

# The Development of Governor's Palaces of the Seven Towns in the Southern Border Region into Areas of Cultural Tourism

## การพัฒนาวัง 7 หัวเมืองชายแดนภาคใต้ ให้เป็นพื้นที่ท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรม

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### Abstract

The objectives of this research are 1) to study the historical background of Governor's palaces of the seven towns in the southern border region, 2) to study the current conditions and problems of Governor's palaces of the seven towns in the southern border region, and 3) the guidelines for development of governor's palaces of the seven towns in the Southern border region into areas of cultural tourism. This qualitative research is conducted by reviewing related literature and in depth interviews. The qualified samples were selected from Thai and foreign tourists with about 109 people participating. The results from analyzed information revealed that 1) the historians knew Pattani as the name of Langkasukha since the King Rama I reign and has been colonized from then. Pattani was divided into seven towns, Pattani, Yala, Yaring, Ra-Ngae, Raman, Sai-Buri and Nong Chik and the rulers of the seven cities were appointed under the supervision of Songkhla; 2) the governor's palaces in the region are regarded as having historical and architectural value. This background came together with the regime in seven cities in the southern border region. Currently, some of the palace buildings have been out of order and in disrepair, and some was sold out and made over from the owners, which the palaces were renovated to be more valuable. 3) The guidelines for development of governor's palaces of the seven towns in the Southern border

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region into areas of cultural tourism by improving the landscapes, environment and buildings, doing the direction sign, developing the palaces into the museum, and promoting tourism through various media such as tourist guide, magazine and social media.

**Keywords:** Seven cities in the southern border region, Potential for tourism, Cultural tourism, Tourism areas

### บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อ 1) ศึกษาประวัติความเป็นมาของวัง 7 หัวเมืองชายแดนภาคใต้ 2) ศึกษาสภาพปัจจุบันและปัญหาของวัง 7 หัวเมืองชายแดนภาคใต้ 3) แนวทางการพัฒนาวัง 7 หัวเมืองชายแดนภาคใต้ ให้เป็นพื้นที่ท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรม การวิจัยนี้เป็นการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ โดยศึกษาข้อมูลจากเอกสารที่เกี่ยวข้องและการสัมภาษณ์ผู้ที่เกี่ยวข้อง นักท่องเที่ยวทั้งชาวไทยและชาวต่างชาติรวมทั้งหมด 109 คน ผลการวิจัยพบว่า 1) นักประวัติศาสตร์รู้จักปัตตานีในนามของลังกาสุก ในรัชสมัยพระบาทสมเด็จพระพุทธยอดฟ้าจุฬาโลก ได้แบ่งแยกหัวเมืองมลายูปัตานีเป็น 7 หัวเมือง ได้แก่ เมืองปัตตานี เมืองยะลา เมืองยะหริ่ง เมืองยะแวง เมืองรามันท์ เมืองล่ายบูรี และเมืองหนองจิก และแต่ตั้งผู้ครองหัวเมืองทั้งเจ็ดอยู่ภัยใต้การควบคุมดูแลของสงขลา 2) วัง 7 หัวเมืองชายแดนภาคใต้ เป็นสถาปัตยกรรมอันทรงคุณค่าทางประวัติศาสตร์ มีความเป็นมาควบคู่กับระบบการปกครองบริเวณ 7 หัวเมืองชายแดนใต้ ขณะนี้อาคารของวังบางแห่งกำลังทรุดโทรมลงไปตามกาลเวลาและยังไม่มีการซ่อมแซม หรือบางแห่งกำลังถูกซื้อขายเปลี่ยนมือจากเจ้าของเดิม และอาจจะมีการแก้ไขดัดแปลงรูปแบบอาคารที่มีคุณค่ามาแต่เดิม 3) แนวทางการพัฒนาวัง 7 หัวเมืองชายแดนภาคใต้ ให้เป็นพื้นที่ท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรม โดยการปรับปรุงภูมิทัศน์ ลิ้งแวดล้อม และตัวอาคารการจัดทำป้ายบอกทาง การพัฒนาวังให้เป็นพิพิธภัณฑ์ และการประชาสัมพันธ์ในรูปแบบต่าง ๆ เช่น คู่มือแนะนำการท่องเที่ยว จุลสารและลือออนไลน์

