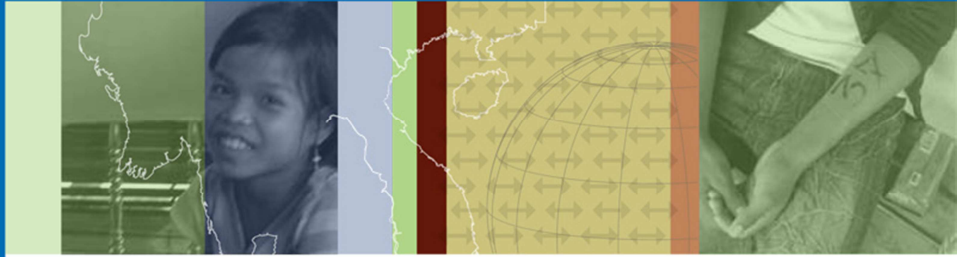




UNIAP

United Nations Inter-Agency
Project on Human Trafficking

THAILAND | ประเทศไทย



May 2013

Monthly Update

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the May Monthly Update. Please be informed that publication of the information in this update does not constitute an official endorsement or approval by the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking (UNIAP) Thailand Country Office.

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Organizing on June 9 – 11, 2013
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International News

Fishermen trafficker charged

13 May 2013, *The Phnom Penh Post*

A Taiwanese woman accused of trafficking Cambodians to work in slave-like conditions on fishing boats off the African coast was charged yesterday with human trafficking by the Phnom Penh Municipal Court.

The woman, Lin Yu Shin, 53, was charged with the “unlawful removal [of persons] with purpose” and has been sent to Prey Sar prison while she awaits eventual sentencing, said Judge Leang Sam Nat, who questioned Lin for nearly four hours in court yesterday.

Lin, who runs Giant Ocean International Fishery Co Ltd, was arrested by police in Siem Reap on Friday morning.

Her arrest comes after police received more than 169 complaints that her company had trafficked Cambodians overseas, said Chiv Phally, deputy chief of the Anti-Human Trafficking and Juvenile Protection department at the Interior Ministry.

Phally added that police have been investigating the company since late 2011 and issued an arrest warrant for Lin in January.

It took time to arrest Lin, as she had changed her name and gone into hiding in Siem Reap, Phally added.

“After her firm was closed in 2011, she hid in Siem Reap and opened a souvenir shop at the night market,” he said. “But after we got information on her name change from Taiwanese police, we arrested her.”

Phally estimates that Lin sent some 700 Cambodians abroad on fishing vessels to countries such as South Africa, Micronesia, Fiji, Qatar, Japan, Malaysia and Singapore.

These fishermen would work almost 20 hours each day with no pay, he said.

It is still not known exactly how many of these fishermen remain enslaved abroad, said Joel Preston, a consultant with the Community Legal Education Center.

“We’ve been in communication with the port police in South Africa, who’ve told us that there are a large number of Khmer fishermen there,” he said.

Because Cambodia has few links with these African countries, it is difficult to locate the fishermen, he added.





May 2013

Laos, China map out measures to tackle human trafficking

11 May 2013, *Vientiane Times*

Officials from Laos and China met yesterday in Vientiane in a joint effort to fight cross-border human trafficking.

The two-day meeting came after the two governments agreed to work more closely to combat the trafficking of their citizens.

Previous cases indicate that this trade between the neighbouring countries mainly involved sexual and labour exploitation of the victims, who were lured abroad by the traffickers for several reasons.

Lao victims were taken to China where they often suffered inhumane working conditions and sexual slavery, Deputy Head of the Secretariat of Laos' National Committee in charge of Anti-human Trafficking, Ms Thoummaly Vongphachanch, told the *Vientiane Times*.

On the other hand, most Chinese victims were brought to Laos before being sent to other countries.

"Because of this situation, the two governments have decided that we need to have a bilateral agreement to set up a precaution and prevention policy between our countries," she said.

Meeting participants are finalising a draft bilateral cooperation agreement on human trafficking precaution and prevention. This will then be submitted to the two governments for consideration and signing before promulgation.

Once it comes into force, the new agreement will provide instrumental policy guidelines to better fight the problem of cross-border human trafficking between the two countries.

"It will define clear precautions and prevention measures," Ms Thoummaly said.

It will also outline measures to protect those who are most vulnerable and intervention methods to help victims, she added.

"It will also identify a coordination process and specify official bodies to take charge of planning and arrange for the safe transport of victims back home," Ms Thoummaly said.

Numbers of cross-border human trafficking cases between Laos and China are not very high, she added. However, the new agreement will allow for important measures to restrict cross-border human trafficking when it comes into force.

This was the second meeting on the matter, with one taking place last year in China's southwest province of Yunnan.

