

OISCA BULLETIN BOARD

NO. 142
June 18, 2021

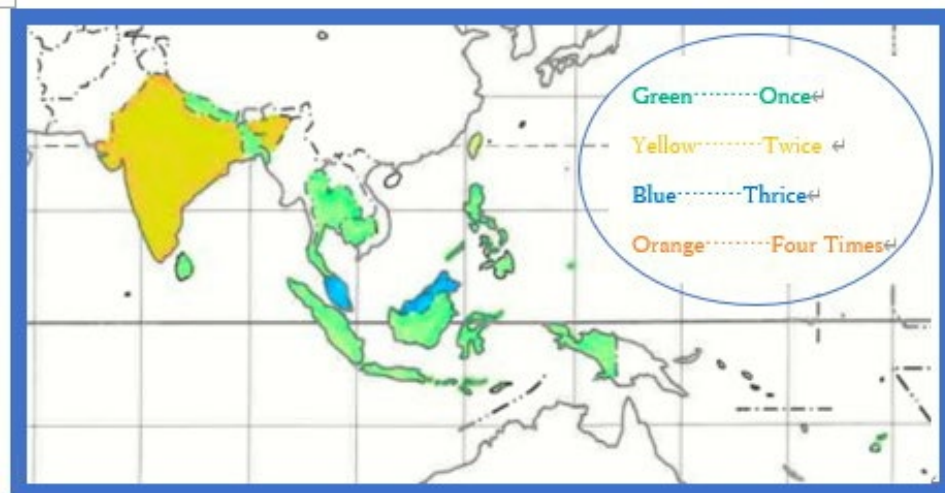
YOUTH FORUM – OISCA WAY

45th Year in 2021

OISCA-International initiated “Youth Forum” will celebrate its 45th year of activities in December this year. Since its inception, the scope of the Forum has progressively grown, step by step, from Asian Youth Forum (AYF) to Asian Pacific Youth Forum (APYF) and to Global Youth Forum (GYF).

Both AYF and APYF aimed at enhancing youth participation in community development particularly in rural areas where majority of people in Asia and the Pacific countries inhabit. So, the titles of the forum were Asian Youth Forum for Community Development and Asian Pacific Youth Forum for Community Development.

Please refer
“Youth Forum at a
Glance on page 8)



YOUTH FORUM, why?

Upon assuming the presidency of OISCA-International in July 1974 succeeding the Founding President Rev. NAKANO Yonosuke who left this world on June 24th 1974 at the age of 88, Ms. NAKANO Y. Yoshiko had made extensive tours to Asian countries. While given warmly welcomed by OISCA national chapter members and well-wishers in the countries visited, she witnessed signs of social unrest, particularly, in urban communities that might have been caused in particular by educated young people, who had neither enough knowledge on rural communities nor had practical experience to till the soil that produces basic livelihood of people. No country can

make a sustainable development unless young people positively participate in constructive and productive works. It is particularly so in newly independent developing countries. This edition specially focuses on Asia and the Pacific region that has the largest population and the widest ground area on the planet earth.

In August 1976, Ms. Nakano invited a select number of trusted friends of Asian countries to her summer resort near Mt. Fuji, the symbol of Japan. This resort was built by OISCA's Founding President in 1950's for his adopted daughter Yoshiko for her to use on truly important occasions. Yoshiko thought that it indeed was such an important occasion (Ref: Bulletin Board No.121).

In fact, the invitees were sharing the same concern with Yoshiko. They too were worrying about the future of their countries, most of whom gained the independence after the World War II. One of them, Khunying Kanok Samsen Vil, President of the Girl Guides Association of Thailand (GGAT), proposed an idea to provide a face-to-face dialogue opportunity among youth leaders and workers transcending national boundaries. It was an epoch-making idea then. Yoshiko and all her invitees agreed to Kanok's proposal. With no hesitation, Yoshiko made up her mind to organize this face-to-face dialogue within the year (1976). (Khunying is equivalent to a Lady in English. In Thailand, former Royal family members are given this kind of honorary title).

GERMINATION of Youth Forum

Back to Bangkok, GGAT President wasted no time to find out an appropriate venue and found out that the facilities of the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) would be available in December because of winter holiday season, when hostels, guest houses and auditorium would be vacant. God blessed!! Ms. Nakano decided to go ahead with what later became Asian Youth Forum for Community Development in December at AIT. The time available to prepare for the Forum was just three months – September, October and November. Having heard of Ms.

Nakano's firm conviction on the objectives of the "Forum", dedicated OISCA members in Japan began to raise fund to support her. She immediately made another round of trip to Asian countries to convince national leaders to send their youth leaders and workers to Bangkok in December. Her extraordinary enthusiasm convinced the national leaders whom she met. "What should be done, should be done", it is the leader's basic qualification, the lesson she learned from her Founding President. In the meantime, ESCAP and FAO's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific came forward to support OISCA-International (ref: Bulletin Board No. 121, page 2).

