

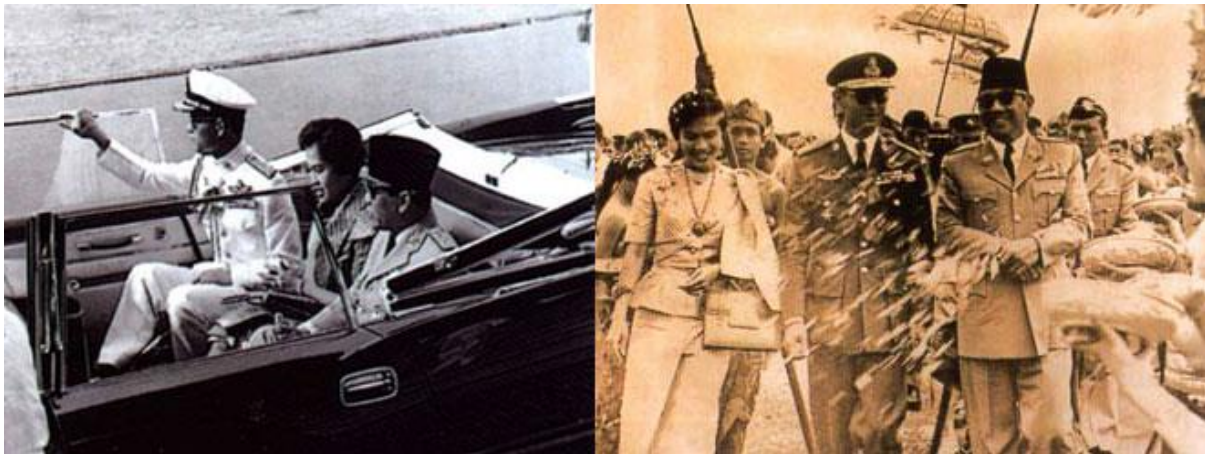
Royal Ties of Friendship



His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX) has taken upon himself the daunting task of working for the well-being and livelihood of his subjects all over the country. Yet, as Head of State under the Constitution, he has numerous duties in forging friendly ties with various countries. In diplomatic protocol, he receives foreign ambassadors to Thailand, who officially present letters of credence to him upon their accreditation to Thailand and take leave at the completion of their terms.

He also grants audiences to Thai ambassadors to various countries and gives them a royal blessing before they leave to take up their posts. He also made efforts to pay state visits to friendly countries when time permitted. And with the royal children grown up, they share the burden in reinforcing the bonds of friendship with various countries by paying royal visits to observe technical progress and promote cooperation with them, leading to good understanding and benefits to the country and the people, which is the true objective of the Royal Ties of Friendship, a time-honored mission of the Thai monarch.

The first State Visit was to the Republic of Vietnam, 18-21 December 1959.



The State Visit to the Republic of Indonesia, 8-16 February 1960. His Majesty the King remarked in his speech at the state banquet hosted by President Sukarno: I believe that happy relations existing between our two countries will continue to grow in strength and should result in complete unity of purpose and in perfect understanding.



The State Visit to the Union of Burma, 2-5 March 1960. His Majesty the King made this response to the welcome address by the Burmese President U Win Maung: The Burmese and Thai peoples are bound together in friendship, through sharing the same Buddhist faith, as well as the same aspiration of peace and cooperation. I am therefore all the more happy in being able to bring to you the goodwill and the greetings of my own people

Following visits to neighboring countries, Their Majesties the King and Queen in June 1960 embarked on a seven-month-long series of State Visits to the United States of America and 13 European countries.

Their Majesties arrived in Washington, D.C., on 28 June, met at the Washington National Airport by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. The Washington Post & Times Herald said in its headline, "President and 75,000 in Streets Greet Thailand King and Queen."

On 29 June, His Majesty the King addressed a joint session of the United States Congress, ending with these words:

Our two countries have had the best of relations. They started with the coming of your missionaries who shared with our people the benefits of modern medicine and the knowledge of modern science. This soon led to official relations and to a treaty between the two nations. That treaty dates as far back as 1833.

It can be said that from the beginning of our relationship right up to the present time no conflict of any kind has arisen to disturb our cordial friendship and understanding. On the contrary there has been mutual goodwill and close co-operation between our two countries. In view of the present world tension and the feeling of uncertainty apparent everywhere, it is my sincere feeling that the time is ripe for an even closer co-operation. It will demonstrate to the world that we are one in purpose and conviction and it can only lead to one thing – mutual benefits.





The royal ties of friendship with the nobility of other countries culminated in the Sixtieth Anniversary Celebrations of His Majesty's Accession to the Throne on 9 June 2006, when members of royal families from all over the world were invited to Bangkok.

Source:

[Royal Ties of Friendship Flourish in the Present Reign. \(n.d.\).](#)

His Majesty King BhumibolAdulyadej the Great

(King Rama IX)

(1946- 2016)

His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand was born at Mount Auburn Hospital, Cambridge, Massachusetts, in the United States of America, on Monday, 5th December, 1927, as the third and youngest child of Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess Mahidol of Songkhla.

His Majesty's elder sister, H.R.H. Princess Galyani Vadhana, was born May 6, 1923, in London, United Kingdom, while His Majesty's elder brother, His Majesty King Ananda Mahidol (King Rama VIII), was born September 20, 1925, at Heidelberg, in Germany.

Even the facts of His Majesty's birth seem to be significant in several ways. He is, first of all, the direct grandson of His Late Majesty King Chulalongkorn (King Rama V), renowned for the extensive series of great reforms, which he introduced to all government institutions in Thailand to bring them up-to-date and in line with those of the Western-oriented world.

His Royal father, Prince Mahidol, was perhaps one of the most modern-minded of all King Chulalongkorn's sons and his own life was dedicated to the development of many modern ideas, particularly, as he was a qualified medical physician, in the field of Medical Science and Public Health, to the extent that he is now known as the 'Father of the Modern Thai Medical Profession'.

