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English

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Item 4(a) of the provisional agenda *

**Reports: Governments on the situation in their countries
and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names**

National Report of Thailand on Geographical Names

Submitted by Thailand**

* GEGN.2/2023/1

** Prepared by the Thai National Committee on Geographical Names, The Authority of Thailand.

**National Report of Thailand on Geographical Names
for the period of 2019-2020
to be Presented to the Second Session of the United Nations
Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN)**

The National Report of Thailand will be covered activities from 2 agencies which are the members of the Thai National Committee on Geographical Names; namely, the Royal Thai Survey Department, Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, Ministry of Defense and the Department of Provincial Administration, Ministry of Interior that can be concluded as follow:

1. Activities of the Royal Thai Survey Department

The Thai National Committee on Geographical Names was established in 1992 with the purpose to consider and set the same standardizations of Geographical Names in national and international levels. The United Nations has decided to urge its members to establish the national agencies which have authorities and duties to take responsibilities for the standardization of Geographical Names.

The Thai National Committee on Geographical Names is comprised of experts and delegates from 14 agencies and is chaired by the Director of Royal Thai Survey Department. The First Meeting was held in 1989 with the purposes of furthering work progress, considering and adopting the operating results of the Thai National Sub - Committee on Geographical Names.

The Thai National Sub - Committee on Geographical Names is appointed by the Thai National Committee on Geographical Names comprised of experts and 20 delegates from related field and this committee is chaired by Dr.Kanchana Kanchanawan. Its function is to consider and propose the considered Geographical Names to the Thai National Committee on Geographical Names for its approval.

Activities during 2022 - 2023

The 19th Meeting of the Thai National Committee on Geographical Names was held on 20th July 2022 at the Royal Thai Survey Department with the purposes of following up work progress, considering and approving the operating results of the Thai National Sub - Committee on Geographical Names and other relevant topics regarding Geographical Names which can be concluded in the following:

1.1 Requesting for authorization of the list of the Geographical Names of the 361 islands, which have been approved by The Thai National Committee on Geographical Names to be declared in the Royal Thai Government Gazette for the uses in both private and public sectors, as well as the use of the identified Geographical Names in publication and etc. for the sake of the same national standard of the Geographical Names.

1.2 Examining the correctness of the 15 Geographical Names of the islands which have been approved from the Thai National Committee on Geographical Names Meeting but haven't declared in the Royal Thai Government Gazette yet because there still have had some arguments regarding dialect names or location together with scrutinizing additional 20 Geographical Names of the islands as well.

1.3 Having examined the correctness of the Geographical Names of the islands which have been declared in the Royal Thai Government Gazette Book number 130th, extra section 11th NG (Thai alphabet) dated 25 January 2013 as there are some arguments regarding the administration boundary and 37 names of the islands' location.

1.4 Creating additional information as supplementary data for Geographical Names which have been declared in the Royal Thai Government Gazette by adding more geographical name spelling in Roman Alphabet in comply with Romanization Principles as well as to specify the coordinate to be clarify in accordance to the resolution of the Thai National Committee on Geographical Names in order to propose to be corrected after they are done and will proceed to request for authorized declaration in the Royal Thai Government Gazette afterward.

1.5 Creating Geospatial Information Model as supplement for geographical name consideration and setting the guideline for the publicizing of Geographical Names which have already been approved from the Thai National Committee on Geographical Names in online platform for the purpose that the users can access to data more conveniently and quickly.

2. Activities of the Department of Provincial Administration

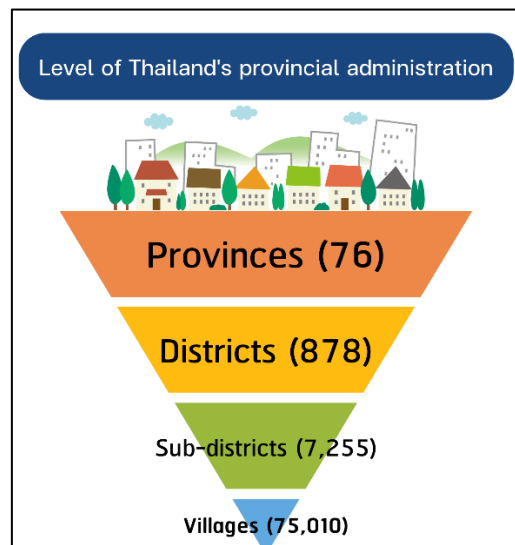
2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the Department of Provincial Administration's work on Thai geographical names and an addition to Thailand's National Report to UNGEGN.

