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*The Life of Tricycle Rickshaw Riders, Hua Hin Municipality, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province,
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Abstract:

The purpose of this research was to study the life of tricycle rickshaw riders in the Hua Hin Municipality in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province. This was qualitative research based on non-participant observation and in-depth interviews with 15 key informants. The results showed that the tricycle rickshaw riders were divided into two main groups: in-system tricycle rickshaw riders and out-system tricycle rickshaw riders. Their service areas fell into four main areas: the Hua Hin Railway Station, the entrance to the Hua Hin Beach near Sofitel Hotel, the mini-bus station opposite to Siriphetchkasam Hotel, and the Clock Tower in front of Hua Hin Temple. Their passengers were mostly Thai and foreign tourists. They worked freelance, and they did not use the queue system in their service. The frequency of their service each day mainly depended on the number of tourists. There are a lot of passengers during the high season. Their lowest service charge was 40 baht per time or was of the flat rate; however, this depended on their negotiations with the customer. Their job-related problems included government agencies' inadequate concern, which has led to a reduction in the number or disappearance of tricycle rickshaw riders in the Hua Hin Municipality.

Introduction

In 2007, there were 14,464,228 tourists in Thailand, among whom 2,439,159 (452,100 foreigners and 1,987,059 Thais) travelled in Hua Hin District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province (Phetchaburi Provincial Office of Tourism and Sport, 2008). Hua Hin District is located only 196 km away from Bangkok, and it is a famous tourist attraction among both local people and foreigners. It is a beach resort town with white beaches, and it is crowded with tourists during summer (Black-plate Taxi Business in Hua Hin District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, 2009). It is an old district which the government and private sector have collaborated to preserve it as a town with the old condition and atmosphere. Each year, it is visited by a large number of Thai and foreign tourists, which generates a huge amount of revenue for the province and country.

The “tricycle rickshaw” was invented during the reign of King Rama IV, in 1993, by Mr. Luean Pongsophon. He combined a bicycle with a rickshaw to make it easy to ride. It was first used in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, and it later became a popular vehicle as it was promoted by the government in order to limit the rickshaw’s roles. In 1957, the number of cars in Thailand rose. Traffic officers were afraid of accidents; therefore, they announced that tricycle rickshaws shall not run on the main road, and the registration of tricycle rickshaws was cancelled. In 1960, the government issued an announcement about the cancellation of the use of tricycle rickshaws. Today, however, there are still tricycle rickshaws in some provinces, such as Bangkok, Prachuap Khiri Khan, and Nakhon Si Thammarat. Tricycle rickshaw riding has generated incomes among Thais for over 78 years (The Way of Life of Tricycle Drivers in Samut Prakan Province, 2001).

The Hua Hin Municipality is an area where there are a lot of Thai and foreign tourists. Amidst its liveliness, the “tricycle rickshaw” is a vehicle that preserves the condition and atmosphere of the past. Tricycle rickshaws in the area are found to be rare due to the fact that tricycle rickshaw riders’ incomes mainly depend on tourists, the number of whom varies from day to day, and there are other types of vehicles that are more convenient and faster to choose from, e.g. black-plate taxis, motor tricycles (tuk tuk), and motorcycle taxis. This has resulted in an increase in the number of tricycle rickshaw riders.

Riding the tricycle rickshaw seems to be a family business as it is inherited from generation to generation. Most of tricycle rickshaw riders have done this job for at least 40 years. They are low-educated people with a low economic status. They have no idea what other jobs they can do. This is a freelance job with no rules and is one among decent jobs for them. The tricycle rickshaw becomes less interesting for tourists. Apart from its oldness and unusualness, it has nothing to attract them. It is a slow vehicle. Today, tricycle rickshaw service becomes unpopular for many reasons. Its fares are similar to those of other faster vehicles. They are occasionally hired by tour groups or companies that they have registered with, and this allows them to receive a special rate of fares. Although it is a freelance fairly-paid job, it cannot attract people of new generations. The tricycle rickshaw service area is clearly divided. Tricycle rickshaw riders’ major groups of passengers are Thais and foreigners, travelling in the Hua Hin Municipality during public holidays, when they get the highest earnings. Their major incomes are from tour groups, general tourists, and companies related, e.g. souvenir shops, stores, and hotels, which they take tourists to. Tricycle rickshaw riders manage their own business and have freedom in the business. Nonetheless, they do not receive social support from any government or private agencies. Some of them receive a

monthly income from a real estate company by posting their advertisements on their tricycle rickshaws with decorations as assigned by the company each month.