Last, but not least, His Majesty was bestowed with the significant name of BhumibolAdulyadej, meaning 'Strength of the Land Incomparable Power', which became more and more prophetic as His Majesty's Reign advanced through some of the most critical periods of the Thai nation's history, with events evolving ever more closely around the Throne, as the sole source of unity and strength

Education of His Majesty the King

At the age of 5 years, His Majesty started his primary education at Mater Dei School in Bangkok. In 1933, His Majesty, with his elder brother and sister, left Thailand with their mother to live in Lausanne, Switzerland, where he continued his secondary education at the Mere Mont School, where he also studied the French, German and English languages.

His Majesty then went on to study at Ecole Nouvelle de la Suisse Romande, Chailly sur Lausanne and graduated with a Bachelieres de Lettres diploma from the GymnaseClassique Cantonal of Lausanne. His Majesty then chose to enter Lausanne University to study Science

In 1938, His Majesty followed his elder brother, H.M. King Ananda Mahidol, to Siam for the first time since they had left, staying briefly at Chitralada Villa, Dusit Palace, before returning once more to Switzerland. With the end of the Second World War, His Majesty again accompanied his elder brother back to Thailand on December 5, 1945, His Majesty's 18th birthday celebration.

The sudden demise of his elder brother, King Ananda Mahidol, in Bangkok on June 9, 1946, changed the course of his life completely, for the Law of Succession immediately bestowed upon

him the arduous and challenging function of the Thai Crown. His Majesty decided to return to Switzerland to complete his studies, which were changed to include subjects that would better familiarize him with the workings of government. In 1950, His Majesty returned to Thailand for his Coronation Ceremony, which took place on May 5, 1950.

His Majesty then returned to Switzerland briefly to complete his specially prepared course that included Political Science and Law that would better suit him for his arduous duties as Thailand's new Monarch.

Royal Marriage

During this latter stay in Switzerland, His Majesty had a serious car accident, which took some time to recover from and it was during this period of convalescence that His Majesty came to know the beautiful Mom RajawongseSirikitKitiyakara, daughter of His Highness Prince ChandaburiSuranath (Mom Chao NakkhatraMangalaKitiyakara) and Mom Luang Bua (Snidwongse) Kitiyakara. His Highness Prince ChandaburiSuranath was the third son of His Royal Highness Prince ChandaburiNarunath and Her Serene Highness Princess AbsarasmanKitiyakara. His Majesty became engaged to Mom RajawongseSirikit on July 19, 1949, at Lausanne, Switzerland.

Returning to Thailand briefly, Their Majesties were married on April 28, 1950, at the Lotus Pond Palace before His Majesty's Grandmother, Her Majesty Queen SawangVadhana, after which His Majesty was crowned the Ninth King of the Chakri Dynasty (King Rama IX) on May 5, 1950, and at the same time, Her Majesty was crowned Queen SomdejPranang Chao.

Their Majesties' Children

Their Majesties were married in the presence of Her Majesty Queen SawangVadhana, the paternal grandmother of His Majesty, at SraPathum Palace in Bangkok on the 28th. of April 1950.

Their Majesties have four children, namely:

- Her Royal Highness Princess UbolRatana, born 5th April 1951, in Lausanne, Switzerland.
- His Royal Highness Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn, born 28th July 1952, in Bangkok, Thailand. (His Majesty King Maha Vajiralongkorn PhraVajiraklaochaoyuhua)
- Her Royal Highness Princess MahaChakriSirindhorn, born 2nd April 1955, in Bangkok, Thailand. (Her Royal Highness Princess MahaChakriSirindhorn)
- Her Royal Highness Princess Chulabhorn, born 4th July 1957, in Bangkok, Thailand. (Her Royal Highness Princess ChulabhornKromPhraSrisavangavadhana)

His Majesty's Ordination as a Monk

Buddhism is the national religion of Thailand and His Majesty has always been a devout member of the Buddhist Religion and Palace, which remains the Royal Residence of Their Majesties to the present day.

dedicated disciple of the Lord Buddha. In accordance with Buddhist tradition, young men, who are followers of the Buddhist Religion, normally enter a Buddhist Temple for a period of time,

where they receive instruction in the Buddhist Religion. His Majesty entered the Buddhist Monkhood at Wat PhrasirattanaSasadaram on October 22, 1956 and stayed fifteen days at Wat Bovornnives.

The Constitution of Thailand prescribes that the King shall be the Defender of the Buddhist Faith and also upholder of all Religions in Thailand. His Majesty consequently gives equal attention to the protection of all forms of worship and also to the problems of other religious communities in Thailand.

When His Majesty King Bhumibol entered the Monkhood in 1956, Her Majesty Queen Sirikit became the Kingdom's Regent during that period. Her Majesty performed her duties so well and so satisfactorily that, on the recommendation of the Government, Her Majesty was bestowed with a title of higher distinction, "SomdejPraboromaRajineenath".

In 1957, His Majesty moved his residence from Ampornsatan Throne Hall, Dusit Palace, to ChitraladaRahotan Royal Residence, Dusit

His Majesty the King's Musical Talent

His Majesty King BhumibolAdulyadej has long been hailed as a musician King blessed with an exceptional musical talent. He is widely recognized by world-renowned musicians and composers as a proficient musician, well able to perform in the company of other distinguished, professional musicians. As a composer, His Majesty composed 48 popular songs in various musical genres, including jazz, classical and march tempo.

Several of His Majesty's songs have become all-time favorites among Thais; for example, 'New Year Greetings' has become a traditional favorite played on New Year's Eve. Similarly, 'MahaChulalongkorn', 'Yung Thong' and 'Kasetsart' have each been adopted as the revered alma maters of Chulalongkorn University, Thammasat University and Kasetsart University, respectively.

His Majesty the King demonstrated an early ability and a keen interest in music as a young schoolboy in Switzerland. During this time, he received intensive instruction from musical tutors in theoretical musical practice, including musical notation, composition and other classical music studies over a period of 2-years. This basic grounding in the essential elements of the composition and interpretation of classical music, served him well when he later set about composing his own music.