Along with the strategy "Thailand 4.0," the Ministry of the Interior has fostered policies and guidelines for "Interior 4.0." As an agency that implements policies, the Department of

Provincial Administration (DOPA) must transform the government sector into a digital government by utilizing internal data to generate new kinds of government services, including the creation of an information management system to serve the public and move the country forward.

The Department of Provincial Administration is responsible for the geographical names of Thailand, which are divided into 76 provinces, 878 districts, 7,255 sub-districts, and 75,010 villages.



In the standardization process, the Committee for the Preparation of the Thai Proper Noun Dictionary of the Royal Society, comprised of members of the DOPA, was responsible for Romanizing the geographical names of Thailand. This group is comprised of government representatives who are knowledgeable and capable of conducting a comprehensive review of Thai proper nouns.

Moreover, DOPA is also in charge of jurisdictional boundary delineation. Therefore, we aim to update Thai geographical names with international standards. Efforts towards standardization include the following:

- Contribute to the UNGEGN Strategy objective of encouraging the use of nationally standardized Thai geographical names.
- Create a database of Thai geographical names and a Thai romanization system.
- Focus on local languages, history, and community participation.
- Enhance the district officer's knowledge and understanding of geographical name standardization

2.2 Past Activities

In 2021–2022, DOPA developed Thai and English versions of the Thailand Report's 2021 on the geographical names of districts and sub-districts in Thailand for the United Nations Expert Group on Geographic Names. The report outlines the standards for Romanizing Thai into Roman characters as well as the principles for forming the geographical names of provincial administrative units in Thailand. (GEGN.2/2021/CRP.129)

2.3 Current activities

Geographical names are an important part of the overall capacity of geospatial information. Therefore, DOPA applies technological methods to Thai geographical names in two initiatives:

- Developing a Thai-Roman geographical name search engine (DOPA Directory website)
- Developing a geographical name database system and a Thai romanization system for village level during 2022 and 2023

2.3.1 Activity 1: A Thai-Roman geographical name search engine (DOPA Directory website)

Technically, the DOPA geographical name information is maintained in a single database called " DOPA Directory," which was launched in 2022. The goal is to search for Thailand's province, district, and subdistrict names. It is a standardized and user-friendly website for DOPA officers and the general public.

In addition, this website enables the internal department to link and manage data in the back-end system and to update geographical names in real time. The web address is <https://mis5.dopa.go.th/0305/dopa>.

