



AMDA

NEWSLETTER

THE ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL DOCTORS FOR ASIA

AMDA INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS 1988-1989

PRESIDENT

Shigeru Suganami

CHAIRMAN

Francisco P. Flores

INFORMATION

Nipit Piravej

FINANCE

Kenneth Hartigan-Go

DIRECTORY

Mohd Suhaimi Hassan

EXCHANGE PROGRAM

M.S. Kamath

REGIONAL COORDINATORS

Dennis Shun Chiu Lam

45, Yue Kwong Rd.,
27/F, Flat 2, King Fai House,
Aberdeen,
Hongkong.

M.S. Kamath

Dept. of Ayurveda,
Kasturba Hospital,
Manipal-576119, India

A. Husni Tanra

Jalan Sunu G-5,
Kompleks UNHAS, Ujung,
Pandang, Indonesia.

Kohei Tohda

39-1 Ienoshita,
Hiroomote, Akita,
Japan.

Mohd Suhaimi Hassan

55, Jalan SG 6/15,
Taman Sri Gombak,
Batu Caves, Selangor,
68100 Malaysia.

Kenneth Hartigan-Go

11 Lourdes Castillo St.
Quezon City 3008,
Philippines.

Euan Murugasu

25, Sunset Heights,
Clementi Park,
Singapore 2159.

Jintana Pootirat

92/7 Soi Jitvisut 1,
Muang, Nontaburi,
Thailand 11000.

OFFICE :

Suganami Hospital,
1/310 Narazu, Okayama,
Japan 701-12. Tel. 0862-84-7676

VOL.3 NO.9

JULY 1989

ISSN 0857-7412

READERS' SURVEY

The Non-governmental & Community Organizations Network for Thai Children



The well-being of children is the focus of a large number of NGOs in Thailand. At present there are more than 300 national and international NGOs, working at both local and national level in all areas of importance to children such as health, education, welfare, the law and water resources and environmental sanitation. They are increasingly encouraged by the Government as the Sixth Plan promotes a strong role for NGOs and community organizations in helping to implement the extensive social development programme with the limited resources available.

continued on page 3

IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial

P.2

Readers' Survey

P.5

Deterioration of the
Environment in Thailand

P.3

AMDA NEWSLETTER

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL DOCTORS FOR ASIA

PURPOSES

1. To publish information about AMDA activities.
2. To provide a medium of communication among AMDA members.
3. To be a forum for AMDA members to express ideas and comments.
4. To publish articles about health care and community development

EDITOR

Nipit Piravej, *Thailand*

ASSISTANT EDITORS

Praphai Piravej, *Thailand*

Antonio C. Sison, *Philippines*

EDITORIAL BOARD

M.S. Kamath, *India*

Tsuyoshi Kawakami, *Japan*

Euan Murugasu, *Singapore*

Christmas Tanchatchawan, *Thailand*

All materials for publication should be sent to Nipit Piravej, M.D., editor, AMDA Newsletter, 56/13 Soi Kua Witthaya, Charoen Nakhon Rd., Bangkok 10600, Thailand.

EDITORIAL



Dr. Nipit Piravej

Eight issues of the third volume of the AMDA Newsletter have already passed your view and they were all published under the present editorial staff. Many changes from the previous two volumes have been made in the format, organization and content of the newsletter. As you could have easily noticed, we have set up 9 basic sections or columns, namely Cover Story, Special Report, AMDA Interview, AMDA in Focus, Members' Corner, Editorial, News & Notes, Correspondence and Announcement. Among these, only the section of correspondence, which is designed to be a forum for the readers to express their view points about the published articles or messages, has never been realized yet, despite great effort.

Perhaps this is because it needs a lot of active participation from the readers. We hope that we shall be able to encourage readers to send in sufficient materials to set up this section eventually. Also in the plan is to set up another new column called AMDA panel discussion which will be another way to gather ideas from AMDA members in some special topics. All in all, we just would like to try our best to booster the effectiveness of AMDA Newsletter as a medium of communication among AMDA members and supporters.

