

AIT > NEWSLETTER

Asian Institute of Technology

SEPTEMBER 2014



New students begin their journey at AIT, welcomed at August Orientation

Addressing over four-hundred newly enrolled postgraduate students at the Orientation on August 8, Prof. S. Kumar, Vice President for Academic Affairs, welcomed the August 2014 Semester intake with a quick lesson in numbers that summed up their overall class.

"You represent the successful 16 per cent of all applicants to AIT who were accepted," he said, adding that fifty accepted students, or one in eight, ranked in the top one per

cent of their previous class and one hundred cracked the top five per cent.

Speaking on behalf of AIT President Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai, the vice president informed that the newest batch of students represented 34 countries. Students came from every continent except South America and Antarctica, he said.

See photo gallery on p.5 >>>



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FAO Asia-Pacific head discusses 2014 Action Plan for Collaboration

Inviting the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to consider the Asian Institute of Technology as its “academic arm” for the region, AIT President Prof. Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai welcomed Mr. Hiroyuki Konuma, Assistant Director General and FAO Regional Representatives for Asia and the Pacific, to the campus on August 24 for detailed discussions on the FAO-AIT 2014 Action Plan for Collaboration.

Congratulating Professor Worsak on his recent appointment as presi-

dent, Mr. Konuma said FAO would be happy to consider specific suggestions for expanded collaboration in areas such as knowledge exchange, research, internships and publications.

President Worsak invited FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific to be a primary partner of next year’s high-level regional conference on climate change to be hosted by AIT in preparation for the global COP 21 meeting in Paris, France.



Mr. Hiroyuki Konuma

A related article titled "Message to hungry SE Asia: Waste Not, Want Not," written by Shawn Kelly, Senior Media Specialist, AIT, was published in *The Nation* on 19 August 2014. Read the article at this link: <http://goo.gl/cMx3mA>

AIT held in “highest esteem” in Bhutan: Ambassador

AIT is held in “highest esteem” in Bhutan, and is regarded as a Center of Excellence. This was stated by

the Ambassador of Bhutan to Thailand, H.E. Mr. Kesang Wangdi, during his visit to AIT on 26 August 2014.



Prof. Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai (left) with H.E. Mr. Kesang Wangdi.

Describing himself as an “admirer of AIT,” the Ambassador remarked that AIT’s vision of sustainable development of the region matches with the requirements of the global economy. As the world is seized of the discourse on post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), AIT’s vision becomes more relevant. The Ambassador complimented AIT for contributing towards international understanding and friendship among nations. As a student of diplomacy, I can say that the role played by AIT in creating harmony is admirable, he added.

New President Worsak communicates ‘State of AIT’

AIT’s President, Prof. Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai has communicated his thoughts and vision about the ‘state of AIT’ and the trajectory that it will follow. In an email to the AIT community on 18 August 2014, Prof. Worsak thanked the AIT Board of Trustees for providing him with a “golden opportunity as an alumnus to serve my alma mater at this most critical juncture of history.”

Prof. Worsak outlined his priorities and the vision of the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. The entire text of his message to the AIT community can be read at this link:

http://www.ait.ac.th/news-and-events/2014/news/message-from-professor-worsak-kanok-nukulchai-ait-president/view#.U_w69sWSySo

Stanford University pioneer dazzles audience at Robotics talk

The AIT Distinguished Lecture Series kicked off with a talk on “Living with Robots” delivered by Stanford University pioneer Prof. Oussama Khatib on 26 August 2014. Traversing the 50-year journey of robots, Prof. Khatib highlighted how robotics is entering new frontiers.

Describing how robotics has changed since its first deployment, Prof. Khatib talked of the increasing degrees of freedom and mobility of modern day robots. The brain of a human and the body of a robot are working together to create autonomous robotic systems, he added. The first of the new series of AIT Distinguished Lectures saw a packed AIT auditorium filled with students and researchers from numerous universities and institutes.



Prof. Oussama Khatib

AIT inks partnership with Indian nonClonable ID developer Bilcare Ltd.

AIT has signed a three-year partnership agreement with Indian high-tech pioneer Bilcare Ltd. involving multiple aspects of nanotechnology co-operation and higher education. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by Bilcare Executive Director and Chief Scientific Officer Dr. Praful Naik, and AIT President Prof. Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai on 20 August 2014.



Dr. Praful Naik

According to Dr. Naik, the new technology offers authorization, verification and product tracking and tracing — and is the only technology available today that is capable of providing all three components in one system. Anti-counterfeiting, e-pedigree (for example, college transcripts) and tamper proof packaging are also applications involved with the technology. Based on the deal signed with AIT’s Center of Excellence in Nanotechnology (COEN), AIT becomes the first higher education institute to partner with Bilcare Ltd.

CSI founder Ashraf Habibullah headlines international seminar on Performance-Based Design

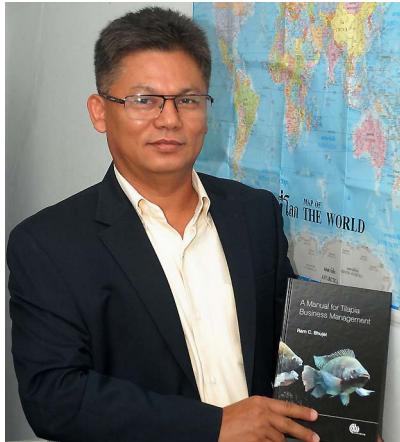
“Earthquake engineering is going through a ground-shaking,” renowned President and CEO of Computers and Structures, Inc., Mr. Ashraf Habibullah told structural engineering experts in Thailand as he introduced a one-day seminar titled “The theory and practice of Performance-Based Design: The Future of Earthquake Engineering.”