Ms Thoummaly was unable to give exact figures on the number of Lao people who were victims of human trafficking every year, saying that data is unavailable at present.

The majority of the victims were found in Thailand where high numbers of Lao people were reported to be seeking employment opportunities because of higher wages.

Head of the Secretariat of Laos' National Committee in charge of Anti-Human Trafficking, Colonel Dr Phengsavanh Thipphavongxay, is leading the Lao delegation at the talks with the Chinese

delegation.

Court hears ‘virgin’ trade case

8 May 2013, The Phnom Penh Post

The Phnom Penh Municipal Court yesterday heard the case of two women charged with procuring prostitutes, including a 16-year-old whose vagina was allegedly sewn repeatedly by the suspects so she could be sold as a virgin.

Presiding judge Chaing Sinath said Tith Phon, 47, and Chea Kimyenh, 32, were charged by the court for “procurement of prostitution”, a crime falling under human trafficking and sexual exploitation laws.

Anti-human trafficking and juvenile protection officers arrested Phon in a raid at the Minico Hotel in Phnom Penh’s Tuol Kork district last September, while Kimyenh was arrested at her rental home, according to police.

The suspects were arrested after the victims complained that they had been brought to Phnom Penh and Siem Reap hotels to have sex with men for payment, of which the madams would take a sizeable cut, the judge said.

The 16-year-old victim told the court that she had met Kimyenh in Phnom Penh in August 2011 and was offered the prospect of well-paid work.

She was first brought to see a customer in September that year and paid \$200, half of which Kim-yenh took as commission, she said, adding that afterwards she was regularly sent to meet wealthy customers in hotels.

In order to convince customers that she was a virgin and charge a higher price, Kimyenh would sometimes sew her vagina before sending her to certain customers who would pay more than \$1,000, the 16-year-old victim told the court.

“Based on the hearing and evidence, they have really committed the offence as accused. Therefore, I would like to maintain the charges against them and ask the court to punish them,” deputy prosecutor Meas Chanpiseth said yesterday.

However, the suspects denied the accusations, saying they didn’t even know the victims.

“I did not know about this case. I was not involved and did not commit these crimes as accused. Also, I do not know these girls. I would like to ask the court to drop the charges and release me,” Kimyenh told the court yesterday.

The verdicts will be handed down on May 30.



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National News

Aunt sold girl, 17, for sex work in Korea: police

21 May 2013, The Nation

The police's Anti-Human Trafficking Division (AHTD) yesterday applied for an arrest warrant for a Thai woman who allegedly lured her 17-year-old niece into prostitution with a well-paid job in South Korea.

The move came after the girl was rescued and sent back to Thailand on Saturday night after calling for help via Facebook.

AHTD commander Pol Maj-General Chawalit Swangpuech said Thai Police worked with Seoul police to rescue the Roi Et girl, identified as Ae (not her real name). The girl, a former employee at a Pattaya tour company, reportedly told police her 43-year-old aunt, who married a Korean man and opened a massage parlour in Seoul, told her about a well-paid restaurant job there. So, she travelled to South Korea with a Korean man and a Thai woman early this month.

After arrival, a Korean gang took her passport and forced her to work as a sex worker for 20 hours a day. She said she tried to phone her aunt for help but was turned down, so she used Facebook to notify a Thai police officer - which led to the rescue.

Chawalit said police had applied for an arrest warrant for the aunt for charges of human trafficking and procuring a child for sex work. Police were also checking with Immigration Police for the names of the Korean male suspect and Thai female that accompanied the girl to Seoul.

AHTD officer Pol Lt-Colonel Chusak Apaipak said this case, which saw collaboration between AHTD and the Social Development and Human Security Ministry, had also led to the rescuing of seven other Thai women. Besides a suspect now in police custody, he said Thai police would also ask Interpol in South Korea to arrest a Korean man alleged to be the gang's leader.

Deputy superintendent of Khok Srisuphan station in Sakhon Nakhon, Pol Lt-Colonel Thanin Jindasamut, was the person who received Ae's call for help via his Facebook page. He said the girl managed to tell him about her ordeal and the shop location so he alerted AHTD and the Thai Consulate to aid her.

DOE: All migrant worker applicants to get permits by August deadline

16 May 2013, National News Bureau of Thailand

BANGKOK, 16 May 2013 (NNT) – The Department of Employment (DOE) has revealed that almost 170,000 migrant workers have already received their work permits while assuring that the documents will be issued for the rest of the applicants before the deadline in August.

According to DOE Director-General Prawit Kiangpol, a total of 542,822 workers have submitted their applications for work permits with the department so far. Almost two-thirds of them are Burmese nationals while 66,082 are Laotians and the other 122,899 are Cambodians.

