Speech by Dr. Sompop, Director, NIH

The Department of Medical Sciences has been responsible for the development of sciences and technology for disease prevention, control treatment and health promotion of the whole nation. The Department had realized that as the technology in medical sciences developed rapidly and the cost of equipment was very high, foreign support was necessary in order to develop the central body of DMS to be the health research center completed with manpower, technology, laboratory and equipment, so that its activities would be fully beneficial to the population and led to health quality promotion nationwide.

Therefore, DMS had made requests to the Japanese Government for the establishment of NIH, and technical cooperation for the research promotion of NIH. The construction of NIH building was completed in October 1986 and the building was officially opened in 1987, whereas the Research Promotion Project in NIH was started in August 1985 under the administration of DMS. The objectives of the Project were to strengthen the research capability of the Institute necessary for the prevention and control of infectious diseases, to coordinate and cooperate with Japanese scientists in carrying out joint projects in different health fields, and to serve as the national and internation al training center.

The Project was planned for 5 years from 1985 to 1990, and it progressed satisfactorily with good cooperation and friendly relationship between Japanese experts and Thai counterparts. In supporting

the Project, JICA has provided experts, equipment, and fellowships to be trained in Japan, and has allocated budget for training for the middle-level staff in Thailand. In the early stage of technical transfer, laboratory techniques and research methodology commonly for various fields by means of lectures and practice were emphasized. When the basic knowledge was established, more specific pratical techniques were developed and then were repeated and applied to the research implementation and reference activities.

At the end of the 5-year project, both DMS and JICA agreed that the cooperation and assistance were satisfactory, almost all the objectives could be achieved. Nevertheless, there were still some activities which were not completed, and hence a two-year extension for technical cooperation from 1990-1992 and a two-year follow-up period from 1992-1994 were granted. During the extension period, the biological products necessary for the control of prevailing infectious diseases were seriously studied and developed. In the follow-up period the emphasis was on the application of technologies acquired as well as the subjective selection of research themes, such as dengue hemorrhagic fever, ~~application of molecular techniques for polio evadication~~, intestinal viral and bacterial infections, melioidosis, and monitoring of laboratory animals.

When the activities have been much developed, DMS has adjusted its infrastructure in February 1990 in order to cope with the progress. Four new divisions and three additional regional medical sciences centers have been established. In connection with NIH, the new divisions are the Biological Products Division, and the Health Sciences Research Institute.

All through the 9-year Project of Research Promotion, NIH personnel have made much progress in surveillance and research capability. The obtained technical know-hows have been applied in many promising research projects. The results of achievement have been distributed to all regions of the country. NIH has been successful in JE vaccine devlopment and has transfered the technology to the Government Pharmaceutical Organization for mass production, which resulted in the significant reduction of JE patients. A large amount of government budget threw in importing the medical products has been reduced. NIH scientists have made very successful presentations in national and international conferences, and have obtained congratulations from the participating countries. Many training courses and workshops have been organized to transfer the useful diagnostic techniques and various technical know-hows to the health personnel especially to provincial laboratories. NIH has become the benefial consulting institution for these laboratories and has supported them reagnets for effective services to the people in rural areas.

In this coming July, the Research Promotion Project in NIH will be completed. I should say that all these successful activities become greatly realistic owing to the great contribution of the Japanese Government and the Japanese experts who have provided us their generous and friendly instruction and cooperation. I hereby in the name of NIH Thailand would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Japanese Government and all Japanese concerned for the invaluable assistance all along the Project.

Speech by Dr. Kanai, Project Team Leader

Dr. Panya, mr. Kumamoto, Mr. Asano, all my colleagues and friends of Thailand and Japan who are sitting in this room.

This is really a most dramatic moment during my 7 years stay in NIH and Thailand.

My heart is now full of recollections and sentiments coming forth and back over and over again. But I must make my mind cool so that I can present a concise and business-like report.

The research promotion project in NIH started in 1985 with 5 years program as defined by Record of Discussion. It was then extended for another 2 years following the recommendation by Thai-Japan Evaluation Team in 1990. Finally, in 1992, the project was succeeded by "Follow-up" stage of 2 years by the agreement between the 2 countries so that the project may come to a satisfactory end.