Later, His Majesty developed a growing interest in jazz. He studied the works of well-known jazz musicians, comparing their different styles and various musical expressions. An accomplished piano, guitar, trumpet, clarinet and saxophone player, His Majesty would often play along with recordings of his favorite jazz musicians. 'Dixieland' became his favored jazz style, which originated in New Orleans and features fast, rousing rhythms and a wide range of artistic freedom of musical expression.

His Majesty the King especially enjoys playing wind instruments of all types and is particularly adroit in playing the soprano, alto, tenor and baritone saxophones, clarinet, trumpet and cornet, while being an accomplished guitar player and pianist.

His musical flair has not only been witnessed by Thai people, but has also been appreciated internationally. In 1960, while Their Majesties the King and Queen were paying a State Visit to the United States, His Majesty joined some of the world's renowned jazz musicians, among them, the legendary clarinetist and bandleader, Benny Goodman, in an impromptu session, involving some remarkable improvisation on the part of His Majesty and other high profile players, while suitably impressing American viewers.

Later in 1964, during Their Majesties State Visit to Austria, the 'NiederOsterreichTonkünstler' Band performed five of His Majesty's compositions, including 'Kinari Suite', 'Falling Rain', 'Love at Sundown', 'Royal Marines March' and 'Royal Guards March' at a concert in the Vienna State Concert Hall. The concert was also broadcast live by radio and was greatly appreciated by the Austrian people.

During this State Visit, His Majesty the King 's talent as a composer and musician was acknowledged with the award of an Honorary Fellowship of the Institute of Music and Arts of the City of Vienna, being only the 23rd recipient and the first Asian composer and musician to receive this prestigious accolade. Another great personal honour witnessed His Majesty's name, together with his compositions and his talent as a musician being included in the recent edition of the "Encyclopedia of Jazz". This particular honour is unique, as His Majesty is the only Thai jazz musician ever to be included in this acclaimed publication.

In the early part of his reign, His Majesty the King used music as a medium to strengthen relations with his subjects, reflected in the foundation of the 'Aw Saw Wan Suk' band in 1952. The King played a variety of music and songs with other members of the Aw: Saw Wan Suk Band, broadcasting live on the radio every Friday evening. The program provided Thai people with an opportunity to contact His Majesty the King, as he was personally involved in the selection and playing of the various songs and music for his audiences in the early period of the program, often answering telephone requests for music himself.

His Majesty and the Aw Saw Wan Suk band brought a welcome form of entertainment to many people at a time when television was only available to a small minority.

His Majesty the King's Artistic Talent

His Majesty King BhumibolAdulyadej has demonstrated a remarkable ability in various fields of art, such as painting, sculpture and photography.

Painting - His Majesty the King has been interested in painting ever since he was a young boy. He has always enjoyed painting by himself and has studied from many books about art and painting, as well as the works of various famous artists from around the world. He would sometimes visit artists whose paintings had impressed him, to obtain insights into how they worked and observe their individual painting techniques, all of which he absorbed and adapted to create his own unique style and interpretation.

There are around 60 paintings by His Majesty the King. Most are oil paintings, classified into three main groups; realism, expressionism, abstract and portraits - the latter being mainly of Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal children. One of His Majesty the King's most prominent portraits is of his father, His Royal Highness Prince MahidolAdulyadej of Songkhla, in which His Majesty

achieves a perfect harmony of highlights and shadows. Free emotional expression, with bright colors and strong brushwork identify His Majesty's painting signature.

Sculpture - His Majesty the King is very capable of creating sculptures in various forms of the art, whether sculpting, casting or molding. He possesses a deep understanding of each process and technique for creating a sculpture, again mainly gleaned from studying art books and experimenting by himself.

His talent in sculpture is clearly evident in his two sculptured masterpieces; a figure of a kneeling woman, 9-inches high, and the half-figure of Her Majesty the Queen, 12 inches high. Both are of a round relief and modeled in plasticine.

In addition, His Majesty has also been actively involved in creating a number of Buddha statues. He personally cast the head of a Buddha statue of 9-inches in 1965, and cast another Buddha statue in the attitude of 'Subduing Mara' of 9-inches in 1966.

Photography-His Majesty the King has been a keen and devoted photographer, having studied and practiced taking and developing photographs since he was very young. He is an extremely proficient photographer, adept in using either manual, automatic, or cinecameras and has extensive expertise in film-developing, photo-printing and enlargement for both black-and-white and color photographs. He has also introduced innovative photographic techniques, resulting in some of his photos becoming valuable works of art.

With his photographic skills being compared with professional photographers, some of his early photographs were published in the 'Standard' magazine, edited by Prince Prem Purachat in 1940.

During the early period of his reign, His Majesty the King enjoyed taking photos of Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal children and many photographs abound of Their Majesties and the Royal children enjoying happy family moments together.

Apart from their high artistic value, His Majesty's large collection of photographs, taken during his many trips upcountry in connection with Royal Projects to improve his people's quality of life, are also a valuable chronicle of Thailand's development and the changing lives of its people, during His Majesty's reign. His camera suspended from his neck, wherever he went during visits to the provinces, provided photographs that helped to formulate operational plans to tackle problems in a timely and efficient manner.

In the capital, his photos of flooded areas in Bangkok, together with his deep understanding and experience of water problems, later contributed to a practical flood-prevention plan. It is therefore no exaggeration to say that His Majesty the King's photographic hobby has also been instrumental in helping to develop the nation.

His Majesty the King's Contribution to Traffic Problem Alleviation

The year 2006 marked the 60th Anniversary of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's Accession to the Throne. During his reign and over the long passage of time, Thai people have overwhelmingly felt His Majesty's graciousness and contributions to their well-being. With his people at heart, His Majesty feels their happiness and woes as intensely as they themselves do.

His Majesty is merciful and has worked tirelessly for his people's well-being. He has never put his own happiness before the welfare of his people. Solid proof of his care is His Majesty's extensive activities in various fields, as well as in many royally-initiated projects.

His Majesty's caring devotion made a difference in the lives of many Thai people. Be it in the urban or rural areas, His Majesty's gracious efforts in a variety of fields have greatly contributed to the people's well-being.

For example, residents of Bangkok and adjacent provinces have long suffered the intense difficulties of traffic congestion. Undoubtedly, persistent traffic congestion hinders the country's economic development and adversely affects people's quality of life.

