

SEAMEO RIHED Bulletin



ISSN 0859-9084/ January 2008

Message from Centre Director Prof. Dr. Supachai Yavaprabhas



I hope it is not too late to celebrate a new beginning and wish all of you a 'Happy New Year 2008'!

The year 2007 was another great year for SEAMEO RIHED. Apart from our usual activities to promote higher education cooperation among the member countries through seminars, workshops and institutional visits, the highlight of the 2007 fiscal year was our campaign for the process of harmonisation in higher education in Southeast Asia. The concept is rather new in this region. However, the very same process has been developed in many parts of the world for almost a decade now. In Europe, the Bologna Process, which is the process to provide a readable and comparable system of higher in the region, will achieve its goal in 2010 through the establishment of 'European Higher Education Area.' In other continents, similar endeavours have been actively launched. What about us? What about the future of higher education development and cooperation in Southeast Asia? In my personal thought, the stakes of being left behind are extremely high!

Nevertheless, while penning down the message for this bulletin, I have reasons to be delighted pondering about the future of higher education in this region. At least SEAMEO RIHED's concern about 'staying relevance' has been actively welcome by many international organisations, academics and government agencies. The concern was especially echoed during the 2nd Director General, Secretary General and Commissioners responsible for Higher Education Meeting, held in Malaysia in November 2007. During the meeting, the prevailing discussion was about areas in which further development of general guidelines for cooperation can be pursued among Southeast Asian nations. The rally to raise the keen awareness among other key stakeholders about the importance of the harmonisation process of higher education in SEA will certainly be the highlight of SEAMEO RIHED in the years to come.

In the past three months, a lot of other activities have also been launched in regard to capacity building in the Greater Mekong sub-region. As our long-term project, SEAMEO RIHED followed up on the previous activities to promote higher education development and cooperation in GMS countries by conducting an event called 'the Regional Workshop on Strategic Planning for University Administrators' in December 2007. The workshop focused on developing skills and capacities of senior university administrators in university governance and management areas in GMS countries.

Our other activities during September – December 2007 were also consisted of the Centre's active involvement in convening a session on 'Reinventing Higher Education: Towards Participatory and Sustainable Development' in the 11th UNESCO-APEID International Conference, a public lecture on 'US-ASEAN Relations: the Preparation on ASEAN Integration' and our preparation for the first SEAMEO RIHED – AGB Educational Visit to the US, which you could find more details in this volume.



Visit and Linkages



The 11th UNESCO-APEID International Conference Reinventing Higher Education: Towards Participatory and Sustainable Development

12-14 December 2007, Bangkok, Thailand

The Conference brought together representatives from governments, educational institutions, non-governmental organisations, the private

sector and local communities to explore the linkages between higher education, participatory development and sustainable development.

The Conference expected to facilitate a paradigm shift in a sector that is less commonly associated with participatory development by highlighting the role of universities and other higher education institutions in balancing social inequalities and in formulating sustainable solutions with, and for, people so that they can have equal access to the benefits of a globalising world.

On 14 December 2008, Prof. Supachai Yavaprabhas, Director of SEAMEO RIHED chaired the session on “Quality Assurance in Southeast Asia: Sharing Experience, Shaping the Future”. The key speakers in the session included *Professor Zita Hj Mohd Fahmi*, Deputy Executive Officer (QA), Malaysian Qualifications Agency, who shared with the audience her ideas on ‘Recent Changes-Challenges to Enhancement of Quality of Higher Education in Malaysia’. *Professor Dr. Paulina Pannen*, Director, SEAMEO Regional Open Learning Centre (SEAMOLEC) led the discussion in the area of ‘Quality Enhancement of Higher Education: Open and Distance Learning Perspectives’. Finally, *Professor Dr. Somwang Pitiyanuwat*, Director, Office of National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA), introduced to the audience ‘the Role of EQA for Enhancing Quality of Higher Education’.