**คำสำคัญ :** วัง 7 หัวเมืองชายแดนภาคใต้ ศักยภาพการท่องเที่ยว การท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรม พื้นที่การท่องเที่ยว

### Introduction

Three provinces in the southern border region consist of Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat provinces, the majority of the population is Muslim. In the past, the

three provinces in the southern border region, Pattani was inherited from Langkasukha realm, from the area of Hindus and Buddhists. And after that, Islam has become the prominent religious belief, and after Buddhist era 1700, Islam was extensive in the lower regions. The center of Islam was at Pattani Daruslam state, where it relocated from Langkasukha to be situated at Krue Se near the Pattani River. The government of Pattani was changed from Heyao Beru and Kuning to the Sultan government of Pattani (Binji et al., 2007). The local name is “Pataning” or “Patani”, when Siam had more power and influence for 700 years and after that Pattani had come under the government of Siam in 2329 BE.

In 2439 BE. King Rama V endorsed to allocate the three southern border provinces to be supervised directly under Nakhon Si Thammarat province. Since then, the governance kept improving in the four southern provinces by the province of Nakhon Si Thammarat which consisted of 10 cities: 1) Nakhon Si Thammarat 2) Phatthalung 3), Songkhla and a total area of seven districts: 1) Pattani 2) Yala 3) Yaring 4) Rangae. 5) Raman 6) Sai Buri 7) Nong Chik, where mostly Muslim inhabitants and its state commissioner were located at the city of Songkhla (Chuckkree, 1998).

In 2440 BE. The King endorsed Satun province to be under the supervision of Traiburi or Kedah which was the subsequent city that consisted of 3 other cities 1) Kedah 2) Perlis 3) Satun where the county commissioner was located in Kedah until 2499 BE. Pattani province was then separated from the province of Nakhon Si Thammarat.

In 2449 BE. King Rama endorsed to allocate new separate subdivisions in the south by adjusting the remaining seven districts to four cities, including the city of Pattani, Yala, Saiburi, and Rangae town, where the City Hall of Rangae district had been changed to Bang Nara district. Rangae district and the city was named Rangae district. Bang Nara city in 2458 BE, later was renamed to Narathiwat province. Sai Buri was changed to Taluban district locating in the province of Pattani in 2475 BE. In the same year Siam changed from absolute monarchy to a democracy on June 24, 2475, Siam was renamed Thailand. Muslim Thais in the country had been forced to be under Thai law and to be Thai citizens. This resulted in many

insurgencies in this region until the present time. This system remained in place until 2475 when Thailand again changed its local administrative to province, district and sub-district as continued until to today (Wongtech, 2012). After the change of government, there were some obstacles that remained, such as the objection from the governors side, as well as the officials of the city because the new system had forced the ruler to those who had been overseeing the city on behalf of the king but this time they needed to follow the orders of the king instead and follow the laws that came from the capital. They lacked freedom and reduced powers of self-governance. The governors in these selected cities raised concerns about their safety, so their families emigrated to stay with the rulers of Kelantan, Perlis, Kedah and Terengganu. The ruler of Raman was the one who had been the most outspoken in opposition to the regime of the time and was finally assassinated. The ruler of Pattani was incarcerated by the Phitsanulok ruler for several years. After the remission he returned to evacuate his family living in Kelantan until he died. Meanwhile, the Saiburi ruler had run away for political asylum to live with relatives in Terengganu, etc. From the above events, all seven palaces where these rulers had been living in were left dilapidated by time. Only some palaces were taken care of by the keepers and some are still in good condition but will be sold to the private sector. The Seven governors' palaces are currently located in seven districts of Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat, which is a landmarked area in the history carrying a valuable identity of Melayu. The ruler is ethnic Malay and Muslim. The traditional way of life, language and culture are distinct from other provinces in the south and the unique identity of this area is reflected in the different ways that can be felt and clearly perceived (Thuansiri, 2013).

