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**An Appreciation by H.E. Thanong Bidaya,  
to mark the 72<sup>nd</sup> birthday of Dr. Prathip Martin Komolmas.**

I am pleased to learn that Assumption University is planning a grand celebration on December 27, 2005 to commemorate the 72<sup>nd</sup> birthday of Bro. Prathip Martin Komolmas. As a former colleague and fellow educator and being aware of his sense of simplicity and sensitivities, I am inclined to conjecture that he would not approve of ritzy shows and gorgeous festivities for his anniversary but on the other hand, he could not possibly douse or dampen the ardour and zeal of his admirers, fans, friends and well-wishers including a large body of students and alumni whose call and clamour for a fitting and appropriate ceremony and tribute according to Thai culture and traditions would be loud, clear and insistent.

I believe that Bro. Martin's achievements as an individual and as former president of Assumption University and the spectacular success and growth of the institution under his helmsmanship and the impact he made on Thai society are far too numerous and conspicuous to be ignored or underestimated. He held important positions in private and public sectors such as member of the Research Council of Thailand Educational Specialist in Ministry of Education, Executive Committee Member of the Education Reform Commission, etc. He was also the recipient of many honorary degrees and awards including, the Knight Grand Cross (First Class) of the Most Noble Order of the Crown of Thailand from H.M. the King of Thailand.

**Work done as Rector of Assumption University.**

Beginning modestly with a small investment as Assumption Commercial College, later as Assumption Business Administration College and accredited as Assumption University in 1990, the institution grew from a small single building school with 50 odd students to a vast university with 3 campuses, 20,000 students, 1,500 strong faculty and staff and billion Baht revenues within a couple of decades. One special aspect of benefit ensuing from educational services provided by Assumption University, which is often overlooked by the general public, is the fact that Thai students are now able to study for undergraduate and graduate courses in Bangkok itself without having to proceed to countries like USA, Europe or Australia thereby avoiding steep expenditures on air travel, board, lodging and other incidental items. In fact the advantages of savings and conveniences of pursuing studies in Thailand are now availed of even by students from regional countries like China, India, Bangladesh and Vietnam who had flocked to Assumption University and a few other schools where we now have a fair proportion of international students. This reversal of destinations of study initiated by Bro. Martin imply a far-reaching and colossal attempt at stemming the outflow and stimulating inflow of foreign exchange which is in consonance with the long-term policy objectives of the state and I am sure that this salutary trend of establishing Thailand as an educational hub will continue to be encouraged and promoted.

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Bro. Martin's accomplishments and the transformation of the university are undoubtedly a highly dramatic phenomenon and what makes it so remarkable and noteworthy is that all this was done by Bro. Martin almost single-handedly although the adoption of English language as medium of instruction, the unprecedented growth of Thai economy and the process of globalization helped and boosted his endeavours. I understand that the university is now in a solid position and provided there is proper maintenance and consolidation in academic, financial and organizational spheres there should be no slow-down or decline in its momentum and the continuing success of its ongoing programs and courses.

For all his achievements as a visionary educator, as a creative designer and builder and as the an outstanding planner and entrepreneur who laid the foundation for the future success and prosperity of Assumption University and for his enduring contributions to education and society in the Kingdom of Thailand, I salute Rev. Bro. Prathip Martin Komolmas and wish him good health, happiness and many years of enjoyment of the fruits of his labours, his wisdom and sagacity.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Thanong Bidaya'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Thanong Bidaya  
Minister of Finance  
Royal Government of Thailand