

ROYAL THAI EMBASSY  
Students' Department  
5017 - 16th. Street, N.W.  
Washington 11, D.C.

Circular Letter for the Month of October 1962

October 25, 1962

Dear Students under the Civil Service Commission:

There are the following instructions for you to carry out, and various items for your information:-

1. Report on Study Load: Every university or college student is required to submit a report on his Study Load at the beginning of every semester, term or quarter to the Students' Department. Especially for government students and officials on leave, this is a "must". Hence this is to remind you that it is now time for you to send the said report for Fall Semester, Term or Quarter.

A Study Load Form is attached herewith. It is to be understood that this Study Load Form can be made by the student himself, when necessary. Therefore a copy should be made by him for future reference.

2. Address with Telephone Number: In the circular letter for the month of November 1961, a request was made to all students to send their addresses with telephone numbers. Very few indeed have complied with this request. Recently the Minister of Education would like to meet students under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, no communication could be made with some students in time by telephone, thus depriving those students of the chance of meeting the Minister. Therefore another request is now made to all students to send their correct addresses with telephone numbers.

3. Honor conferred upon a Thai Student: Tavach Meksawan was duly elected an associate member of Northwestern University Chapter of the Society of the Sigma Si, on May 24, 1962. This society is devoted to the promotion of research in science. He was also a member of the Chapter of Sigma Pi Sigma, Physics Honor Society at Purdue University in March 1962.

4. The Minister of Education's Informal Address:

On Wednesday October 17, 1962 at the Royal Thai Embassy, the Minister of Education (H.E. Mom Luang Pin Malakul) gave opportunity to the government students and officials on leave under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education to meet him, and on this occasion he kindly delivered an informal talk on the progress of education in Thailand.

(1) Elementary Education: He mentioned that education in Thailand has been progressing satisfactorily compatible with the economic advancement of the country. Budget for education has been steadily increasing, until now it is the biggest item in the central government budget. [Baht 1,468,425,000 in 1962, being about 17% of the total national budget]. At the Unesco meeting last year, he concurred with the recommendation of the Unesco that the compulsory elementary education should be extended from Pathom 4 to Pathom 7. (Grade 4 to Grade 7),



and this objective should be fulfilled within a period of 20 years. In fact Thailand has started on the new national scheme of education [having Pathom 1 to 7, and Matayom 1 to 5, in all 12 grades as before] two years ago, so there are 18 years left to accomplish this end. There are now over 3 1/2 million pupils in elementary schools. As the compulsory elementary education is extended from Pathom 4 to Pathom 7 from district to district (tambon), the number of elementary school pupils will increase rapidly, and thereby it is expected that the number of pupils in secondary (Matayom) schools will also increase to 500,000. This will induce a lot of new problems to be solved.

A law was passed recently empowering the Minister of Education to extend the period of compulsory education to seven years in any district (tambon), which he deems appropriate. As there are over 5,000 districts in the Kingdom of Thailand, he hopes to accomplish this feat in a period of ten years. But there are many problems relating to this matter, as he has inspected the existing conditions in different districts. He cited two examples. In one district, he found that there are now private schools teaching Pathom 5 to 7, if he would proclaim compulsory elementary education to be extended to Pathom 7 in that district, all private schools will have to be closed, since compulsory education is free, and all children will flock to government schools. In another district, he found that the location of the school is near the boundary line of the adjoining district, so children of the second district go to school situated within the first district. How could the children of the second district be prohibited to go to school in the first district, when there is not yet facility for the children in the second district?

The Minister was so pleased to inform the gathering that according to the census taken in 1950, about 50% of the population were literate, but within a decade this percentage has increased to 72% as shown by the census taken in April 1960. This is indeed not a slight achievement for Thailand.

(2) Centres of Education: The Minister mentioned that Thailand has only one really big city, that is "Bangkok", which is also the big centre of education. When one finishes Pathom 4 in his own village, if he wants to continue his education, he must go to an Amphur for grades up to Matayom 3 and to a Changvad for grades up to Matayom 6, and then if he still needs to have further pre-university or university education, he must move to the Capital, Bangkok. This is over-centralization.

In the new national scheme of education, there will be establishment of 12 new centres of education, i.e. Ayuthaya, Lopburi, Pitsanuloke, Chiangmai, Korat, Ubol, Udorn, Nakorn Pathom, Rajburi, Chumporn, Puket and Yala. Each of these new centres of education will be self-contained, and does not have to depend upon the centre in Bangkok. It is hoped that these new centres of education will draw more people and help to create these provincial towns into big cities in the future.

Also it is the conviction of the Minister that new schools in these provincial centres will not be inferior to those in the Capital, and they may even be superior to old schools in Bangkok. For instance, he narrated that in a new Korat Matayom school, a modern experiment is



being tried out by letting all students in that secondary school study the same subjects in the first year. Then during this first year, teachers must watch students closely and try to gauge their abilities and lines of interest, and determine the character of trade or occupation each student should pursue. Those who are suitable to go to vocational schools would be diverted to proper channels, and those who have such high intellect that they should follow academic education would be placed in separate groups, so that they can be prepared for eventual higher education later on. By this process different sections of population will be given education suitable to the needs and abilities of individuals; harmonizing with the political and economic systems of the country.

