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Thailand and Smart Trade-off

COVID-19 is a new pandemic. We must also learn about this phenomenon. Nobody can predict about it. We must accept that Thailand is a country with the best medical management in the world. The daily new infection cases remain in the single digit for several days. The government starts the plans to ease lockdown with conditions. There will be 4 phases. Each phase needs meticulous preparation. There will be tests and evaluation. I called this “Smart Trade-off”. Some countries like South Korea or Singapore lack prudence and concrete action plans so COVID-19 revisits them.

From the history, Spanish Flu revisited 2-3 times. Thailand must be very careful and prevent the next serious outbreak.

I would like to cite the case of South Korea’s good pandemic management. When the lockdown was firstly eased, young people went to pubs. Then, the number of infected cases rapidly increased even though South Korea had similar rules to Thailand and more disciplines. Therefore, South Korea had to lockdown again.

The lesson from South Korea can be a good warning for Thais. For Smart Trade-off, I think that 3 stakeholder groups must work together.

The first group is the responsible owner or entrepreneur group. They must be smart to reopen their businesses in this transformation era. They must seriously invest to protect people’s health in 3 aspects as follows.

- (1) Working based on social distancing principle
- (2) Washing hands
- (3) Wearing masks
- (4) Consistently keeping clean of the workplaces. Be careful because COVID-19 lasts long on the floor.

In the U.S., there is a lot of news about one of the largest businesses. That is online business like Amazon. During the COVID-19 outbreak, its work demands increase as well as employment. Some employees say that they work hard despite their poor safety. Some of them resigned. The owner may think that they have to pay for higher cost. This weakens the company’s image.

Recently, Tyson Foods, a food manufacturer in the U.S. has revealed its more than 1,000 COVID-19 infected cases and dead toll of more than 10. However, President Trump commanded it to open its business operation to promote employment and income generation. When it operated, there were increasing infected cases. Tyson Foods’ business operation without caring for hygienic and medical aspect is not Smart Trade-off. Smart Trade-off needs to ensure that hygienic and medical aspect go together with business. Besides

hiring them to work to generate economic benefits, the businesses must find ways to protect their employees.

The second group is employee group. The employees must strictly follow the principles. They must be very careful. They should not let their guards down. There must be practical manuals. They should not wait for the owners' rules. They must have their great self-protection. They must be self-disciplined. They must know their workplace problem during COVID-19 outbreak. They must apply social distancing rules and always wear masks. If they are sick, they must take a leave. The owners must have test. Personnel Department of the company must have medical advisors. There must be enough safety equipment for working employees. They must always communicate with employees. If employees are sick, they should be allowed to take a sick leave. They must be paid during the sick leave. Some companies do not sympathize to the employees. They do not pay the employees during the sick leave.

Smart Trade-off for businesses must promote understanding between the employers and employees. Besides rules, manuals, business benefits, employee safety must be regarded.

The last group but very important for Thailand's Smart Trade-off comprises of restaurants, shopping malls and retail shops. They must beware of consumers. There must be rules for consumers.

The service recipients in the New Normal age play important roles and are majority. If they are in the crowded places, they can be spreaders.

I noticed that, in the first phase of Smart Trade-off, many businesses did well especially restaurants. The seating well follow social distancing rules. The dangerous groups are takeaway customers and delivery service. Sometimes, they are crowded. The riders are crowded in the waiting area. The management must always check their social distancing practice. Otherwise, they can cause troubles. If the outbreak revisits, we will have to lockdown again.

I think that the government must communicate with these 3 groups to understand deeply about this.

- (1) Entrepreneurs or management
- (2) Employees
- (3) Consumers

I hope that the government will have more rules and communication on these issues. During the trial period, if this data is available, the business owners do well and employees and customers cooperate, Thailand will be the role model for the world. This should be applied to every province because this pandemic outbreaks everywhere.

I hope that, within the next 3-4 weeks, if Thailand's COVID-19 statistics remain stable at 10 cases, the Smart Trade-off can be possible. Thailand will be a good case study for Smart Trade-off. Thai medical efficiency did well with the recovery rate of more than 90%. The number of newly infected cases decreased. If the Smart Trade-off is gradually applied, the government will have more time to better give remedy to the affected groups. Then, the country can have enough

resources to support Thais to survive. Meanwhile, economic system can move forward. Thailand can move forward by ensuring the medical and economic aspect balance.

The most crucial success factor for Smart Trade-off is the national harmony. The politicians from the government side and opposition side, medical personnel, business and the general public must go to the same direction to create harmony and express sympathy for the national fellows. The examples are the Pantry of Sharing and almshouse.

I call it “Smart Trade-off” which creates win-win results. It should not be win-loss result in which the pandemic will be gone but people will starve.

I wish the pandemic gradually fade and Thais have gradually improved economic situation. Step-by-step Smart Trade-off is better than current measures used by several countries.



Poor Social Distancing



The Right Seating Based on the Social Distancing Principle



The Pantry of Sharing

Prof. Dr. Chira Hongladarom

www.chiraacademy.com

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKyulC3wra76rasO-TmdjdA>