During these 9 years, a total 6 long-term experts and 124 short-term experts came to NIH for technological transfer and research cooperation. At the same time, a total of 50 Thai fellows visited Japan to get technological training, to experience cooperative research, or to observe the administration system of Public Health.

Cooperation has been also directed to the training program by whole or partial financial assistance to Middle Level Staff Training Program (1986 to 1990), Annual Seminar (1988-1993), and Memorial Seminar of the project (1994).

Provision of equipments and other expense amounted to 278 million yen in the period from 1985 to 1993.

Areas of technological cooperation are roughly divided into the following 6 areas.

------- Diagnostic microbiology and immunology necessary for reference activities of NIH
------- Molecular epidemiology of viral and bacterial infections
------- Vector entomology
------- Experimental animals
------- Vaccine development
------- General laboratory methodology

The extent of the implementation of the project has been evaluated positively by Thai-Japanese Joint Evaluation Team in December, 1989, February, 1991 and June 1994.

Thank you so much for your friendship and cooperation of long years.

Speech by Dr. Yamazaki, Leader of the Japanese Evaluation Team

I am truly honored to have been invited to attend the closing ceremony of the Research Promotion Project in the NIH, Thailand.

First, on behalf of the Joint Evaluation Team, I would like to express our deepest gratitude to Director-General of DMS and Director of NIH for their kind cooperation and thorough preparations for our evaluation including the three - day seminar which really helped us accomplish our mission.
During our stay here , we carefully studied and discussed,together with the Thai counterparts, various aspects of the whole project, particularly focussing on the four research subjects namely, DHF, Melioidosis, intestinal infections of viral and bacterial etiology, and monitoring of laboratory animals. These were specifically selected for the research activities in the Follow-up Program during the 2 year period from August 23,1992 to the Preseut time. This morning we had a Steering Committee Meeting, where the Japanese Evaluation Team and the Thai authorities concerned discussed and jointly evaluated the past achievements and future prospects of the Japanese Technical Cooperation.

Here, I am happy to report : both Thai and Japanese sides agreed that the technical cooperation between the two nations has accomplished the objectives of the Research Promotion Project quite satisfactorily, having made a big progress in various fields of the research and reference activities necessary for the control of the infectious diseases prevailing in Thailand and other Asian countries.

In addition, the NIH building constructed in 1986 as well as other facillities and equiptments, gradually furnished during the nine year period of the Project, have been maintained in excellent condition by the Thai side efforts.

As for the technology transfer, we often met the challenge of recruiting a sufficient number of Japanese experts and accepting Thai counterparts for trainig in Japan, but we have always managed to come through. We could never overcome the difficulty without good intention and enthusiasm shown by many individuals concerned from both Thailand and Japan .

Consequently, the techology transfer has been successfully implemented. The NIH has acquired the bacic and advanced technologies, having made remarkable progress in the research capability as well as in the ability to serve as a national reference laboratory for the control of infectious diseases.

Needless to say, all these splendid achievements would not have been attained without the mutually rewarding, friendly relationship between Thailand and Japan.

CONCLUSION

As the reslts of the joint evaluation and discussions, both sides reached the following conclusions:

1. In general, the goals of most activities of the Project, as stipulated in the record of Discussions signed on April 18, 1985, the Record of Discussions concerning extension of the Period signed on July 31,1990 and the Minutes of Discussions concerning Follow-up Program signed on June 23,1992 have been realized.

2. The total cooperation period of nine years is evaluated to have been successfully accomplished. However, it is greatly desired that unyielding efforts be further made to create future development of NIH.

3. Moreover, it is advisable to further strengthen the role of NIH as the national reference center for infectious diseases including AIDS.

4. It is strongly recommended that " the third country training program" be implemented in the near future. Hereafeer NIH is acknowledged to have a mission to widely disseminate the acquired technology to South-East Asian countries.

Finally, taking advantage of this opportunity, we, all members of the Japanse evaluation team, would like to express out greetest respect and gratitude to all the people concerned of both Thai and Japanese sides for thier tremendous efforts over the past 10 years to make such great success as has been highly evaluated and appreciated today.

