Chris Cantwell

Palau

Role of Infrastructure in the Development of South East Asia

Infrastructure is a vital factor to the small island nations of Palau. Palau contains 38 miles of roads, only 22.4 miles of which are actually paved. These roads are vital to to the survival of people outside the main town of Koror across the islands because the country is limited to only only one port in Koror. Air transportation is also limited with only 3 airports, and only the international airport across from Koror having a paved runway. Also, technologically, Palau has a television station with over 11,000 television receivers in the nation.[[1]](#footnote-1) Internet access is available, but it is very expensive with regular monthly internet costing about $120 dollars per month. Palau has a weak infrastructure and participation in a South East Pacific alliance would increase the ability for infrastructure growth.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Palau would not be able to participate in many regional connecting projects, such as the Trans-Asia Railway or the Asian Highway, because of Palau’s major geographical isolation. However, the creation of the railroad or the highway would inadvertently benefit Palau’s industry. The creation of the Trans-Asia Railway or the Asian Highway would allow for massive commercial growth in the South East Asia region and increase personal wealth for many people. Due to the fact that Palau’s main industry is tourism[[3]](#footnote-3), massive growth in personal wealth of other Southeast Asian countries would allow for increased ability to travel to Palau. Since Palau is very close to these nations, travel could be very easy to Palau and increase the chance that they travel to Palau.

The funding of this project must be addressed through the increased use of corporate businesses and a limited amount of reshuffling of government funds. Many have proposed reshuffling funds from the federal governments of these countries to build the transcontinental railway and highway, but this is a bad idea because many of the government officials are corrupt. They cannot be trusted to rightfully delegate the proper amounts needed to fund projects. Corporate funding is a better way to go since they do not have as much political power, and they can be subject to more international regulations and United Nations control. South East Asian companies would be willing to fund this railroad because it would allow their local business ventures to strengthen into strong continental powerhouses. Also, corporations would be willing to continually fund repairs to the highway and railroad, so they could maintain continental influence in the region and grow it as a whole.

However, during construction of the railroad and the highway must be subject to major environmental regulations. Many corporate projects have not had to deal with strong environmental regulations and have caused irreplaceable environmental damages. In the nation of Palau, we are very susceptible to climate change and the rising sea levels.[[4]](#footnote-4) We must use this project as a precedent for protecting the environment, so construction can become more environmentally friendly. The highway and railroad should be created with renewable materials, and energy from solar panels should be used to power the energy in the highway and railroad. To ensure these measures are taken, we will impose sanctions against companies and nations that attempt to take an anti-environmental approach, limiting the business and interactions they are allowed with other nations. Without protection measures, the global community will have to answer for the displacement, or even death, of the over 20,000 citizens of Palau.

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Palau

Labor Migration and Illegal Trafficking

Palau has had some difficulties with the rights of migrant workers and human trafficking with its approximately 3,000 migrant workers.[[5]](#footnote-5) Some women, mostly women for the Philippines and the People’s Republic of China, have been lured to the country for commercial exploitation. Other employers lure men and women to Palau through fraudulent representation of contract terms and employment conditions. They go to work in Palau’s agriculture, domestic service, or construction industries, but when they arrive, workers work excessive hours without pay, have their travel documents confiscated, and have their salary withheld to control their movement. The migrant workers basically become involuntary servitude. Women sometimes arrive expecting to become waitresses or clerks, but they become forced into karaoke bars and massage parlors as sex workers.[[6]](#footnote-6) Palau has a problem with human trafficking and migrant worker’s rights that could help be solved in conjunction with the United Nations.

In this matter, communication and coporeration are the keys to solving the illegal and unprotected migrant problem. Migrant workers are not simply a problem that’s plaguing the South East Asia region, this is a worldwide issue that all countries must unite together on. One important solution could be to establish a ranking system in each country receiving migrant workers. Businesses will be ranked based on the amount of safe migrants the business have kept safe and maintained the conditions in the contracts. The higher the business is ranked, the more likely the business is to keep the migrants safe. Also, we would employ individuals to act on behalf of the UN periodically initiate random checks on businesses with a large number of migrant workers to make sure all conditions are safe and correctly followed. Advertising for this ranking system would be key. Host countries of workers would be charged with advertising well-known and safe individuals and companies for migrant workers. They would also promote going through their host nation to find migrant labor, and host countries would specifically inform citizens the dangers of going through a organization not affiliated with the government to find work. As always, not all governments have their citizens best interests in mind, so we would form a subcommittee to direct countries migrant relations. If countries abuse or undermine the purpose of the migrant system, they could face international economic sanctions and return workers back to the nation. This is a comprehensive plan to help end the abuse of migrant workers.

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Future of Food

The nation of Palau is very privileged to not have to deal with the misfortunes of poverty, starvation, and unemployment. Our unemployment rate is very low at only 4.2%. Most of our jobs are focused in the tourism branch, but other areas such as craft items (from shell, wood, pearls), construction, garment making, and subsistence agriculture.[[7]](#footnote-7) Subsistence agriculture, in conjunction with fishing, allows everybody in our population to obtain food and prosper. Our society understand the importance of self-sufficiency in agriculture and how importation is not an option.

Prosperity of Southeast Asian countries directly affects our main industry of tourism, so it is highly important to lift as many people above the poverty line as possible to benefit everybody. One important way to lift people out of poverty is to promote subsistent agriculture to rural populations. Grand societies from Mesopotamia to the Thirteen Colonies have successfully survived and thrived using subsistent agriculture to support themselves. Rural citizens will not have immense access to resources such as ocean and air trade living deep within countries such as Thailand and Laos. Promotion of subsistent agriculture could occur through tax breaks for subsistent farmers and government provision of basic farm supplies. For urban areas, modern practices must be observed such as urban farming. Urban farming is when farming takes place in the center of a large urban center, allowing citizens of the city to see exactly where their food is being grown. This would entail designating specific parts of the city for simply food production,[[8]](#footnote-8) and we could also create UN agencies within the cities borders to maintain the food’s quality, adding more jobs to the countries. While this could entail massive financial burden, we would help in alleviating major areas of poverty

However, environmental protection must be taken into consideration when providing agriculture for millions of people with food. Livestock use should be heavily decreased because manure from livestock is a major cause of nitrogen being released into the atmosphere and stealing oxygen from the atmosphere.[[9]](#footnote-9) People can successfully survive on a plant diet as our ancestors did thousands of years ago. Also, use of coal farm machines must decreased use to prevent CO2 gases from destroying the atmosphere. Farm machines should not be used at all in subsistent farming because they are not feeding a large amount of people. In urban settings, machines can be used, but they should be electric powered by solar or hydro energy. Environmental standards must be upheld to protect nations that are able to receive food such as my nation of Palau.

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