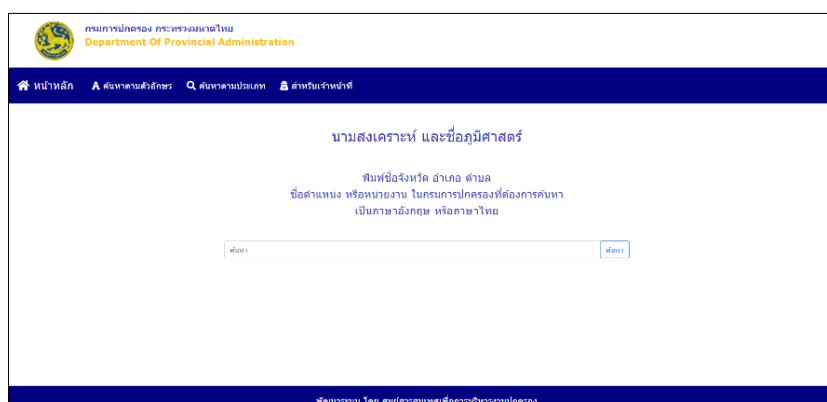


Figure 1: Homepage for searching Thai or Roman geographical names

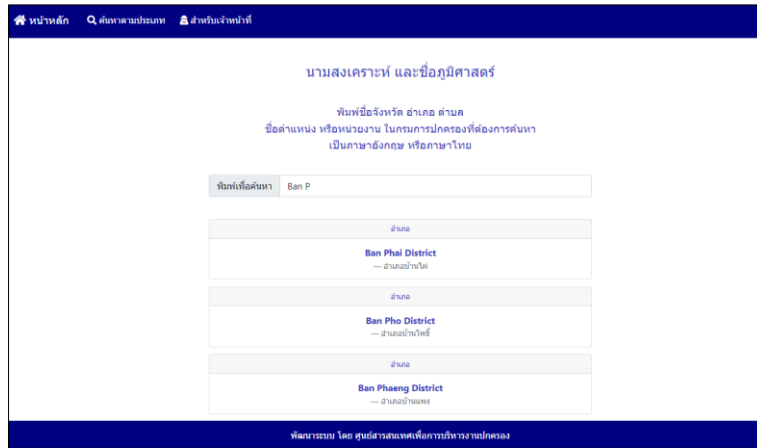


Figure 2: Webpage showing search results for geographical names

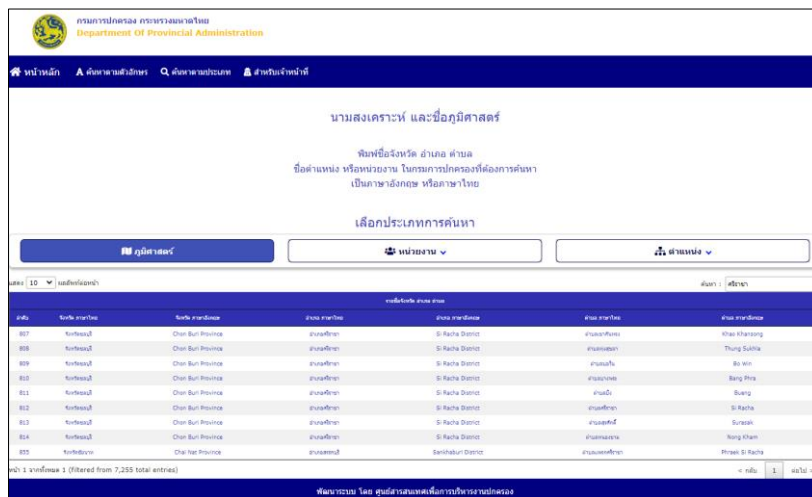


Figure 3: Webpage showing both the Thai and Roman geographical names

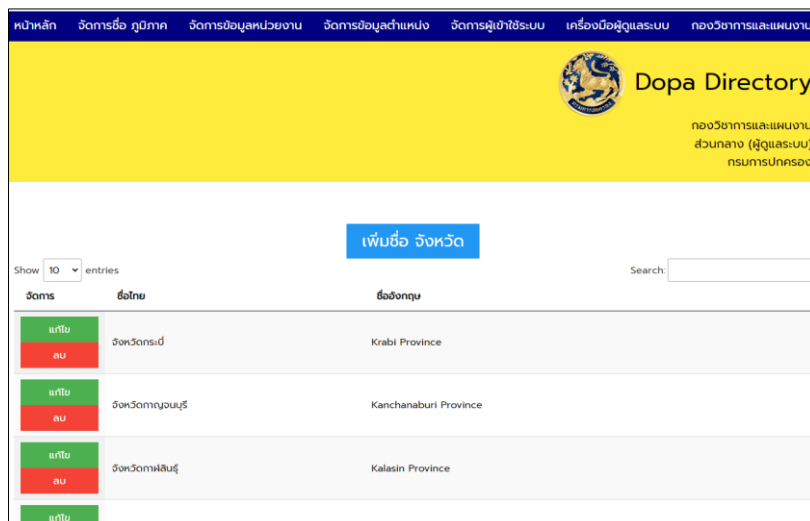


Figure 4: The back office for the authorized officer's geographical names**2.3.2 Activity 2: Developing a geographical name database system and a Thai romanization system for local administrative units at the village level**

In 2023, DOPA created a database of village-level geographical names, including the Thai Romanization system, the area's history, geographical coordinates, dialects, and population engagement.

