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Thai University on the International Stage

I followed H.E. Dr. Sakthip Krairerk, the Chairman of UTK Council Board to Indonesia last week.

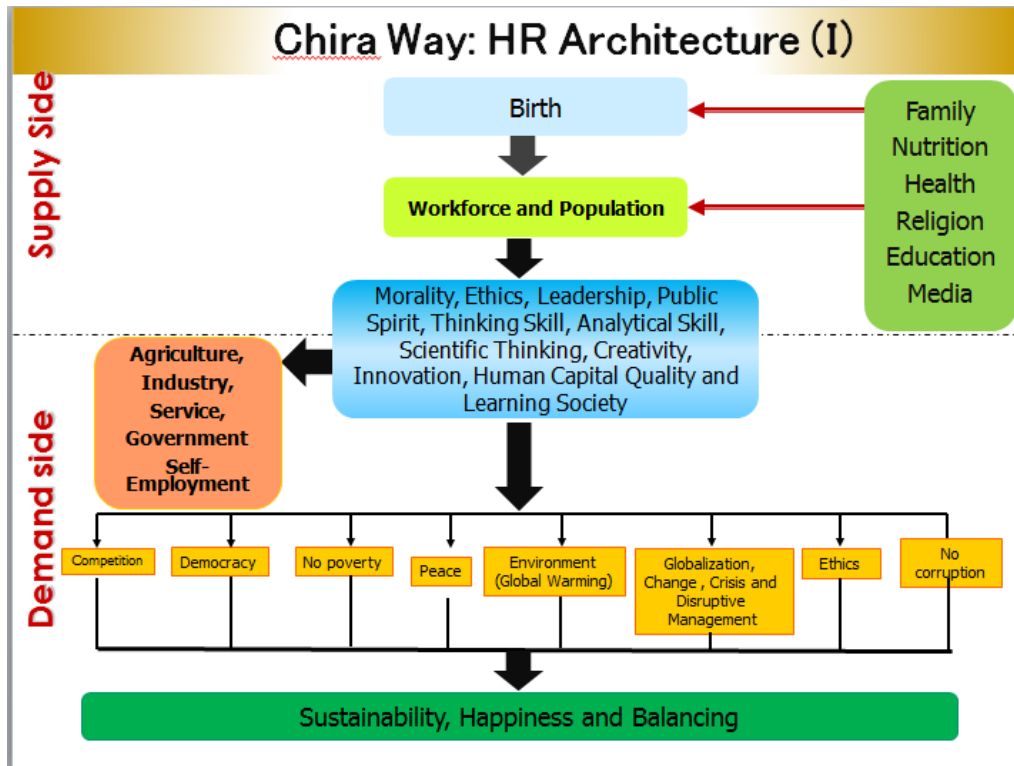
The first activity I joined was the International Conference organized by Dr. Soetomo University. I am very proud that the of University Council Chairman who used to be a Thai Ambassador to Cambodia, Japan and the U.S. was invited to be the first keynote speaker for the experts from several countries and more than 100 participants. The Conference theme was ASEAN Conference on Humanities Industries, and Technology for Society. The main point was that the current global community needed to have democracy, good governance and fair laws. It highlighted the political system with good governance and people's participation. This was very useful. Nowadays, Thailand is gradually entering the democratic system. After Indonesia's election, Jokowi came back for the second term with democracy. It reflects that both countries move towards people-centered democracy.

I was invited to deliver the keynote speech about the fourth industrial revolution and impacts on society. I said that every country needed to adjust to the global changes from digital technology, AI and Internet of Things. The main points were as follows.

- Opportunities and benefits

- Cost or negative impacts especially on the poor. They will become poorer and get into troubles. Thailand and Indonesia will need to solve this.

I would like to cite HR Architecture to explain the benefits to the society on these aspects.



The first one was health or nutrition. This is especially for the digital system. It provides the poor with access to nutrition and good health. A weakness is that digital technology cannot outreach remote areas. This leads to the larger gap between the rich and the poor. At this conference, time was limited for me to talk about this. I would like to emphasize this on my article. I have opportunities to develop community-based tourism all over Thailand. Recently, I have done for 5 southern provinces comprising of Songkhla, Satun, Narathiwat, Yala and Pattani. If we develop digital skill for tourism communities, it will be very useful. However, we have not taken concrete actions.

Due to time constraint, I suggested that, 10 years ago, an Indian told me that Thailand had more than a million of village health volunteers. There should be digital support systems for the poor. Thailand provided the poor with simple health support like health data collection. The most important thing is holistic nutrition. Digital systems can support this. In the North East, people lack Iodine. This weakens Thai children's brains and IQ.

I think that industry 4.0 should greatly support education because modern education needs to use digital system especially in the community level. If

ASEAN or Thailand still relies on centralized bureaucracy, they cannot get benefits from this.

In conclusion, there were both opportunities and risks. The gaps must not expand. To solve problems like health or education, decentralization is needed. Do not leave anything in the central government's hands only. NGOs must be seriously involved. I would like academics or NGOs to have opportunities to work with the government. We cannot only rely on the civil servants. They get promoted from C7 to C8 and will lack work continuity. NGOs must still pursue this.

Besides this conference, UTK Council Chairman and I visited University of Islam Malang. We exchanged views and discussed cooperation with Prof. Dr. H. Maskuri, M.Si, President of this university. MOU was signed. The students of this university will come to Thailand to exchange learning.

After that, we went to Batu. Mrs. Dewanti Rumpoko, the Mayor of Batu came to welcome us. She provided recommendations on Thai-Indonesian cooperation in Halal Tourism. This was valuable knowledge. In 2014 (as data available), Muslim tourists travelled all over the world and spent 142 billion USD. They spent only 18 billion USD less than the Chinese tourists did. Chinese tourists spent 160 billion USD.

Thai universities' roles can be seen from UTK's case study. This is a prospective direction. International College of UTK has professional management. Tourism or Halal Tourism will attract more Indonesian tourists as well as Muslim tourists from all over the world to Thailand. Halal Tourism does not limit to food only. It also includes toilet, praying rooms, spas, and travel facilities to best serve Muslim tourists.



Group Photo at the ASEAN Conference on Humanities Industries, and Technology for Society organized by Dr. Soetomo University in the Republic of Indonesia



H.E. Dr. Sakthip Krairerk was invited to be a Keynote Speaker at Dr. Soetomo University in Surabaya, the Republic of Indonesia.



Meeting and learning exchange with Prof. Dr. H. Maskuri, M.Si, President of University of Islam Malang.



Meeting and Halal Tourism Cooperation Discussion with Mrs. Dewanti Rumpoko, the Mayor of Batu

Prof. Dr. Chira Hongladarom