
Politics and Local Government in Thailand

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Introduction

Politics and government the monarchy has a role in politics, governance and national integration. Creation of independence Foundation politics and government Establishing political stability and governance the reform of the governing land since the past has continued throughout the present. The role of the monarch has greatly helped to create the unity of the country. Every group of Thai people, regardless of their religion, is different in their traditions and has a common feeling of having the same king. Visiting people in various provinces even though the remote area or very constantly with danger causing the people to have good morale there is a feeling of connection with the nation that is not abandoned. His royal duties have greatly helped the government.

There are many royal duties of the King. And all contribute to the overall good Although the royal duties are a heavy burden But His Highness did everything perfectly Until being able to tie the hearts of the people to loyalty I am aware of His will. Was more concerned with the benefits of the general public than himself truly sacrificed to suffer for the country truly, as the royal determination of His Majesty the King, the present reign that we will rule the country fairly for the benefit of the Siamese public.

Local government can meet the needs of the local target and effective since the locality is different, regardless of geography, resources, people, needs and problems, it is different those who provide services or correct problems and in line with the needs of the people must people who know the problems and needs citizens' as well Management will therefore be fast and effective do not waste time proposing matters for approval to the north up local management will complete the local work. No need to waste unnecessary time and expenses. Decentralization has caution and has become a critical point which has many aspects as already mentioned especially in the area of decentralization and consideration of knowledge level can public which is a very controversial issue and for a long time since the change of government in 1932, that is to say, the debate about the readiness of the people to self-government. Always been until now but from the importance of local government, if looking at a large point, then it can be divided into two areas: In politics, governance, and administration, that is to say, in politics and governance Is the foundation of government democracy and learning self-governing as for the administration to alleviate the burden of government and local people to find a way to respond to problems by themselves with various administrative mechanisms in terms of personnel management, budgeting and management etc. General principles for governance of the country. Governing that country requires an organization governing or servicing the government. Such an organization is "government", which means a group of people assigned to exercise executive power. To carry out the governing country in this regard, there must be an administrative organization called to organize government administration in order to manage or manage the country according to the government's policy, there are 2 main principles which are.

Principles of centralization is the principle that governs the administration by authorizing the governing authority to the central government, which is the ministry, bureaus, departments of the state, and there are civil servants or officials of the central administration that are directly connected to each other, respectively. Is the governing body throughout the entire territory of the country therefore it is a national job which is a duty and responsibility. The central government must act to meet the needs or common interests of the people with the following important characteristics.

1.1 There is a gathering of military and police forces to be centralized. To ensure absolute and timely command, if necessary As well as to maintain order and stability of the country.

1.2 There is a centralized decision making authority in the central area, that is to say, to be authorized to perform various operations throughout the country territory and the central part may grant certain powers to civil servants or the staff in the landscape can make a decision on certain matters but the final decision is still central.

1.3 There is a hierarchy of command which has a significant effect is the central authority has the power to appoint, remove civil servants and officials who work in different regions of the country, as well as to

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exercise the power to command the operations can be within the scope of the law and in accordance with the policy as well.

Politics

Thailand is a parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarchy. After the country went through a peaceful transformation in 1932, sovereign power came to belong to the Thai people, with the King as the Head of State who is above partisan politics and discharges his role in accordance with the country's Constitution. The administration of the country is carried out by the prime minister – elected through an open vote by members of the House of Representatives – and the cabinet that the prime minister forms. The Kingdom has a bi-cameral legislature and an independent judiciary. Despite periods of political turbulence, Thailand's political history reflects the country's unwavering commitment toward becoming a full-fledged, multi-party democracy, with accountability, transparency, good governance, as well as respect for human rights and the rule of law being among its main guiding principles. The Thai people and civil society organizations are increasingly taking part in political activities, enjoying the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution. With the resiliency and fundamental strengths of the Thai society, the country has been able to continue its stride along the path of development, guided by the traditional Thai traits of tolerance, common sense and preference for peaceful solutions to problems. Over the past decades, there has been a remarkable continuity in policy direction, providing a predictable framework for investors and businessmen. Successive Thai governments have always been committed to certain fundamental policy principles: friendly relations with all its neighbors and a responsible and constructive foreign policy, an open-market economy, hospitality toward foreign investors and tourists, sound macro-economic policies with fiscal and monetary prudence and the improvement of the country's infrastructure to increase competitiveness and achieve sustainable development. These policies are underpinned, among others, by the vibrant private sector and the strength and continuity of the civil service of the nation, which oversees the implementation of policies and execution of laws throughout the country.