To ease the people's hardship, His Majesty asked all officials concerned to urgently address the problem of traffic congestion. And to ensure a speedy solution, His Majesty furnished the officials and other parties concerned with useful ideas and plans in the development of efficient traffic networks for main and secondary roads, expressways, bypasses, and ring roads. Much to everyone's delight, all of His Majesty's contributions offered comprehensive solutions to Bangkok's traffic woes.

Concerned about the traffic burdens of residents in the industrial zones of Southern Bangkok and SamutPrakan, His Majesty initiated the construction of the Industrial Ring Road in 1995. This road forms part of a road network including the southern section of Kanchanaphisek Road, to facilitate traffic flow, especially between the Bangkok Port and the industrial factories of SamutPrakan. The Industrial Ring Road network eliminates the need for trucks to travel through inner Bangkok.

For a long time before the ring road, trucks were significant contributors to traffic jams both in the capital and the suburbs. The Industrial Ring Road Project also included the construction of the Industrial Ring Road Bridges, which cross the Chao Phraya River and link Bangkok's Ratburana and Yannawa districts to SamutPrakan's Prapadaeng District. Thanks to these bridges, the major industrial zones of the two provinces are now effectively linked.

The Industrial Ring Road is indeed a "valuable present" to the Thai people from His Majesty the King on the occasions of the 60th Anniversary of his Accession to the Throne, which was celebrated in 2006, and his 80th birthday in 2007.

Throughout the past 60 years, His Majesty's wisdom, overwhelming graciousness, and devotion to his people's well-being have been highly admired by people the world over. It is now more than evident that His Majesty's traffic solution concepts have hugely alleviated traffic congestion and have greatly benefited his people.

Therefore, the Department of Rural Roads was so honoured to work on His Majesty's "Industrial Ring Road Bridge Project", which benefits not only the residents of Bangkok but also the residents of nearby provinces and numerous other motorists. In the context of the auspicious anniversaries that this project marks. The Department of Rural Roads feels great pride in having been under His Majesty's gracious and wise administration.

His Majesty the King's Royal Graciousness Applied to Education

All Thai people are well aware that their long-reigning Monarch, His Majesty King BhumibolAdulyadej, immersed himself deeply from the beginning of his reign in his quest to

eliminate various serious problems faced by communities in different parts of his realm. Throughout his reign, the King has traveled to all areas of his country to contact his people and hear about their problems at firsthand. After which, he set up various Royal Initiated Projects that, over the years, have brought about immeasurable improvements to the quality of life of rural people in communities in all corners of the country.

One of His Majesty's deep concerns has always been education, which is directly related to human development. His Majesty first presented degree certificates to graduates from academic universities on Thursday, December 13, 1962. In his address at this first ceremony, His Majesty emphasized: "...education is a major event of significance for all human beings. People, when born, received a primary education from their parents. As they grew up, teachers and instructors provided lessons of a higher level, guiding their minds to good moral behavior, so that they will be good people for the country in the future...".

His Majesty the King has also founded several schools and established scholarships. His support for education spans from pre-school to post-graduate studies abroad. People are encouraged to acquire formal and non-formal education, as well as education at their own pace. The types of support he gives can be categorized as follows:

Granting of scholarships - His Majesty the King deems the development of the population with education as being essential to national development. He graciously donated a contribution from his private funds to establish the Ananda Mahidol Scholarship, which provides financial support for bright students to enable them to pursue the highest levels of education, in particular, advanced disciplines in various developed countries. There is no obligation for the selected scholars to repay their scholarship, nor to choose a particular career, reflecting the King's wish to enable scholars to realize their responsibilities by themselves.

His Majesty also founded the Navarerk Fund as a Foundation for Needy Schoolchildren under Royal patronage, enabling graduates of compulsory education, with good academic records and of good behavior, who lack financial means, to further their studies at secondary, vocational, teachers' training and university levels.

Setting up of schools - His Majesty has founded and promoted the establishment of numerous schools with different objectives:

- Chitralada School, established within the Chitralada Villa - primarily for Royal children and children of members of the Royal entourage, using the regular syllabus of the Ministry of Education, with classes from kindergarten to upper secondary levels.
- Rajavinit School, established to provide free education for children of members of the Royal entourage.
- Klaikangwon Palace School, established in the reign of King Rama VIII, to provide education to children of officials of Klaikangwon Palace. The school is granted private funds each year by His Majesty the King to support its operation.
- Currently, the Klaikangwon Palace School, in Hua Hin District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, produces and transmits live programs for distance learning at 12 levels, as well as programs on vocational knowledge and college level programs, including a Royal sponsored program, "Education Review" on the distance learning television network, with 14 channels, 24 hours per day, directly to about 7,000 schools all over the country.

- Schools for children in poverty circumstances and orphans - His Majesty the King granted donations from his personal funds to establish schools within Buddhist temples, with Buddhist monks as teachers of both moral and academic knowledge, including:

Wat SichanPradit School, SamutPrakan Province

Wat Santikaram School, Ratchaburi Province

NanthaburiWitthaya School, Nan Province

Wat BuengLek School, Nakhon Phanom Province.

His Majesty the King's Royal graciousness is greatly appreciated by Thai people, which attracts cooperation from both government and private sectors for the development of education, and support for people's well-being in the future, through upholding His Majesty's Royal Address as the main principle.

His Majesty the King's Royal Education Projects in Rural Areas

Ever since His Majesty the King ascended the throne in 1950, he has continuously demonstrated his deep concern for his Kingdom and its people, constantly seeking ways and means to help develop the country, while endeavoring to improve Thai people's quality of life. Early on, His Majesty realized the most effective way of improving the lives of the country's human resource was through the education process.

His Majesty knew that the development of youth education is a vital foundation of any country and for Thailand, this would have to include the opportunity of education for rural people, hill tribes, or people in frontier areas far from the communication system then available.