From the information found and the importance of these palaces revealed with regard to the major events that have been recorded in the history of the regimes since the rulers were appointed the premises had been built as places to live, to be used as Governor's state guest reception and other functions called Wang of the ruler. It is located in an area of the city minimized into the district and provinces were also shown as evidence of the past. As a ruler, all palaces (Wang) were built as the large buildings surrounded with a fence and gate. Construction

and building materials used were premium. An expression in the pattern of building was unique and tasteful throughout the regime. Even though, those rulers have already passed away, some of the palaces (Wang) have remained with valuable architectural historical appearance. Nowadays, such buildings are deteriorating over time and some are being sold to the private sector. The present owners, descendants of the rulers, are concerned that these palaces will be destroyed, modified, adapted far from their original design. All these concerns should be studied, preserved and the problems should be resolved. Thus, this research has studied the development of the seven governors' palaces in the southern border into an area of cultural tourism to promote tourism, conservation and outreach to the younger generations; in other words, to love, cherish and take pride in their cultural heritage.

### **Research Objective**

1. To study the history of the seven governors' palaces in the southern border region.
2. To study the current condition of the seven governors' palaces in the southern border region.
3. The guidelines for development of governor's palaces of the seven towns in the Southern border region into areas of cultural tourism.

### **Research Methodology**

1. Population and samples of this research include officials in government and private sectors, local community traders including tourists, both foreigners visiting Thailand and seven governors' palaces in the southern border region. Researchers screened samples by using specific (Purposive Sampling) governing 109 people, including community leaders, religious leaders and residents of 69 groups of 30 tourists from Thailand and a group of 10 foreign tourists.
2. The research tools consist of the survey on the physical environment of the seven governors' palaces in the southern border region, structured and unstructured interviews which it was tied out with the relatives, people the community, participatory and non-participatory observation approach to develop a

guideline in the development of these seven palaces into areas of cultural tourism, group discussions to conclude the crystal clear information of this research to be used with relatives, academician, community leaders, religious leaders, to be a guideline in the development of these seven palaces into areas of cultural tourism and the workshop was organized to address the guidelines and highlight the problems found in the development the seven governors' palaces in the southern border region into an areas of cultural tourism.

3. Data collection - The researchers used the survey on the physical environment of the seven governors' palaces in the southern border region to record the results of the study of the physical architecture and Fine Arts of the Palaces. An interview form was used to record information about the history and current state of development. The group discussion was held to find a conclusion and clarity of ideas on the development project. A Group Conversation for religious leaders and scholars along with the workshop were organized for the development of the seven governors' palaces in the southern border region into areas of cultural tourism.

4. Data analysis - Before analyzing the data the researcher had collected data from various sources and data from in-depth interviews with the sample being well organized, reviewed and selected of relevant content. Removal of all irrelevant information was done by sorting and grouping data so that it could be easily analyzed and made available to completely answer any questions as to the purpose of the research. In the data analysis process a descriptive analysis (descriptive method) will be applied to find the guideline in the development of the seven governors' palaces in the southern border region into areas of cultural tourism and will be summarized to the findings and recommendations to be used as a guideline for the development of the seven governors' palaces in the southern border into areas of cultural tourism.