However, most of the above mentioned w stemmed mainly from one side, i.e., came only from the judgement of the editorial staff which might not be appropriate or good enough. Now it's time to take a break and listen to your feed back. So, we decided to devote part of the space in this issue of the newsletter to a set of questionnaire which we strongly hope that all readers would kindly fill it in with sincere comments and suggestions and send it back to us. Your cooperation will certainly be a great contribution to AMDA Newsletter and, thus to our association as a whole. AMDA Newsletter is primarily published for AMDA members and supporters and hopefully also by AMDA members and supporters.

The Editor

Some of the NGOs are extremely small, running micro-projects, others much larger, operating at the national level in multi-sectoral programmes. There have recently been concerted efforts to co-ordinate the organizations according to their focus of interest, and to set up an information system which will keep track of exactly what activities are being undertaken by whom and where.

The umbrella organization endorsed by the Cabinet as being the leading co-ordinating body for young people, is the National Council of Children and Youth in Development. The Council is a member of the corresponding councils for the ASEAN and Asian regions, thereby being able to organize regional and sub-regional exchanges of information, sponsorships and expertise.

The major responsibilities of the Council include coordination between different NGOs and between the Government and NGOs as whole; formulation of national level child and youth development policy for the private sector; promotion and support of NGO activities; and establishment of effective child and youth information networks. The Council has some 50 members, among them two subsidiary umbrella organizations, the Child Welfare Associations of Thailand (CWAT) with 34 members and the Committee of Volunteer Youth Organizations with 15 members. CWAT focuses on activities con-

cerned with children, while, as its name suggests, the Committee of Volunteer Youth Organizations concentrates on youth. CWAT is presently working on a study to collect and compile baseline data on the activities of the various NGOs in Thailand engaged in child welfare work, in order to minimize duplication of effort and accelerate decision making, while at the same time creating a data bank so as to become a clearing house in the field. Another CWAT project is a thorough review of the child welfare laws through research and workshops in the four main regions of the country.

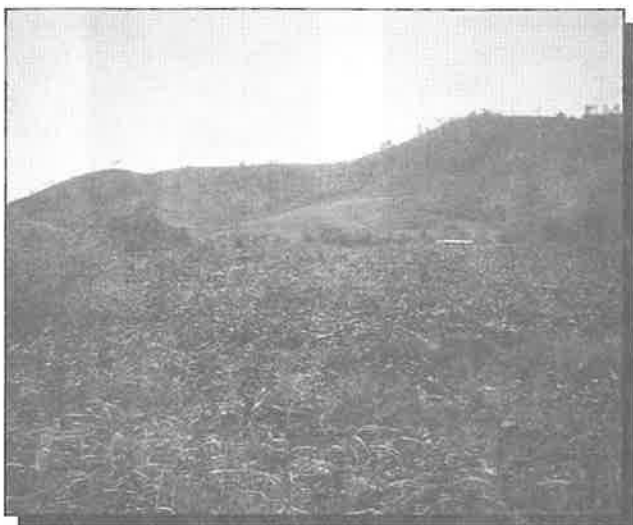
Also members of the Council are three religious youth organization which together make up an extensive network throughout the country. The Young Buddhists Association has 75 branches and members in all regions, although rather fewer in the south. The Young Muslims Association is mainly in the south but also in the central region. The Catholic Youth Council is found all over Thailand, but particularly in the north and northeast.

The Council member with the most widespread network at the village level is the Young Farmers' Foundation. Comprising 6,000 groups with 200,000 members the Foundation acts as a support for young farmers, helping them to obtain needed credit and loans.

