



# CHAPTER 1

## CHAKRI DYNASTY AND THAI PUBLIC HEALTH

The development of public health in Thailand has been associated with the monarchy institution since the Sukhothai period and with that in the Rattanakosin (Bangkok) period in particular. Thus, this chapter focuses on the relationships between the Royal House of Chakri or Chakri Dynasty and the public health system in Thailand, which are phased into different eras as follows:

### 1. The Era of Thai Traditional Medicine (TTM) Revival (1782-1851)

The reigns of King Rama I through King Rama III (the first through third Kings) of the Rattanakosin period were a period of national **reconstruction** with efforts in **assembling various technical disciplines** for use as references for study and national development.

#### 1.1 The Reign of King Rama I (1782-1809)

King Rama I (Phrabat Somdet Phra Buddha Yodfa Chulaloke the Great) graciously had Wat\* Photharam (Wat Pho) renovated as a royal monastery, renamed it Wat Phra Chetuphon Vimolmangklaram, and had traditional medicine formulas as well as body exercise or stretching postures (*ruesi dadton*) assembled and inscribed on cloisters' walls. Regarding official drug procurement, the Department of Pharmacy (*Krom Mo Rong Phra Osot*) was established, similar to that in the Ayutthaya period. The medical doctors who were civil servants were called **royal doctors** or physicians (*mo luang*) and other doctors who provided medical services to the general public were called **private doctors** (*mo ratsadon or mo chaloai sak*).

#### 1.2 The Reign of King Rama II (1809-1824)

King Rama II (Phrabat Somdet Phra Buddha Loetla Nabhalai) graciously had traditional medicine textbooks gathered again by inviting all experts/practitioners to assemble indications of various medicines. Anyone having a good medicine formula was requested to present it to the King. Then the royal doctor department would select and inscribe the good ones in the **Royal Formulary for the Royal Pharmacy** (*Tamra Luang Samrab Rong Phra Osot*) for the public's benefit.

In 1816, the King graciously promulgated the Royal Pharmacists (*Phanakngarn Phra Osot Thawai*) Law, under which royal pharmacists had powers to seek medicinal plants throughout the country; and no one could raise any objection. Such doctors were generally members of the families whose medical practices had been passed on for generations.

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\*Wat means Buddhist monastery



### 1.3 The Reign of King Rama III (1824 - 1851)

King Rama III (Phrabat Somdet Phra Nangklao Chao Yuhua) graciously had Wat Phra Chetuphon renovated and had traditional medicine formulas inscribed on marble tablets affixed to the walls of the temple and cloisters, describing the causes and cures of illnesses. Rare medicinal herbs were planted so that the people could study and use for self-care without confining them for use only in any particular family. The Wat is thus considered the “first open university” in Thailand.

In 1828, the fifth year in the reign of King Rama III was regarded as the time that Western medicine began to play a key role in medical and health care in the country. The Western medical care including dangerous infectious disease prevention was provided to the people. **Dr. Dan Beach Bradley**, generally known to the people as “**Mo Bradley**”, an American Christian missionary who came to Thailand in 1835, **initiated a disease prevention** programme for the first time in the country with **smallpox inoculation**. Then, in 1838, the King advised the royal doctors to learn the inoculation techniques from Dr. Bradley in order to provide immunization services to civil servants and the public.

In 1849, Dr. Samuel Reynolds House, commonly known as **Mo House**, another doctor of the American missionary **introduced the use of ether as anaesthetic for the first time in Thailand**.

## 2. The Era of Civilization

During the reigns of King Rama IV through King Rama VI, there were diplomatic relationships with Western countries and more Christian missionaries. The Kings visited foreign countries and brought back various kinds of civilization for application in the Kingdom, which steadily became modernized; so did the medical and health system.

### 2.1 The Reign of King Rama IV (1851 - 1868)

During the reign of King Rama IV (Somdet Phra Chomklao Chao Yuhua or King Mongkut), the Thai medical service was divided into two systems: traditional medicine and modern medicine.