According to the interviews with the key informants, who were tricycle rickshaw riders in the Hua Hin Municipality, they started this job many years before, and they adjusted their life and job pattern according to social and time change. Their existing condition, the conditions of their existence, and their problems are a social phenomenon that the researchers would like to study in order to create knowledge that relevant agencies, e.g. Hua Hin Municipality, the administrative district of the tricycle rickshaw riders, can apply as a guideline for formulating plans and policies, regulating, granting them security and protection in order to improve their life quality, and preserving their career.

Objectives

The research was to study:

1. The life of tricycle rickshaw riders in the Hua Hin Municipality, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province
2. The conditions of the existence of tricycle rickshaw riders in the Hua Hin Municipality, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province
3. The guidelines and recommendations for solving problems of tricycle rickshaw riders in the Hua Hin Municipality, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province

Methodology

This research was qualitative research with in-depth interviews with 15 key informants: 13 in-system tricycle rickshaw riders and two out-system tricycle rickshaw riders. The concept of the social network (Pongpit, 2005: 34) and the concept of human existence (Na Mahasarakham, 2004: 270-277) served as the research concepts and framework.

Scope

The scope of the research includes the scope of the study area, population, and content, as follows:

1. Area

The area of study was the Hua Hin Municipality, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province.

2. Population

The key informants were tricycle rickshaw riders in the Hua Hin Municipality, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province.

3. Content

The study was on the way of life of the tricycle rickshaw riders in the Hua Hin Municipality, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province.

Process

This was qualitative research in which in-depth interviews and data analysis served as the research tools. To cover all substantial matters and lead to the answers of the research

questions according to the objectives, the concepts and theories were utilized along the six steps.

Step 1: Determining the population and key informants

The population in the research was the key informants, who were 13 in-system and two out-system tricycle rickshaw riders.

Step 2: Data collection tools

The question guideline was used for the in-depth interviews. The questions were created according to the objectives of the research. Their content and their order could be adjusted accordingly. The researchers had freedom to change the questions, according to the objectives of the research, and the key informants had freedom to answer the questions. The collected data were analyzed. The indispensable data collection tools included a sound recorder, a camera, pens, and notebooks, which were utilized to get accurate, comprehensive data.

In addition, participant observation was conducted. To make the population feel that they were not being observed, the researchers pretended to be their passengers and asked the network of entrepreneurs the researchers knew to introduce the researchers to them. This method produced a lot of data that could not be obtained from the interviews. This allowed the researchers to access the observed and to understand what the researchers were studying better, thus making data analysis more detailed.

Step 3: Data collection

In the study, the research fell in two categories.

1. Documentary research

Relevant documents were collected and studied to see previous studies on this issue. They included books, research studies, and on-line information, which showed concepts and theories about patterns of tricycle rickshaw riding as well as the guidelines and important issues of this business.

2. Field research

Field research was conducted through in-depth interviews, field notes, sound recording, photo taking, question guidelines to explore the patterns of tricycle rickshaw riding, and interviews with tricycle rickshaw riders. Also, participant observation was employed to observe the ways they worked and communicated with tourists to receive data in the real situations.

Step 4: Data collection period

The data was collected from the key informants, tricycle rickshaw riders, between June and December, 2011.

Step 5: Data verification

The triangulation method was used.

1. Triangulation of data sources – Data from 15 key informants were collected.

2. Triangulation of investigators – There were eight data collectors. After all the data were received, they were compared and analyzed together.
3. Triangulation of theories – The concepts of social networks and human existence were employed to study and analyze the data.
4. Triangulation of methods – In-depth interviews and participant observation methods were employed.

Step 6: Data analysis

Based on documentary research and field research, important issues were collected and a structured questionnaire was prepared. The tricycle rickshaw riders were interviewed to receive the data to assist in data analysis. If the data were not complete, more interviews were conducted. The data were analyzed and checked. If they overlapped, field data collection would be terminated. They were analyzed and organized with the descriptive method. The interviews and qualitative data were major data. They were described according to the research objectives and concluded. The suggestions from the research were also presented.