(Source : UNICEF)

National Economic and Social Development Board of Thailand

Deterioration of the Environment in Thailand



In terms of climate, topography and natural resources as a whole, Thailand can be considered generously endowed. The climate imposes no life-threatening extremes, rainfall is generally adequate, river systems well distributed and a long coastline of over 2,600 kilometres provides substantial access to marine resources. However, since the mid 1960s, rapid population growth, the completion of a nationwide transportation system opening up previously inaccessible areas of the country, the Thai farmers' entrepreneurial drive into new, land-expensive cash crops and rapid industrialization centred around Bangkok have combined to place unprecedented pressures on the Kingdom's total land resources and their effective management and protection from environmental degradation.

continued on page 4

The implications of this situation for the future are severe in as much as Thailand remains today and will remain at least into the next century, a substantially agrarian economy. Over the last 30 years the agricultural sector has been transformed from a rice mono-culture into a ranking global producer and exporter of a diversified range of cereals, root-crops and agro-industrial products. Today, the Kingdom is one of the world's top six exporters of food and the only net exporter of food in Asia.

The transformation was made possible not by rapid increases in crop yields or the advent of the Green Revolution, but rather by the expansion of land under cultivation. However, it is now recognized that Thailand reached its "land frontier" in terms of a sustainable and ecologically viable area under cultivation, sometime in the late 1970s.

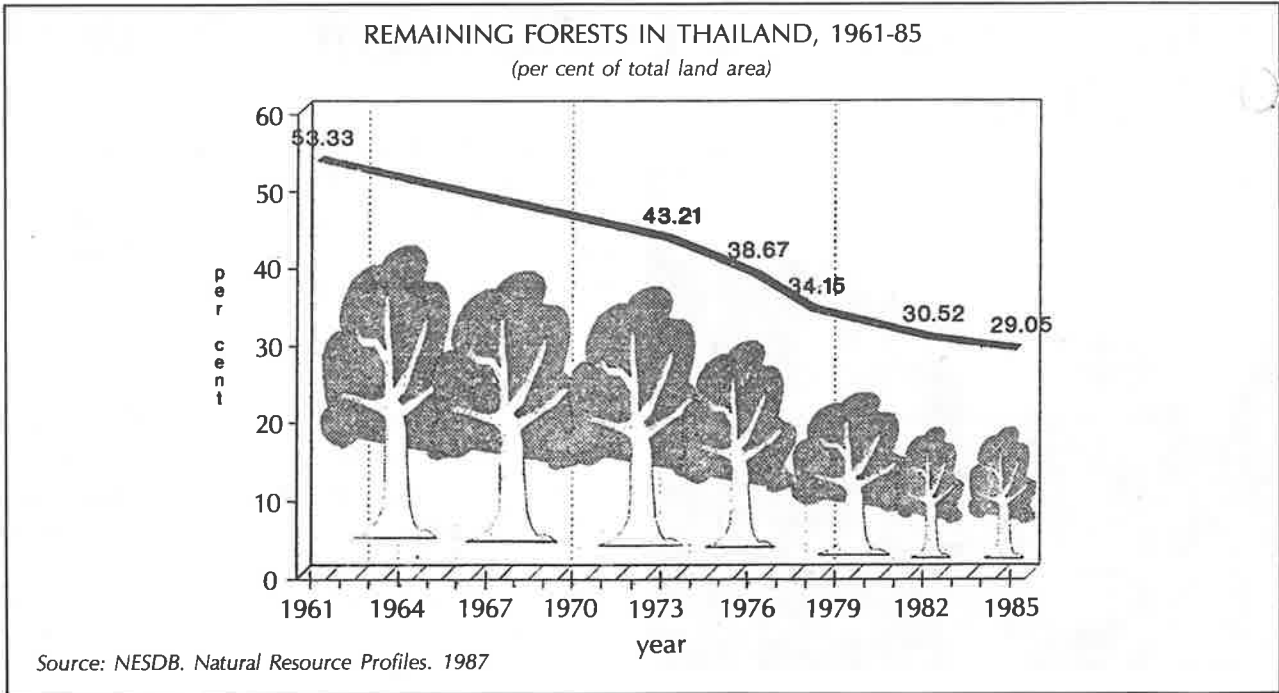
The continued rapid expansion of agricultural land during the present decade has led to the correspondingly rapid decline in the country's forests graphically depicted in the figure. In 1988/89 the ecological consequences of cutting down so many trees was forcefully demonstrated in two contrasting disasters: floods and mudslides in the south of the country and the fourth year of prolonged drought in five provinces in the northeast. The northeast is suffering not only from lack of moisture, but also from increasing salinity in the soil.