Three American doctors (Drs. Bradley, House and Lane) lived in Thailand for a long time during that period. Dr. House played an active role in the control of cholera by using water mixed with tincture in effectively treating the patients orally.

Although the Western medical service was more widely provided, for example in obstetric care, it was unable to change the values of the people as Thai traditional medicine had been used culturally for generations and was part of Thais’ lifestyle.

### 2.2 The Reign of King Rama V (1868 - 1910)

Previously, there was no public hospital to provide curative care to sick people as only temporary hospitals were set up at various places to care for patients during epidemics. After the epidemic had subsided, such hospitals were abolished. King Rama V (Phrabat Somdet Phra Chulachomklao Chao Yuhua or King Chulalongkorn) graciously initiated a medical care programme for the poor by establishing a **Hospital Manage-**

**ment Committee** in 1886 under the Chairmanship of the King's brother, Prince (Krommamuen) Siriwachsangkat. A hospital was constructed and completed in 1888 and royally named it "**Siriraj Hospital**" in commemoration of his son, **Prince Siriraj Kakuttaphan**, who had died of dysentery. Later on, the King graciously established a **Nursing Department** responsible for the management of Siriraj Hospital, replacing the Hospital Management Committee in 1889. The Department was then under the Ministry of Education (Krasuang Dharmmakan) with the King's brother, Prince (Krommamuen) Damrong Rajanupab, as the Director-General. During that period, a number of major medical service events occurred:

In 1889, a medical school (Phaetthayakorn School) was established at Siriraj Hospital, whose curriculum included both Western and traditional medicine. And in 1895, the first Thai **Medical Textbook (Tamra Paetsart Songkroh)** covering both types of medical practices was published.

In 1896, a midwifery school was established with the personal funds of Queen Sri Bajarindra in the Siriraj Hospital compound.

In 1897, a new edition of the **Medical Textbook** was published whose contents mostly dealt with Western medicine.

In 1905, a subdistrict administrative system (sanitary district) was implemented on a pilot scale for the first time in Tambon Tha Chalom (Tha Chalom subdistrict) of Samut Songkhram province.

In 1907, two medical textbooks (called Wetchasart Wanna and Paetsart Songkroh) were published; both were considered the "first national medical and pharmaceutical textbooks" of Thailand.

A Medical Division was set up to take responsibility for epidemic control and smallpox inoculation for the people in the provinces.

### 2.3 The Reign of King Rama VI (1910 - 1925)

During the reign of King Rama IV (Phrabat Somdet Phra Mongkutklao Chao Yuhua or King Vajiravudh), a number of medical and health activities were initiated as follows:

In 1911, King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital was built with funding from the King's personal accounts and the Thai Red Cross Society (then known as Sapha Unalom Daeng).

In 1912, the Pasteur Institute was established to be responsible for rabies prevention and control; and Vajiravudh Hospital was established.

In 1914, under the Ministry of Interior, pharmacies (Osot Sapha) were set up to provide curative care and dispense drugs; and later each pharmacy was renamed "Health Centre" (Suk Sala). Eight preparations of common household remedies were produced for use by the people and the revenue received was used for procuring additional medicines for the poor, which was regarded as the first "user fee" system in the country.

In 1916, the Nursing Department was renamed "Public Protection Department" (Krom Prachaphiban) under the Ministry of Interior.

In 1916, His Royal Highness (HRH) Prince Jainad Narendhorn (or Chainat Narendhorn) revised the medical education system by adding more clinical practices **while withdrawing traditional medicine** as the Western and traditional medical systems were incompatible and it was difficult to identify knowledgeable Thai



traditional medicine practitioners/teachers who were willing to teach.

In 1917, the Army Medical School was established.

In 1918, the medical and sanitation programmes, previously under the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of City Affairs (Nakhon Ban), were merged and named the **Public Health Department on 27 November**, with Prince Jainad Narendhorn as the first Director-General.

In 1920, the Queen Saovabha Memorial Institute was established; and the Thai Red Cross Society was registered as a member of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies on 8 April.