Mr. Ashraf Habibullah

The international technology transfer event in Bangkok on 7 August 2014, which was staged by California-based CSI in collaboration with AIT Consulting and ACECOMS, attracted 137 participants representing 83 organizations from Thailand and nine other countries in Asia. AIT’s own expert on earthquake-resistant engineering Prof. Pennung Warnitchai was a special speaker at the event.

AIT's Ram Bhujel authors book on Tilapia Business Management



Dr. Ram C Bhujel

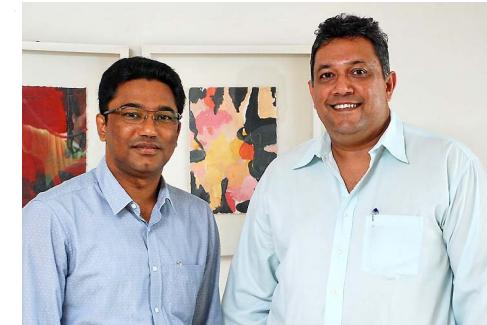
AIT's Dr. Ram C Bhujel has authored a book titled "A Manual for Tilapia Business Management." Published by CABI, the book is targeted at tilapia farmers and producers, besides students of aquaculture. The 10-chapter book covers a wide range of topics including tilapia hatchery, fry nursing, grow-out in ponds, grow-out in cages, polyculture, integrated farming, fish health management and biosecurity, post-harvest handling, and business models.

"The book has a practical focus, and it describes best practice production methods, egg management, new technologies, nutrition, business practices, marketing, equipment maintenance, accounting and logistics," Dr. Bhujel says. Released in June 2014, the 216-pages hardback is available from CABI at this link:

<http://www.cabi.org/bookshop/book/9781780641362>

AIT and WWF Thailand awarded US\$ 980K project from HSBC Water Sustainability Program

An environmental protection project planned for Thailand by AIT and World Wide Fund (WWF) Thailand valued at US\$ 980,000 has been approved by Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) Group Corporate Sustainability (UK).



Dr. Sangam Shrestha (left) and Mr. Sanjeev Jayasinghe

The proposal is titled "Building Capacity and Strengthening Community Participation for Water Resources Management and Wetland Ecosystem Restoration in the Context of Climate Change in Lower Songkhram River Basin."

It is an example of our vigorous push to connect with multinationals, corporate firms and industry, said AIT Fundraising Director Mr. Sanjeev Jayasinghe, who spearheaded the connection with HSBC. According to the project's principal investigator Dr. Sangam Shrestha, AIT will be responsible for forecasting climate change scenarios, and assessing the impact of climate change on water availability and water quality in the basin.

Dr. K. R. Salin joins AIT



Dr. K.R. Salin

Dr. K.R. Salin has joined Aquaculture and Aquatic Resources Management (AARM) field of study at AIT's School of Environment, Resources and Development (SERD). Dr. Salin joined as Assistant Professor from 1 August, 2014.

Dr. Salin completed his Bachelor's in Fisheries Science (B.F.Sc.) and Master's (M.F.Sc.) in Aquaculture from Kerala Agricultural University, India. He obtained his Ph.D. in Marine culture from Central Institute of Fisheries Education (CIFE), Mumbai, India. He also completed two terms of post-doctoral research at Queensland University of Technology (QUT), Brisbane, Australia. Dr. Salin's major research interest includes applied genetics, particularly in selective breeding for improved stocks of fish and prawn.

PHOTO GALLERY

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AIT Orientation: 8 August 2014



AIT's Shobhkar Dhakal presents IPCC findings on mitigation in India

Dr. Shobhakar Dhakal of AIT was among the three select scientists who presented the findings of Fifth Assessment Report (AR5)

of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) at the IPCC Conference organized at the India Habitat Center, Delhi on 6 August 2014.



Dr. Shobhakar Dhakal (left) at the conference.

The Conference titled “IPCC AR5: What it means for a stronger, more inclusive India,” was focussed on the impact of climate change in India, where Dr. Shobhakar presented the report of IPCC’s Working Group III (Mitigation).

Billed as a lead event for dissemination of the IPCC Assessment Report, the Conference witnessed participation from the IPPC Chairman, Dr. Rajendra K Pachauri, and two Indian federal ministers—Mr. Prakash Javadekar, Minister of State for Environment, Forests and Climate Change, and Mr. Jitendra Singh, Minister of State for Science and Technology.

News You Can Use

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The iPad Education Revolution Stalls Out

Gizmodo had an interesting article about the use of iPads in education. Following news reports about suspension of plan to provide iPads to all students, the article provided an overview of the use of tablets and Chromebooks in education. It said:

“Four years after the iPad’s debut and the digital classroom is still in transition. Recent trials, pilot programs, and adoption of other devices and services means that how we educate kids isn’t a one-device-fits-all solution, but it is a question US schools need to get right. Because getting it wrong will cost a lot more than just money.”

Read the entire article at this link:

<http://gizmodo.com/the-ipad-education-revolution-stalls-out-1626965876>



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