There have been inevitable repercussions on the well-being of children in the affected areas. Many parents in the northeast have migrated in search of work, leaving their young children in the care of old people, who are sometimes ill-equipped to search for the now scarce rice and water. There are health problems, notably an out-break of measles with attendant ARI. Children are dropping out of school. In the south a number of children lost their lives or were injured, several were orphaned, and many families were deprived of their livelihood as their land was swept away. Over 200 schools were badly damaged, some beyond repair, and the majority of drinking water sources needed urgent rehabilitation in the three worst hit provinces.

The Royal Thai Government has now established a long-term target of increasing forest coverage to 40 per cent of total land area through a combination of protecting ecologically valuable forest areas and promoting commercial reforestation programmes. Following public out-cry after the southern disaster, where much of the loss of life had been caused by illegally felled logs swirling along in the floodwaters, logging was banned nation-wide.

Toxic pollution of rivers and streams due to overuse of pesticides and chemical fertilizers, together with effluents from agro-industries, are adding to the environmental degradation of rural areas. Untreated industrial waste emptied into rivers in urban areas is also crippling the life-support capacity of the water.

continued on page 5



Deforested Area is more commonly seen now in Thailand.

Other environmental problems in urban areas are linked to water usage, waste disposal and air pollution. In many towns and cities there is an inadequate supply of clean water and what is available is threatened by inappropriate waste treatment. Proper treatment of water and other wastes requires investment and contributions by the public. Meanwhile there has been a noticeable increase in the intestinal disease morbidity rate.

Housing and small industries are not necessarily separated and there are few controls over factory emissions. The air is further polluted by exhaust fumes from the numerous vehicles. Growing in volume

by an average 10 per cent annually, traffic is heavy virtually 24 hours a day in the capital and other crowded cities such as Chaing Mai. High concentrations of carbon monoxide, often exceeding the relevant standard, were found in a 1983 study of selected major cities. Thus urban dwellers are subjected to extensive pollution, which is clearly of potential danger to young children. For instance, the lead content in petrol is .45 mg. per litre. A study comparing the level of lead in the blood of children in urban and rural areas showed that the Bangkok sample had twice as much as their rural counterparts and the average 40 microgrammes per decilitre found was sufficient to affect the central nervous system.

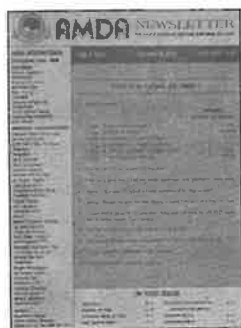


AMDA

NEWSLETTER

THE ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL DOCTORS FOR ASIA

READERS' SURVEY



Please Fill in the Questionnaire in the Following Pages and Send it as soon as possible back to :

DR. ANTONIO C. SISON, M.D.
ASSISTANT EDITOR AMDA NEWSLETTER,
1906 TAFT AVENUE,
MALATE, MANILA,
PHILIPPINES

Please indicate your answer with a "tick" in the box or by writing on the line provided.

A. Your Personal Background

1. Name _____
(First Name) (Family Name)
2. Age _____
3. Sex ☐ Male ☐ Female
4. Marital status ☐ Single ☐ Married
5. Country _____
6. Status in AMDA
☐ Member
☐ Advisor/Supporter
☐ Others _____
7. Profession ☐ Governmental ☐ Non-governmental
Specialty _____
Position _____
Office _____
8. Years after graduation _____
9. Yours hobbies _____
10. Mailing address _____

