



# THE PARK

MFU International Newsletter

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## MYANMAR CULTURE DAY AND EXHIBITION



## CHINESE CULTURE FESTIVAL



## KOICA "DRAW KOREA WITH YOUR MIND" ART EXHIBITION



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Editor in Chief:

**Dr. Romyen Kosaikanont**

Vice President

Editor:

**Nuya Leewanich**

Head,  
International Affairs Division

Co-Editors:

**Gina Salonga**

Lecturer, School of Liberal Arts

**Wannapha Thippayasak**

Author:

**Theresa Somsri**

Publication:

**Supavij Vejpsitpakorn**

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# Message from the President

For sixteen years, Mae Fah Luang University has abundantly grown and evolved with the intention of becoming “a world university”, producing increasing numbers of high-quality graduates to serve society in every field and expertise across the globe. This year, MFU is very proud to congratulate its latest batch of 1,721 graduates from 10 schools of study. MFU graduates have proceeded to go on to both highly successful careers and further education, and it is our hope that all MFU graduates will continue to use their knowledge and experience to drive innovation and make global impacts.

MFU’s reputation as Thailand’s fastest growing post-secondary institution has been maintained since our earliest days. New schools are constantly established, and MFU productively continues to educate not only students, but also the local community and general public in academics, multicultural cultivation and globalization. MFU has successfully reached out to the entire GMS region and beyond, offering cutting-edge areas of study and fulfilling our principle of “new, different, and better”. Activities are constantly organized to help students and the community practice using English and achieve global competence, with focus on internationalization and international development, as well as hosting national events that allow students to fuse academic skills with entertainment and worldviews to promote multicultural vision within all aspects of university life.

The constructive practice of multicultural vision is visible through our social engagements allowing students to experience other cultures in their real locations and by submerging students in campus activities, and the benefits of the resulting extensive vision and perspective displayed through our constant triumphs in both national and international competitions. As MFU grows academically, we continue to develop the entire region through education and service. We look forward towards ASEAN integration and are fully equipped to lead the region with our innovative progressions.



**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vanchai Sirichana**  
**President**

## The 13<sup>th</sup> Pride and Joy of MFU



On 2 February 2015, Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, as a designated representative of His Majesty the King Bhumibol Adulyadej, presided over the MFU Commencement Ceremony for graduates of academic year 2013 at the C4 Princess Mother Auditorium, MFU, marking the commencement ceremony for MFU's 13<sup>th</sup> generation of students. 1,721 graduates attended the degree presentation ceremony, including four Honorary Doctorate recipients: Charun Pakdeetanakul, receiving an Honorary Doctorate in Law; Chalermchai Kositpipat, receiving an Honorary Doctorate in Social Science; Prasert Prasarttong-osoith, receiving an Honorary Doctorate in Business Administration; and Avudh Srisukri, MD., Professor Emeritus, receiving an Honorary Doctorate in Public Health.

Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn graced the graduates and all attendees with an inspiring speech emphasizing the importance of cooperation and individual humility as a foundation to achieve mutual success with responsibility. Her Royal Highness closed

the ceremony with a blessing for the graduates, followed by honouring MFU with the placement of the GMS Medical Hub foundation stone and official opening of the Royal Reforestation Project in celebration of Her Royal Highness's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday.

MFU is determined to continue extensive developments to become a "World University", continuously producing graduates to serve society in every field and expertise across the globe. This year, 72 out of the total 1,721 graduates were international students, consisting of 59 Bachelor's Degree level graduates, 10 Master's Degree level graduates, and 3 Doctorate Degree level graduates. From that number, 42 graduates were from Myanmar; 15 from China; 7 from Korea; 3 from the Laos PDR; 2 from Cameroon; 1 from Malaysia; 1 from Vietnam; and 1 from Sri Lanka.

## IT Open Space for Opening Minds



On 12 February 2015, the School of Information Technology, MFU hosted the IT Open Space Exposition at the Indoor Sports Complex showcasing competitions and displays such as engineered robots created by students, web design and programming, photography showcases, and numerous other inventions and IT innovations by the MFU community. Participants came from all over the northern region of Thailand, including the general public, academic institutions, IT companies, and potential future employers. The event received great attention and was highly praised by all.

