One-hundred and seventy-four students from 11 countries in Asia and Europe received their degrees on the occasion of the 124th Graduation of the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) held on 16 December 2015. The students, which included 22 doctoral graduates, join the 21,000-plus alumni body spread across all continents.

The AIT graduating batch included 80 students from Vietnam, 33 from Myanmar and 28 from Thailand. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Lao-PDR, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Switzerland were the countries of origin of other students. Graduating students received scholarships from 43 sources including five international organizations and foundations, five governments, seven universities and colleges, 22 business and corporate entities, and four other donors.

174 students receive honors on AIT’s 124th Graduation
Thai Pipe announces 9 mill Baht Scholarships for AIT

Christmas Eve brought good cheer to AIT as it received a generous donation of nine million Thai Baht as scholarships. AIT alumnus Dr. Yanyong Phataralaoha communicated to the AIT President the decision to donate a total of 9 million Baht (8.5 million from Thai Pipe Group of Companies and 0.5 million as his personal contribution) towards the Thai Pipe Fund.

This donation of 9 million is in addition to the existing tranche of Thai Pipe Scholarships. Three students (two from Cambodia and one from Myanmar) have already received the Thai Pipe scholarships for August 2015 intake, and three students (two from Vietnam and one from Myanmar) are set to receive the scholarship for the January 2016 intake.

German Ambassador hands over DAAD scholarship certificates

German Ambassador H.E. Mr. Peter Prügel handed over scholarship certificates to DAAD awardees on 3 December 2015 to students from AIT and the Seameo Tropmed Network. Ambassador Prügel stated that academic cooperation between Germany and Thailand had developed significantly and official university collaboration between the two countries reached a record 186 instances with exchanges on all academic levels and fields. Scholarship recipients came from Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam. AIT’s Vice President Prof. Kazuo Yamamoto expressed his gratitude to the Ambassador and to DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) for supporting AIT students.

AIT signs MoU with Irrigation Department of Pakistan’s Sindh Province

AIT has signed a five-year agreement with the Irrigation Department, Government of Sindh, Pakistan for delivering postgraduate programs, short courses, training and building capacity of professionals.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Mr. Syed Zaheer Hyder Shah, Secretary, Irrigation Department, Government of Sindh, and Dr. Jonathan Shaw, Executive Director, AIT Extension, at a function organized at the Chief Minister’s Secretariat in Karachi on 7 December 2015. Organized in the presence of the Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Qaim Ali Shah, and Minister for Planning, Irrigation, Finance and Energy, Syed Murad Ali Shah, the MoU seeks to develop both long-term and short-term customised professional development courses for engineers, develop Master’s and Professional Master’s programs for engineers and management staff, and provide consultancy services.
GRADUATION

GRADUATION ADDRESS

Dr. Twarath Sutabutr, Director-General, Energy Policy and Planning Office, Ministry of Energy (Alumni Address):

Dr. Twarath (Master’s, Geotechnical and Transportation Engineering, 1992) highlighted the role that AIT students could play in an increasingly globalised and integrated world. Quoting examples, he cautioned graduands against sharing of false information that could lead to harmful effects in real life. http://goo.gl/DiInVn

Dr. Rafiul Ahad, Vice President, of Software Development at Oracle Corporation, US:

Narrating his personal story as a stateless young man who could not get a job despite degrees and qualifications, a young Rafiul painted church walls and polished floors before he was introduced to AIT. “I am grateful to AIT for admitting me to the first batch of computer science in 1979, and also to the Royal Thai Government for granting me scholarship to study,” Dr. Ahad reminisced. Asking students to inculcate the spirit of risk-taking, the graduation speaker quoted four lessons from his life — the ability to take risk, a passion for work, continuous acquisition of knowledge, and a work-life balance. Further, be fair to everyone and treat everyone with respect regardless of social status and stature, he added. http://goo.gl/y0Wf5u

Prof. Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai, President AIT:

AIT President Prof. Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai reminded all students that “AIT has always taken pride in its important role in resolving transnational cross border challenges.” Mentioning the role played by AIT in the run-up to the Paris Climate Change Conference (COP21), Prof. Worsak stated that AIT will provide Asian solutions to Asian problems in relation to climate change, while using global knowledge. He asked students to maintain a strong association with their alma mater, and hoped that one day, they too would help AIT to continue its mission of serving future generations of world-class citizens. http://goo.gl/qvPwv6