Results

The results of the study, which mainly relied on in-depth interviews, revealed the following issues:

1. The life of tricycle rickshaw riders in the Hua Hin Municipality, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province
2. The conditions of the existence of tricycle rickshaw riders in the Hua Hin Municipality, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province
3. The guidelines and recommendations for solving problems of tricycle rickshaw riders in the Hua Hin Municipality, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province

The life of tricycle rickshaw riders in the Hua Hin Municipality, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province

The research suggested that all the informants, 13 in-system and two out-system tricycle rickshaw riders, were males and breadwinners. They had no second job. For them, riding the tricycle rickshaw was flexible in term of working hours. They did not use the queue system in their service. Each of them could determine their working hours and charges. Their earnings were not sufficient for their family even for themselves.

1.1 Background

Their age ranged between 30 and 68 years. They were natives of Prachup Khiri Khan, Phetchaburi, or Bangkok. Some were low-educated, and some were uneducated. Before they worked as tricycle rickshaw riders, they had done other jobs, e.g. fisherman and labor. They had no second job. They were married with children. They were poor; their earnings were not enough for their daily life.

1.2 Entering the job

The tricycle rickshaw existed in Hua Hin for over 40 years. Hua Hin had been a famous tourist attraction for Thais and foreigners and beach resort for a long time. In the past, transportation in Hua Hin was not convenient; the tricycle rickshaw was a common mode of transportation. There were over 100 tricycle rickshaws; they were popular among tourists and generated a lot of incomes. Due to transportation evolution and changing time, vehicles were developed to be more convenient and faster, e.g. cars, motor tricycles (tuk tuk), black-plate taxis, and taxi-motorcycles. Tourists chose more convenient and faster vehicles, thus resulting in a rapid decrease in the number of the tricycle rickshaw riders. Most of the tricycle rickshaw riders did the job for a long time because by doing this job, they could make a lot of money and had a lot of freedom. They entered the job for their own reasons and inherited it from their family, not by the social network.

1.3 Clients

Their passengers were mainly divided into two groups, namely Thai and foreign tourists. Most of the Thai tourists traveled with tour agencies, which hired all the 18 tricycle rickshaw riders to take the tourists to tour the town. The charge was at a flat rate, depending on their negotiations. The earnings from the tour agencies were not their major income as they did not get the job so often. The tour agencies contacted them through the tricycle rickshaw riders' head. As for foreign tourists, most of them came from countries in Europe and America, namely United Kingdom, Finland, United State of America, and Canada. The group of tourists hired them to take them to tour the town or destinations. This was the major source of their incomes.

1.4 Area

The field research and in-depth interviews showed that their service areas were:

1. The Hua Hin Railway Station
2. The entrance to the Hua Hin Beach near Sofitel Hotel
3. The mini-bus station opposite to Siriphetchkasam Hotel
4. The Clock Tower in front of Hua Hin Temple

Their service areas were located in the community area, business district, or popular tourist attraction area, so there were a lot of passengers. They chose the service areas for the proximity to their residence and their satisfaction.

1.5 Job patterns

Their job patterns were as follows:

1. Tricycle rickshaw riders

The research revealed that the tricycle rickshaw riders were divided into two groups, namely in-system and out-system tricycle rickshaw riders.

The in-system tricycle rickshaw riders were those who were hired by a real estate company to decorate their tricycle rickshaws and wear costumes with the company logo for advertising the company. Each was paid 3,000 baht monthly and was called a couple times per month. They could do other jobs they wanted. There were 18 tricycle rickshaw riders in this group.

The out-system tricycle rickshaw riders were those who were not hired by any company. They had no regular incomes or job regulations. There were three tricycle rickshaw riders in this group.

Their head was any tricycle rickshaw rider who acted as the coordinator between the hirer and the tricycle rickshaw rider; he divided up the job among the in-system tricycle rickshaw riders.

1. Service hours

The tricycle rickshaw riders worked about from 10 am to 10 pm. This mostly depended on their convenience.

