

Abstract

This study focused on the development of special economic zone decided by the Thai government in 2015 and 2016 in 10 spots along the Thai border. The study selected 4 case-studies. They were Mae Sot in Tak province, Nakhon Phanom, Mukdahan and Sa Kaeo provinces. After the government preliminary investigation on the possible progress of the areas, it was found that the changes was taken place quite slowly with the exception of Mae Sot in Tak province. Toward the end of 2016 the focus was shift to rapid development of Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) consisting of Chachoengsao, Chon Buri and Rayong provinces. Such change in the decision resulting from possible miscalculation on overall economic performance of the 10 special economic zone (SEZ) that did not seem to comply with the government expectation. Also, expectation from the Thai people for the incumbent government to demonstrate better economic performance resulted in the government's shift to the development of EEC mostly. Clearly, the Thai government must act within the existing constraints under the sphere of influences on economic and political decisions of super powers for the national interest from its development efforts. Very quick actions taken by the Thai government, resulted in very rapid progress from the development of EEC. Unfortunately, such decision could result in overlooking many problems as well as other possible better alternatives available.

Keywords Special economic development zone, Eastern Economic Corridor, Politico-economic roles of super powers