In 1922, the Junior Red Cross Division and the Nursing School were established under the Thai Red Cross Society.

In 1923, **the Medical Practice Act** was promulgated to control medical services and practices so that there would be no harm done by unknowledgeable or untrained practitioners. Later the law became present-day laws such as the Medical Premises Act, the Control of the Practice of the Art of Healing Act, and several medical care related professional acts.

### **3. The Pioneering Era of Modern Medical and Health Services (1917-1929)**

The King's father, Somdet Phra Mahitalathibet Adulyadej Vikrom Phra Boromarajchanok (commonly known as His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol of Songkla), was the first Thai prince to become seriously interested in medicine and public health. That was because he had deemed that the medical and health services were not modernized; and the people were highly vulnerable to illnesses, particularly communicable diseases. With his firm resolution to provide modern medical care to the people, he dedicated himself to the foundation and development of medicine by resigning from the Royal Thai Navy and then studying medicine and public health at Harvard University in the United States of America. Through his steady perseverance, he graduated with a Certificate of Public Health and a Doctor of Medicine degree (cum laude). He then returned to Thailand to perform numerous medical and health activities that were extremely beneficial to the country and Thai people. He donated funds for such medical programmes as construction of a medical school, a hospital and a dormitory for nurses. His personal financial support was provided as fellowships for doctors and nurses to study abroad. He served as a Thai delegate in the negotiation with the **Rockefeller Foundation** on assistance for Thai medical service development. His support for medical research involved the initiation of the medical research and development programme at Siriraj Hospital. Besides, he participated in teaching medical and nursing students, and served as a medical resident at Siriraj Hospital and Chiang Mai's McCormick Hospital. He supported maternal and child health (MCH) services by drawing up a project to modify Vajira Hospital to become a large maternity hospital to serve as a training centre for nurses, midwives, public health nurses, social welfare workers and traditional birth attendants, so that there would be more MCH personnel.

Throughout his life, HRH Prince Mahidol undertook activities to promote the nation's medical and health services that are greatly beneficial to all Thai citizens. With his prestige and ingenuity, he was named



“the Father of Thai Modern Medicine”; and a university that mainly produced medical and health personnel was named “Mahidol University” in commemoration of his good deeds.

## 4. The Era of the Inception of the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH)

### 4.1 The Reign of King Rama VII (1925-1934)

During the reign of King Rama VII (Phrabat Somdet Phra Pokklao Chao Yuhua, commonly known as King Prajadhipok), a **ministerial rule** on modern and traditional medical practices was enacted, specifying that:

**4.1.1 Modern medical practitioners** were those who used healing arts based on knowledge from international textbooks that had progressed through studies, research, and experiments of scientific experts worldwide.

**4.1.2 Traditional medical practitioners** were those who used healing arts based on the observations and skills that had been verbally passed on from previous generations or the ancient notebooks with no scientific experiments.

In 1926, the Public Health Department was reorganized and divided into 13 divisions, namely Administration, Finance, Advisors, Editing, City Protection, Engineering, Health, Pharmacy, Narcotics, Mental Illness Hospital, Sanitation Promotion, City Sanitary Doctors (Medical Services), and Vajira Hospital.

### 4.2 The Reign of King Rama VIII (1934-1946)

During the reign of King Rama VIII (Phrabat Somdet Phra Chao Yuhua Ananda Mahidol), **the Ministry of Public Health** was established as a result of the enactment of the Ministries and Departments Reorganization Act (Amendment No. 3) of B.E. 2485 (1942). More research studies on traditional remedies were conducted in 1942 and 1943 while World War II was expanding to Southeast Asia, resulting in drug shortages. Professor Dr. Ouay Ketusingh conducted a study on the use of antimalarial herbal medicine at Sattahip Hospital. After the war had ended, the problem of drug shortages remained; thus the government decided to set a policy for the MoPH Government Pharmaceutical Organization (GPO) to also produce herbal medicines.