The Monarchy of Thailand

Although the sovereignty of Thailand is vested in the people, the king exercises sovereignty through the three branches of government. The constitution limits the powers of the king, but he remains a key figure in Thailand. He is the head of state and has plays some roles in the functions of the government. He is the head of the Thai forces and defender of all faith despite being required to be a Buddhist. He is also the head of the House of Chakri, Thailand's ruling house. The official home of the monarch is known as the Grand Palace. The succession to the throne is guided by the 1924 Palace Law of Succession which allows only the males are allowed to ascend the throne while crown is passed from father to son only.

The Executive Branch of the Government of Thailand

The government of Thailand is headed by the prime minister. The premier is the head of the major party in the House of Representatives. He or she is selected by election in the lower house of parliament and approved by the king. The premier heads the executive branch and also heads the Cabinet of Thailand. The prime minister has the powers to appoint and dismiss ministers and is the main spokesperson for the government. He or she represents the country abroad and also formulates the country's foreign policies. The Thai's Cabinet is composed of 35 ministers and deputy ministers who are in charge of cabinet ministries. The Cabinet formulates and executes government policies. Most of the cabinet ministers are members of the lower house although this is not a mandatory requirement.

The Legislative Branch of the Government of Thailand

The Parliament of Thailand is bicameral, composing of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The national assembly consists of 750 members. The Senate is made of 250 from appointed. The Senate plays an almost insignificant role in legislation but retains a lot of powers on appointments of the members of the judiciary and other government agencies. The House of Representative is the legislative house. It is composed of 400 members of whom 400 are elected from the constituencies around the country while the 100 are selected from the party list. The house is led by the Speaker while the leader of the largest party is likely to become the prime minister.

The Judicial Branch of the Government of Thailand

Thailand's judiciary is made up of four separate systems. The court of justice is the main court system forming the most number of courts in the country and is composed of three tiers, the Supreme Court,

Court of Appeal, and the First Instance Court. The administrative court settles disputes between the states and state organs. Other court systems include the military courts and the constitutional court.

Local Government Structures in Thailand

Institutional Framework Thai local governments are classified into two main categories; general and specific. In the general form, there are three types of local authorities located throughout all seventy-five provinces except Bangkok. They are (i) Provincial Administrative Organization (PAO, seventy-five units), (ii) Municipality (1,136 units), and (iii) Sub-district or Tambon Administrative Organization (TAO, 6,740 units) 2. In the specific form there are two special units of local governments governing specific areas; namely, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) and Pattaya City.

Advantages of power consolidation principles

- (1) Maintaining state power due to the unity of government and administration as well as orders can be easily effective and have the power to enforce them when violations are illegal.
- (2) Allowing equal benefits for people throughout the country because it is a way of governing that aims to benefit the nation as a whole in various regions throughout the country.

Disadvantages of the principle of centralization

- (1) The government cannot provide many types of public services for good and thorough results in all areas at the same time.

- (2) Causing delay because he had to follow the hierarchy wasting a lot of time and not being able to solve some public service problems moreover, complicated government regulations can cause delays.

- Principles of division of power deconcentration is a principle that the central administration gives the authority to make some decisions to government officials or officials which is regularly sent to perform duties in various administrative divisions of the country and under the command of the central administration this principle of division of power is part of the principle of centralization. With the following important characteristics.

- It is the division of power from the central government officials or officials representing the central office that is stationed in various administrative districts in the landscape, but only in certain areas the final command is still with the central administration.

- Civil servants or officials in the provincial area Is the central government official appointed and removed and under the command of the central administration.

Therefore, the principle of power distribution is to delegate the duties of the government to government officials in the region. Have duties and responsibilities as assigned in various administrative districts Both in the exercise of discretion Decision making and problem solving as well as various initiatives Within the framework of the government policy that has been laid down Therefore is a characteristic of Thai government That is called the provincial government system.

Benefits of the principle of dividing power

- The use of the principle of decentralization is the first step that will lead to decentralization, that is to say, if changing the form of provincial administration into a form of local government in accordance with the decentralization principle can be done by changing the central operator's staff to local officials which is elected by the local people.