The first ever regional forum for youth leaders and workers was declared open by the Prime Minister of the host country (Thailand) Hon. Thanin Kraivichien on December 5th 1976 at the auditorium of the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT). Founded in 1959, AIT is an inter-governmental educational/research institution of a global reputation locating in the suburbs of Bangkok. A message came from the Prime Minister of Japan, too.

After a "face-to-face" free dialogue at the AIT auditorium, the participants were taken about 450 km by chartered buses to Surin Province at the eastern region of Thailand bordering with Laos to the east and Cambodia to the south. Surin was one of the least developed areas in Thailand then. There was a GGAT/OISCA rural development center (ref: Bulletin Board No.121, page 3) that was opened in October a year ago (1975) based on the agreement between GGAT (The Girl Guides Association of Thailand) and OISCA-International as if it were waiting for an emergence of something epoch-making event.

FATEFUL ENCOUNTER of Two Leaders

The two leaders, Khunying Kanok and Ms. Nakano, met at an UN conference that took place in June 1975 at ESCAP building in Bangkok and agreed to launch a GGAT/OISCA rural development project in Surin Province. When they had the first encounter in June 1975, there was no sign of a youth forum at all. (Ref: Bulletin Board No.121, page 4). GGAT and OISCA leaders' encounter in June 1975 can be described as a fateful. Thanks to the United Nations!

LEGACY of December 1976

First Asian Youth Forum for Community Development: December 5th-11th, 1976

BANGKOK

The First Asian Youth Forum for Community Development was held in Bangkok, Thailand in December 1976. The opening ceremony took place at the auditorium of Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) on December 5th the opening speech was given by the Prime Minister of Thailand, Hon. Thanin Kaaivichien (photos below). The Girl Guides Association of Thailand (GGAT) played a key role in coordinating with the Government of Thailand and the Asian Institute of Technology.





From top to bottom, left side.

OISCA-International President, President of the Asian Institute of Technology, representative of FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, and the representative of ESCAP.

From top to bottom, right side.

Youth leaders of Thailand, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, and Indonesia.

Bottom: India and Papua New Guinea participants enjoying lunch together. This kind of friendly encounter at work site generated common consciousness among the youth leaders.

SURIN



Youth leaders and workers worked together and with local farmers, too, to harvest rice, thresh the harvested rice, make farm roads, taking care of vegetable, and other works. Even, school children voluntarily joined the work. These field works generated friendliness and common consciousness among the youth leaders and workers transcending national boundaries, customs and religions. Integration of face-to-face dialogue and field work is the symbol of OISCA style youth forum throughout its series.

Royal Palace, Bangkok

All the participants, including OISCA and GGAT leaders, were invited to the Royal Palace and were very warmly welcomed by two young Princess. Plentiful delicious Thai cuisine was served. This extraordinary privilege was attained by GGAT's effort. Nobody could have imagined such an honor in advance.



Thanks GGAT



Photo left was taken in 1980. Guided by OISCA-assigned Japanese expert (extreme left), local farmers, and GGAT staff have harvested well mature vegetables and carry them with full of smile. The farm hosted the field work by the First Youth Forum participants in 1976 (page 5). It has been making a steady improvement. The farm was visited on July 23rd 1977 by Prime Minister Thanin who made the opening speech at the First Youth Forum on December 5th 1976.

FIELD WORK uplifted Oneness Consciousness

At GGAT/OISCA center, the participating youths worked together with local farmers, for instance, to make farm roads, to till rice paddy fields, to harvest rice and thrush it. For them, these field works were extremely tiresome. For farmers, these were routine day-to-day works to produce rice, the staple source of livelihood for people. Both Khanying Kanok and Ms. Nakano, too, joined the youth participants to do the field works as much as they could. Leaders never sit behind. This is Asian tradition.

Having done face-to-face dialogue and field works, the youth leaders and workers developed in their minds a sense of oneness. They were no more strangers to each other. During 1970's and perhaps, during 1980's and the first half of 1990's, crossing the border communication technology and mass media network were not well developed, particularly so in newly independent many Asian countries, so that the youth leaders of these countries, even if they were highly educated, might have been thinking that the problems and difficulties that they were encountering at home were theirs own. It was a natural phenomenon.

Through face-to-face dialogue and joint farming work, they realized that the problems and difficulties were common. They were never isolated any more. Also, they realized that non-productive and non-constructive actions meant nothing. Instead, they learned that they should be the productive and constructive agents in their home countries and communities.