B. Reading of the AMDA Newsletter

1. Your first issue of the AMDA Newsletter
Volume _____ Number _____ Month _____ Year _____
2. Your last received issue of the AMDA Newsletter (Excluding this issue)
Volume _____ Number _____ Month _____ Year _____
3. Do you regularly receive AMDA Newsletter ?
☐ Yes ☐ No
4. How many of the last 8 issues of the AMDA Newsletter, including this issue, have you read ?
☐ All ☐ 5-6 ☐ 3-4 ☐ 1-2
5. Does any person regularly share the reading of your AMDA Newsletter ?
☐ Yes ☐ Family members
☐ Friends/Colleagues
☐ No
6. How do you usually read your AMDA Newsletter ?
☐ All articles ☐ Few articles
☐ Most articles ☐ Usually not at all
7. Do you find AMDA Newsletter of value to you and your work ?
☐ Yes ☐ Very much
☐ Moderately
☐ Very little
☐ No
8. Do you get to know other AMDA members by reading the Newsletter ?
☐ Yes ☐ Quite a lot
☐ Some
☐ Very few
☐ No

Detach here

continued on page 7

9. How much have you learned about other AMDA members' ideas by reading the AMDA Newsletter ?
- ☐ Yes ☐ Quite a lot
☐ Moderately
☐ Very little
- ☐ No
10. Do you feel missing AMDA Newsletter if you do not receive it for a month ?
- ☐ Yes ☐ Neutral ☐ No
11. Other comments _____

C. Editorial

1. Which of the following sections do you read in order of priority ?

	Top Priority	Moderate Priority	Less Priority
Cover Story	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interview	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special Report	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AMDA in Focus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Members' Corner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
News & Notes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Editorial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Announcement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Name your 3 most favorite articles or sections :

a. _____ in Vol _____ No _____

b. _____ in Vol _____ No _____

c. _____ in Vol _____ No _____

☐ None

3. Any new section(s) would you like to be included in AMDA Newsletter ?

☐ Correspondence

☐ Panel Discussion

☐ Exchange Program Update

☐ Please Specify _____

4. Any other topics would you like to be published in AMDA Newsletter ?

☐ Medical academic articles

☐ Medical case report

☐ World politics

☐ Economics

☐ Environmental problems and ecology

☐ Travel/Life style in AMDA Countries

☐ Please specify _____

5. How do you find the language used in the AMDA Newsletter ?

☐ Fine

☐ Acceptable

☐ Need much improvement

6. Other comments _____

D. As a Contributor of the AMDA Newsletter

1. How frequent do you contribute article or message to the AMDA Newsletter ?
☐ Once ☐ Twice ☐ More than twice ☐ Never
2. Have you ever appeared in the article or news in the AMDA Newsletter ?
☐ Yes ☐ No
3. Are you ready to write an article for the AMDA Newsletter ?
☐ Yes, voluntarily
☐ Yes, only when asked to do so
☐ No
4. The most important obstacle(s) for you to contributing some articles to the AMDA Newsletter is (are) :-
☐ Lack of time
☐ Language problem
☐ Writing skill
☐ Communication/message delivery problem
☐ Too complicated format of manuscript preparation
☐ Please specify _____

E. Publication Quality

1. How do you consider the appearance of the last 8 issues of the AMDA Newsletter ?
☐ Attractive
☐ Acceptable
☐ Need much improvement
2. How do you think about the letter type used in the AMDA Newsletter ?
☐ Fine
☐ Acceptable
☐ Need much improvement
3. How do you think about the picture printing quality ?
☐ Fine
☐ Acceptable
☐ Need much improvement
4. Would you suggest color printing even at the expense of higher cost ?
☐ Yes ☐ No
5. Other comments _____

F. The Delivery of Your AMDA Newsletter

1. How do you obtain your copy of AMDA Newsletter ?
☐ Direct mailing ☐ Indirect mailing from regional coordinator
☐ Person to person distribution
2. What is the usual condition of the AMDA Newsletter when it reaches you ?
☐ Good condition
☐ Fair condition
☐ Bad condition
3. How do you consider the timing of receiving each Newsletter ?
☐ Satisfactory
☐ Acceptable
☐ Too much delayed
4. Other comments _____