

MATICHON INFORMATION CENTER		Subject Heading :	
Source : The Nation		No : 51003526	
Date : 3 JAN 2008	Page : 3A		

Foundation mourns its champion

Princess was 'hard-working, economical and punctual' in helping medical group

■ *The Nation*

BEFORE SHE fell ill, Her Royal Highness Princess Galyani Vadhana planned to visit Narathiwat and Pattani, senior officials at the Princess Mother's Medical Volunteer Foundation said yesterday.

Despite her illness, the Princess continued to work and did not wish people to see she was unwell, they said.

The Princess passed away at the age of 84 in the early hours of yesterday at Siriraj Hospital, where she had been treated for cancer since June 15.

Foundation deputy secretary-general Dr Yuth Bhotharamik revealed yesterday that, following her visit to Bang Lang Dam in Yala, the Princess planned to visit foundation members at Pattani and Narathiwat, but heavy rains prevented her trip.

She planned to stay at a local Army camp because of its easy access. However, she fell ill and was unable to travel, he said.

The Princess accompanied Her Royal Highness the Princess Sri Nagarindra the Princess Mother in activities for the foundation, which the Princess Mother founded. Volunteer doctors provide people in

remote areas with health services. After the Princess Mother died, the Princess carried on the mission.

Yuth recalled the Princess as punctual, economical and hard-working. When her health was good, she planned visits to cover all the foundation's mobile units in 53 provinces. Despite concern these visits could affect her health, the Princess said she was happy when visiting people, he said.

The Princess not only saw to it that people had health services but cared for other matters, he said. The Princess was good-humoured and made foundation staff feel close to her.

Its secretary-general Dr Pramuk Chanthawimol said the Princess cared for people in remote areas covered by the foundation's medical teams, including 14 South provinces. She tried to visit hard-working volunteers, he added.

During the first period of her illness, the Princess suffered back pain, yet continued to carry out foundation work without aid.

He accompanied the Princess to Udon Thani, where she visited locals, gave gifts and presented honours to volunteers.

"The Princess worked very hard,



HRH PRINCESS Galyani Vadhana grants an audience to villagers during a visit to a medical project under the Princess Mother's Volunteer Doctors Foundation.

especially having to get in and out of helicopters while she was having back pain," he said.

Dentist Norida Waeyusoh, of Bacho Hospital in Narathiwat, a volunteer since 1990 and looking forward to meeting the Princess on her postponed mission, said she was very sad the Princess had died. It is a great loss to the foundation and the Princess was its inspiration, she said.

She believed volunteers, with their strong determination, would continue their work.

"People have a lot of faith in the

foundation's medical units; when they see us, they are hopeful and thankful. The smiles and thank yous are worth more than money or gold, and keep us going. I believed the Princess was happy with the foundation's volunteers in this regard," she said.

Chiang Mai public health chief Dr Wattana Kanchanakamol said the Princess's passing was a great loss, but 1,445 North volunteers of the foundation would continue their work.

More than 500 teachers and students of Boromarajonani College of Nursing in Chiang Mai suspended

morning classes to stand in mourning. They will wear black and white for 100 days.

The Princess's great efforts in public health were not only with the foundation. She allowed 10 Mental Health Department hospitals and a general hospital in Narathiwat to use the name Rajanagarindra, from her full name of Her Royal Highness Princess Galyani Vadhana Krom Luang Narathiwat Rajanagarindra.

She presented the Mental Health Princess Award to those performing outstanding work in this area.