One particularly praised invention showcased in the exposition was iSonar, an obstacle-warning travelling device for the blind created by Mr. Surapol Vorapatratorn, lecturer in the School of Information Technology, which has greatly helped increase the quality of life for Thailand's blind community.

The School of Information Technology has hosted many activities that help promote innovation and creativity among students in the entire region, applying their skills and displaying their aptitude. Many students from every programme within the school have won multiple awards for their efforts and talents, helping confirm legitimacy of the school's quality and reputation of excellence. In addition to extensive use of problem-based learning, most programmes within the School of Information Technology also offer global internship opportunities for students and global employability for graduates, allowing students to prove their skills in multiple cultures and countries.

## A Green University for the Community



On 13 February 2015, the Academic Services Centre and the Institute for Natural Resources and Environmental Management (NREM), MFU hosted a training session on the use of waste and leftover materials to produce vermicompost for local teachers, students, and the general public. Vermicompost, a heterogeneous compost mixture of decomposing food and vegetable waste produced by worms, is a highly efficient method of recycling basic waste that can be commonly found in every household. Plants also greatly benefit from the water-soluble nutrients, high enzyme levels, and reduced contaminants in the compost.

Dr. Panate Manomaivibool, acting on behalf of the Director of NREM, delivered a statement to the participants about the importance of caring for the environment, and presented methods of recycling and waste reduction used to create vermicompost. After the basic foundational lecture, participants were shown to the laboratory where they were taught to produce their own vermicompost (under the close guidance of environmental science experts and award-winning scientists). After the practical training, participants were all given a composting set to take home for further production and distribution among their own communities.

The project is one of MFU's ongoing projects to help care for the environment and spread environmental awareness among the community. NREM is especially dedicated to protecting the environment and promoting awareness through a wide range of means varying from highly scientific to non-scientific, each of which have been highly successful. Through the combined environmental care efforts of the MFU Community, MFU has gained a widespread reputation for the "MFU Goes Green" concept and determination to raising international awareness for environmental conservation.

## Following in Royal Footsteps to Develop the Community



From 13 to 15 February 2015, MFU's Volunteer Club arranged a community service camp for MFU students of all levels, ages, and programmes to participate in the development of Pha Dua School in the Mae Fah Luang District of Chiang Rai province. The school is located 40 kms from MFU in the mountains of Doi Mae Salong, and underprivileged in many aspects. Students from the Volunteer Club selected the school and organised the entire camp, showing excellent teamwork and cooperation despite differences of language and culture. The 118 volunteer participants received great feedback from both the school and local community for their success and benevolence.

To prepare for the camp, a group of older students surveyed the school and prepared the grounds for their fellow younger camp participants, which included basic cleaning and priming the building floors. During the camp, participating students assisted both academically and in the renovation of the school learning environment. The rooms were cleaned and decorated to create a sanitary and conducive learning atmosphere, and six classrooms were selected for teaching math and basic science (sight, states of matter, magnets and electricity, sound, and color). The Pha Dua students were then taught about causes and response methods for natural disasters, which could be further passed on to the students' parents and families, helping the entire community to become more aware of natural disasters and how to stay safe in emergency situations.

## International Botanical Garden of Culture



On 26 February 2015, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vanchai Sirichana, MFU President, revealed that MFU launched a special project for a cherry blossom garden in honour of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday anniversary. Over 10,000 cherry blossom trees comprised of 13 different species were planted in an estimated area of 13 hectares of the MFU Botanical Garden. The Wild Himalayan Cherry Blossom, Yunnan Cherry Blossom, and the Yoshino Cherry Blossom were each carefully selected from Thailand, China, Japan, and Korea to ensure optimal growth in the natural conditions of Chiang Rai and MFU's campus environment. Each species also has different blossom blooming schedules, which promises the result of beautiful blooms throughout the entire year. The cherry blossoms were chosen to represent a few of MFU's many cultures, resulting in the garden being nicknamed the "International Botanical Garden of Culture" by the local and MFU community.