2. Service patterns

They did not use the queue system in their service. Individual tricycle rickshaw riders had freedom to give their service to any customers. The duration of each service and the frequency of the service each day were varied. They provided a city tour under a daily, hourly or distance rate of charges. Along the way, they told stories and histories of tourist attractions. The clients could go anywhere they wanted to, and they could hire them for shows.

3. Incomes

Each of the in-system tricycle rickshaw riders got about 3,000 baht per month from the real estate company and fares from passengers. As for the out-system ones, they got money from passengers only, which was varied daily and depended on times and festival seasons. The maximum pay that some of them received were 1,000 baht. In some days, they did not get any earnings. Excluding a monthly income of 3,000 baht, the in-system tricycle rickshaw riders' maximum income averaged only 3,500 baht and minimum income was 500 baht per month, which was a very low amount of money and not sufficient for their living and household expenses.

4. Expenses

The tricycle rickshaw riders bought a tricycle rickshaw, which was their major job tool. The price of a new or second-hand tricycle rickshaw ranged from 550 to 15,000 baht. They did not need to pay for space rental, fees, or parking rental. There was no registration of the people who wanted to do this job; they could provide the service just if they had a tricycle rickshaw.

5. Social network

The tricycle rickshaw riders' social network was forming a group of in-system tricycle rickshaw riders. They had no formal head. The one who distributed jobs to the others became their head. The head shared each job among the in-system tricycle rickshaw riders. The out-system tricycle rickshaw riders had no right to get the job. However, both groups had a good relationship.

2. Conditions of their existence

2.1 Education level

Some key informants were low-educated, and some were uneducated. They viewed that doing a better-paid job was difficult as people had higher education, and a better earning job required people with at least primary education. Accordingly, They did not see a need to change the job; they thought it suited their knowledge.

2.2 Age

The key informants were males aged between 30 and 68 years. They regarded that age was important for people in the society, that is, older people could not get a well-paid job, even though they could work as young people. They wanted to be healthy and had a long life. They were willing to do a hard job with small earnings if their psychical condition and age allowed them to do so.

2.3 Freedom

All the key informants said that the reason for doing the job for a long time was freedom. They liked freedom in their work and life. They did not want to be subordinates. Most of them had been employees and felt bored with the job, in which they worked under orders and were unfairly paid. They viewed that the earnings they got when they were employees were not comparable to the effort they made. Despite tiresome, hardship, and small wages, as a tricycle rickshaws rider, they felt happy and regarded that the amount of money they got was in accordance with the amount of energy they spent. The most importantly, they did not need to be anyone's subordinates.

2.4 Income

Each of the in-system tricycle rickshaw riders got around 3,000 baht from advertising for a real estate company through decorating their tricycle rickshaws and getting dressed with the company logo. They also got money from passengers. As for the out-system ones, they got money from passengers only, which varied daily. This depended on festival seasons. The maximum income that some received was 1,000 baht. In some days, they did not get any money. Excluding a monthly income of 3,000 baht, the in-system tricycle rickshaw riders' maximum income averaged only 3,500 baht and minimum income was 500 baht per month, a very small amount of money which was inadequate for their living and household expenses.

2.5 Investment cost

The tricycle rickshaw riders needed to buy a tricycle rickshaw, which was indispensable to their job. The price of a new or second-hand tricycle rickshaw ranged from 550 to 15,000 baht. They did not need to pay for space rental, fees, or the rental of the parking areas. Accordingly, they did not need to pay for job-related expenses.

2.6 Tourists

The major group of their passengers was Thai and foreign tourists. Most of the Thai tourists traveled with tour agencies, which hired them to take the tourists to tour the city. The charge was at a flat rate, depending on their negotiations. The income from the tour agencies was not their major income as they did not get the job so often. The tour agencies contacted them through the tricycle rickshaw riders' head. As for foreign tourists, most of them came from countries in Europe and America, namely United Kingdom, Finland, United State of America, and Canada. The group of tourists hired them to take them tour the city or destinations.

3. Problems and recommendations

The research revealed that the problem arising among the tricycle rickshaw riders was relevant government agencies' inadequate concern about them. The tricycle rickshaw riders learned there was a policy for involving the Hua Hin Municipality in helping and regulating their occupation a long time ago; however, they were never helped, thus leading to a gradual increase in the number of tricycle rickshaw riders. Moreover, individual riders did not work as a group due to a lack of regulation. They would like the municipality to regulate and promote them to improve their life quality and job security. They did not mention other problems.

