration is one of the local self government units and it is a special local self government.⁽⁹⁾

The establishment of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration was the result of the reorganization of the municipal government of the city of Bangkok, the municipal government of the city of Thonburi, the province of Bangkok and the province of Thonburi to be the Bangkok Metropolis or Krungthep Maha Nakorn. That is the combination of provincial administration status of 2 provinces and the status of 2 municipal governments to be a single government or one governmental unit. It should be noted that the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration is a big organization responsible for 24 districts. It might be beyond the capacity of only one governmental unit to administer all of its areas both urban and rural.

The organization of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration is composed of 2 bodies: The legislative and the executive bodies.⁽¹⁰⁾

The legislative body is the Metropolitan Assembly which is now composed of 45 elected members for four year term. The number of assemblymen depends on the inhabitants of Bangkok for the rate of one assemblyman for every one hundred thousand people.⁽¹¹⁾ The duties and functions of the assembly is to enact by-laws or ordinances of the Metropolitan Administration. The assembly has the important power of controlling over the executive. It has the power to question or debate any activities concerning the administration and the power to appoint the standing and the ad hoc committees to review, consider and recommend anything concerning the matters of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration. The assembly elects one from its members to be chairman and two to be vice-chairmen.

The executive body is composed of the governor and four deputy

governors elected by the people the same date and time of the assemblyman election. It is a separation of powers as the presidential system of government in the United States. The governor and deputy governors are in office for four year term. They are all responsible for the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.

Under the governor and deputy governors, there is a career official responsible for the routine administration under the policy control of the governor, he is the clerk or the Under Secretary of State or Palad Krungthep Maha Nakorn. He is the chief administration officer. He has four assistants.

The Administrative Organization of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration comprises of the office of the secretary to the governor, the office of the Metropolitan Assembly, the office of the Under Secretary of State, the office of other high ranking agencies. Bangkok Metropolitan Administration is also divided into Khet or Districts headed by the chief districts appointed by the governor.

The duties and functions of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration are :

1. Maintaining of peace, order and morality of the people.
2. Maintaining roads and waterways.
3. Keeping public places clean.
4. Preventing and suppressing infectious diseases.
5. Promoting occupations for the people.
6. Providing public utilities.
7. Providing schools for the people.
8. Providing and maintaining drainage.
9. Providing traffic and transportation.
10. Conserving and developing environment.
11. Providing social welfare.
12. Providing markets, ports, ferries, burial grounds and crematories.
13. Promoting sports.
14. Local trade enterprises.

To carry on all of these duties and functions the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration has sources of revenues from:

1. Taxes and duties.
2. Fees and license fees.
3. Fines.
4. Income from property.
5. Income from public utilities and enterprises.
6. Grant-in-Aids.
7. Other sources of income as provided by law.

It should be noted that just a small sum of income of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration will not cope with its duties and functions, so the central government should allow the Bangkok Metropolitan to have

the right to initiate new taxes such as restaurant taxes, tourist taxes, construction taxes, etc. By these means it will increase enough income to the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.

The other problem of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration is being a big organization to administer all of the metropolis area. If metropolitan area is divided into 5-7 municipalities it will be better for the capacity of administration and it will be good for inviting people participation.

2) The City of Pattaya

The city of Pattaya is a kind of local self government unit. It was established in B.E. 2522 (1977) by the City of Pattaya Administration Act B.E. 2522.⁽¹²⁾

The will of Thai government to establish the city of Pattaya different from all of the municipal government units was to try and introduce the system of the Council and Manager Plan⁽¹³⁾ of the municipalities of the United States to Thailand. The rest of the municipal government in Thailand has been the uniformity of the Mayor and Councils Plan.

The organization of the City of Pattaya Administration comprises of two bodies: The City of Pattaya Assembly as the legislative body and the executive as the manager called in Thai "Palad Maung".

The City of Pattaya Assembly is composed of two categories members: elected and appointed. There are nine members elected by the people for a four year term. There are eight members appointed by Minister of the Interior. The City of Pattaya Assembly will select one among its members to be chairman. The chairman is at the same time called the Mayor. He does not play any role in the administration. The one who is responsible for the administration is the city manager. The assembly is to consider and approve the ordinances and to control over the city manager in the administration.