Dr. Muhammad Khalil Farooq delivered the Doctoral Student Message:

AIT provided an excellent living environment, where students with diverse backgrounds, cultures and religions live together like a family, Dr. Farooq said. http://goo.gl/hY3l1o
Among the degree recipients were senior officials of the Ministry of Construction, Myanmar led by their Permanent Secretary and Head of Office, Mr. U Kyaw Linn, and Director General Mr. Win Tint. They were enrolled as students of the Professional Master's Program in Project Management which was conducted in Myanmar, and is a custom-made program for Ministry of Construction, Government of Myanmar.
RECENT NEWS / HAPPENINGS AT AIT

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AIT contributes to COP21

As 196 countries from all over the world signed the historic Paris Climate Change agreement, AIT has reasons to rejoice as it has been actively contributing towards the process.

AIT was host to the Regional Forum on Climate Change (RFCC) along with French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development, ASEAN Secretariat, and the European Union (EU) from 1-3 July 2015, where 400 participants from 20 countries prepared a message for COP21. The message read out by AIT President Prof. Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai on the concluding day of the Conference made a “Final Call” for COP21. Prof. Mukand Singh Babel of AIT presented the key messages from RFCC at a UNEP event organized on 2 December 2015 at Paris. AIT’s Dr. Shobhakar Dhakal was widely quoted for his views on COP21 including ‘The Economist.’ His commentary was also published in a special Elsevier issue on “Climate change: A virtual special issue with commentary for #COP21.”

‘Climate Change Asia – AIT’ born on the heels of COP21 agreement

Just as the recent COP21 climate change negotiations reached their conclusion, senior international officials convened at AIT to develop ‘Climate Change Asia—AIT’, which is intended as an Asian region response to climate change.

Former Asian Development Bank Vice President Dr. Bindu Lohani on 11 December 2015 chaired a one-day strategy session of officials connected to the ADB, World Bank, and United Nations Environment Programme, as well as senior-level climate change scientists, researchers, scholars, consultants and private equity managers. Anchored at AIT, Climate Change Asia will operate as a regional center of excellence to connect research and development, and training on climate change mitigation and adaptation. Dr. Subin Pinkayan, Chairman, AIT Board of Trustees also graced the occasion.

Farewells and Appointments

AIT organized a farewell and felicitation function for faculty and staff members who were retiring at the end of 2015. These include Prof. Nguyen Thi Kim Oanh, Prof. Gopal Bahadur Thapa, Dr. Soparth Pangkur, and Ms. Salaya Phunsiri from the School of Environment, Resources and Development (SERD); Assoc. Prof. Erik L.J. Bohez, Mr. Chamlong Waigaesee and Mr. Samwai Somrsrd from School of Engineering and Technology (SET); Ms. Wannapa Pliansri, Ms. Kulvimol Wasuntiwongse, Ms. Chadarat Nissaipan, Ms. Kalya Bumrungsak, and Mrs. Debra Brown from Administration; and Dr. Supat Wongwongwatana from Regional Resource Centre for Asia and the Pacific.

AIT also announced a new Administration team beginning 1 January 2016 with Prof. Sivanappan Kumar, Prof. Kanchana Kanchanasut, and Prof. Kazuo Yamamoto as Vice Presidents; Prof. Voratas Kachitvichyanukul, Prof. Rajendra Shrestha, and Prof. Nazrul Islam as Deans; and interim administration positions for Mr. Shawn Kelly (External Relations and Communications Office), Ms Chalita Lertwinyu (Royal Thai Government Relations and Government Relations Unit), Karma Rana (Board Secretariat-additional), and Somnuk Yardpaka (Student Counselling). More details at http://goo.gl/WwjPNw
Lessons for ASEAN on the globalisation of education
Prof. Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai

AIT President Prof. Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai’s Opinion piece titled “Lessons for ASEAN on the globalisation of education” was published in the Bangkok Post (22 December 2015).

It can be read at this link: http://goo.gl/Gk6isw