It was recommended that government agencies concerned should be involved in this matter by regulating and promoting tourism with tricycle rickshaws to increase tricycle rickshaw riders' income and job security and improve their life quality, by providing them with service areas, regulating and dividing areas of respective vehicles in the municipality area, and preparing direction signs to the station of each kind of vehicles to alleviate the conflict about clients and others that possibly cause social problems in the future.

Conclusion, Discussion, and Recommendation

The research was to explore the way of life of tricycle rickshaw riders, conditions of their existence, problems, and recommendations. The research showed that this job was popular in the old times as it was a highly-earnings job, and it was a freelance job, in which people could set their work hours by themselves. Due to technological advancement and changes in society and modes of transportation, the number of tricycle rickshaw riders decreased rapidly. The tricycle rickshaw riders were divided into two groups, namely in-system and out-system tricycle rickshaw riders. They entered the job for their own reasons and inherited it from their family, not by the social network. Their service areas were divided into four main areas, which were in good locations and in popular tourist attraction areas.

They did not use the queue system in their service, and worked independently from one another. The frequency of their service each day varied to factors. As for the expenses in their job, they had to buy a tricycle rickshaw, the price of which ranged from 550 to 15,000 baht.

Their passengers were mainly divided into two groups, Thai and foreign tourists. Most of the Thai tourists traveled with tour agencies. As for foreign tourists, most of them came from countries in Europe and America.

Each of the in-system tricycle rickshaw riders received a monthly income of 3,000 baht, not including fares from passengers. As for the out-system ones, they got money from fares only, which varied daily and depended on periods of the day and year. The fares were at the distance rate or flat rate set by the tour agency, which, however, depended on their negotiations.

Their social network was forming a group of in-system tricycle rickshaw riders. They had no formal head. The one who distributed jobs to the others became their head, who divided up the job among the in-system tricycle rickshaw riders. The out-system tricycle rickshaw riders had no right to get the job. However, both groups had a good relationship.

The problem arising among them was relevant government agencies' inadequate concern, thus decreasing the number of tricycle rickshaw riders. Moreover, their job was not

regulated or promoted. They would like the government sector to regulate them to improve their life quality and job security.

The research suggested that relevant government agencies should be involved in regulating and promoting tourism with tricycle rickshaws to increase tricycle rickshaw riders' income and job security by providing them with service areas, dividing zones for respective types of vehicles, and preparing direction signs to the station of each kind of vehicles to lessen the conflict about clients and other conflicts that possible result in social problems in the future.

As for their existence, they had difficult life as their earnings were insufficient for their monthly expenses, and they could not access the government welfare, e.g. loan to do a second job. Related government agencies had no concern for regulating them, which made them lack good service standards. All these things made the tricycle rickshaw riders have no work area, thus marginalizing them and forcing them to quit their jobs so that they had place to stand in society. The society that is changing into the post-modern society is constructing the otherness to the tricycle rickshaw riders.

To maintain the identity and cultural root of this local career, agencies should realize, attach great importance to, and formulate relevant policies to preserve it.

Recommendations from the research

1. Policy recommendations

1.1 The tricycle rickshaw should be developed as a public transport mode, and its quality control and service standard should be set by a government agency.

1.2 There should be a project that introduces tourists to the tricycle rickshaw service in order to promote tricycle rickshaw riders' earnings.

2. Practical recommendations

2.1 Tourism-related entrepreneurs, e.g. tour agencies and hotels should have a system of coordinating with tricycle rickshaw riders and provide them with a clear, fair rate of remuneration to reduce the conflicts about interest and income.

2.2 Tourism with tricycle rickshaws should be regulated and promoted to improve tricycle rickshaw riders' incomes, job security, and life quality through providing them with service areas, setting stops for respective kinds of vehicles, and preparing direction signs to the station of each kind of vehicles to decrease the conflict about clients and other conflicts that might lead to social problems in the future.