(3) Higher Education: The number of university students is increasing every year, as more high school or pre-university graduates are being turned out. But the universities in Bangkok are already crowded, and cramped in areas, further extensive expansion cannot be easily effected. Consequently the Government is planning to establish THREE more universities in other regions of the country, the first in Chiangmai for the Northern region, the second in Konkaen for the Northeastern region, and the third in Patani for the Southern region. But as the establishment of a university is a tremendous undertaking, incurring a big investment and requiring a large amount of preparation, only the establishment of the University of Chiangmai is now being pushed forward [Compared with Indonesia having not even one university in the whole country before the Second World War, but now only 17 years afterwards there are altogether nine universities in different parts of that country].

The Chiangmai University will be officially open for the academic year 1964. At first it will have the Faculties of Humanities, Natural Sciences, Agriculture and Medical Science and the student body will consist of about 300 students for the first year. The Faculties of Social Sciences, Engineering and Architecture could be added on later to make it a complete university.

The Minister mentioned that from his survey, the most popular courses demanded by the people in the northern region are Agriculture and Commerce. It is his intention to model the Chiangmai University after the best of English, European and American universities combined. It will not be like their counterparts in other continents, but will adopt and adapt such aspects and traditions of other universities as most suitable to the Thai heritage.

All students must live in the university. There are no day students. The students will be divided into different colleges. The idea of having students living in groups or colleges is to train them for good citizenship. As regards academic education, all students will receive instruction in their various fields of knowledge from the central part of the university. All educational buildings will be grouped together. Methods of instruction, either English, European or American will be used, whichever will yield the best result. It is hoped that the Chiangmai University will be close to the ideal university as much as possible.



Over 300 applications for the faculties have been received, but so far only about 40 have been selected and accepted.

(4) Chiengmai University as Centre of Research: The Minister remarked that Thai universities should also conduct research programs of their own. The University of Medical Science has produced some recognized results of research in the medical field. It is his belief that the Chiengmai University also could carry out several research programs pertaining to its special location in the northern part of Thailand. For instance, we know that there are still many Thai groups in Shan States, Assam and other neighbouring territories, a research on the origin of the Thai people would be useful. Also there are many hill-tribes of the northern Thailand, such as the Meo, Yao, Lawa, Kha Mu, Kariang, Mussuh, Lahu, Lisu, Kha Haw, Haw etc., of which little is known, a research on these hill-tribes would be valuable for the well-being of Thailand.

(5) Needs of Highly Qualified Persons: The Minister mentioned that the Ministry of Education is the Ministry of Teachers, therefore highly qualified persons are needed for this ministry. The College of Education in Bangkok is now granting master's degrees in Education. As regards those students studying abroad under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, he would sponsor them to attain the highest possible level of education, in accordance with their abilities and the needs of the Ministry.

5. The Phakavali, the Thai Dance Troupe: The Phakavali, a private Thai dance troupe under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Prasidh Silpabanleng, is touring the U.S. under the sponsorship of the Asia Society (47 W. 55th Street, New York 19, N.Y.) from September to December 1962. The dancers give their performances at different colleges and universities. In Washington D.C., the troupe performed at Lisner Auditorium, George Washington University on September 28, 1962 to a full house. The critics said that "they are small exquisite group of dancers with a rare and gentle charm. The troupe's purity of style and graceful reserve were refreshingly devoid of commercialism, and at the same time lively and theatrically appealing. The dances had tranquility and sustained sinuosity." Though this troupe is a small private group of fifteen persons without any government aid, they have helped to advertise Thailand greatly, by bringing the Thai arts to different colleges and universities of this land.

Sincerely,

*Videt-Yontrakich*

Luang Videt-Yontrakich  
Education Counselor



STUDY LOAD REPORT TO BE SENT TO THE STUDENTS' DEPARTMENT  
AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH TERM OR SEMESTER OR TRIMESTER

1. Name of University \_\_\_\_\_  
College or School \_\_\_\_\_  
Major field \_\_\_\_\_
2. Present degree program \_\_\_\_\_  
[Bachelor's, Master's, Doctor's]
3. Total number of credit hours required  
for the present degree program \_\_\_\_\_ credits
4. Certificate or Special program \_\_\_\_\_
5. Session \_\_\_\_\_ Academic year \_\_\_\_\_  
[Semester, Quarter or Trimester]
6. LIST OF SUBJECTS ENROLLED
- | [1] _____ | Credit hours _____ |
|-----------|--------------------|
| [2] _____ | " " _____          |
| [3] _____ | " " _____          |
| [4] _____ | " " _____          |
| [5] _____ | " " _____          |
| [6] _____ | " " _____          |
| [7] _____ | " " _____          |
| [8] _____ | " " _____          |
- Total number of credit hours enrolled \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is considered a normal academic\*(credit) load for  
the program you are now pursuing for each session ? \_\_\_\_\_ Credits.
8. What is the TOTAL number of credit hours  
you have already earned up to now ? \_\_\_\_\_ Credits.
9. Additional Remarks \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print [ \_\_\_\_\_ ]

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

N O T E: \* The normal academic (credit) load is meant that if the course  
of study is 4 years, and the total number of credit hours  
required is 120, then the normal academic load per year is  
30 or 15 credit hours per semester.