## Results

1. The study on the history of the seven governors' palaces in the southern border found that Wang Ja-bung-dtigor, Yaring, Wang Sai Buri, Wang Raman, Wang Nong Chik, Wang Ra-Ngae and Wang Yala are located in Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat

provinces. The locations and environments of the palaces located in the center of towns. The houses generally have a one to two-story house combination of Colonial European and Muslim style. The roof of the house was a hipped roof tiles. The roof is raised and a covered porch area upstairs. It was built mainly by Chinese and Melayu technicians and also local artisans. Those appointed governors built their palaces according to their functions such as a place to live, Governor's state guest reception and other purposes. These palaces were called Governors Palaces. The houses were built in a variety of sizes, depending on their functions and purposes or by placing a decorative pond in the middle of the house as the idea which was adopted from the spring in Europe and the Governors' Palaces had fences built to surround them (Bauwkeaw, 1997 and Cheewasat, 2000).

2. The study on the current conditions and problems of the seven governors' palaces in the southern border found that Wang Yaring remained intact because the descendants have the potential to maintain and repair the damaged parts, and the palace is open to tourists to visit both from Thailand and overseas. For Wang Nong Chik, the descendants had donated the house to be under supervision of the Fine Arts Department, however; the descendants are still taking care of the palace with support from the government. The house is open every day for the public to visit. Wang Ra-Ngae has been donated to become a national treasure and the improvement of the property has been transferred to the Fine Arts Department since some part of the house had collapsed to the ground. For Wang Raman and Wang Yala, the houses of these two palaces have completely collapsed to the ground. Later the remaining parts of the houses were taken and utilized by the villagers in various ways. The current conditions and problems of the seven governors' palaces in the southern border at present is some of them are being traded. The original owners and descendants of the rulers are concerned that the valuable constructions may be destroyed, modified, adapted from the original state or the descendants of some of the palaces do not have the capacity and know-how to preserve the houses of these ancient rulers to maintain the traditional architecture. Some of the palaces have collapsed to a state of non-existence and have completely

disappeared as time has passed quickly they could not emulate the original and traditional architecture (Yimarn, 2005).

3. The research on the guidelines for development of governor's palaces of the seven towns in the Southern border region into areas of cultural tourism found that it is advisable to prepare a guideline manual to introduce these ideal palaces to present to the cultural tourists as new attractions in the three southern border provinces. The guideline manual should be printed into three languages, Thai, English and Malay. The local museums are advised to be established nearby the sites to display collections of items used by the former rulers in each palace for the visitors to see; such as clothing, appliances and daggers. The size of each museum would depend on the availability and capacity of each palace or allow the descendants or the relatives to coordinate with the government sector to come up with the idea of the new models for the palace projects to be reconstructed in the same place, or as close as possible for visitors to experience the atmosphere of the most authentic surrounding. Moreover, the traditional Melayu cultural dance performances in the context of each different palace can be revived and performed to attract tourists or for educational purposes, such as Tari Kipus dance, Rammana dance, Ma Yong and Silat in order to preserve the high valued culture in the palace which was regarded as a classic one to be preserved in the Melayu land. It can be another activity that could be the attention of tourists as well. Besides these activities the government sectors, the Tourism Authority of Narathiwat, Yala and Pattani provinces should agree to add the story and activities to promote in the yearly calendar.

## Discussion

The key to the development of seven governors' palaces in the southern border into an area of cultural tourism and to be successful depends upon the participation of the relatives and descendants of the former rulers as well as the government sectors to work together to develop this idea to be possible and also to improve in various aspects such as politics, economics and social society. The study on the development of seven governors' palaces in the southern border

revealed that Pattani province has a historical foundation and unravels the history of their own. The starting point in the past was a community on the trade route between India and China, through the Malay Peninsula south into the Kra Isthmus which was also known as Langkasukha. This kingdom was related to the kingdom of Srivijaya, which was the commercial hub of South East Asia in the last century, 9-12 and about 14 -15 century the community known as Langkasukha had a major adjustment again due to the changing of the trade routes moving down from the community center to the coastal area for the new trade routes. This new center of Langkasukha was the port later known as Pattani.