## 5. The Reign of King Rama IX (1946-present)

**5.1 His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX)**, the present King, has been interested in and concerned about the well-being, particularly health conditions, of all citizens. His Majesty has initiated numerous projects including those on disease prevention, health promotion, curative care and rehabilitative services. All Thai citizens highly appreciate his graciousness. Even foreigners also realize and appreciate his health initiatives as evidenced by WHO’s **presentation of the Health For All Gold Medal in 1992 and the presentation of Gold Medal of Appreciation** by the International Commission on Iodine Deficiency Disorder Control, for his advice on the concept and direction for disseminating iodized salt to prevent iodine deficiency





among the people. Besides, in 2001 the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute and the World Committee on Disability presented His Majesty with a Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Disability Award in recognition of Thailand's achievements of major targets of the UN's global plan of action on persons with disabilities. And on 26 May 2006, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan visited Thailand and presented His Majesty with the UNDP Human Development Lifetime Achievement Award in commemoration of His Majesty's great intelligence and ability in initiating royal development projects aimed at improving the quality of life of Thai people in a sustainable manner throughout His reign. This was the most prestigious award newly set up and presented by the United Nations to honour His Majesty the King on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of accession to the throne of His Majesty, being the first individual to receive such an award in the world.

Public health activities that have been graciously supported/initiated by His Majesty are numerous, the major ones being the following:

#### **5.1.1 Establishment of the Ananda Mahidol Foundation**

His Majesty the King graciously had the Ananda Mahidol Foundation established to promote and support Thai nationals who have outstanding academic records to study abroad for an advanced degree in certain subjects. It is hopeful that, upon graduation, such individuals will return to serve the country as experts in their respective fields of study. On a pilot scale, the initiative was financed with the Ananda Mahidol Fund in 1955. Later, on 3 April 1959, His Majesty decided to change the Fund's name and status to "The Ananda Mahidol Foundation" and donated 20,000 baht of his personal funds as an endowment, in commemoration of his elder brother, the late King Ananda Mahidol (King Rama VIII), **and awarded a first scholarship for studying medicine abroad.** At present, Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn is the President of the Foundation.

Between 1959 and 2010, with the Foundation's fellowships, 287 individuals completed their studies abroad, while 53 were still studying. Among the returnees, 77 are medical doctors and 14 dentists; and among those studying, 7 are medical doctors and 4 dentists.

#### **5.1.2 Establishment of the Rajprachasamasai Foundation**

In 1954, His Majesty the King graciously granted his private funds with some public donations for the construction of the **Ananda Mahidol Building** at Siriraj Hospital in commemoration of the late King Ananda Mahidol. Upon completion of the building, there was a funding leftover of 175,065 baht. At the request for funding of the Public Health Minister for building an institute for personnel training **and research on leprosy** at Phra Pradaeng Hospital in the amount of one million baht, His Majesty gave the remaining funds to initiate such activities for leprosy patients. His Majesty graciously named the place "**Rajprachasamasai Institute**". Besides, the King had also been concerned about the education of lepers' children who were not infected, but isolated in a nursery of the Department of Health. Then **Rajprachasamasai School** was established for this purpose with the initial funding of one million baht from Their Majesties the King and the Queen. The King presided over the school opening ceremony and later on visited it again several times.



### **5.1.3 Establishment of the Prince Mahidol Award Foundation under the Royal Patronage**

To celebrate the 100th birthday anniversary of His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol, the King's father, on 1 January 1992, the Mahidol Award Foundation was established under the Royal Patronage to publicize the prestige of the Prince who undertook activities greatly beneficial for the Thai medical and public health systems and made them as modernized as those in civilized nations. Later on 28 July 1997 the foundation was renamed "**Prince Mahidol Award Foundation under the Royal Patronage of His Majesty the King**".

The Foundation's objective is to confer an Award upon individuals or institutions which have demonstrated outstanding and exemplary contributions to the advancement of medical and public health services for humanity; two awards are given each year. The Foundation Committee is at present chaired by **HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn**.