The garden radiates an atmosphere of multicultural fusion, while also providing an educational site for promoting environmental awareness in the local community. The Conscious efforts to help prevent global warming are greatly increased, while also instilling love for nature and the environment, expanding MFU's green efforts and natural conservation to external communities.

## Expanding Diversity in MFU's International Family



On 5 February 2015, the MFU International Affairs Division and International Student Club hosted the "International Student Orientation 2/2014" for new international students enrolling at MFU in the second semester of academic year 2014. The orientation was held at the Mae Sai Meeting Room, the Office of the President Building. This semester, MFU welcomed 39 new international students from 11 countries, expanding MFU's already diverse international family. The orientation was attended by MFU Vice Presidents, Assoc. Prof. Gp. Capt. Yuthana Tra-Ngarn and Dr. Romyen Kosaikanont; lecturers from all schools; staff from various student-related divisions; and both new and returning international students.

In the welcoming address, Dr. Romyen Kosaikanont reminded students of the importance of life-long learning skills and reflecting on the goal of their education, as well as informing new students of MFU's focus on diversity and multicultural perspectives, stating "Diversity is beauty". After the formalities, students mingled and made friends, joining in with games and fun activities as means of both entertainment and broadening cultural understanding. The Thai Performing Arts Club performed a Thai traditional sword dance during dinner, introducing new students to an exciting display of Thai culture, receiving many astonished and thrilled responses. The orientation was a multipurpose session for informing new students and reminding returning students of university rules and regulations; forming new friendships and preparing for life in Thailand; and providing important information for immigration processes.

## From "Buddies" to Friends



On 13 February 2015, the International Affairs Division, MFU, held the first activity for the second semester of academic year 2014's "International Student Buddy Programme" at the Learning Resources and Educational Media Centre (Library) activity court. In the first session, new international students were matched with their Thai "buddies". Buddies then help them become more familiar with the university, campus, and off-campus resources and facilities. The International Student Buddy Programme is organised each semester to enable cultural exchange from first-person inside perspectives and to ease communication between Thai and international students at MFU, helping students understand each other from direct interaction with their peers. This semester, 25 international Bachelor's Degree level students joined the programme, and quickly became good friends with their Thai buddies through an evening of games and icebreaking activities, which then evolved to form even closer relationships and stronger, long-lasting friendships.

## MFU: Providing Outstanding Multidimensional Chinese Education



Within 16 years of establishment, MFU has rapidly become one of the most popular and well-known educational institutions for Chinese language and culture. The School of Sinology, Sirindhorn Chinese Language and Culture Center, and Confucius Institute at MFU have been strongly devoted to working together and working hard, forging strong Thai-Chinese ties and operating as outstanding academic resources in multiple areas of Chinese arts, culture, and language not only for the MFU Community but also for the local communities and general public. Serving as the centre for excellence in the teaching of Thai and foreign languages, development studies, and social sciences, MFU boasts international focus and reflects global vision.

On 13 February 2015, the 7<sup>th</sup> MFU Chinese Culture Festival was held at the F4 Recreation Court with attendance from MFU executives, deans, faculty members, staff, students, and the general public. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chayaporn Wattanasiri, Vice President, opened the festival, which then featured many cultural and complementary activities for everyone to enjoy. Participants employed complementary Chinese cuisine; Chinese cultural activities, such as rope knotting, calligraphy, paper cutting art, mask painting, Chinese bingo, and diabolo juggling; and extravagant displays of performing arts by Confucius Institute volunteers from China, such as instrument playing, kung fu, fan dances, flag dances, and lion dances. The performances ended with a Chinese karaoke contest, allowing students to show off their harmonic vocal talents and expertise in Chinese language. The Chinese Culture Festival is held annually as a part of MFU's celebration of the multicultural community and

aspirations to expand education on international focus and perception.

A "Chinese Language for Daily Conversation" short course training programme was also recently held for lecturers and staff from the Bureau of Vocational Education Standards and Qualification, Office of Vocational Education Commission, the Ministry of Education. A double-session seminar on "Charm of Chinese Culture #4" was also provided for the course attendants. The first session was held on 1 April 2015 by Prof. Cen Ronglin, senior lecturer from the School of Sinology, followed by the second session on 7 April 2015 led by special lecturer Mrs. Ma Jiangrong, a Chinese language, history, and culture expert (with special interest in Thai history and culture). Mrs. Ma Jiangrong was able to provide a perspective of China from a different cultural background, distribute new knowledge and understanding, and provide outlook and vision for living together in the ASEAN community as one.