Thank you

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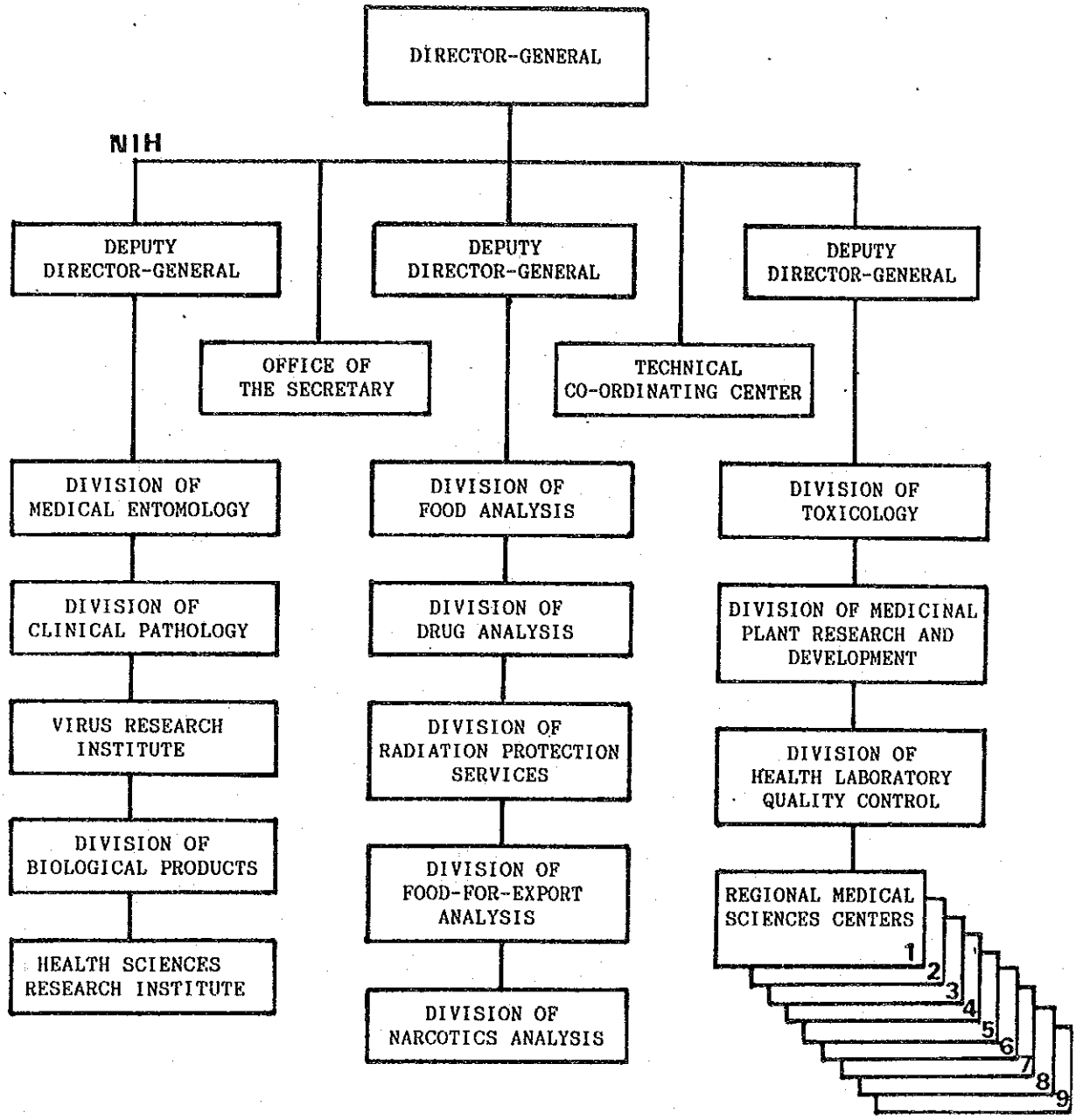
DEPARTMENT OF MEDICAL SCIENCES



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