4. Further activities regarding the following:**4.1 DOPA Geonames Project**

DOPA created a database of geographical names and a Thai romanization system for the village level, resulting in the DOPA Geonames website (<http://geonames.dopa.go.th>), which implemented a model from the UNGEGN Manual for the national standardization of geographical names. DOPA has made a database of geographical names by switching from collecting information on paper to collecting it in a database.

4.2 The Function of Provincial and District Administration Offices in DOPA Geonames system

With regard to government bodies, the role of the district administration office is of particular importance as a data recorder by assigning the district officer who coordinates with each sub-district to collect the data about history, dialect, and sound corrosion and distortion from village headmen, villagers, or elders who are knowledgeable about the village's history.

After the district recorder has collected the data, the central administration will verify the data. The DOPA also encourages the general public and other government agencies to utilize this website.

4.3 Target area

DOPA prioritizes provincial target groups through international collaboration and relationships. There are 13 provinces and 10,174 villages in the pilot area out of a total of 75,010 villages.

- The Eastern Economic Corridor Area comprises three provinces: Chachoengsao (893 villages), Chonburi (664 villages), and Rayong (440 villages).

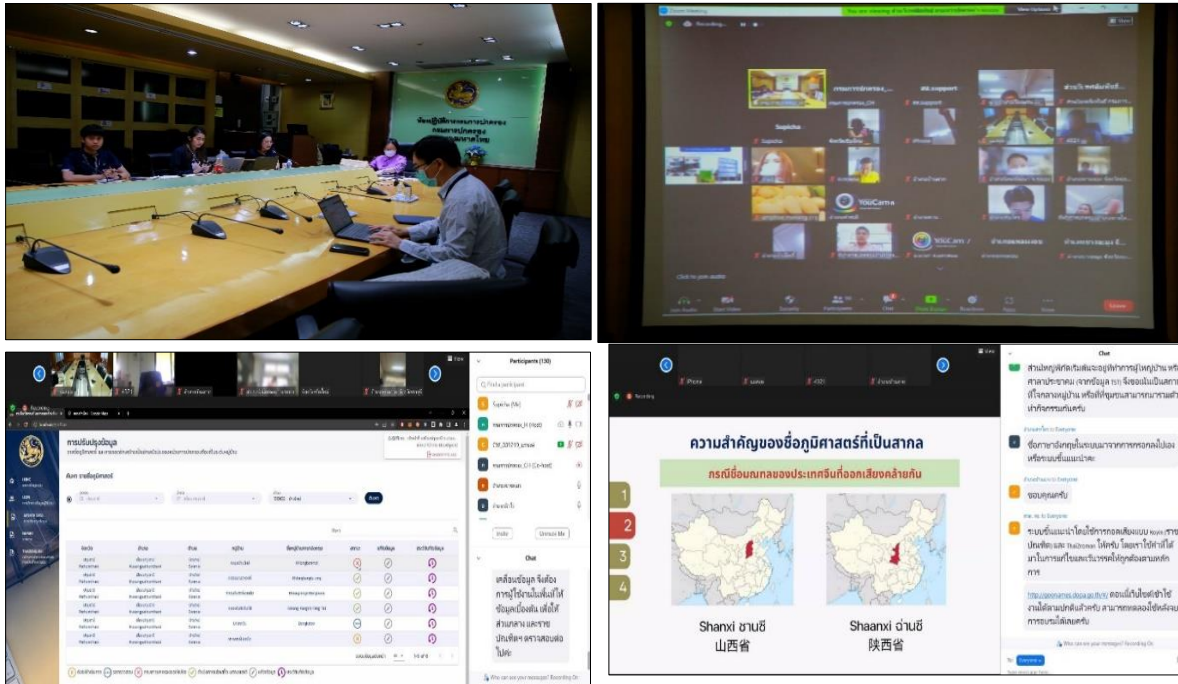
- The Special Economic Zone includes ten provinces: Trat (262 villages), Sa Kaeo (732 villages), Nong Khai (679 villages), Nakhon Phanom (1129 villages), Mukdahan (527 villages), Chiang Rai (1754 villages), Tak (563 villages), Kanchanaburi (960 villages), Songkhla (981 villages) and Narathiwat (590 villages).