- Helping the business run quickly because there is no need to propose a central order for all matters therefore making various operations go faster.

- In the area where there is a local government organization would result in closer communication and supervision of the local administrative organization.

- Organization of government agencies, management, landscape, principles of power sharing Useful for countries where people still lack knowledge in governance. And arrange for the officials of the central administration to carry out the local governing.

(3) Save money because there are civil servants or officials and efficient appliances and belongings in the center can be rotated to various administrative districts can be in the whole country.

(4) Creating unity in government because the power of command and command is in the same center Use the same laws and regulations.

Disadvantages of the principle of dividing power.

- Still not able to meet the needs as needed by each locality thoroughly and correctly, because each locality has different service needs. The central and geographical areas may not know the needs and needs of the locality thoroughly.

2. Principle of decentralization is a method in which the state authorizes some governance to other organizations. In order to provide some public services with reasonable independence don't have to be in the central command with the central part only being controlled which has the following important characteristics.

2.1 There are organizations that are juristic persons separated from the central administration In accordance with the law that has a property budget and their own staff which is assigned to manage and provide certain public services without being under the command of the central administration that only controls them to perform their duties correctly.

2.2 Election Local Administrative Organization consisting of officials elected by local people Resulting in participation in local government and the elections are considered the cornerstone of decentralization.

2.3 The organization is independent in its operations. Which according to the principle of decentralization, the organization must have its own independent power and operate independently within the scope of the law with their own budget and staff.

Advantages of decentralized principles.

(1) Resulting in better response to the needs of local people and able to properly carry out actions that suit local problems Because of the necessity conditions of each locality as well as the condition of the terrain will be different.

(2) To alleviate the central burden allowing the central area to create large businesses more about the common good And also allowing the business to be accomplished quickly.

(3) Helping to promote democracy because decentralization is the power of local people to govern themselves. Make the people have responsibility and be responsible in the local business which is essential for a democratic country.

Concepts and theories Local Government

Daniel Wit (1967: 101 - 103) defines local government as the government that the central government gave. Power or distribution Power to the local administrative unit to open the opportunity Allowing local people to have Power of the governing body in all or part of the local administration.

William V. Holloway (1959: 101-103) defines local government as an organization that has certain territories with a defined population with authority. Self-governing has its own fiscal management and there is a local council in which members are elected by the people.

Prathan Kongritthisuksakarn (2524: 15) defined that local government is a system of Governing that is a consequence of distribution and this implies that a local governing body will be formed by the local people this organization is established and controlled by the government, but it has the power to formulate policies and control the implementation of their own policies.

Uthai Hirunto (1980: 2) defines local government as administration that the government empowers local people to manage and manage. Some operations by Take action yourself to local administration is organized as an organization, with all or part of the people elected officials. There is independence in administration, but the government must be controlled by various methods as appropriate. There is no state control without it, because local government is what the state creates.

Summary of the essence of local government there may be many forms of local government units. Forms based on differences in population growth or area size must have independent power to perform duties as appropriate. Local government units must have legal rights to conduct autonomy. There are organizations that need is in the administration and autonomy, that is, there are administrative organizations and Legal department local people are involved in local government.

Disadvantages of decentralization

(1) Causing danger to unity and causing problems for national security Because of the various locales the competition is good. And there is not enough coordination. Therefore, this principle must be used to suit the needs of the country and the knowledge of the people as well as the government must control to maintain the unique qualities of governing the country.

(2) Making the benefit of the locality more important than the common good of the country Due to focusing on local interests only and sometimes overlooking the common interests of the country.

(3) Local officials may exercise their powers and duties unreasonably because decentralization requires elections, therefore, there may be parties taking advantage, as well as using the powers and duties to seek benefits for themselves and their friends.

(4) Causing costly waste because a local organization must be established therefore must have a budget for staff and equipment since it cannot be used for revolving switching.

Therefore, any country will use the principle of decentralization or decentralization depending on the event of each period. Political status And the ability of the people in that country is important Which most of the countries Often combine the principles of power and the principle of decentralization together In organizing the governing country So that the advantages of one principle come to solve another disadvantage As for the principle of division of power or regional administration, the applied countries tend to see benefits in the sense of guaranteeing order of local peace. And help the central government oversee local government units which is a coordination unit between the central and local area.

