



## HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn to preside over AIT Day 2010

Thailand's beloved princess, HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, has graciously consented to preside over "AIT Day 2010," a first-of-its-kind event planned for 7 September 2010 to honor AIT's alumni.

HRH will also witness the kick-off of AIT Endowment Fund Campaign and hand over awards to selected senior alumni to be inducted into AIT's Hall of Fame, AIT Vice President for Resources Development, Prof. Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai, recently

announced.

Spearheading the fundraising campaign, Prof. Worsak said his goal was to build up a structure and culture of fundraising at AIT. The seven-year campaign to last from 2010 to 2017 has a goal to raise over 1,000 million Baht. All funds raised will go towards supporting world-class visiting scholars to come to AIT each year and scholarships for top students in Asia to attend AIT. The Institute is in the process of requesting that the visiting scholars be honored as "Princess Sirindhorn Scholars".

*The celebration on 7 September 2010 will take place at AIT's home campus. ■*



### INSIDE ISSUE...

■ Recent News / Happenings at AIT.....	2	■ People & New Programs .....	5
■ Opinion.....	4	■ Backpage.....	6



## Iraq Ministry officials benefit from AIT program

Eleven participants from the General Directorate of Human Resources (GDHR) of the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works (MMPW) of Government of Iraq benefited from a training program on Manpower Planning organized at AIT Extension.

According to Mr. Voravate Chonlasin, Senior Program Specialist, Public Sector Capacity Building at AIT Extension, the training program is a part of a series of courses to be conducted for UNICEF-Iraq. "It is expected that 121 GDHR staff will participate in training programmes at AIT from May to August 2010," he added.

This program follows the European Union funded Enabling Environment for Enhanced and Sustained Water and Sanitation Services in Iraq project, which seeks to organize human resource training programs for senior officials from MMPW, Government of Iraq. The General Directorate of Human Resources (GDHR) under MMPW is a key component of the project which responsible for HR personnel to MMPW staff.

## AIT ranks top in four engineering areas on research in Thailand, study says

A recent study by Thai Research Fund (TRF) on the research output of Thai universities confirms that Thailand-based Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) scored the highest rating in four engineering subject areas. This is the first time AIT participated in Thailand's nation-wide evaluation, based on the research output in 2007-2008.

In the recent official report received from TRF, AIT was rated the highest among all Thai universities in these four engineering subject areas: Civil and Infrastructure Engineering, Information and Communications Technology, Environmental Engineering and Management, and Industrial Systems Engineering.

The TRF Rating is based on the weighted average varied from 'five' to 'one' of the following four factors: Equivalent international journal papers per faculty member (weightage of 30 per cent); Journal impact factor per faculty member (weightage of 20 per cent); Total equivalent international journal papers for the entire subject cluster (weightage of 30 per cent); and Total journal impact factors for the entire subject cluster (weightage of 20 per cent).

Based on the above TRF criteria, AIT's engineering fields of study still received the highest overall rating in comparison with those programs in Thai universities. This is despite the disadvantage of AIT's limited faculty size as a postgraduate institution.

The details reveal that in all cases AIT stands out in the two "per-head" factors, implying the highest order of research productivity and quality of its individual faculty members. ■



*Mr. Chatri Moonstan and Ms. Emilie Naerum Everett, Political Officer, Royal Norwegian Embassy*

## Norway compliments AIT's performance

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has expressed its appreciation to the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) and has complimented its performance. This was conveyed by Mr. Chatri Moonstan, Senior Programme Officer, Royal Norwegian Embassy during the annual consultation of the Norwegian MFA and AIT held on 9 June 2010. Mr. Chatri stated that the association of Norwegian government and AIT dates back to 1978 and that the cooperation is "very special". ■



(from left) Ms. Cynthia A. Griffin and Ms. Jennie Ness

## US Embassy Thailand, AIT discuss 'creative' possibilities

*"Forty years ago the United States helped build bridges in Thailand. Today our aim is the help build knowledge bridges and a creative economy."*

These remarks from Ms. Cynthia A. Griffin, Commercial Counselor, Embassy of the United States of America in Thailand, set the tone for a visit to the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) by high-ranking American government officials on 15 June 2010. Ms. Griffin was joined by Ms. Jennie Ness, Regional Intellectual Property Officer, US Patent and Trademark Office, Embassy of the United States of America in Thailand.