His Majesty initiated the establishment of the "Sala Ruam Jai" libraries in rural areas and set up the supply of many categories of books for people to obtain information and knowledge from reading. In addition, he graciously donated private funds to construct Frontier Patrol Police Schools to teach hill tribe people and other people in remote areas. His Majesty also graciously bestowed the Royal title of "Chao PorLuangUpatum" or "Royal Father Patronized School" on each of these schools.

The PhraDabos Project is another of His Majesty the King's Royal Initiative Projects, established in 1975. The Project's objective supports those without educational opportunities through a lack of sufficient funds, or who are unemployed and don't have basic education qualifications to continue their studies at higher level institutes. The ultimate aim of this project is to prepare this particular group of people to become self-sufficient by obtaining suitable employment and making a decent living for themselves, their families and ultimately, for the benefit of the country.

Interested people training with the PhraDabos Project include police, armed services, civilians and handicapped veterans. All teachers are qualified volunteers who willingly impart their particular knowledge and experience for the general benefit of others, without receiving any reward in return.

His Majesty graciously donated Bt50 million to the initial fund to establish the Remote Education by Satellite Foundation. Afterwards, both government and private sectors also contributed to the Foundation.

His Majesty also graciously permitted Wang Klai Kang Won School, in cooperation with the Remote Education by Satellite Foundation, to provide live teaching programs for secondary education to be broadcast via 14 television channels. This provides access to modern technology to increase educational opportunities for students in all regions of Thailand, while helping to reduce the problem of teacher shortages, especially in the teaching of foreign languages, science and mathematics.

Established in 1996 to celebrate the auspicious occasion of the 50th Anniversary of His Majesty the King's coronation, the Remote Education by Satellite Foundation together with the Department of General Education, Ministry of Education, provides secondary education programs via satellite to 7,000 schools nationwide.

In addition, both government and private organizations have cooperated together and provide support in a wide variety of ways, following His Majesty's speech on youth education development. For example, BurliJuckerPcl., through the BerliJucker Co., Ltd. Foundation, has helped to increase educational opportunities, by providing scholarships and various educational materials deficient in schools in rural areas.

Throughout his reign, His Majesty the King has bestowed his guidance in education for students, educational institutes, government and private sector organizations and various groups of associated people. Royal speeches are recorded on document with broad ranging advice and deep content. His Majesty's steadfast commitment to the continuous development of Thai education has long been apparent and clearly perceived by all Thais.

His Majesty the King's Various Talents in Science

His Majesty the King is a highly skilled inventor and scientist. Many of his researches and inventions have achieved international recognition and have helped to develop the country and improve Thai people's quality of life. In recognition of the high esteem in which His Majesty's reputation is regarded, the Ministry of Science and Technology decided to select and recount a few of His Majesty's most enterprising Royal Initiative Projects in science, technology and innovative research, as follows:

Royal Vetiver Grass Project: His Majesty first began the Vetiver Grass Project at Huay Sai, Petchburi Province, where samples were grown specially for the first experiment. Initial results indicated the Vetiver grass had taken strong root in the soil and its surface foliage was also sufficiently strong and dense to act as a barrier, well able to resist flowing water. Many organizations cooperated together to help develop and promote the Vetiver Grass Project in accordance with His Majesty's aspirations.

In 1993, by unanimous agreement, the International Erosion Control Association (IECA) presented the International Erosion Control Association's International Merit Award to His Majesty the King for his outstanding leadership in adapting Vetiver grass for soil, water and environment conservation. In the same year, the World Bank presented a Bronze-plate featuring a Vetiver Grass

Sculpture as an Award to His Majesty, praising His Majesty's role as a major soil and water conservationist

Royal Rainmaking Project: Well aware that Thai farmers often suffered from drought conditions due to insufficient rainfall during the long dry season, His Majesty decided, in 1955, to devote himself to studying and researching ways and means of creating artificial rainmaking techniques, donating a contribution from his private funds to launch the Royal Rainmaking Project. In 1969, His Majesty was at last able to test his innovative project by seeding a suitable cloud formation with a quantity of cubic-inch size dry ice particles, or solid carbon dioxide, at a height of 10,000 feet, changing the physical format of the cloud from moisture layers to a heavy water droplet laden cloud formation, which then fell as rain.

The experiment was witnessed by observers on the ground, who recorded the rain falling from the treated cloud formation onto Khao Yai National Park. This indicated the strong possibility of being able to seed larger cloud formations and controlling rainfall in a particular area when required.

On October 19, 1972, His Majesty demonstrated a new formula for the Royal Rainmaking Project to achieve a more effective result, for the first time in the world at KaengKrajan Dam, Petchburi Province. A large assembly of people, including foreign diplomats, government representatives and a vast gathering of Thai people were present for the demonstration, which witnessed a steady shower of artificial rain falling in the designated area.

From this impressive display and the continued development of this scientific approach to creating artificial rain, the Cabinet, on December 12, 2000, approved a proposal to accord His Majesty the King with the title, "Father of Thai Technology". In addition, the Cabinet set the date of October 19th as "Thai Technology Day", to be celebrated annually and to be the responsibility of the Ministry of Science and Technology to organize appropriate exhibitions, fairs and other associated activities.

Royal Tricking-the-soil Project: "... This is one reason we spoke of three, or more than four years ago, that we wanted water to allow the soil to work. Once the soil is working, it will stop being angry. Nobody believed this at first, but after we worked here, results were achieved..." (Royal speech at the Pikun Thong Royal Development Study Center, Narathivat Province, on observing the development of the Royal Innovation Project "Klaeng Din", on Monday, October 5, 1992)

The Royal Tricking-the-soil Project began in 1981, when His Majesty visited Thai people in Narathiwat Province. There, he found evidence of strong-acidity in the swamp soil in this province, making it difficult to develop the swampland for cultivation, due to the high levels of sulfuric acid present in the soil. To overcome this high soil acidity problem, His Majesty suggested using a "Klaeng Din", or "Tricking the Soil" methodology, which involves rendering the soil strongly acidic by alternately flooding and drying the soil to accelerate the reaction of pyrite, to a point where the soil becomes extremely acidic. His Majesty then determined the most suitable way to combat the acidity, by controlling the ground-water level, de-acidifying the soil by applying 1-4 tons of lime per rai, mixed with topsoil, which is then followed by flooding the soil again and planting an appropriate crop selection, followed by research and analysis on improvements to the acidic soil achieved and areas indicating the highest level of productivity.