MFU is widely renowned for its reputation of excellence in Chinese arts, language, and culture, and is strongly devoted to expanding this passion and knowledge to others in the community and region. Thai and Chinese culture is often fused through the vast networks and collaborations between MFU and Chinese partner institutes, which also provide opportunities for students from all academic schools to participate and personally gain direct experience. Students from the School of Sinology have also participated in many academic contests and challenges, often receiving top prizes, including full-ride scholarships from bachelor to doctorate degree level from external institutions.



## An Artistic Fusion of Thai and Korean Culture



On 18 – 24 February 2015, MFU and the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) led by Ms. Choi Won Mi held the “Draw Korea with Your Mind” Art Exhibition at the foyer of the MFU Learning Resources and Education Media Centre (Library). The exhibition focused on the use of Thai materials to create Korean art and reflected MFU’s ability to recognise multicultural exchange, revealing the similarities and differences between both cultures while also merging the differences to form a creative fusion of culture and art. Thai artists, local academic institutions, and the general public showed great interest and participated in the event.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chayaporn Wattanasiri, Vice President of MFU, opened the ceremony, introducing the exhibition and addressing the close relationship between MFU and KOICA. Korean volunteers are appointed by KOICA to teach Korean at MFU, providing students with internal perspectives on Korean culture and language. Through this direct experience, MFU students able to absorb the broadened worldviews of other cultures as well as impact others by sharing their own, forming a new globalized worldview for all within the MFU community.

## Preparing Students and Expanding ASEAN Awareness



On 29 April 2015, as part of the ASEAN Studies course from the School of Social Innovation, MFU students led by the Student Union and Student Development Division organised the 5<sup>th</sup> ASEAN International Fair 2015 at the Indoor Sports Complex, MFU. The main objective of the fair was to promote ASEAN awareness and prepare students for the ASEAN Community by allowing students to actively participate in activities reflecting the cultures and traditions of all ASEAN and nearby countries.

Students had the opportunity to prepare delicacies from all ASEAN countries, dress in national costumes, and perform exquisite displays of dancing and singing such as Lawiswis Kawayan (Philippines), Laskar Palangi (Indonesia), Siam Araya (Thailand), and Peacock Dancing (Vietnam) among many others. Both participating students and attending participants remarked on the extravagance of the fair and expressed their enjoyment, remarking on how much they had learned from submerging themselves in other cultures.

## Celebrating Myanmar Culture in Myanmar Style



On 3 April 2015, the International Affairs Division and Myanmar Student Union organized the fourth Myanmar Culture Day and Exhibition at the Indoor Sports Complex. The event was a vivacious display of tradition, dance, food, and a taste of home for many Myanmar students at MFU. Over 400 attendees joined the celebration, including special guests from Tachileik, Myanmar, and press from the Tachileik News Agency. The popularity of the event among the entire region is a clear indicator of MFU's notoriety in neighbouring countries and the strength of MFU's relationship with the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. The Myanmar Student Union garnered tremendous commendation for their great efforts and many contributions towards the success of the event.

This year, MFU took the opportunity to celebrate Myanmar's vibrant culture and independence under the theme of "Thingyan Water Festival", (the Myanmar New Year Water Festival) chosen by the Myanmar Student Union. The festival is based on a Buddhist belief in which water is sprinkled as a form of blessing. Similar celebrations and festivals are held in Theravada Buddhist countries of Southeast Asia, such as Songkran (Thai New Year) in Thailand.