Between 1992 and 2010, Prince Mahidol Awards were conferred upon 59 individuals or institutions, 26 of whom had had outstanding contributions in the field of medicine and 33 in public health. Among the laureates, 4 were Thai nationals including Dr. Prasong Tuchinda, Dr. Suchitra Nimmannitya, Dr. Wiwat Rojanapithayakorn, and Mr. Mechai Viravaidhya. Some of the Prince Mahidol Award laureates later became Nobel laureates in medicine and public health, i.e. Professor Barry Marshall (in medicine, 2001) from Australia, who found that *Helicobacter bacilli* was the cause of peptic ulcer and could be effectively treated with antibiotics, and Professor Harald Zur Hausen (in public health, 2005) from Germany, who found that human papilloma virus was the cause of cervical cancer which successfully led to the development of cervical cancer vaccine.

To make Prince Mahidol Awards well known all over the world, since 2007 the Prince Mahidol Awards Foundation and many Thai and international organizations such as Mahidol University, the Ministry of Public Health, the Health Systems Research Institute, the World Health Organization, the World Bank, and the Rockefeller Foundation, have organized annual conferences, entitled "Prince Mahidol Award Conference", the theme for each year being an issue of global concern.

Besides, in 2009 the Foundation initiated the Prince Mahidol Award Youth Programme for a few selected medical students who have special interest in any field of health sciences to study or work in an academic institution or international organization for one year under the supervision of a Thai mentor so as to create "life-long mentorship".

### **5.1.4 Establishment of the Princess Srinagarindra Award under the Royal Patronage**

The Princess Srinagarindra Award under the Royal Patronage of Majesty the King was established in Commemoration of the Centenary Birthday of Her Royal Highness Princess Srinagarindra, the late Princess Mother, on 19 October 2000, under the presidentship of HRH Princess Galyani Vadhana, the King's elder sister, until her passing. Since 2008, HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn has been the president of the foundation, whose objective is to confer a Princess Srinagarindra Award on individual registered nurse(s) and/or midwife (or midwives) from countries in the South Asia, East Asia and South-east Asia with outstanding



performance, nationally and internationally recognized, for the benefit of public health development and people's well-being. The awarding is also to honour the prestige of the Princess Mother to all other countries. Between 2000 and 2010, there were 11 laureates of the Award.

**5.2 Her Majesty Queen Sirikit** has continuously supported the King's health development projects. **Her Majesty the Queen serves as the President of the Thai Red Cross Society** and as a patron of associations and foundations involved in medical and health activities such as the Foundation for the Blind, the Foundation for the Mentally Retarded, and the Foundation for the Deaf. Importantly, Her Majesty is the patron of the Polio Immunization Campaign Project, which has steadily reduced the polio incidence; the disease is expected to be eradicated in Thailand in the near future. Besides, Her Majesty was presented with the **Lindbergh Award** on 16 May 1995 by the Charles A and Anne Morrow Lindbergh Foundation for her internationally recognized work on "**creating a balance between technology and nature**", being the first lady to receive such an award. Her Majesty was recognized for her leadership and support for national and international food safety activities and thus was presented with the Food Safety Awards on a August 2005 by the World Health Organization, which was the first lady to receive such an award.

In addition, Her Majesty the Queen has been patronizing and involved in other health activities such as the Royal Medical Services Project, the Village Doctors Project, and support for patients with medical care under the Royal Patronage.

**5.3 Her Royal Highness Princess Srinagarindra, the Princess Mother** (Somdet Phra Srinagarindra Boromarajonani), the late mother of His Majesty the King, was one of the important members of the Royal Family who had undertaken or supported numerous activities related to the public health as follows:

(1) In 1956, the Princess Mother began to patronize the Foundation for Assistance of the Disabled by donating her personal funds for the operations of the Foundation and seeking support from local and international individuals as well as agencies concerned for persons with disabilities.

(2) In 1963, the Princess Mother began to patronize the Foundation for Lepers in Lampang Province by donating her personal funds for the construction of Jit Aree School building and a dormitory and providing financial support for the children of lepers as well as for the operations of the school. Consequently, the quality of life of lepers' children and people with poverty has been much improved.