The relocation to Pattani, coincided with the two important parameters, namely the migration of the Malay and added to the coming of Islam. It is believed that the religion spread into Asia from the Middle East and India through trade. Lands that were in South East Asia where Islam grew in the early stages as major trading ports, Pasay, Sumatra, Malacca and Pattani developed were important. The emergence of the ports to accommodate the expansion of trade of the Malay community and Islam. This caused all three power centers that look into the state of small shops scattered on the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra and the Malay East. The unique ethnic culture is similar to the Malay - Muslim, but at the same time competing with each other for politics and trade. Pattani was one of the Malay states – however, because of its location just north of the Malay Peninsula State and Pattani Malay - Muslim or another state, Kedah or Trai Buri which makes it a unique one. It is a land that connects the Malay kingdom to the lower southern Thailand. Pattani therefore, has a special historical context for the Malay states that had a relationship with the Kingdom of Thailand (Chuckkree, 1998). In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century; several power centers in Thailand during several periods of time had extended their political influence down to the Malay Peninsula, such as the Sukhothai, Ayutthaya and Nakhon Si Thammarat and were closest to the Malay States. However, for the political right over the land of Pattani in Thailand was still under the understanding of the relationship model between the state and in the conservative kingdom which was a form of power relations rather than real power or possession (Binji et al., 2007). The historical turning points that caused what is known as the issue of

governance in the city of seven districts of the southern border began when the relationship patterns were flexible and acceptable to both sides. That was when Thailand began to see the need to tighten more strictly and to be regulated by controlling the outer districts of Thailand, rather than a subsequence of cities or towns in the Kingdom. This process started in the reign of King Rama I when Pattani was divided into seven governors' cities under the supervision of Songkhla. The process of integrating the territory of Pattani into Thailand was conducted prominently again during the reign of King Rama V when the abandonment of the rulers of the city came and established four Monthon instead. The change of power was completed when the area was once a state that became Pattani, Narathiwat and Yala in Thailand. For that reason, it was imperative that Pattani must be integrated into the territory of Thailand, Thailand is understandable. It was an attempt to prevent the invasion of Western colonialism under the then current building modern nation-state to define clear boundaries and building up unity within the people of the land. However, such actions caused differences in political views among the people of Thailand and Pattani, Thailand and the state of Malay - Muslim Pattani; in other words, Thailand and the people that were being integrated into the State of Thailand by the use of force. This became a reason of discussion about the legitimacy of Pattani in Thailand being integrated into the state of Thailand (Pongsapitch, 2006). The key point discovered in this research is the Proposal for the development of the seven governors' palaces in the southern border into an area of cultural tourism. However, the family relatives and the descendants and government sectors such as Provincial Administrative Organization, Provincial culture and tourism authority in the three southern border provinces should cooperate to trigger the development of these seven sites of the southern palaces to become the new cultural tourist attractions. Another suggestion is the preparation of the guideline manual published into three languages, Thailand, English and Malay, and possibly the establishment of a museum near the palaces to keep and display collection of appliances, articles and features of each palace such as clothing and daggers. Meanwhile, the size of the museum depends on the availability and capacity of each premise.

## Conclusion

The research on the development of the seven governors' palaces in the southern border into an area of cultural tourism revealed that coordination is needed with various sectors in order to develop cultural tourism and tourism in the southern region permanently as a partnership between the owners of the palace. Sub-district Administration Organization Provincial Administrative Organization, Provincial Culture Provincial Tourism Authority rehabilitate the dilapidated buildings to be restored to their original states. Some palaces need to be rebuilt as a new building on the original foundations to form the model of the old palace atmosphere. The events should attract tourists through the classical displays such as Ma Yong, Silat and Rammana dances depending on the availability of each palace to contribute to cultural tourism as a whole. Finally, but not least of all, a form of media is encouraged to promote various formats such as tour guide informative manuals published into three working languages, Thai, English and Malay as well as online media.

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