Mr Prawit revealed that work permits have already been given to nearly 170,000 applicants while a little more than 373,000 of them are still waiting. The Director-General explained that each of the 12 One-Stop Service Centers can only produce such documents for 1,500 workers per day at maximum. Despite concerns over the slow processing of papers, he confirmed that all of the remaining applicants will be given their permits by the deadline.

Previously, the Cabinet resolved to extend the period for work permit issuance for migrant workers for 120 more days from April 13 to August 11.

Human trafficking victims to be allowed to work temporarily in Thailand

15 May 2013, National News Bureau of Thailand

BANGKOK, 15 May 2013 (NNT)- Migrant workers, who were once victims of human trafficking, will likely be exempted from paying employment fee to work in Thailand under the new draft law currently being considered.

Labor Minister Padermchai Sasomsap said the law, once approved by the Council of State, will allow illegal aliens, who were human trafficking victims, to work as laborers and housekeepers before they are repatriated.

Upon gaining a temporary employment in the Kingdom, they will also be exempted from the employment fee.

The law will be enforced as soon as the Council of State gives it a nod. Only illegal migrants, proven to have been forced to work against their will, will be entitled to benefit from this law.

Migrant workers are generally required to pay 1,800 for the fee and more for the renewal of their work permits

Two held for Korean sex trade

3 May 2013, Bangkok Post

A South Korean man and a Thai woman have been arrested for their alleged involvement in human trafficking and the flesh trade in Korea.

Police from the anti-human trafficking division on Thursday arrested Lee Junho, 47, and Natthaya Porthong, 25, on Rama IX Road in Huai Khwang district.

The suspects operated a Thai traditional massage parlour in Huai Khwang as a front to lure young women into the flesh trade abroad, division commander Pol Maj Gen Chavalit Sawaengpheut said.

The arrests followed complaints from two women on March 20 that they had been lured into prostitution in South Korea.

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The women said the suspects had persuaded them to work as masseuses at Koong Thai massage shop in Seoul with a promise they would earn at least 100,000 baht a month. When the women arrived there in January they were forced into the flesh trade.

They were asked to provide sex services to male customers five to seven times a day, they said. They had not received any money.

The victims managed to escape the massage shop and returned to Thailand to file complaints with police. Both suspects denied all charges.

Human-trafficking cases revealed

1 May 2013, The Nation

The head of the Anti-Human Trafficking Division, Pol Maj-General Chawalit Sawaengphuet, yesterday presented two recent arrests, including a suspect who lured a Thai woman into forced prostitution in South Africa.

In the first case, 21-year-old transvestite Marak Lakoti was arrested at a Chatuchak shopping mall in Bangkok for allegedly conspiring with at least four others to lure a 36-year-old Chon Buri restaurant cashier into prostitution with the promise of a well-paid Thai massage job in South Africa.



The woman was detained in a Johannesburg hotel basement and forced to prostitute herself until she escaped and got help from Thai compatriots.

The woman was later sold to another sex trafficking group, until she escaped again and this time called for help from police, which led to her being deported. She later filed a police complaint over her ordeal.

Although Marak maintained his innocence, police inquiries found that this gang had at least four people in both Thailand and South Africa, while the victim claimed another 10 Thai women were detained in the basement by this gang, Chawalit said.

In the second case, Wilai Toyabutr, 58, a former employee of a job agency, was arrested in Bangkok's Southern Bus Terminal for allegedly luring a Myanmar man to work in the fish industry in Samut Sakhon.

But the man found himself forced to work on a fishing boat for 4-5 months until he escaped. He claimed he found the man a job but didn't know it was forced labour.

Chawalit urged members of the public to alert the authorities via hotline 119 if they spot cases of suspected human trafficking.

Events & Activities

= Upcoming Events =

Name of Event: Consultation Discussion on COMMIT Evaluation

Organized by: UNIAP Thailand

Venue: Amari Watergate Hotel, Bangkok

Date: June 7, 2013

Attendees: Key government and non-government counter trafficking stakeholders whose work is related to the COMMIT Process

Purpose: To solicit stakeholders' perspectives on results, ownership and sustainability of the COMMIT Process

Name of Event: Bilateral Meeting to discuss the amendment of the MOU between Thailand and Cambodia on Bilateral Cooperation for Eliminating Trafficking in Children and Women and Assisting Victims of Trafficking

Organized by: The Government of Cambodia

Venue: Siem Reap Province, Cambodia

Date: June 9 – 11, 2013

Attendees: Concerned Government agencies from Thailand and Cambodia side including UNICEF, UNODC, ILO, WV, SMF, UN-WOMEN, WINROCK, ARTIP and others.

Purpose: To discuss about and amend the bilateral MOU and Action Plan (POA) between Cambodia and Thailand.

For more information about other UNIAP human trafficking news digests, please contact the following:

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