Provincial administration is a part of the country's administrative machines, allowing local communities a certain level of autonomy. The local powers are under the state powers; the local administrations are not independent bodies; they are under the national laws, set up for the benefit and well-being of the members of the community. Decentralization is, amongst others, the fundamental principle of the local government to empower people of self-government according to their will. They will elect their representatives (members of the local assemblies or local administrators) to administer the local affairs instead of them with expectation of their better lives as well as protecting local interests and the country's as a whole. Therefore, all the local governmental organizations shall enjoy autonomy in laying down policies for their governance, administration, finance, and shall have powers and duties particularly on their own part. Members of the local assemblies or local administrators shall hold office for the period of four years. "There are currently 5 kinds of Thailand's local (provincial) administration as the following.

1) **Provincial Administration Organization** is the largest body of Thailand's provincial administration; each province has one, except Bangkok. The PAO covers the area of the whole province, set up with an aim to manage and provide public services within its province, helping the works of municipalities and the sub-district administrations; it does so by collaborating with other administrations within the same province to avoid power redundancy and appropriate budget allocation. Provincial Administrative organization (PAO) consists of two administrations. The first is the administrative body led by the chair of the provincial administrative organization; he or she is responsible for all the administrative affairs of the province. The second is the legislative body where members of the provincial administrative organization issues rules and regulations as well as monitor the management of the provincial organization. There is only one chair of each provincial administration organization; he or she is elected by the people in the province. The main duty is to monitor and manage the provincial administration organization led by the permanent secretary of the organization who functions as the top executive of the organization. The chair appoints his or her assistants who are not members of the provincial administration council to help him or her running the administrative affairs of the organization. The assistantship serves for four years. Their duties include managing and monitoring of the provincial administrative affairs, making sure that the administration is done in accordance with the provincial acts and regulations and the provincial development plan. Other duties include planning for the development of the province, setting up the annual budget to be submitted to the provincial administrative council, and reporting the performance and expenditures to the provincial administrative council. Members of the PAO are directly elected by the people; they are elected to a four-year term. Their duties and responsibilities include enacting rules and regulations to be used within a particular province or district such as regulations on petrol and tobacco taxes, monitoring of the administration of the PAO, and monitoring and evaluation of projects' expenditures. Their roles and responsibilities also include their roles in approving the provincial development plan which is a collection of plans and projects submitted from municipalities and sub-district administration organizations. The plan may entail road construction or other infrastructures. They also take part in approving the province's annual budget, which is the management of the public money, managing the collected taxes levied from the public; the taxes include property tax and indirect taxes such as trade and business taxes. These collected taxes, in principle, would return for the development of the province or city.

2) **Municipalities** refer to provincial political units, such as a city or town. It has three categories: (1) sub-district (Tambon) municipality, district (Muang) municipality, and (33) city (Nakorn) municipality,

depending on the number of population and the civility and development of that particular area. Municipalities are set up to manage and provide basic infrastructures for people in local areas; they permeate the daily life of people from birth to death. In theory, a municipality has its autonomous administration. Municipal staff and the permanent secretary function as local government servants, carrying out their duties under the supervision of the municipal council directly elected by the people. A municipality entails two bodies: legislative and administrative bodies. The legislative body's main duty is to enact local regulations and monitor the administration of the municipal council; the administrative body manages the affairs of the municipality via the executive power of the mayor and the members of the municipal council.

The mayor is directly elected from the eligible people with a particular constituent, serving for the term of 4 years; each municipality entails 2 council members from each sub-district (Tambon), 3 council members from each district, and 4 council members from the province. Members of the municipal council are directly elected from the eligible voters, serving the term of 4 years. The number of the council members depends on the type of the municipality. The number is 12 for the sub-district municipal council, 18 for the district municipal council and 24 for the city municipal council.

3) **The Special Administration of Bangkok.** The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration divides its administration into districts and sub-districts. The Bangkok Administration Council functions as the legislative body; the governor of Bangkok is the head of the administrative body. The governor and members of the Bangkok Administration Council are elected from the voters. The term for the members of the council is 4 years.