Mr. Khen Suan Kai, a Myanmar lecturer from MFU's School of Social Innovation, presented the report prior to the formal opening of the event. Attendees were informed of the main objectives of the Myanmar Culture Day and Exhibition: To raise cultural awareness about traditions and cultures in Myanmar; to perform various Myanmar cultural performances to promote national heritage; and to build better relationships between students of all nations in Mae Fah Luang University through cultural competence.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vanchai Sirichana, MFU President, opened the ceremony, remarking on the great long-lasting relationship between MFU and Myanmar, and announcing the launch of the MFU Myanmar Alumni Association in collaboration with the Royal Thai Embassy in Yangon, Myanmar. Myanmar has currently contributed the highest number of international students to MFU, consisting of 182 international students (3 Ph.D. students, 15 master's degree students, and 164 undergraduate students). Students have performed outstandingly in their academic pursuits and are well-equipped for the industry. The association will function as a platform for alumni in Myanmar to meet, allowing MFU and students from Myanmar to maintain close ties with their alumni after graduation, while also serving as a reminder that MFU will always support and encourage students in their future careers and ventures.

## Fungal Research: Small in Size but Huge in Name



Recently, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kevin David Hyde, world-renowned lecturer and researcher from the School of Science and Head of the MFU Institute of Excellence in Fungal Research has received an award for “Highly Cited Researcher” from Thomson Reuters, and has been recognized by Google as the most cited researcher in the area of Plant and Animal Science in Thailand. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kevin David Hyde has published more than 800 refereed papers in multiple areas of mycology and molecular biology, of which 595 are in SCI journals and has an SCI H’ index of 42, which is the second highest in mycology worldwide.

In addition to his notorious research in the Institute of Excellence in Fungal Research at MFU, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kevin David Hyde has authored 18 books, edited 3 conference abstract books, produced 77 volumes in multiple areas of mycology and agricultural biotechnology, and currently holds the position of honorary professor at multiple institutes: Kunming University of Science and Technology, Kunming, China; the Research Institute of Insect Resources, Institute Chinese Academy of Forestry, Kunming, China; Zhejiang University, Hong Zhou, China; Key Laboratory for Mycology and Lichenology, Institute of Microbiology, Chinese Academy of Science, Beijing, China; Hanoi University of Education, Hanoi, Vietnam; Chiang Mai University, Thailand; and King Mongkut Institute of Technology, Ladkrabang, Thailand.

At present, the Centre of Excellence in Fungal Research at MFU has 40 postgraduate students from 8 countries, and has published its own international journal, Plant Pathology & Quarantine (PPQ) which is now well-established. In addition to research, the institute provides training workshops for regional participants in key areas of

mycology, and has strong collaborations with universities and organizations in the Netherlands, France, USA, China, Germany, New Zealand, and the UK. The institute is now one of the leading centres in fungal research in the world.

## “My Chinese Dream”: Making Dreams Come True



On 2 April 2015, Ms. Niporn Prangsaengwilai, a third year student majoring in Business Chinese from the School of Sinology, won first place out of 22 students in the preliminary round of the 14<sup>th</sup> “Chinese Bridge” Chinese Proficiency Competition for Foreign College Students in Thailand, themed “My Chinese Dream” hosted in Bangkok by the Office of Higher Education Commission. Winning first place awarded Ms. Niporn Prangsangwilai with a master’s degree scholarship from the Confucius Institute and the opportunity to participate in the international level competition in the People’s Republic of China with other winning students worldwide. Over 300 students from Chinese-related fields of study attended the competition.

The competition was divided into an improvised speech session, question session, and talent session. For the speech session, Ms. Prangsangwilai was assigned to speak about a Chinese movie. She chose the movie “Lost in Thailand”, and improvised a speech on how the characters helped each other, and how the movie impacted the Thai tourism industry by attracting tourists from China. In the special talent session, Ms. Prangsangwilai performed the Chinese opera “Visiting Ing-Tai”. Ms. Prangsangwilai said she was able to fully display her Chinese skills due to her “ability to place herself in the mindset of those from other backgrounds” resulting from MFU’s multicultural campus life placing emphasis on fluidity in cultural diversity.

## Expanding Relations with Northumbria University



On 4 February 2015, Mae Fah Luang University (MFU) welcomed Dr. Ruth M. Crabtree, Director of International Development, and Ms. Julie Edgar, International Associate Dean, from Northumbria University, England, marking the third visit from Northumbria University. Short term exchanges, physical training programmes, sport placement programmes, nursing collaborations, staff development and exchange projects, short term visits, and joint degrees were discussed. MFU and Northumbria University have had a long-lasting and strong relationship, with great potential to continuously expand collaborations in joint research, staff and student exchanges, dual degrees, and many other prospects. In this visit, Northumbria University kindly presented MFU with two scholarships in Health Science and one scholarship in any chosen field of study, helping provide increased opportunities for MFU students to gain global experience and international education.

