

Trip essay

On the first day of our trip, we visited Savan-Seno Special Economic Zone in Laos. I've learn a lot of new things from lecturer. This economic zone attracts many foreign investors because of a large number of skilled labors, tax benefit, logistic connectivity, and lower cost of production. The lecturer emphasized on tax benefit that the investors will get tax exemption for raw materials and export products. Moreover, operating tax is exempted for around 2-10 years until company gains profit. Similarly, personal income tax for foreigners is lower than other countries accounted for 5 percent.

I used to believe that Mekong river would be the main transportation for trade in this region. However, the lecturer mentioned that the water level of Mekong river is low in which not suitable for shipment. With Chinese dam construction, the water level is further lower than the past. So, they have Dry Port that helps facilitate investors by distributing products to Laem Chabang port and Danang port through east-west corridor route. The Dry Port helps reduce logistic fees and lower time of transportation.

The next day, we visited Vinh Moc Tunnel in Vietnam. This place surprised me a lot because it used to be Vietnamese habitat during the war. They had to live under the ground to avoid bombs. In the tunnel, there are tiny rooms for each family that is quite depressing to see how difficult people lived in that time.

After we had dinner, I met some Vietnam children at the playground. They were so nice and can speak a little bit of English. They tried to teach me and my friend how to pronounce some words in Vietnam. This was interesting because young children can understand and communicate in English reflecting how fast Vietnam has developed.

On the third day, we got chance to visit CP in Vietnam that only focuses on shrimp production. Interestingly, CP has its own process for all supply chain. They started by having

their shrimp hatchery and farm for raw material. Furthermore, they concern on quality so that they have their own research on food for their animals. Sometimes, they also bought some shrimps from local farmers. After getting shrimps, they transport to the plant located near the farm so as to take a shorter time for transportation. In the plant, the labors will prepare the raw shrimps for three products that are frozen shrimp, cooked shrimp, and shrimp prepared for sushi. This production is mainly for export especially Japan and Europe. However, some low quality product will be sold to the local people.

At night, I and my friends went sightseeing around Hue. We first visited Vincom Plaza, I saw a lot of goods from Korea and Thailand. However, I cannot observe much diversification of products. After that, we walked to the bridge located close to the river. Along the way, I saw that the street was good for walking and there were a lot of tea and coffee shops as well as bars. Vietnamese are likely to hangout at night since I could see a lot of them outside even though it was 10 p.m.



The next morning, we departed from Hue to Danang. This day was chilling due to no schedule. So, we went to local market closed to the hotel. I saw a lot of Korean and they loved to buy Vietnam hat and dress. Many shops have Korean language. I was surprised that Danang is popular destination among Korean.

At night, my group went sightseeing around Danang. Interestingly, there are more than ten bubble tea shop in one street. Moreover, KOI shop and other bubble tea shops are also on construction in that street. Every shop is beautiful with modern style and full of customers. I found that bubble tea shops here are different from Thailand since there are table

provided outside for client to hangout. The number of bubble tea shops exceeds coffee shops implying that Danang people love to drink bubble tea than coffee. Bubble tea shop is a destination for Vietnamese teenagers to hangout together at night.



On Friday, we had a great opportunity to visit SCG Cement Building Materials Vietnam, LLC. The lecturer explained that one of the key factors that Vietnam is a great destination for investment is that economy structure. People in Vietnamese use cash while Thai use credit card which leads to weak economy structure since using credit card is speculation. In Vietnam, government strictly control money system to ensure strong economy. So, credit card is not widely used but digital payment is popular. Moreover, the construction sector becomes more important since household is bigger along with their culture having one son and one daughter causing house is more demanded.

Doing business here, SCG has to collaborate with local company such Song gianh, a cement company. SCG rebrands the local product into higher quality in which the product becomes premium in Vietnamese perception and can sell at high price reflecting their position. People are willing to pay at higher price for cement since they want their home to be durable. And SCG is their first decision.

After that, we then went to Hoi an, a famous ancient riverside town. This old town is full of variety of street food, our group decided to have dinner at one restaurant. I ordered Cao Lau which is recommended by the restaurant, it was delicious and the tastes was similar to Pho. Throughout Hoi an, there were a lot of colorful lanterns. The atmosphere was nice and delightful especially during the night. Walking along river at Hoi an is the must.