4.4 Training Program:

To improve the understanding of the principles of standardization of geographical names, DOPA held training and assisted name authorities.

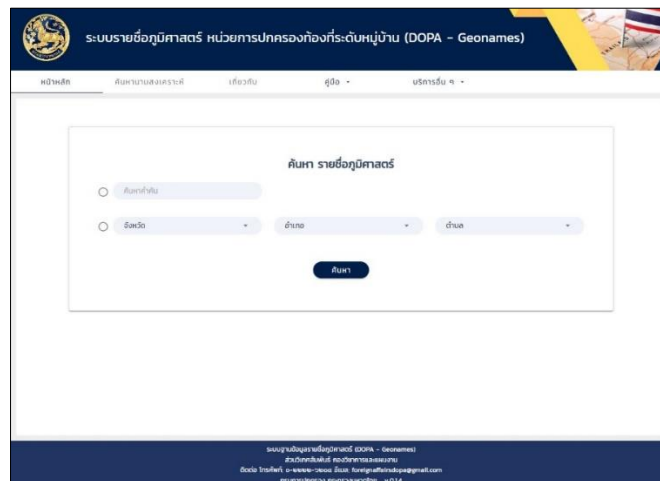
- DOPA is continuously updating an online Handbook for the Usage of the DOPA Geonames system and the principle of Thai Romanization for the district officer.

- On January 10, 2023, DOPA organized a training on the Thai romanization of the village name and the use of the village data system for district data recorders.



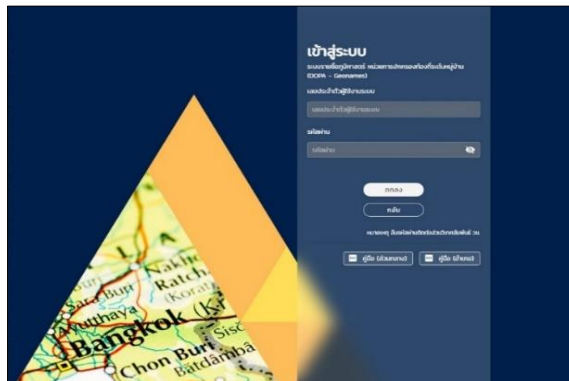
4.5 Main Function:

4.5.1 A web page that enables users to search for Thai - Roman geographical names.



4.5.2 Access to the system for officers

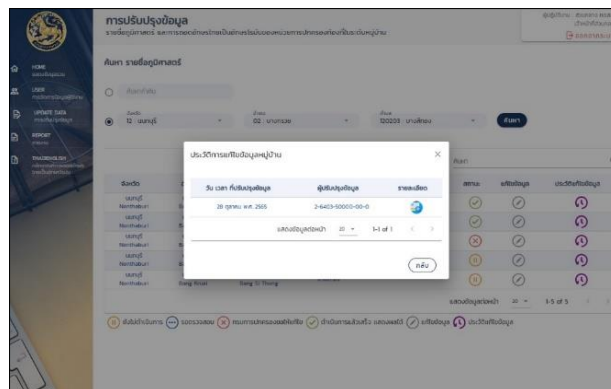
4.5.2.1 Webpage for DOPA officers to access the database.



4.5.2.2 Web page for displaying dashboard data in grid or map format



4.5.2.3 The district officer is authorized to add a new user for entering village names in Roman characters.



4.5.2.4 The district officer will review the village name and record its Roman character, pronunciation, geographical coordinates, dialect, and history.

- Expand the target for Thai-Roman village names.
 - Develop a back-end database and connect data for a variety of public and private benefits while giving culture and heritage the proper weight.
 - Improve the English version of the website for international visitors.
 - Promote and disseminate the DOPA romanization systems and the geographical names database for national and global use.
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