30th SEAMEO High Official Meeting

21-22 November 2007, Bangkok, Thailand

Vice ministers, permanent secretaries and high officials from Ministry of Education of SEAMEO member countries shared and discussed initiatives in integrating Information and Communication Technology in their education systems during the 30th SEAMEO High Officials Meeting. Malaysia led the discussion by presenting its acceleration programme to help improve the ICT capabilities of their schools and the challenges of providing the needed infrastructure and in making teachers and students adopt a culture of ICT. Member countries and SEAMEO regional centres exchanged ideas on how to prioritise investments, in preparing the ICT readiness of the educational systems of countries in the region, and also in taking care not to harm the environment while ensuring access to technologies to bridge the gap between urban and rural schools. In the Meeting, high officials also encouraged SEAMEO RIHED to further develop the ‘Roadmap for the harmonisation of higher education in Southeast Asia.’





Public Lecture on US – ASEAN Relations: The Preparation for ASEAN Integration **22 October 2008, Prof. Wichit Sri Sa-an Meeting Room, Commission on Higher Education Building, Thailand**

On 22 October 2007, SEAMEO RIHED and the Fulbright Foundation (Thailand) co-organised a special lecture on ‘US-ASEAN Relations: The Preparation for ASEAN Integration’ at the Commission on Higher Education, Thailand. The key speaker was Dr. Termsak Chalermphanupap, Director of Research, ASEAN Secretariat and Special Assistant to ASEAN Secretary General.

Dr. Termsak outlined the background of US-ASEAN relations throughout the past decades, especially the role of the US in influencing the politics of ASEAN. He also elaborated on the development of the ASEAN Charter and stressed the importance of ASEAN countries in preparing themselves towards a more integrated society or ASEAN community. In this occasion, Ms. Pornthip Karnchananiyot, Director of Fulbright (Thailand), also chaired the session and led the discussion among participants from government agencies and academic institutions.



The 2nd National Education Leaders Forum and WorldDIDAC Asia 2007 **21-22 November 2007, Bangkok, Thailand**



The SEAMEO Secretariat, in collaboration with WorldDIDAC, Matchon Public Co., Ltd, and Reed Tradex Company, convened the 2nd National Education Leaders Forum and WorldDIDAC Asia 2007 Exhibition on 27-29 November 2007, at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Centre in Bangkok.

With the theme “In Search of Excellence in Education,” the forum was organised to innovate and reshape the teaching and learning practices, foster the collaboration in education among countries and contribute to the improvement and excellence of education in the region. The program featured early childhood, basic, vocational and higher education. Twenty-one speakers from 12 countries shared their expertise and views on education issues facing the region.

The WorldDIDAC Asia 2007 Exhibition served as an international showcase for leading-edge technology and innovative solutions for teaching, learning and training challenges from over 120 exhibitors from 22 countries. Over 9,000 quality visitors in educational fields from all over the world explored the exhibition hall to take a look at tomorrow’s education and training.



Visits

The Study Visit of Faculty and Graduate Students of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines to SEAMEO RIHED 15 October 2007, Bangkok, Thailand

Twenty-eight (28) participants from the Polytechnic University of the Philippines and representatives from SEAMEO INNOTECH made a visit to SEAMEO RIHED. The Centre took the opportunity to organise a small seminar to introduce to the students, faculty members and staff the development of Thai basic and higher education.

Dr. Saksit Khattiyasuwan, Deputy Director of Monitoring and Evaluation, The Office of Basic Education Commission, Ministry of Education, Thailand, kindly agreed to be the main speaker on the topic of Thailand's Basic Education. Briefing on the higher educational system of Thailand and SEAMEO RIHED activities were conducted by Prof. Dr. Supachai Yavaprabhas, Director of SEAMEO RIHED and Dr. Nopraenue Dhirathiti, Senior Specialist (Higher Education Research), SEAMEO RIHED.



Visit of Ministry of National Education (Indonesia) to Thailand 13-14 December 2007

During 13-14 December 2007, the representatives from the Ministry of National Education (Indonesia) made a visit to Thailand and spent a few days making courtesy calls on several higher education institutions in Bangkok. The purpose of these visits was to learn about Thailand's development on E-learning system for multicultural education, which has now become one of the key emphases in Indonesian higher education. The two representatives visited 5 different institutions in Bangkok, including Thailand Cyber University, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, Suan Dusit Rajabhat University, Ramkhamhaeng University, Assumption University and also SEAMEO RIHED office.