The two visited the campus to explore possibilities for collaboration with AIT. The visit was a follow-up to a meeting in late March with AIT President Said Irandoust and Mr. Vikrom Kromadit, CEO of Thailand's Amata Corporation, in which they discussed ideas for Thailand moving towards a knowledge-based economy through public-private partnerships in higher education.

President Irandoust welcomed the delegation and noted how the embassy's initiatives dovetail with the aspirations of the Asian Institute of Technology. Reminding the officials of America's instrumental role in the founding of AIT, and of its significant impact on the historical development of the Institute, the president enjoined the United States to join AIT again in full partnership. "We expect to have 18 to 20,000 students within 10 years," President Irandoust said. ■

## Partnership with AIT is a record of success: Ford Foundation IFP

Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) has proved to be an extremely positive "destination campus" for Ford Foundation fellows, and the AIT partnership with the Ford Foundation International Fellowship Program (IFP) is a demonstrated record of success. This was stated by Dr. Mary Zurbuchen, Director of the Asia and Russia Program for the Ford Foundation IFP, during an interaction at AIT on 8 June 2010.



Dr. Mary Zurbuchen

While complimenting AIT for hosting IFP fellows, she identified the "bridging program" offered at AIT as a facilitator which helps students settle in the institute. Dr. Zurbuchen stated that further association between IFP and AIT needs to be explored, particularly on utilizing the vast pool of IFP alumni in the region. ■



Dr. Jean-Chalres Maillard and Prof. Said Irandoust

## CIRAD inks partnerships with AIT

CIRAD (Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement) and Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) have reaffirmed their partnership by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and two Memoranda of Agreement's (MOA). The agreements were signed by Dr. Jean-Chalres Maillard, Regional Director of CIRAD for Continental South East Asia and Prof. Said Irandoust, President, AIT. ■

## Student mobility and Thailand's potential as a hub

**C**hairman of the AIT Board of Trustees, Dr. Tej Bunnag and AIT President Professor Said Irandoust jointly published an article in the *Bangkok Post* on 11 June 2010. The article is reproduced here.

Traders, warriors and missionaries are generally regarded as the people who travelled all over the world exploring other civilisations and cultures. They ventured into unknown lands looking for avenues and paved the path towards a modern connected world.

Others are here for an education, too: Children of Burmese migrant workers gather for their lunch break at a charity primary school set up by migrants and monks in Ranong province, southern Thailand.

In ancient times, when travel was hazardous, dangerous and full of mystery and surprises, these people helped connect various civilisations and people.

In this age, one can add another category to traders, warriors and missionaries - students.

Students moving from one country to another and travelling across the seven seas has become a normal dimension of modern education. Student mobility is one

of the most significant trends that is altering the landscape of education all over the world.

An intensely complex process, student mobility affects not just the life of individuals but has helped chart the destiny of nations.

The edifice of technological and economic progress of many nations squarely rests on the fact that it

managed to attract the best international students. It is estimated that three million students study outside their home countries, a 40% increase since 1999. This number is set to cross seven million by 2025.

Former education editor of the *US News & World Report*, Ben Wildavsky, in his just released book *The Great Brain Race: How Global Universities Are Reshaping*

the World, reveals the extent of international competition for the brightest minds across the globe.

His thesis is that while this "revolution" is transforming the world of higher education, it should be welcomed, not feared.

Click to read the entire article in the [Bangkok Post](#).



Dr. Tej Bunnag



Prof. Said Irandoust

## Thai higher education needs public-private investment

**A**IT President Prof. Said Irandoust and Chairman of AMATA Corp Vikrom Kromadit jointly published an article in *The Nation* on 4 June 2010. The article is reproduced here.

THAILAND IS, in so many ways - amazing. Blessed with unique intangibles that are renowned and embraced across the world, the country has a magnetic pull and a strong appeal. In a number of economic sectors, such as tourism and medical care services, agriculture and manufacturing, the Kingdom performs at very high levels and displays clear abilities to compete and win in the international arena.

Today, Thailand aims to join the ranks of knowledge-based economies by transitioning from brawn to brains; from labour-intensive work to new, emerging economic activities. In a Thai knowledge society, many sectors will require workers with specialised knowledge, who can use their skills as a productive tool to develop, innovate and create. Such a transformation is critical to the nation's long-term prosperity.

Click to read the entire article in [The Nation](#).