Through His Majesty's leadership, encouragement and knowledge, the Tricking the Soil theory transformed, useless, acidic swamplands into agricultural fields of rich soil, suitable for

cultivation. On June 20, 2006, in recognition of this major feat and his many other innovative projects, the Cabinet approved a proposal to accord His Majesty the King with the title, "Father of Thai Innovation". In addition, the Cabinet set the date of October 5, each year, as "National Innovation Day", to be celebrated annually and to be the responsibility of the Ministry of Science and Technology to organize appropriate exhibitions, fairs and other associated activities.

His Majesty's Far-Sighted Vision on Alternative Fuels

His Majesty the King has continuously demonstrated his deep concern for his kingdom and its people, constantly seeking ways to help develop the country, while endeavoring to improve the Thai people's quality of life. One of his main concerns has been seeking alternative fuels to deal with the crisis of future fuel shortages.

The potential use of biofuels to replace fossil fuels in mechanical engines has long attracted the interest of His Majesty the King. Recent publicity on palm oil as a possible replacement for diesel fuel under His Majesty's initiatives, sparked a wave of interest among Thai people, including academics, education institutes and various elements from within both the private and public sectors, all of whom have extended their full cooperation by widely and diversely experimenting with the idea. In the beginning, His Majesty graciously presented the sum of Bt.925,500 to the project investment fund for the construction of an official laboratory building and to purchase research and experimental instruments and equipment.

In 1985, His Majesty suggested an initial study be made into the feasibility of producing ethanol from sugar cane, as sugar cane is a prolific crop that grows well in all regions of Thailand. Looking to the future, with reserves of oil becoming depleted and the depressed price of sugar cane, processing sugar cane would boost the crop's commodity value and, at the same time, help resolve the renewable energy problem.

A report prepared by researchers at Prince of Songkhla University that was presented to His Majesty in 2000, indicated that palm oil could indeed be converted into a combustible form through a process known as trans-esterification, in which the palm oil is converted into methyl ester, a combustible compound, well capable of powering a diesel engine.

Towards the end of 2000, Her Royal Highness Princess MahaChakriSirindhorn, visiting a Royal initiated palm oil mill at the Pikul Thong Royal Development Study Center, in Narathiwat Province, witnessed the successful operation of biodiesel-powered agricultural machinery. The following year, the Chaipattana Foundation, a charitable organization, of which His Majesty the King is honorary president and its secretary-general, Dr. SumetTantivechakul, authorized the funding of biodiesel experimental projects to commence.

The first step in producing a home-grown alternative to petroleum was to produce industrial quantities of crude palm oil. In 2002, an 11.3-million-baht mill, with a production capacity of 50 tons of crude palm oil per month, was built at the AoLuek Land Settlement Cooperatives in Krabi Province. The plant is fed by oil from palm trees grown on a 25,000 rai plot of land, cultivated by 3,700 farmers.

Building a biodiesel plant to convert large quantities of raw palm oil into a combustible form was the next stage and in 2003, two biodiesel plants were built. The first, at Pikul Thong Royal

Development Study Center, has a capacity of 400 liters of biodiesel per day, while the second, at Prince of Songkhla University (PSU), produces a credible 1,000 liters per day

Academic research and development into the Project for investigating the feasibility of various forms of renewable energy is still proceeding. Renewable energy for use as a diesel alternative has two formats. One is biodiesel derived from vegetable oil, which is not yet available at filling stations. The other, is desohol, a mixture of diesel, biosiesel and a chemical additive.

Desohol is under research and development headed by Captain Dr. Samai Chai-in of the Royal Thai Naval Dockyards Department and The Royal Chitralada Projects Office. Continued development of this form of renewable energy will greatly help reduce the country's dependence on expensive imported fuel and also contribute considerably to achieving a clean environment. Vehicles using biodiesel fuel will release a less polluted exhaust compared to that of normal diesel fuel.

His Majesty's confidence in the viability of using pure palm oil and pure palm oil blended with diesel as alternative fuels for diesel engines, is reflected in His Majesty's decision to register both processes with the Department of Intellectual Property. In the future, Biodiesel will increasingly gain popularity as an alternative source of fuel.

Once again, through his dogged perseverance, scientific knowledge and organized cooperation, encouragement and support, His Majesty has triumphed in producing an energy alternative from a home-grown product that exemplifies His Majesty the King's admonition to us all, to seek and apply indigenous means to achieve our own self-sufficiency.

His Majesty the King's Sufficiency Economy

"...to be a tiger is not important. The important thing for us is to have a self-sufficient economy. A self-sufficient economy means to have just enough to survive. About this, I have often said that a self-sufficient economy does not mean that each family must produce its own food, weave and sew its own clothes. That is going too far! What I mean, is that each village, or each district, must have relative self-sufficiency. Things produced in surplus can be sold, but should be sold in the same region, not too far away, so that transportation costs are minimized..."

His Majesty's speech, which included his reference to sufficiency economy, was presented on the auspicious occasion of the eve before His Majesty's Birthday Anniversary, on December 4, 1997, the year in which the devastating Asian economic crisis struck Thailand.

In actual fact, His Majesty had long been expressing this same simple philosophy, as a guideline for Thai people to follow in leading their lives, for more than 25 years before the 1997 economic crisis. Even as Thailand gradually recovered from the crisis, His Majesty cautioned his people to practice their lives in this manner to survive and once more attain a stable and durable existence.

His Majesty has graciously reminded Thai people on many occasions of a step-bystep and balanced approach to development, which is now known as the Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy, providing guidance on appropriate conduct covering numerous aspects of life.

Sufficiency economy is a philosophy that stresses appropriate conduct and way of life while incorporating moderation, due consideration in all modes of conduct, and the need for sufficient

protection from internal and external shocks. It requires the application of accurate knowledge, care and giving, mutual assistance and collaboration.

The aim is to create bonds which closely link people from all sectors together and boost a positive, creative force in order to lead to unity, a balanced and sustainable development, as well as readiness to cope appropriately with critical challenges occurring as a result of globalization.

