

Beat: Miscellaneous

Tourism Tower - Shining Bright for a New Generation

Tourist numbers exceed 26 million

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USPA NEWS - Bangkok University is set to raise the standards of education and vocational expectations in the region with the completion and opening of its state-of-the-art building Tourism Tower located next to the Chao Praya river in Bangkok set in the grounds of the University itself.

Since the time of the Vietnam war through to the 1960's when the U.S. GI's first arrived in Thailand on Rest and Recuperation leave, R & R, Tourism in the entire region has seen substantial growth year on year. The first Boeing 747 landed in Thailand in 1970 really kicking off a revolution in travel and as such Thailand has always been a popular destination for travellers and GI's to her sandy beaches and tropical rainforest, and bustling city life. The year-round sunny climate and tropical weather has certainly helped maintain this persona along with the world-famous Thai smile, which is one of the reasons why Thailand has become known as the Land of Smiles, LoS.

With such a huge demand on the hospitality sector, the need was seen for a greater number of people to be educated in the tourism sector and in 1963, the first Hotel and Tourism management courses first started to appear in Thailand. Back then the number of visitors was only around 336,000 tourists and 54,000 GI's so the country could easily manage the numbers but with in excess of 26 million visitors in 2014 bringing in an estimated 7.3% (2012) of the country's GDP and Bangkok being ranked 3rd most visited city behind London and New York it's time for Thailand to renew its education systems and improve the standards of management.

To help alleviate this ever-growing problem a new state-of-the-art, 12-floor, 800 million Baht (\$24.5 million U.S. dollar) tower has been built and equipped with a complete virtual environment of real hospitality and aviation Tourism. The tower is a new place for training and educating new tourism professionals in the standards such as housekeeping, front desk, food and beverages and kitchen work. The key role is to ensure a high quality of education so students are capable and skilled in their fields of work.

At a recent press conference, president Mathana Santiwat said "The University is confident that it can produce quality graduates with international standards, as they will be groomed by a modern curriculum taught by experienced teachers".

Somyot Wattanakamolchai, dean of the College of Tourism Management, said the college enrolled 2,500 hospitality students, including 10 foreign students, at its four schools - airline management, hotel management, tourism management and hotel and restaurant management (international curriculum).

The tourism management school also plans to increase foreign admissions, particularly from the surrounding ASEAN countries.

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