On Saturday, we went to Bana Hills. At first, I thought that the weather would be extremely hot but surprisingly the result turned otherwise. Possibly, the Bana Hills is located



at the high mountain so that the temperature is lower. Here, I loved travelling by cable the most as I could observe a lot of nature as well as waterfalls and the music on the cable was relaxing as well. The next thing that I like was Alpine coaster, it was funny and challenging. I played it with my friend and we can saw hill view while playing. Another highlight destination was Golden bridge. The unique design with hand is very interesting and suitable for photo taking. It is the must-do-thing if visit Bana Hills.

This place is renowned in Danang. So, I can see a lot of foreign visitors especially Korean and Chinese. Every instruction and sign will have Korean and Chinese. Possibly, the number of visitor is getting bigger, this tourist attraction then expands their area as some new places are under construction.

During the night, we crossed the dragon bridge to visit other side. There was a night market selling lots of goods. Many merchants will speak in Thai, Chinese, and Korean. That

night, I tried local ice-cream but the taste was similar to Thai products. Surprisingly, I observed that Vietnamese loves to hangout at night at the small shops along the river and at the dragon bridge. Moreover, a lot of girls like to buy fashion clothes and accessories but these kinds of stores are not widespread in Hue and Danang.

The last day, we visited My Son Sanctuary where a lot of historic sculptures are shown. In my opinion, Vietnam and Thailand had culture similarity such as religion and belief since I observed a lot of Buddha sculpture. Before we departed from Vietnam, Danang international airport interested me a lot since it looks like Incheon airport in South Korea. the Lotte duty free opens their branch here as well. But, there are not many stores in the airport.

The most surprising thing in Vietnam is bubble tea shop. Both in Hue and Danang, there are a large number of bubble tea shops. I never know before that Vietnamese love drinking bubble tea. The customers in Bubble tea shops are higher than the number of clients in coffee shops in both areas. Even though the bubble tea shops are abundant, but some investors still plan to open more since I saw a lot of shops under construction.

After went sightseeing for four nights, I impressed a lot with footpath and street. Along the way, the place was tidy and full of trees. The cities were a great destination for walking. It is not dangerous and there were a lot of tourist attraction. From my point of view, their infrastructure somehow is better than Thailand. They improve a lot of places to attract foreign visitors. However, I think they should improve on their motorcycle culture since it is dangerous while crossing the road.

East-West economic route will have more potential in the future since this route takes only 2-3 days for transportation compared to other means of logistics. Due to lower time, it helps lower cost and can distribute goods fast efficiently. Moreover, this route connects with mainly 4 countries that are Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. These countries also

have connectivity with other countries as well like China and Europe shipment. So, it would be a great opportunity for investors that their transportation will be more connected and they also can capture more consumers around the world. For example, fresh fruit business can distribute their product fast and that is good for them since this kind of product easily get bruised. Not only businesses gain benefits, but also travelers do. They can visit these four countries more conveniently so that tourism can gradually boost economy. However, I observed some problem from this route during our trip. Some road condition is still inconvenient and narrow. There are not much facilities like restroom and minimart available along the route. So, these problem will be challenging for the government. Lacking of quality, this route can cost higher for transportation that discourage people to use the route. If they could improve the infrastructure and facilities, this R9 route will have more potential.

In next 5-10 year, I believe that Laos and Vietnam will be totally different from this year since the GDP growth are very high leading to more development. In Laos, there will more industrial sectors since the country is the hub of connectivity. It is closed to many countries. So, with tax benefit and logistic connectivity, these will attract a lot of investors.

Nowadays, Vietnam is a great place for visiting, many investors come in. In the future, there would be more variety of products and services. With the rise of middle class, there will be more clothes shop, more restaurants, and more department stores. Even though there are a lot of tourist attraction but the transportation is not convenient and not connected. Tourists need to have car or motorcycle to get around. Possibly, the government will improve more on mass public transportation so as to facilitate visitors during their own trip.

For me, I can imagine myself working at Vietnam since Vietnam is more developed than Laos and a lot of industries are growing. So, more jobs are available. I went sightseeing at Danang one night and saw Shinhan bank is going to open soon. So, this inspires me to

work in banking sector to help facilitate investors. However, Thai commercial banks still need to negotiate with the Vietnamese government to open their branches in Vietnam. Apart from working at bank, I also want to run my own business here. I want to open clothes and beauty salon because there are still rare in Vietnam.

This trip widens my perspective toward neighboring countries. It makes me understand more on how these countries become fast-growing countries. I can see what actually be apart from my lectures in class. The sightseeing in Danang and Hue are the most impressive. Moreover, our Ajarms and staffs are the best. We all were happy during this trip. Laos-Vietnam visiting is one of the most memorable exploration ever.