Vikrom Kromadit

## PEOPLE



**APPOINTED:** Professor Joydeep Dutta has been appointed as AIT Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). The appointment was made from 1 June 2010 and shall last until 30 June 2013. He took over from the outgoing Vice President Prof. Peter F. Haddawy.



**APPOINTED:** Dr. Naveed Anwar has been appointed the first CEO / Director of AIT Consulting. Dr. Naveed is currently serving as Director of the Asian Center for Engineering Computations and Software (ACE-COMS) in the School of Engineering & Technology.



**FAREWELL:** Well-known all across campus, Ms. Marie-France Champagne has left AIT and will take up residence in Yaounde, Cameroon with her children and husband, Jean-Philippe Thouard (another former AIT notable). She became known to so many because she was involved in a multitude of AIT activities. She first arrived at AIT's Language Center on 3 November 1993.



**APPOINTED:** Dr. Sun Sayamipuk is the new Head of Contract Management Office (CMO) at the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT). An AIT alumnus (M.Sc. in 1995 and Ph.D. in 2000), Dr. Sun has worked at AIT since May 1996 in various capacities.



**APPOINTED:** Dr. Hoang Le Tien has been appointed as Head of the AIT Alumni Office. The decision to establish a full-fledged AIT Alumni Office follows discussion on strengthening the Alumni Relations Unit of the External Relations & Communications Office (ERCO).



**AWARDS/ RECOGNITION:** Former AIT faculty colleague Prof. Ram M. Shrestha and Dr. Shobhakar Dhakal (an AIT alumnus) were Guest Editors of a Special Issue on "Carbon Emissions and Carbon Management in Cities" of the Energy Policy Journal.

## NEW PROGRAMS

### Unified BBA-MBA program

University of Economics and Business (UEB), Vietnam National University and Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) today signed an agreement for the launch of a unified BBA-MBA program. The unified program, the first of its kind at the School of Management (SOM) at AIT will accept the first batch of



(left) Prof. Phung Xuan Nha, President UEB, Prof. Said Irandoust, President AIT and Dr. Barbara Igel, Dean, SOM, AIT

students already enrolled at UEB from August. ■

### Professional Master's in Geoproduction and Petroleum Engineering

Vietnam Petroleum Institute (VPI) has signed a MOU with to develop and offer a one year year Professional Master's program in Geoproduction and Petroleum Engineering (GEPG). ■



(left) Dr. Phan Ngoc Trung, General Director and Dr. Nitin Afzulpulkar, Dean, School of Engineering and Technology, AIT

## Fish release ceremony, essay competition mark **World Environment Day celebrations at AIT**

*“You may think it is OK. It is not. Earth is a special planet. You have to keep it clean, green and beautiful.”*

These beautiful words were among the prize-winning entries of the essay competition organized at the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) by AIT/ United Nations Environment Programme UNEP Regional Resource Centre for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP.RRC.AP) to mark World Environment Day 2010. The theme of the celebration was “Many Species, One Planet,



One Future.”

Dr. Suvit Yodmani, former Minister of Tourism and Sports, Royal Thai Government, former Regional Director UNEP, and former Vice President for Development at AIT, presided over the function.

Children of AIT International School also released 300 fish in the AIT pond. AIT’s Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Development in the Context of Climate Change (SDCC) and TEAM Consulting were co-sponsors of the program.

### Did You Know?

The original research on Atmospheric Brown Clouds (ABCs) began at AIT.

News  
You  
Can  
Use

## Changing Font to Save Ink

### Changing Font to Save Ink

The University of Wisconsin Green Bay has decided to go gothic, but not in a medieval or ghoulish kind of way. The school changed the font in its email system, saying the move could save thousands of dollars in printer ink. It found a new way to cut costs with e-mail — by changing the font. It switched the default font on its e-mail system from Arial to Century Gothic. The university says the change sounds minor, but it will save money on printer ink when students print out e-mails in the new font.

Century Gothic uses about 30 percent less ink than the old Arial setting used for email. However there is a note of warning. Since the font is a bit larger, it would actually take up more space. So occasionally, you might need more paper for a printout if it pushes the document over a page.

Source: NPR and Washington Post

#### Editor:

Bajinder Pal Singh  
Media Specialist, AIT  
bajinder@ait.asia

For feedback, contact  
Media and Communications  
Unit at AIT mcu@ait.asia