The city manager is hired by the assembly under a two year contract. In case of the city manager does not perform the duties and functions as said in the agreement, the city manager will be fired by the assembly. The city manager has a deputy manager to help him in the administration.

It should be noted that the duties and functions of the City of Pattaya are the same as those of the town municipal government such as:

1. Maintaining of public peace.
2. Maintaining of roads and waterways.
3. Keeping roads, pathways and public place clean and disposing of refuse and garbage.
4. Maintaining and promoting of culture and conserving of national resources.
5. Providing for markets, ports, ferries, burial grounds and crematoria.
6. Providing for city planning and controlling the construction.
7. Controlling and promoting tourism.

8. Providing for clean water, water works.

To perform all these duties and functions, the City of Pattaya has the sources of revenues as follows:

1. Taxes and duties.
2. Fees and license fees.
3. Fines.
4. Income from property.
5. Income from public utilities and enterprise.
6. Grant-in-Aids.
7. Other sources of income as provided by law.

The significant point of establishing the City of Pattaya Administration was to try and introduce the City Manager Plan to the local government system and hereby it is the only one municipality which is different from all the municipal government units in Thailand.

Anyway, it is rather difficult to be successful in this policy because of the social value of Thai Society. That is the belief that the Mayor has more prestige than the Clerk or Palad Maung. The clerk or the manager of the City of Pattaya, in spite of his status as the executive, is hired by the assembly. He must be under the mayor who is the chairman of the assembly. All of the initiation of the administration must come from the mayor and the members of the assembly. It goes without saying that the form of the City Manager is not accepted by the people because of the Thai social value.

The government has tried to introduce or initiate the system of local self government in Thailand but confronted with the problem that the people did not exercise enough role in political participation. The political development can achieved its goal if the local self government is successful.

The Trends of Local self Government in Thailand

As the study in Chapter I and Chapter II of this paper, shows the ineffectiveness of the local self government and the insufficient participation of the people in their administration, it gives a hint that reorganization of the local self government structure is needed in Thailand.

There is no problem in the local state government or the provincial administration. Still, it is recommended that the government should have the policy to transfer the provincial administration to local self government in the future.

Anyway, at present there is a unit in the provincial administration called tambol council or sapatambol in Thai which serves as the centre to educate people the democratic way of life. Tambol Council plays an important role in planning of Tambol Development according to people's needs and the National Development Plan. It also determines the programs of job creation in the rural areas. It is hoped that tambol council or commune council will be strengthened so as to become a local self government unit in the future.

This chapter will present some points of view aimed to reorganize each type of local self government units.

The Provincial Administration Authority

The Provincial Administration Authority is comprised of two bodies: The legislative and the executive bodies. It should be noted that the people can not have any role in political participation in this local unit because it is limited by law that the provincial governor must be the executive. Though this kind of local government unit is separated from the provincial administration. Most of the people said that they have no opportunity to be the executive. This means they do not have the real right to govern themselves. This is the point why the Provincial Administration Authority should be revised by law to let the people be the executive as the system of municipal government or the parliamentary system of the national government.

The Sanitation Districts

A sanitation district or Sukhapiban in Thai has no separated legislation and executive bodies. It is administered by a commission. The commission is composed of government officials and a few elected members. It causes the same problem that the people can not play the role of self government. It is the local government by government officials. It is not the matter of the people.

To say about the reorganization of the sanitation district, there is a significant problem to revise. That is to change or to transfer the status of the sanitation district to be the municipal governments, because the

municipal government Act B.E. 2496 said that the sanitation district can be promoted to be the municipal governments anytime, when the government considers suitable. This is the way to complete the structure and the system of local self government.

The Municipal Government

The Municipal government in Thailand was introduced by the government in B.E. 2476. The policy of government was to practice the people to participate in politics and government and to familiarize the people with the parliamentary system of government. The form of the municipal government in Thailand is that of the mayor and council, the uniformity of all the municipalities.

