



SEAMEO RETRAC

Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Training Center



Newsletter

Vol.1 No.1

March 2009

ISBN 1729 - 1852

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Visit by H.E. Minister of Education, Malaysia

H.E. Dato' Seri Hishammuddin Bin Tun Hussein, Minister of Education, Malaysia cum 43rd SEAMEO Council President, paid a working visit to SEAMEO RETRAC on February 12, 2009. The President urged for further cooperation



between SEAMEO RETRAC and institutions in Malaysia, as well as those in other member countries.

The President congratulated on the achievements and contributions of SEAMEO RETRAC to education in Vietnam and the region over the years, and its strong commitment to future development and regional partnership.



31st High Official Meeting

Dr. Do Huy Thinh, SEMEO RETRAC Director, and Mr. Than Trong Minh, Dean of Technology, attended the 31st High Official Meeting (HOM 31), held in Bangkok from 19 to 21 January, 2009.

At the in-camera session, Dr. Thinh presented the issue "Proposed Amendments to the SEAMEO RETRAC Memorandum of Agreement," regarding the recognition of the Center as an international body and the Center's needs of enjoying the minimum immunities and privileges as at other SEAMEO Centers.

The 31st HOM endorsed the proposal for presentation at the 44th SEAMEO Council Conference (April 2009) for approval.



Heads of delegations of SEAMEO Member and Associate Member Countries, directors of SEAMEO regional centres and representatives from international organizations in a group photo with HE Mr Jurin Laksanavisit, Minister of Education, Thailand

44th SEAMEO Council Conference

A delegation of SEAMEO RETRAC, led by Prof. Dr. Do Huy Thinh, attended the 44th SEAMEO Council Conference (SEAMEC 44), held in Phuket, Thailand



from 5 - 8 April, 2009.

SEAMEC is the annual meeting of the Council of the South-east Asian Ministers of Education Organization and is attended by the ministers of education and officials of SEAMEO Members Countries, SEAMEO Associate Member Countries, the Affiliate Members, SEAMEO center directors, the SEAMEO Secretariat as well as the officials and observers from donor governments and international organizations.

More related to SEAMEO RETRAC was the signing of SEAMEO RETRAC's amended Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Government of Socialist Republic of Vietnam and SEAMEO.



The newly signed MOA affirms SEAMEO RETRAC status as an international center of SEAMEO and grants the Center minimum privileges and immunities, as given to other SEAMEO centers by their host countries.

Training Course for Afghan Education Leaders and Administrators

From February 23 to March 15, 2009, twenty three leaders and administrators from 16 higher education institutions and the Ministry of Higher



Education in Afghanistan participated in a training course in educational management at SEAMEO RETRAC. Topics covered in the training course included student services, registrar system, academic regulations, the admission system and process, and grading and assessment. The training course employed a variety of teaching methods and the participants were involved in different training activities such as group discussion, experience sharing, group work and project presentation, and school visits to several public and private universities in Ho Chi Minh City.

The training course was facilitated by experienced trainers of both Vietnamese and expatriates from SEAMEO RETRAC. A final project was performed by each participant and it served as a tool to measure the extent to which knowledge and skills were obtained and used to improve their current system.



Expert Meeting on Teaching Competency Standards at SEAMEO INNOTECH

On behalf of SEAMEO RETRAC, Dr. Ho Thanh My Phuong, Dean of the Division of Education, attended the Expert Meeting on Teaching Competency Standards in Southeast Asian Countries at SEAMEO INNOTECH from 16 to 17 March, 2009. At the meeting, representatives from 11 Southeast Asian countries presented their research findings on teaching competency standards of basic education used in their countries. The meeting expected to identify common standards that will be used to evaluate teaching competencies for Southeast Asian countries.



Orientation Session for New Foreign Teachers

The Division of Foreign Studies had a chance to meet with its new foreign teachers in an orientation session held on February 10, 2009. The orientation session acted as a guideline to introduce the Center's setting, its regulations, and job requirements for new teachers, covering such topics of discussion as: "SEAMEO RETRAC – An Introduction", "Co-teaching Activities in Kiddy Programs", "How to Blend ICT in Language Teaching", "Applying for a Work Permit," and "Regulations for Teachers." The teachers, including two Americans, one Canadian, one British, and one Spanish, felt comfortable and secured when starting their teaching career at SEAMEO RETRAC and expected to work for the Center as full-time teachers in a long-term commitment.