## Promoting the Role of Thailand in ASEAN Frameworks



On 18 February 2015, MFU hosted the 16<sup>th</sup> East Asia Academic Cooperation Council (EACC) Meeting at the Doi Tung Meeting Room, the Office of the President, MFU. The council delegation, comprised of senior representatives from the ASEAN University Network Secretariat, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Office of the Higher Education Commission, and representatives from 15 universities, were welcomed by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chayaporn Wattanasiri, Vice President of MFU.

The East Asia Academic Cooperation Council was established by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in May 2007. The main objective of the council is to promote the academic roles of Thailand and MFU in the frameworks of ASEAN+3 and ASEAN+1 (ASEAN+China and ASEAN+China, Japan, and South Korea). These frameworks include those of the Network of East Asian Think Tanks (NEAT), the Network of East Asian Studies (NEAS), and the East Asia Forum (EAF) among other East Asian collaboration forums. Increased roles would result in greater opportunities for Thai educational institutions to form international networks and collaborative projects, resulting in combined academic advantages and mutual benefit across the entire ASEAN and relevant regions. The East Asia Academic Cooperation Council is currently chaired by the ASEAN University Network Secretariat and is comprised of 26 universities.

## Extending Global Networks with WHU



On 25 February 2015, Mae Fah Luang University's School of Management received a visit from Otto Beisheim School of Management (WHU), Germany. WHU was represented by the Associate Dean, Prof. Michael Frenkel, and received by Dr. Chatrudee Jongsureyapart, Dean of MFU's School of Management, with lecturers from various programmes within the School of Management. During the visit, both institutions had the opportunity to discuss future relations and potential collaborations, especially in the area of student exchanges between MFU's School of Management and WHU. WHU has an extensive global network, consisting of many active and high quality relationships with institutions all around the world. The school offers a large diversity of experiences for students, many of whom are exchange students. The visit indicates a good start of a fruitful relationship with the expectation of many more exciting joint activities and co-operations to come, increasing global expertise and international employability of graduates.

## MFU's First Partner University: "MFU is Inspirational"



On 10 March 2015, MFU received a visit from a group of 13 students on a "Term Abroad" programme from Brock University, Canada led by Dr. David T. Brown, Associate

Professor and International Programme Coordinator from the Department of Tourism Management, and Mr. Samart Plangpramool from Burapha University International College in Bang Saen, Thailand. In a brief discussion, Dr. David T. Brown remarked on the greatly impressive growth of MFU, stating the university's rapid growth as "inspirational", and showed interest in MFU's School of Anti-Aging and Regenerative Medicine and School of Medicine. Brock University was MFU's first official partner university, and it was a great pleasure for both institutions to meet again to share growth and success stories.

## Forming Relations with International Youth of Chiang Rai



On 7 April 2015, MFU received a visit from a group of 24 tenth and eleventh grade high school students from Chiang Rai International School (CRIS) accompanied by four teachers. Similar to MFU, the international school students came from diverse backgrounds, including Pakistan, Cambodia, Taiwan, and South Korea. Many students expressed their keen interest in a question-and-answer session after an introduction to the university, and complimented MFU for "being able to provide an international atmosphere regardless of an individual's nationality and background", showing special interest in the availability of global internship opportunities, the global employability of graduates, and international exchange programmes. Mr. John Thomas Watson, an accompanying history and economics teacher from CRIS, remarked on MFU's international competence and unique ability to provide countless scholarships and international opportunities for students of all nationalities.

## Reaching MFU's Goals with AIMS



From 13 to 17 February 2015, Dr. Nattaya Konsue, coordinator of the ASEAN International Mobility for Students (AIMS) programme at MFU and lecturer from MFU's School of Agro-Industry, and Ms. Nuya Leewanich, Head of the MFU International Affairs Division, attended the launch of the Top Global University Project and the 2<sup>nd</sup> University of Tsukuba International Symposium on ASEAN International Mobility for Students (AIMS) and Trans ASEAN Global Agenda Education (TAG) Programme at the University of Tsukuba, Japan. The Top Global University Project is promoted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) as a 10 year development plan for higher education institutions in Japan focusing on globalization and becoming a transborder university. The developments would lead to increased activities and collaborations with international partner universities, increasing potential for joint activities with MFU.