It should be noted that the form of the municipal government is good for practicing the people in the political participation, but there are many problems involved such as the inefficiency of municipal personnel, the shortage of revenues and budget. In the future, the municipal government should be revised in order to solve the problems. It is not the revision of the form because its form is practical and have already been experienced by the Thai people. The thing that should be reorganized is to give the taxation power to the municipal government in order to increase its income to cope with its duties. To solve the problem of the inefficiency of municipal personnel is to promote the prestige and income of the municipal personnel because it seems that the prestige of the government official is higher than that of the municipal personnel or the municipal employee. It is true that government bureaucrats were accepted to be superior people. This value was strong and it still exists.⁽¹⁴⁾

It appears that the morale of the municipal employees is low and it is effected the efficiency in the municipal administration. To solve the moral problem, there should be an integration of national and local government personnel system.⁽¹⁵⁾ That is to make the government officials and the municipal employees equal under the same personnel system.

The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration

The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration is corporated by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration Act B.E. 2518. It is a big organization which is one governmental unit to administer all of 24 districts. The problems of big organization of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration effect the efficiency administration.

To reorganize the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, it should use the system of two governmental units of local government. That is to divide the Bangkok Metropolis into 7-9 municipal governments so that they can carry on the duties and functions of each municipal government. This is the way to solve the problem of big organization of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.

The City of Pattaya

The City of Pattaya was established in B.E. 2552. The will of the government was to introduce a new form of the City Manager or the council and manager form. After its establishment, the people have not been familiarized with this system. No one is willing to be the city manager because he is underestimated by government officials and the Mayor. The Mayor himself usually plays the executive role though by law he has no power in the administration. It always ended with the resignation of the city manager.

To solve this problem, the chairman of the assembly should not be called "Mayor" as called in the United States because Thailand has different tradition of bureaucracy.

Otherwise, the City of Pattaya should be changed to be the same form of the municipal government. That is the Mayor and council form which is now popular for Thai people. This system will be suitable for practicing the parliamentary system and it will be good enough for the political development in Thailand.

The reorganization of the structure of the local self government is necessary to do quickly in order to response to the policy of government in Political Development. In the future, the local self government will be the center of Political, Social and Economic Development. It will be the important political institution that the government should finally establish.

The local self government in Thailand should not have too many types and forms because this will cause complication to people while practicing democracy and political participation.

NOTES

- (1) Pratan Kongridhisuksakorn, op.cit, pp. 139–144.
- (2) Thai Government, The Provincial Administration Authority Act. B.E. 2498, Royal Thai Gazette (February 8th, 2498).
- (3) Choop Karnjanaprakorn, op.cit., p. 29.
- (4) Thai Government, Royal Decree on Municipal Civil Service B.E. 2486 (1943), Section 3.
- (5) United Nations, Local Government Personnel System, (New York: United Nations Publication, 1966), pp. 7–8.
- (6) Thai Government, The Municipal Government Act B.E. 2496 (1953), The Royal Thai Gazette (February 17th, 2496).
- (7) Pratan Kongridhisuksakorn, op.cit., pp. 140–141.
- (8) King Chulalongkorn, The Speech given by the King Chulalongkorn to the Privy Council Concerning the Policy of Administrative Reorganization (Bangkok, Thailand: Sapon-Pipattanakorn Press, B.E. 2470 (1927), p. 63. Translated by Choop Karnjanaprakorn in Choop Karnjanaprakorn, Municipal

Government in Thailand: As an Institution and Process of Self Government (Bangkok; Thailand: The Institute of Public Administration, Thammasat University, 1962).

- (9) Thai Government, The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration Act B.E. 2518 (1975), The Royal Thai Gazette (February 20th, 2518).
- (10) Ibid.
- (11) Ibid.
- (12) Thai Government, The City of Pattaya Administration Act B.E. 2522. The Royal Thai Gazette (October 30th, 2521).
- (13) Milton C. Cummings, Jr. and David Wise, Democracy under Pressure: An Introduction to the American Political System (New York: Harcourt Brace Javanovich, Inc., 1971), pp. 657-658.
- (14) Pratan Kongridhisuksakorn, The Movement Toward Municipal Government in Thailand (A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School, Department of Political Science, Indiana University; 1972), pp. 14-15.
- (15) United Nations, Local Government Personnel System (New York: United Nations Publication, 1966), pp. 7-9.