The Second Meeting of Director-General/ Secretary-General/ Commissioner of Higher Education in Southeast Asian Region

30 November – 1 December 2007, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



As part of SEAMEO RIHED's campaign for awareness raising about the significance of the process of harmonisation in higher education among key stakeholders in Southeast Asia, the 2nd Meeting of Director General/ Secretary General and Commissioner responsible for higher education in Southeast Asia was convened under the sponsorship of the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Malaysia. During the event, ten (10) Director-General/ Secretary-General/ Commissioner of Higher Education in SEA attended this meeting with 13 participants observers joining the Meeting.



Professor Dr. Supachai Yavaprabhas, SEAMEO RIHED Director, welcomed all the participants and expressed his deepest appreciation and gratitude for the warm hospitality extended to all participants by the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia. He was also thankful for Dato' Professor Dr. Hassan bin Said's kind acceptance in agreeing to, again, host the Director General/ Secretary General/ Commissioner of Higher Education in Southeast Asian Region, for the second time in a row and also for UNESCO, Bangkok, in kindly supporting the travelling expenses of the participants from the CLMV countries.

The Meeting took on the theme of the 'Regional Integration in Higher Education in Southeast Asia' and pointed out that the key concern of was the fact that Southeast Asia is fairly lagged behind other regions in recognising the importance of a concerted regional effort to promote a coordinated higher education policy and framework. It was therefore a great opportunity for SEAMEO RIHED to have exerted the ideas and concerns on the issue of regional integration on higher education in Southeast Asia at the policy level.

SEAMEO RIHED has made clear during the Meeting that through the initial support of the Minister of National Education, Indonesia, the Centre has tried to develop the ideas and issued of concerns and proposed it to both academics and policy makers in various venues. The proposal which ventures upon the ideas of promoting initiatives and establishing mechanisms that could lead to a 'common space' has been submitted to the 15th Governing Board Meeting and the 30th High Official Meeting held in November 2007. The same proposal will be tabled to the SEAMEO Council of Ministers Meeting in March 2008.

Dato' Professor Dr. Hassan bin Said, Director General of the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia further stressed in the Meeting about the importance of the effort in promoting the idea of an 'ASEAN space' can be pursued. In his understanding, such a space will be the area in which closer collaboration in higher education in such fields as mobility, quality framework, research area in science and technology as well as the need to create awareness and multi-cultural understanding of integration process. The Meeting also had an extensive discussion pertaining to the issues that could enhance and/ or inhibit regional collaboration and frameworks in higher education in the region and agreed that special focuses should be given to: 1) the observation on the Bologna Process and its relevance to the promotion of Southeast Asian regional framework for higher education and 'ASEANness'; 2) ASEAN Quality Framework and Core Curriculum Development; 3) Student Mobility Enhancement; 4) Leadership Development Programme 5) E-learning and Mobile Learning Programme; and 6) ASEAN Research Clusters in Science and Technology.



The Regional Workshop on Strategic Planning for University Administrators in the Greater Mekong Sub-region

**17-21 December 2007,
The Montien Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand**



The Workshop was participated by 24 Participants from GMS countries, including China (Yunnan Province), Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam.

The themes and the sequence of the activities are as below:

Opening Session: Introductory Remarks

Dr. Supachai Yavaprabhas, Centre Director, SEAMEO RIHED
Dr. Chantavit Sujatanond, Deputy Secretary-General, Commission on Higher Education, Thailand

Lecture on University and Strategic Planning

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tong-in Wongsothorn, Advisor to the Minister of Education, Ministry of Education, Thailand

University and the Dynamics of Globalisation

Dr. Subramaniam Venkatraman, UNESCO Bangkok

University Strategic Planning: A Participative Approach –

Lessons from USM University and Strategic Planning

Assoc. Prof. Omar Osman, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Universiti Sains Malaysia

Becoming a World Class University:

The Roles of Strategic Planning

Prof. Dr. Jacob Phang, Electrical and Computer Engineering Department, National University of Singapore, former Chief Executive Officer of NUS Enterprise, NUS 2002-2006

University Strategic Planning: Financial Consideration

Prof. Dr. Boonserm Weesakul, President Emeritus, Dhurakij Pundit University and Professor Emeritus, National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA)

University Strategic Planning: Does QA Matter?