The Communicative English Courses for Government Agencies



The opening ceremony of the Communicative English Course conducted for 15 senior officers of the Ministry of Education and

Training of Vietnam (MOET) was held on February 16, 2009, at the Center. This special six-week English course involved participants in diversified interactive activities including in-class communication sessions, online discussion, self-access learning sessions, seminars, and field trips. The purpose of the course is to enable the participants to develop their ability to communicate effectively in English so as to serve their jobs well.

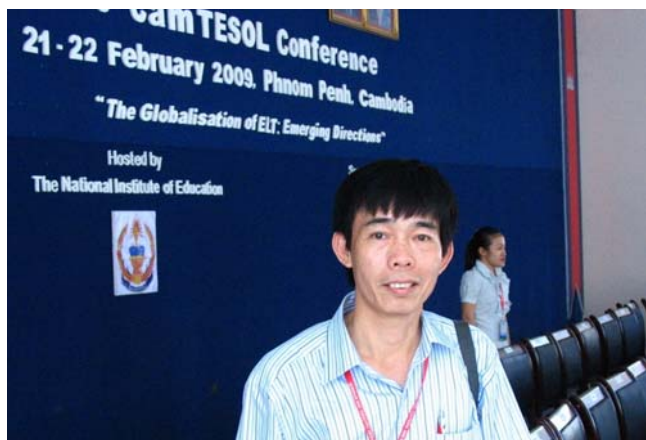
At the same time, SEAMEO RETRAC opened a Communicative English Course for 20 senior officers of the Vietnam Education Publishing House in Hanoi and another similar class in Ho Chi Minh City at SEAMEO RETRAC. The course includes 10 weeks and is divided into two stages. For the first 6-week stage, students will learn English in Vietnam and the remaining 4 weeks will take place overseas.. The course aims at providing the learners with language skills and knowledge for their effective communication, as well as real experience of using English in everyday activities.



Conference Participation

Dr. Dang Van Hung, Dean of Division of Foreign Studies and Mr. Nguyen Manh Thuong, a program officer at DFS, had an opportunity to take part in the 5th Cam TESOL conference from February 21 to 22, 2009. At the conference, Dr. Dang Van Hung had a presentation entitled "Autonomy in English Language Learning: A Case Study." ►

- Dr. Hung also attended the 4th World Teachers' Day in Thailand and 12th UNESCO-APEID International Conference held in Bangkok, Thailand from 24 to 26 March 2009. Dr. Hung's paper presented at the conference is "Constraints on the development of a learner-centered curriculum: A case study of EFL teacher education in Vietnam".



Meeting on Curriculum Development

DFS organized a meeting on March 18, 2009 to introduce the new TOEFL-iBT curriculum to all teachers teaching this program at SEAMEO RETRAC. The meeting aims at collecting teachers' opinions about the new curriculum and textbooks for TOEFL-iBT courses. Over 30 teachers attending the meeting actively contributed their ideas to the new curriculum and suggested textbooks. The new curriculum for TOEFL-iBT is intended to be in effect in early May 2009.

Canada Education Fair

As an annually conducted activity Canada Education Center (CEC) and SEAMEO RETRAC co-organize CEC Fair to promote Canada education. The fair was held within 2 days, the 4th and 5th of March, with the participation of 26 institutions and attendance of almost 1,600 students and parents. The information at the fair was various and plentiful as it was provided by the representatives of high schools, colleges and universities. Overseas Study Department attracted a large number of students and parents for consultancy on visa application as well as other information about Canada education.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **2nd Congress of TESOL HCMC, April 18.**
- **Training Course in Educational Management for High School Leaders from Tay Nguyen provinces, April 21-23.**
- **Training Course in Educational Management for University/College Administrators from Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar, May 24-30.**
- **English Training and Pre-departure Program for the Government-funded Scholarship Plan (Program 322), May-June.**
- **Graduation/Opening Ceremonies of Postgraduate Diploma Programs, June 15.**

The **SEAMEO RETRAC** Newsletter is a quarterly publication of **SEAMEO RETRAC Vietnam**.

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