Afterwards, from 15 to 16 February 2015, Dr. Nattaya Konsue and Ms. Nuya Leewanich attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> University of Tsukuba International Symposium on ASEAN International Mobility for Students (AIMS) and Trans ASEAN Global Agenda Education (TAG) Programme for representatives from active participating universities to meet and discuss guidelines, complications, and solutions. Leading universities from 6 countries joined in the symposium, including Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia. In addition to the AIMS and TAG programmes, exchanges between inbound and outbound students with the University of Tsukuba and relevant evaluation systems were also discussed.

Mr. Philip Masterson, programme officer and representative of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation, Regional Institute of Higher Education and Development (SEAMEO RIHED) reported the annual results of operations for 2013-2014 and announced the establishment of the Academic Credit Transfer Framework for Asia (ACTFA). The ACTFA system would lead to universities using the same systems to support credit transfer between institutions, leading to greatly increased mobility between universities, faculty members, and students. MFU's influence in the GMS region among Cambodia, Laos, China, Vietnam, and Myanmar would be greatly affected in a positive direction, and MFU is looking forward to welcoming the increase of academic opportunities and cultural experiences.

## “All is Fair” in the Bhutan International Education Fair



On 6 to 7 March 2015, Mae Fah Luang University led by Vice President Dr. Romyen Kosaikanont joined the 5<sup>th</sup> Bhutan International Education Fair 2015 held at Thimphu, Bhutan. The event was organized by the Bhutan Chamber of Commerce (BCCI) to allow students to browse and gain more information about potential tertiary education academic institutes to further their education after secondary school. MFU received great attention and interest from many students and parents, and many participants expressed their wish to apply to MFU. On this occasion, MFU also visited secondary schools in Paro and Punakha city, namely Paro Bajothang Higher Secondary School, Drugyal Higher Secondary School, and Punakha Higher Secondary School, to introduce the schools to MFU and to present the offered courses and scholarships to Bhutanese students. The Bhutanese Student Scholarships raised exceptionally great interest, with numerous parents, students, and teachers asking for more information to apply in the upcoming semester.

## Sharing Cultural Diversity and Cross-Culture Skills



From 6 to 8 March 2015, the International Affairs Division, MFU supervised a cultural study trip for students to Kyaing Tong, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. 28 students participated in the study trip with Mr. Sai Seng Sai, 4<sup>th</sup> year student from Myanmar studying in the Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Engineering programme, School of Information Technology, designated as the student director. The group of 12 Thai students and 10 international students from Bhutan, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, and Vietnam were guided by 6 additional peers originally from Kyaing Tong.

The cultural trip aimed to allow students to learn more about the culture and society of Kyaing Tong, and to practice their cross-cultural skills and abilities in a foreign environment. During the trip, the students visited many famed temples and cultural religious sites, such as Wat Yang Kong, famous for the “Dragon Scale Buddha”, as well as markets and Nong Tong Lake. The trip also included a visit to the oldest and largest lacquerware factory in the world, Bagan Lacquerware Factory. At the end of the trip, everyone came together to share their experiences and thoughts, expressing their delight and anticipation for the next trip. Everyone greatly enjoyed their time in Kyaing Tong, were glad to learn more about foreign societies and cultures, and for the opportunity to practice their international skills and abilities in cultural fluidity.

# CULTIVATING KNOWLEDGE AND CONSERVING THE ENVIRONMENT

 [www.mfu.ac.th](http://www.mfu.ac.th)

 [inter@mfu.ac.th](mailto:inter@mfu.ac.th)

 [facebook.com/inter.mfu](https://facebook.com/inter.mfu)

International Affairs Division

Mae Fah Luang University

Chiang Rai 57100 Thailand

Tel: +66 (0) 5391 6026

Fax: +66 (0) 5391 6023