Prof. Emeritus Dr. Somwang Pittiyauwat, Director, The Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment-ONESQA (Public Organisation)

In view of the changing economic and social environment at the regional and international level as a result of globalisation and the increased interactions among the academia and higher education systems around the globe, higher education institutions (HEIs) in every continent, GMS included, are forced to adapt themselves to accommodate these trends and challenges. HEIs in the GMS countries could neither afford to stay behind nor pursue policies which contradict to the present momentum of regional and global higher education cooperation. If they are to boost university efficiency and productivity, the strategic moves to reposition their governance systems and to seek further cooperation and integration, both at the institutional and policy levels, are indispensable. According to these unprecedented challenges, the International Strategic Planning Bureau, Commission on Higher Education, Thailand and SEAMEO RIHED joined efforts to organise the Regional Workshop on 'Strategic Planning for University Administrators in GMS countries' to raise awareness among GMS countries on the issues relating to university governance and the trends of higher education in the globalised world.

Also, the Regional Workshop on 'Strategic Planning for University Administrators in GMS Countries' was organised with the aims at promoting the ideas of ASEAN integration and the establishment of ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community. To support the initiative for ASEAN Integration, which had been focusing on the levelling up of member countries in the areas of economics, human resources, technology, and infrastructure, the International Strategic Planning Bureau and SEAMEO RIHED were keen on promoting closer cooperation within this 'sub-region'. As a matter of fact, the International Strategic Planning Bureau and SEAMEO RIHED have conducted series of seminars, conferences and trainings to promote the issue of long-term higher education development in the GMS countries for a few years already. Some of which included the Workshop on Long-Range Planning for Higher Education in 2003, and other activities co-hosted by private HEIs in Thailand.

Following the Workshop on the Long-Range Planning for Higher Education conducted in 2003, the International Strategic Planning Bureau and SEAMEO RIHED received recommendations from participants of the Workshop to follow up with activities relating to higher education planning. Therefore, the Regional Workshop on Strategic Planning for University Administrators in GMS countries was considered a great opportunity to further address the issues pertaining to strategic development and university governance in HEIs in GMS countries. This was believed to be one of many activities advocating the establishment of the framework for deeper level or regional integration in Southeast Asia. As a sub-region, GMS countries would surely benefit from the opportunities to learn best practices from senior university administrators of other Southeast Asian countries, who were the speakers of the Workshop. At the same time, the participants would be able to establish a close-knitted network among themselves in the sub-region.



Upcoming Activities

The 1st SEAMEO RIHED - AGB EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME to the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 13 - 21 April 2008

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME

1. to provide the opportunity for senior university administrators from Thai and other Southeast Asian universities to participate in professional development activities by attending the prestigious AGB's National Conference on Trusteeship, which attracts HEI executives worldwide;
2. to improve ideas and insights on recent and current developments in university governance, leadership and management and marketing techniques as well as their applicability in relation to universities in Thailand and other Southeast Asian Countries, through series of lectures and discussing sessions with senior executives and staff in both public and private HEIs in the US; and
3. to provide the opportunity for senior university administrators and executives from Thailand and Southeast Asia to cultivate personal and institutional cooperation with the AGB and HEIs in the US

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS

1) AGB Conference: participants join the AGB's National Conference on Trusteeship 2008. Further information about this conference can be found in www.agb.org

2) Lectures and discussions: participants attend special lectures from senior staff and administrators in various types of US higher education institutions in Boston and Washington DC in the following topics:

- a) University Governance and Leadership
- b) University Relationship with Local Community and Industries
- c) Strategic Planning and Marketing Tools
- d) University and the Role of Think-Tank

3) Campus visits: participants take a campus tour in each institution and take a look at the institution's landscape, environment and facilities.

The visited universities as:

- 1) AGB Headquarters, Washington DC
- 2) Research/Public University: Centre for International Higher Education, Boston College
- 3) Research/Public University: University of Maryland – College Park, Maryland
- 4) Research/Public University: George Mason University – Fairfax, Virginia
- 5) Research/Private-Comprehensive University: Georgetown University – Washington DC
- 6) Research/Private – Doctoral University: American University – Washington DC
- 7) Community College/Public: Northern Virginia Community College – Fairfax, Virginia

Further information about this programme can be found in www.rihed.seameo.org/usatrip

For more information, please contact:



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