

BPS Visit to Phuket and Phang Nga

On Friday and Saturday, 28 and 29 January, representatives of the Board of Trustees, the PTG, the academic and business staff and the student body visited tsunami hit areas in the provinces of Phuket and Phang Nga. The itinerary for the visit was organised by the Regional Director of Education, Mr. Nicom Jarumane, and on the Saturday the group was joined by the Permanent Secretary to the Minister of Education, Khunying Dr. Kasama Voravarn.

The principal purpose of the visit was to present computers and stationery to some of the worst hit schools, particularly in the province of Phang Nga. At the same time, the group was able to witness the devastation wreaked by the Andaman Sea on school buildings located only a few hundred metres from the shore – school buildings which mercifully were unoccupied on the Sunday morning when the tsunami struck. Members of the group were able to talk to local teachers, children and villagers who, in one way or another, had been directly affected, some in the most

tragic of ways.

Participants in the visit were given much food for thought on how best to channel further, future support so that the most pressing needs might be met. The students in the group will also be undertaking some project work under the guidance of their tutor.

The visiting group were full of admiration for the resilience and community spirit of the local people and for the speed and effectiveness of the relief efforts by local vocational colleges, the military and volunteers in erecting temporary school buildings and homes pending longer-term solutions. These will be provided not only by the government but also through the King's Foundation, the Princess Sirinthorn Foundation and other charitable organisations including Bangkok Patana.

M.L. Pariyada Diskul
Executive Director



Thank You

As many of you may know, over the past few days the Tsunami Relief Committee has been collecting stationery for schools affected by the tsunami. Last weekend a group of staff and parents travelled to Phuket to deliver the donated stationery and toys to various schools in the Phuket and Phang Nga regions. Our party was joined by Khunying Dr. Kasama, the Permanent Secretary to the Minister of Education, and two other representatives from the Ministry. In total we visited five schools: Baan Nai Torn School, Baan Kamala School, Baan Kho Sirae School, Pakweep School and Baan Bangsak School. We expected the schools to still be under construction but were surprised by the efficiency of the aid and support which has been pouring into the area, already completely reconstructing most of the schools.

However, this opportunity has also allowed us to view the still essential problems which have been overlooked by the larger relief organisations. We hope in the future months to help to solve these problems through fund-raising projects. So far Bangkok Patana School has already contributed 15 computers to Pakweep School as well as two bus loads of stationery and toys.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the people who were involved in this trip and an especially big thank you goes to the people who contributed to the stationery and toys appeal. That one pen or stuffed toy has made one child's day brighter.

Lynn Shiao Tai
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