(3) In 1967, the Princess Mother accepted the New Life Foundation under her patronage in order to help rehabilitate disabled lepers.

(4) In 1969, **Mobile Medical Corps (Por Or Sor Wor or mobile medical units)** were set up, comprising volunteer doctors, dentists, nurses, health workers and volunteers from both central and provincial levels. The units have been providing curative, preventive, promotive and rehabilitative care to the people in remote areas.



(5) In 1973, a **Volunteer Flying Doctors** Unit was launched and later on became a **Radio Medical Services Unit** that provided medical consultation to remote health centres via radio communications in 25 provinces. Since 1976, the MoPH had undertaken similar services for other provinces. And in 1996, they were all transferred to be under the MoPH.

(6) In 1974, the Princess Mother established the **Princess Mother's Medical Volunteer Foundation** with the first royal endowment of one million baht. Later, the Royal Thai Government as well as other public and private agencies from within and outside the country has provided financial support as well as medical supplies and equipment to the Foundation.

In 1986, specialized medical services projects were initiated to provide medical/surgical care for patients with cataract, hare lip and cleft palate, congenital heart disease, impacted tooth, and those in need of prosthetic/orthotic services.

(7) Dental health services of the Mobile Medical Corps include the annual dental care campaigns and exhibitions on the National Dental Health Day, 21 October each year.

(8) In 1992, the Princess Mother donated her private funds of 500,000 baht to establish the Artificial Legs Foundation and HRH Princess Galyani Vadhana also donated another 750,000 baht to produce/provide artificial legs for poor people free of charge regardless of race and religious belief.

In recognition of her prestige and devotion for health promotion of Thai people, in 1990 the World Health Organization presented the Princess Mother with "**The Health For All Gold Medal Award**". Furthermore, on 21 October 2000, UNESCO honoured the Princess Mother as a person worthy of respect of the world. In addition, on the 100th birthday anniversary, the Princess Mother was named "**the Mother of Thai Public Health**".

**5.4 His Royal Highness Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn is the Honorary President of the Crown Prince Hospitals Foundation.** The Crown Prince presided over the foundation stone laying and opening ceremonies of all 21 Crown Prince Hospitals (district-level hospitals in remote areas). With great interest in health activities, the Crown Prince regularly visits the hospitals and gives advice to the MoPH on how to improve hospitals' efficiency and service quality for the people.

**5.5 Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn (Somdet Phra Debaratrasuda Sayamborommarajakumari)** is particularly interested in improving the nutritional status of children and youths. Thus, several royally initiated projects have been launched such as the Agriculture for School Lunch Project, aiming to help improve the health and nutritional status of children in remote areas particularly those in border patrol police-operated schools. Later on, the Ministry of Education adopted this approach and got it replicated in all other schools nationwide. Besides, the Princess has supported the establishment of the Toddlers Development Project and the Pre-school Child Development Centres with her personal funds to help resolve malnutrition problem among pre-school children and the Nutritional and Health Promotion for



Mothers and Children in Remote Areas Project.

Moreover, the Princess is the chairperson of the National Commission on Iodine Deficiency Disorder (IDD) Control, which is an important project. With the Princess' interest in seriously resolving the problem, the IDD prevalence has significantly dropped to the level that is no longer a public health problem.

**5.6 Her Royal Highness Princess Chulabhorn** has been playing an outstanding role as a scientist. Her reputation is internationally recognized and she was awarded the Einstein Gold Medal from UNESCO. The Princess has contributed to several medical and health development activities and established the Chulabhorn Foundation to assist in medical and health education. The Chulabhorn Research Institute was also established by the Princess as a centre for scientists to conduct research studies aimed at developing scientific products or findings that will be beneficial to the nation and resolve urgent health, environmental and agricultural problems. Besides, the Institute has also implemented the Chulabhorn Village Development Project in the southern provinces of Nakhon Si Thammarat and Surat Thani, whose aim is to improve environmental conditions and well-being of the people, based on the primary health care concept including self-reliance approach.