2.3 As tricycle rickshaw riders have little knowledge and experience in servicing Thai and local tourists, if they are trained in techniques of best practice or being a good host to upgrade the career to be something unique that disseminates Thai culture to Thai and foreign tourists, this will promote tourism in Thailand and preserves Thai ways of life.

2.4 Tricycle rickshaw riders have limited knowledge and skills of communications with foreigners as they are low educated. Training them in language use can boost their knowledge and upgrade this job.

3. Recommendations for further research

3.1 Study on the possibility of setting the system to regulate tricycle rickshaw riders to create their service areas and distribute incomes in all areas.

3.2 Study on the guidance about the career

3.3 Study on the guideline for enhancing tricycle rickshaw riders' knowledge and communication skills

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แบบแสดงหลักฐานการมีส่วนร่วมในผลงานวิชาการ

บทความทางวิชาการ ตำรา หนังสือ งานวิจัย ผลงานทางวิชาการในลักษณะอื่น

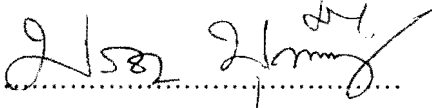
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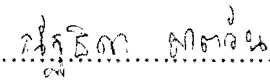
The Life of Tricycle Rickshaw Riders, Hua Hin Municipality, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province.

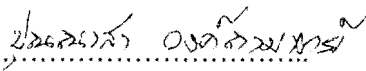
ผู้ร่วมงาน จำนวน 9 คน แต่ละคนมีส่วนร่วมดังนี้

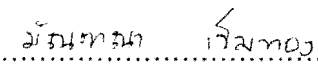
ชื่อผู้ร่วมงาน	ปริมาณงานร้อยละ และหน้าที่ความรับผิดชอบ
1. นางมนัสสินี บุญมีศรีสง่า	60% วางแผนการวิจัย วิเคราะห์ข้อมูล และเขียนรายงานวิจัย
2. นางสาวณัฐธิดา มาตะวัน	5 % ร่วมวางแผนการวิจัย วิเคราะห์ข้อมูล และเขียนรายงานวิจัย
3. นางสาวปทุมณาสา วงศ์ถามาตย์	5 % ร่วมวางแผนการวิจัย วิเคราะห์ข้อมูล และเขียนรายงานวิจัย
4. นางสาวมณฑนา เข้มทอง	5 % ร่วมวางแผนการวิจัย วิเคราะห์ข้อมูล และเขียนรายงานวิจัย
5. นางสาวสุธีรา สุพระโส	5 % ร่วมวางแผนการวิจัย วิเคราะห์ข้อมูล และเขียนรายงานวิจัย
6. นางสาวสุนารญา ธนัตชัยการ	5 % ร่วมวางแผนการวิจัย วิเคราะห์ข้อมูล และเขียนรายงานวิจัย
7. นางสาวศุภิญา ลือเนตร	5 % ร่วมวางแผนการวิจัย วิเคราะห์ข้อมูล และเขียนรายงานวิจัย
8. นายณัฐพล ก่อกิจวิริยะกุล	5 % ร่วมวางแผนการวิจัย วิเคราะห์ข้อมูล และเขียนรายงานวิจัย
9. นายพลเทพ ชัยติกุล	5 % ร่วมวางแผนการวิจัย วิเคราะห์ข้อมูล และเขียนรายงานวิจัย

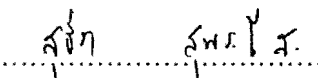
หมายเหตุ

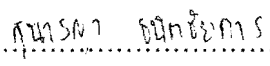
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(นางมนัสตินี บุญมีศรีสง่า)

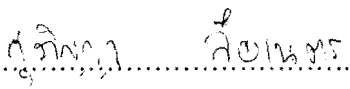
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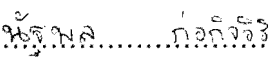
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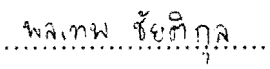
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ลงชื่อ.....
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ลงชื่อ.....
(นางสาวสุนารญา ชนัดชัยการ)

ลงชื่อ.....
(นางสาวศุภิณญา ลือเนตร)

ลงชื่อ.....
(นายณัฐพล ก่อกิจวิริยะกุล)

ลงชื่อ.....
(นายพลเทพ ชัยติกุล)