SIGN of follow up Forum

Having returned from Surin to Bangkok, the participants with their unanimous voice proposed OISCA-International President to hold this kind of youth forum beyond the one they had participated. Her answer was "Yes". The outcome of the first ever Youth Forum was what she might have expected in her mind. Nakano-Kanok collaboration in 1976 laid the foundation of direct encounter among youth leaders and workers across the national boundaries that has

been lasting for 45 years. Great! indeed.

ASIA PACIFIC

Emerging into a Dynamic Developing Region

Estimated more than 20,000 youth leaders and workers, both internationally and domestically got access to a series of forum. For instance, a youth at the age of 20 in 1980 became a mature age of 66 in 2021. 20 in 1990 is 56 in 2021 the energetic age. And 20 in 2000 is 46 in 2021 the most energetic age. It is reasonable to think that everyone has positively contributed, and has been doing so, in governments, legislations, business, banking, education, research and various other sectors by means of exercising productive and constructive actions to bring Asia and the Pacific region as a whole into a dynamically developing region on the global map.

EXPECTED Role of "Global Youth Forum"

Participants in the Global Youth Forum for Sustainable Development are expected to play pivotal roles to advance SDGs, particularly to reduce global warming for the interest of their succeeding generations. The UN Secretary-General in his message to the 17th Asian Pacific Youth Forum stated, "Your gathering can lend momentum to global efforts to combat climate change. The voice of young people will be crucial in advocating the transition to a low carbon future, to involving those who have the greatest stake in it – the world's young people. Your role is more vital than ever – keep lending and to lead together in a spirit of global citizenship".

The *Yomiuri Shimbun*, with the daily circulation about 10 million, Japan's largest newspaper, reported on May 30th 2021 that 1,780,000km² of forest of the world has decreased in the past 30 years. This figure is 4.3% of the total forest 40,590,000km² on our planet, equivalent to 31% of the land. When the ever-increasing human population is taken into account, global warming is indeed very real.

Youth Forum at A Glance

This fact indicates very clearly the urgency as well as the importance of tree planting. As nation builders for sustainable future, role of youth is truly vital.

Worthwhile Lesson from the Ancient History

The Japan News, May 28th, 2021, reported that during *Jomon* period (ca 10,000 BC-ca 300 BC) humans coexisted with nature for more than 10,000 years. It is a part of Japan's history. OISCA's basic philosophy, namely, Agriculture, the great education of mankind, advocates that human should live in harmony with soil (ref: Bulletin Board No.122, page 1). It looks clear that OISCA's basic philosophy coincides with *Jomon's* life and spiritual culture (縄文文化) transcending time and space. It is truly a worthwhile message for the present-day young people, who should shoulder common responsibility to build a sustainable future. It is in line with SDGs. This is also the message from OISCA-International to OISCA method youth forum participants.

Water (aqua) planet "EARTH" being the sole living place not only for us humans but also all other living beings, large, small and micro, has been living for 4,600,000, 000 years. It is reasonable to think that the nature will continue to sustain increasing human population as long as air, water and atmosphere are properly managed by human "intelligence". The role of young people in this respect is vital. It is what OISCA firmly believes.

	Date	Location/Venue
1 st Asia Youth Forum	December 5-11, 1976	Thailand
2 nd Asian Pacific Youth Forum	April 11-15, 1977	Taiwan
3 rd Asian Pacific Youth Forum	October 3-6, 1977	Malaysia
4 th Asian Pacific Youth Forum	April 5-9, 1978	Sabah, Malaysia
5 th Asian Pacific Youth Forum	October 22-28, 1978	Indonesia
6 th Asian Pacific Youth Forum	April 17-22, 1978	Philippines
7 th Asian Pacific Youth Forum	January 5-11, 1980	Sri Lanka
8 th Asian Pacific Youth Forum	February 15-18, 1982	Fiji
9 th Asian Pacific Youth Forum	January 23-26, 1984	Bangladesh
10 th Asian Pacific Youth Forum	February 11-14, 1985	Malaysia
11 th Asian Pacific Youth Forum	March 10-14, 1986	Palau
12 th Asian Pacific Youth Forum	January 13-17, 1994	Kerala, India
13 th Asian Pacific Youth Forum	May 15-20, 1995	Taiwan
14 th Asian Pacific Youth Forum	November 20-25, 1996	Nepal
15 th Asian Pacific Youth Forum	November 14-18, 2004	Cambodia
16 th Asian Pacific Youth Forum	September 17-19, 2013	Malaysia
17 th Asian Pacific Youth Forum	November 21-25, 2015	India
18 th and First Global Youth Forum	February 9-11, 2018	India
19 th and Second Global Youth Forum	December 5-6, 2019	India

Next issue: No. 143

OISCA-International
Izumi 2-17-5, Suginami-ku
Tokyo, 168-0063 Japan
<http://www.oisca.org/>
E-mail: oisca@oisca.org