4) **The Special Administration of Pattaya.** This administration entails the city council as the legislative branch entailing the 24 elected members. The mayor of Pattaya is elected by the people, serving as the head of the executive branch.

5) **The Sub-District Administration Organization** is a local administrative organization under the Councils and Sub-district Administration Organization Act BE 2537, functioning as a local administrative organization at the sub-district (Tambon) level; it is, thus, very close to the people of the community. A Sub-district Administration Organization has developed from a Sub-district (Tambon) Council with income up to a certain level. It is established to manage public services at the local level, villages and sub-districts, as it is impractical for the government to administer all of the villages in the country, the number of which is over 70,000. A sub-district administration organization entails two branches: the legislative branch and the executive branch. The legislative branch entails members of the organization; their main duties are to pass the local laws and monitor the administrative affairs of the sub-district. The executive branch is led by the president of the organization who chairs the sub-district administration organization. The chair of a sub-district administration organization is elected by the people functioning as the head of the administrative branch, and the term is 4 years. Members of the sub-district administration organization are directly elected by the people of the community; their administrative term lasts for four years. The number of the members of for each sub-district varies, depending on the number of villages within a particular sub-district. The sub-district organization of only one village can only have 5 members. If the number of villages is two, each village is allowed to vote for three representatives. The organization with more than two villages is allowed to have two representatives for each village.

Conclusion

The importance of local government from the concept of local government to support the administrative objectives of the state in which will maintain the stability and well-being of the people. By adhering to the principle of decentralization and to comply with democratic principles in which citizens participate in self-government. The importance of local government can be summarized as follows.

Local government is the foundation of basic democracy, because local government is the institution for training political politics for people. Let the people feel that they have a connection with the stake in government. Local administration takes responsibility and cherishes the benefits to the locality in which they will lead to faith in the democratic regime in the end (Chusak Tiangtrong, 1975: 6-7), where people will have the opportunity to elect legislative, executive. Elections will be practice. Let the public use discretion to choose the right representative. Those who have been elected to manage local affairs can be considered as local leaders so they can use their knowledge of local administration. Familiarity and expertise in exercising citizens' rights and duties which will lead to having continued political participation at the national level.

Local government makes local people recognize self-government. The heart of democracy. One thing is Self-government is not the rule arising from the command above Self-government is the people's participation in the governing of the local administrators, in addition to being elected to be responsible for the local administration. Through cooperation United from the people Local administrators must listen to the voice. People with democratic methods, such as giving people the opportunity to vote on referendum giving the people the power to remove (Recall), which will make people aware. In their local importance the public will be aware of obstacles, problems and help to solve. Problems of their locality (Anan Anantakul, 1978: 6-7). Local government is to ease the burden of the government. Which is an important principle of Decentralization Local government is established for the purpose of alleviating the government's burdens due to some of the following needs (Chuwong Chayabutra, 1996: 28-29).

The mission of the government is extensive. Day by day it will be extended. Which can be seen from the budget increases each year according to the growth of the country. The government may not act in response to the needs of the people. Thoroughly local because each locality has a problem and needs Different Solving problems or providing local project services in the same way inevitably does the most effective local people know the problems and understand the problems better who is not in that locality the local people are therefore the right people to solve the problem. That occur in that area the most some businesses are local. Not related to other locals and without disadvantage the country as a whole it is therefore appropriate that the local people do it myself. Therefore, if there is no local governing body the government must bear all the burdens, and not sure if it will meet all the local needs or not. Including must be processed only that locality is not associated with another locality. If organized by local government to do it myself Government burdens will be relaxed. The government is responsible for only controlling Take care only as needed in order to make the local standards of operation even better. Spreading the burden gives the government time to take important actions. Or large national activities which benefit the nation as a whole the congestion of various duties that are centralized will be reduced. Streamline operations in the central area will increase.

Local government is the governing body that is one of the closest to the people usually, local government will allow people in that local area to elect their representatives to act as local administrators or be a member of a local council to select a local executive (referred to as direct or indirect elections respectively), local government organizations will have autonomy in the administration of the state to a certain extent, according to the law. Direct election of local administrators is an opportunity for local people to directly elect the local administrative organization in their area as for the election of local administrators indirectly the local council will choose the local administrators in place of the local people, meaning that the local people will just choose members of the local council. Then the local council members will be responsible for electing another level of local administrators.

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