

Laos Trip report from the south to the north

Lao People's Democratic Republic is the name of my home country which I left when I was 12 years old. I mostly spent my life in Thailand. This was the good chance for me to check Lao out again with a group of my friends called "Child's Dream Foundation".

I had been waiting for this trip for about two months and I had to make my decision because my partner was ill and I didn't want to leave him behind, but he encouraged me to go on this trip....so the adventure began....

On Sunday, August 1st, we left on the trip which took about 10 days. We traveled there by car and the road was unbelievable, I mean it was very difficult to reach some places that we went. I didn't expect the trip would be so excited like this. We crossed the Chong Mek border on August 2nd and this was the first time I crossed there. I was so surprise the fee was 100 baht to go back to my own country! What? Charging for coming back to my own country? That was painful to pay. I went back to ask, but I didn't get any proper answer. I was not sure if I knew my country well after that and you have to be very careful if you drive you own car to do everything in their way or you might get fined.

Then we went to see a first project at Gae Lae Secondary School. The road was not so bad to go there. The project has been built so fast in just one month.



We were all happy with this project and the community is very helpful. I felt so grateful that the foundation has done this important thing. We left this city the next day and straight ahead to Savannakhet Province which is my home. The traveling was very easy because the road was very good. We had a meeting with the community committees at Uthumphorn High School. We discussed many things about construction. This school is a very big school and that was the first time I had been there. There were so many buildings that I cannot

remember them all. This time I also learned the meaning of Seno: it is an abbreviated form of the French which means Sud, Est, Nord, and Ouest.



Working time everyone!

We had a bit of time after lunch with the community committees, so we went to visit a lovely couple who are my grandparents and my younger brother. In the end, my grandmother gave us a water blessing, but it was not holy water; it was CK One blessing! What a glamorous grandmother!



One two smile!

Time to cross the border again about 4 p.m. Bye Savannakhet! We went back to Mukdahan, Thailand and stayed overnight with Um's family in Sakonnakhon Province.

The next destination was the Loei border. We crossed the border and drove straight to Muang Paklay. The road was getting harder than the road from Champasak to Savanakheth.

I did not believe about being forced to drink alcohol in Lao, but I realized that when I was at Paklay. That was the part that I really did not like because it was not my favourite drink, but I had to be friendly.

The main job in Paklay was to meet the scholarship students. We went to meet them one by one at their houses to announce the very good news and explain the contract to them. The moment that we told them that they had got a scholarship, the hope for their future that was almost dark was light again. I could not always see how happy they are because some did not show their feelings, but I deeply felt that they were so happy. That was a moment of happiness for me too. I would like to give the boy in the picture as the example of a hard working man. He lost his parents and had to stay with his brother and sister-in-law, but never gave up his hope to study. I hope he will try so hard to achieve what he wants.



Pepsi.....ສີ້ ໆ

Next station was Muang Pa, an unforgettable town. It was not raining when we as we drove there. We were so lucky! But by the time we arrived there, it was raining. We were so tired when we arrived, but we had to stay with the community and talk to them. By the time we finished, it was quite late, so nobody had had shower except Um. Good night, everyone.

I was not sure what date the next day was. We talked to the head contractor about the construction. He told us that the construction was going slowly because of the rainy season. After that we had breakfast with the community committees. I had turkey first time in my life there. It was delicious and we had more energy to move on. I knew by now that we could not know what might happen during the day, so one thing I learned from the trip was to eat anytime I got the chance. Bye, Nam Pa.

We left Nam Pa and it was raining. I was not expecting something to happen on the way and we went on until we arrived at a downward slope that Tai told

us was a quite difficult part of the road. Guess what? We hit the jackpot, especially Um and I because the back of the car swung and was difficult to control. We had to get out of the car and let K drive alone because we wanted him to concentrate and we did not want to bother him. I was so scared because the road was slippery. Anyway the car got stuck. I did not worry about my clean clothes anymore because I was worried about the car. We tried every way to free the car. We tried to pick up everything that would help to support the car to move and in the end we did it. It was not so difficult because we had good drivers. We released the car from the mud and everybody was happy, I did not expect that we would meet another problem but another one was waiting for us later. It was the time we had to climb a slope. This time we spent a long time to pass this slope, and some guys drove past and helped us to get up the slope. Thank you so much, turkey that I had that morning! I spent my male hormones that I saved for my whole life with that slope!

By the time we arrived at the hotel, we all looked so tired and dirty that the receptionist told us to wash our feet before we went in. That was a day we will never forget. What a day!

The picture below shows the fantastic views we could see from the car as we drove through Laos. That was my favourite part of the trip, apart from sharing stories when we were in the car.



The impression moment

The next picture shows the road from Sayaboury to Muang Ngern, because the road was under construction. You will see people beside the road waiting to help you to push the car. I did not know how much we would have to pay because we did not get stuck. Our truck helped us to pass the muddy road and our good driver too! Thanks!



Somebody help!

May I be excused jumping to the last day? We could not wait to come back to Thailand, so we returned to Thailand on August 10 and then drove back to Chiang Mai. I felt like I came back home. Something I learned from this trip is that we have to be as flexible as possible because we cannot do everything exactly as planned. Bye Laos!

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