A well-known and practical example of the application of the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy is integrated farming practice according to the "New Theory". The New Theory which was first introduced by His Majesty the King in 1992 promotes step-by-step development, starting from building a good basis for people at family level to enable them to become self-reliant to a certain extent, without taking advantage of others. The people can then join hands in various activities to form a group, community, or even a community enterprise.

The aim is to enhance the creative force among themselves which in turn helps strengthen the community, reduces the risks of impact from external factors and builds connections with large-scale businesses, government agencies and organizations. The end result will then be the expansion of various forms of the cooperation scope at national level.

His Majesty's philosophy of sufficiency economy serves as a guideline for people at all levels on how to conduct their daily lives. This is also accepted and respected by the global community.

On May 26, 2006, United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan presented an international award to His Majesty in recognition of his dedication to improving the lives of Thai people. It was the first time that the UNDP Human Development Lifetime Achievement Award has been awarded to an individual in honor of their lifetime's work furthering the understanding and progress of human development in a national, regional or global context.

His Majesty the King's Agricultural Talent

Thailand is an agricultural country. Agriculture has been the basic occupation of the Thai people over the centuries and agricultural development is the driving force of national economic and social development, as highlighted in His Majesty the King's royal address:

"The prosperity of the country relies on ensuring that the prosperity of agriculture is given top priority;"

The important royal initiatives regarding the development of agricultural production involve research and experimentation of new plant varieties including economic plants, plants for soil improvement and herbal plants; study of insects and pests; as well as development of livestock such as cattle. Knowledge and technology should be simple, inexpensive and applicable for farmers. Significantly, they must be suitable for the social and environmental conditions of the local areas.

Self-Reliant Agriculture

His Majesty's major concern is to enable farmers to be self-reliant especially in terms of food such as rice, vegetables and fruits. However, farmers should not only depend on agricultural products because they are vulnerable to fluctuations of market prices and unstable natural conditions. Instead, His Majesty promotes integrated farming to reduce risks from having to depend solely on

a single crop while enabling them to be self-supporting all year round. Moreover, farmers should be able to live on supplementary income such as from cottage industries. The SUPPORT (Supplementary Occupations and Related Techniques) Foundation under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit urges farmers to produce handicraft works using readily available materials in the community in order to earn extra income.

The King's Experiments

Effective agricultural development requires real research and experimentation as well as gradual practices as stated in His Majesty's speech:

"Agriculture which concerns the livelihood of the Thai farmers should emphasize real practice, rather than relying on textbooks."

Thus, His Majesty has allocated parts of his Chitralada Villa compound to act as stations for conducting research and experiments in all fields of agriculture since 1962.

His Majesty the King stresses that research and experimentation should take place both before and after production. Before production, the points of consideration should include suitability between plants and soil as well as the demand of the markets. After production, they should cover consistency of the markets, the quality of the products and the farmer's basic knowledge of accounting and agricultural marketing which will enable them to earn a living from self-supporting types of enterprise. His Majesty deems that the collective force of the farmers is crucial in contributing to the success of such enterprises.

Royal Initiative Agricultural Development Projects

Agricultural projects under His Majesty the King's initiatives comprise different types of work. In general, these projects concern study, research and experimentation of plant and animal species suitable for the nature of the local areas. Most of the projects are being implemented in the Royal Development Study Centres and the successful results have been disseminated to the public by means of training. These projects also embrace work such as the Promotion of Rice Cultivation on Terraces Project, Sri Sakhon District, Narathiwat Province; the Integrated Development Project, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province; the Royal-initiated Wat MongkolChaipattana Area Development Project, Saraburi Province; the Royal-initiated New Theory Demonstration Project at Ban DaenSamakkhee, Khao Wong District, Kalasin Province, etc.

His Majesty the King's Environmental Talent

With His Majesty the King's wide visionary perception, he was able to foresee the impacts of environmental problems on national development. Thus, His Majesty initiated many Royal Development Projects concerned with conservation and management of natural resources including Development and Conservation of Soil, Water Sources, and Forest Resources.

Development and Conservation of Soil

Natural soil resource has largely deteriorated during the past few decades, and many Royal Development Projects have been aimed at improving and restoring the productivity of deteriorated resources and to help solve soil problems including deterioration of soil, soil lacking quality and shortage of land for cultivation.

To encourage farmers to learn how to conserve soil and be able to manage it by themselves, His Majesty established the KhaoHinSorn Royal Development Study Centre and the Pikun Thong Royal Development Study Centre to conduct study and research on soil problems. Moreover, His Majesty also conducted a study concerning cultivation of vetiver grass to control soil erosion and maintenance of moisture in the soil.

With His Majesty's remarkable aptitude, he initiated the "New Theory" which is the practice for managing a piece of land by dividing it into portions and implementing integrated farming. The piece of land should be divided for rice farming, field crops and horticulture, with a pond area for agricultural uses and raising fish, and a house and growing of garden crops, which enables farmers to have food all year round, as stated in a royal speech below:

"... The New Theory... is one way to enable the people to have enough food: they won't be rich but they will have sufficient food and won't go hungry..."

Development and Conservation of Water Sources

The Huai Hong Khrai Royal Development Study Centre at DoiSaket District, Chiang Mai Province was established as one of His Majesty's initiative projects. The centre aims to conduct research on appropriate patterns of development of watershed areas for economic benefits as well as various development patterns, which enable the people to be self-reliant without having to destroy nature.

Development and Conservation of Forest Resources

His Majesty is aware of the importance of forest resources especially due to drought and flood problems caused by forest destruction. His Majesty suggested several theories to rehabilitate forest resources as follows;

- Reforestation without Planting: An example of this theory is provided at the RoyalinitiatedKhai Cha-ngum Deteriorated Soil Rehabilitation Study Project, Ratchaburi province. The project demonstrates His Majesty's initiative concerning the rehabilitation of forests based on the principle of natural cycle, which is simple and cost-saving as well as supporting the original natural cycle of the forest.
- 3 Forests, 4 Benefits: This theory was implemented at the Huai Sai Royal Development Study Centre, Petchaburi Province, and the Huai Hong Khrai Royal Development Study Centre, Chiang Mai Province. The 3 forests to be planted should be for timber, fruit and firewood. All of which would yield benefits to the people in a symbiotic manner. Besides, the 4th benefit is the conservation of soil and water.
- Mangrove Forestation: mangrove trees are planted relying on the motion of tides for their growth. The trees form a wall to protect the coastal areas from wind and erosion, Besides, they serve as a habitat for aquatic animals which helps to restore the balance and abundance of the ecological system.