Besides, the Princess has also performed other health activities initiated by the late Princess Mother and served as Honorary President of the Princess Mother's Medical Volunteer Foundation since 22 June 2009.

**5.7 Her Royal Highness Princess Galyani Vadhana Krom Luang Naradhiwas Rajanagarindra**, the King's elder sister, was the President of the **Kidney Disease Foundation** of Thailand that promotes and supports preventive/curative care for patients with kidney and urinary tract diseases, and research as well as dissemination of knowledge on such diseases.

Besides, the Princess also supported projects initiated by the late Princess Mother. She also served as the Honorary President of the Princess Mother's Medical Volunteer Foundation since 18 August 1995 until her death on 2 January 2008. She also had outstanding contributions to the international mental health promotion and drug dependence prevention programmes, giving importance to young childhood development (being a patron of the Young Children in Slums Foundation and several other foundations), making donations for setting up supplementary food funds, and providing books and toys for enhancing child development according to their age. The Princess also set up the Mental Health Princess Award to be conferred on someone with outstanding performance on international mental health and drug abuse control. And in recognition of her reputation and contributions, the South-East Asia Regional Office of the World Health Organization presented her with the WHO/SEARO Award on 19 August 2003.

**5.8 Her Royal Highness Princess Srirasm, Royal Consort to the Crown Prince**, has been especially interested in the promotion of breastfeeding and maternal and child health. The Princess has



supported the gathering of pregnant and postpartum women, parents, and elderly persons as a breastfeeding club, a mothers-volunteers club, or a Born of Family Love (Saiyairak Haeng Krobkrua) Club, as well as the establishment of a healthy child care and breastfeeding centre.

**5.9 Her Royal Highness Princess Soamsawali** has continuously performed royal functions initiated by Their Majesties the King and the Queen, particularly those related to social development.

Regarding medical and health activities, Princess Soamsawali is particularly interested in HIV/AIDS as evidenced by the fact that she always presides over the Thian Song Chai (Candlelight in the Mind) Festival almost every year if she is not engaged in any other more important function. The festival has been held by the Thai Red Cross Society and the Wednesday Friends Club (a club of people living with HIV) on 1 December, the World AIDS Day, every year since 1991. Her kindness has also been extended to all other projects of the Thai Red Cross Society such as the Prevention of Mother-to-Child HIV Transmission Project and the Friends in Need (of “Pa”) Volunteers Project.

**5.10 Princess Ubol Ratana** has been extremely concerned about the public’s health and the country. She is the President of the To Be Number One Project, which aims to campaign on the prevention and control of drug abuse by raising public awareness nationwide of the understanding of how to resolve the drug abuse problems and to help drug addicts to overcome drug addiction and get a better chance to return to society.

## **6. Royal Activities Related to Health**

Beside the aforementioned activities, there are a number of other major health activities initiated and/or supported by Their Majesties the King and the Queen as well as other Royal Family Members in 2010 as follows:

Totally, 216 projects are ongoing and another 118 projects have been completed as listed in Table 1.

**Table 1.1** Royal development projects related to the Ministry of Public Health (by each royal family member)

Order	Name	No. of projects									
		Royal initiatives		For commemoration		Total		Total completed		Total Ongoing	
		Completed	Ongoing	Completed	ongoing	Completed	ongoing	Completed	ongoing	Completed	Ongoing
1	His Majesty the King	19	33	52	35	58	93	54	91		
2	Her Majesty the Queen	9	16	25	8	15	23	17	31		
3	HRH the Crown Prince	2	3	5	4	3	7	6	6		
4	HRH Princess Sirindhorn	19	48	67	10	13	23	29	61		
5	HRH Princess Chulabhorn	-	1	1	-	3	3	-	4		
6	HRH Princess Galyani Vadhana	1	6	7	5	4	9	6	10		
7	Princess Ubol Ratana	5	6	11	-	2	2	5	8		
8	HRH Princess Srirasm	1	3	4	-	1	1	1	4		
9	HRH Princess Soamsawali	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>216</b>		

**Source:** Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Health.