Death and funeral of BhumibolAdulyadej

His Majesty the King died in Siriraj Hospital in Bangkok, Thailand on 13 October 2016, at 15:52 local time, at the age of 88, as announced by the royal palace later that day. The following day, his body was taken by motorcade to the Grand Palace for the customary bathing rite. Thousands of the bereaved public lined the route, demonstrating their affection for their "king of kings". The

royal procession arrived at the Grand Palace through VisetChaisri Gate at 17:00. His only son and the next in line to rule the kingdom, Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn, presided over the bathing ritual at PhimanRattaya Throne Hall.

A royal cremation ceremony took place over five days at the end of October 2017. The actual cremation, which was not broadcast on television, was held in the late evening of 26 October 2017. Following cremation his ashes were taken to the Grand Palace and were enshrined at the ChakriMahaPhasat Throne Hall (royal remains), the Royal Cemetery at Wat Ratchabophit and the Wat BowonniwetVihara Royal Temple (royal ashes).

National Day of Thailand

The National Day of Thailand is in remembrance of His Majesty the late King BhumibolAdulyadej, the world's longest serving monarch and the "Development King", well loved by the people of Thailand. The late King had contributed to the improvement of lives in Thailand and all over the world with his Sufficiency Economy philosophy.

The ninth monarch of Thailand from the Chakri Dynasty, the King started his reign in 1946. In 1987, he was conferred the title "King Bhumibol the Great". He passed away in October 2016 after struggling with a disease. The people of Thailand treated King Bhumibol with reverence because of what His Majesty had done for the country. He is also known as the "Father of the Nation", so the Thai people celebrate Father's Day on the day of the King's birth anniversary.

King Bhumibol's son, King Maha Vajiralongkorn, succeeded his father as King of Thailand on December 1, 2016. Nonetheless, December 5th remains as the National Day of the country in commemoration to the dearly loved and profoundly respected King. Meanwhile, King Maha Vajiralongkorn's birthday on July 28 is celebrated as another public holiday. In essence, the memory of the late King Bhumibol is forever etched in the hearts of the people of Thailand.

King Bhumibol's birth anniversary is a significant day for the Thai people. They have high respect for the late king they deeply revered. Thus, on National Day, there are symbols which the people of Thailand use to commemorate His Majesty's birthday. Disrespecting these symbols is considered a serious offense in Thailand.

Thailand's Lese Majeste Laws state that symbols of the royal family, especially of the King of Thailand, must be treated with respect. Speaking negatively about the royal family is a punishable infraction. Likewise, making jokes or criticizing any member of the royal family can land someone in jail. Furthermore, the Thai currency is a symbol of the king; hence, stepping on money is considered a form of disrespect. Tourists are not exempted from the Lese Majeste Laws.

Moreover, the Thai love to wear yellow during the National Day as it is the King's color and the color of Monday, which is the day the King was born into this world.

The National Day of Thailand is commemorated as a solemn event. It starts with a prayer ceremony at Bhumibol Bridge where the royal anthem and the late King's composition would be sung. There are also merit-making ceremonies held at the Grand Palace and led by the current King.

The whole country dresses up in yellow, which is the King's color. The children also give their fathers and grandfathers canna flowers (similar to a lily). The temples will be busy as people usually give alms to the monks. There are also cultural performances organized by local

communities. Before the late King passed, the people of Thailand used to camp outside of the Royal Residence so they can have a glimpse of His Majesty after he delivers a speech. Moreover, there are fireworks shows in some cities, particularly in Bangkok. However, when King Bhumibol died in 2016, the whole nation went into mourning. Wearing their yellow clothes, they light candles to honor His Majesty.

Thailand honors HM the late King on World Soil Day

Thailand has organized nationwide activities to honor His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej the Great and his brilliance in the area of soil, as the international community marks World Soil Day on December 5.

One area to which His Majesty King Bhumibol devoted considerable attention, and achieved tangible results, was in the area of soil, specifically preserving soil around water sources and rehabilitating deteriorated soil. His Majesty's work greatly benefited the nation's farmers and served as the basis for modern Thai environmental re-balancing efforts. His Majesty initiated a soil development project in 1968 to rejuvenate the soil of suffering farmers and saw to the establishment of a development center aimed directly at soil issues, ultimately bringing about successes which were noted both nationally and around the globe.

In 2002, the International Union of Soil Science (IUSS), in coordination with the Land Development Department of Thailand and the Soil and Fertilizer Society of Thailand, organized an international conference on soil in Bangkok, hearing about His Majesty's works and viewing the achievements in an exhibition. The IUSS was so impressed that it mandated World Soil Day in honor of His Majesty in sustainable betterment of soil.

At the 144th United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) summit, which took place in June 2012 in Rome, Italy, it was officially decided that World Soil Day be observed annually on His Majesty's birthday December 5 in acknowledgement of the gratitude owed to the late King by soil scientists the world over.

On April 16, 2012, the IUSS presented His Majesty with the Humanitarian Soil Scientist award and requested his approval for the use of December 5 as World Soil Day. It was stated that the day would be used to raise global awareness of soil betterment. They also requested the late King's approval for 2015 to be recognized as "World Soil Year".

World Soil Day is a day for people to focus attention on the importance of healthy soil. World Soil Day aims to raise awareness of the importance of sustaining healthy ecosystems and human well-being.

Thailand has denoted December 5 as World Soil Day since 2012. For 2019, the FAO has set the theme for the day as "Stop Soil Erosion, Save Our Future", focusing on the promotion of awareness of the need for topsoil preservation.

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