

# THE ROTARY FOUNDATION

## **BHICHAJ RATTAKUL**

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4 April, 2005

Dear Rotary Friends,

Re : Operation Rotary Cares  
The Tsunami Catastrophe in Thailand

After writing to you on 10 February, 2005 I have been to Anaheim, California; Houston and Mexia in Texas; Shreveport in Louisiana; and Hanoi in Vietnam ... all on Rotary business.

Before I leave again on 4 April for Italy, The Netherlands, France; and then on to Evanston for the meeting of the trustees of The Rotary Foundation, I wish to keep you informed of the progress we (the Thai Rotary Centre) have made in regard to the relief operation for the Tsunami victims in Thailand.

Here is our Second Report, viz:-

1) District Governor Voravut Pongvitayapanu of District 3330 (the affected district), Miss Danucha Punitavorn (director of the Thai Rotary Centre) and myself, spent three days in the provinces of Krabi, Phang-Nga, and Phuket during 22 – 24 March, 2005.

2) The Board of the Thai Rotary Centre met to hear the latest report of the operation at the Thai Rotary Centre Office in Bangkok on 29 March, 2005.

3) As of yesterday, 31 March, 2005, we have received formal approval in writing from the Government and the Provincial Governors to build houses in ...

Baan Pru Teow	in Phang-Nga Province.....	80 houses
Baan Nai Rai	in Phang-Nga Province....13 + 12 .....	25 houses
Baan Koh Poo	in Krabi Province.....	14 houses
Baan Koh Cham	in Krabi Province.....	<u>1 house</u>
Total.....		<u>120 houses</u>

4) The construction of the FIRST 13 houses in Baan Nai Rai, and the 300 metres compact clay road leading to the village and the 13 houses, will be completed within April, 2005; while the construction of the ADDITIONAL 12 houses in Baan Nai Rai will be completed in June.

5) The construction of the 80 houses in Baan Pru Teow; the 14 houses in Baan Koh Poo, and the one (1) house in Baan Koh Cham, will start during the first week of April. We expect the completion of the construction of these houses in Baan Pru Teow; Baan Koh Poo; and Baan Koh Cham within June, 2005.

6) After visiting Baan Koh Poo and Baan Koh Cham (two islands) in Krabi Province, we saw another obvious need to try to help the fishermen in these two villages in the rehabilitation programme. We have, therefore, agreed to help build a ship repairing "shack" and equipped with necessary tools and facilities for repairing fishing boats. There are more than 250 fishing boats in these two villages. This ship repairing "shack" will be built in Baan Ting Rai at the cost of about Thai Baht 500,000.- (about US\$ 13,000.-) These facilities will be operated by the fishermen themselves who will form a sort of "Village Co-op" to run the operation.

7) The cost of the construction of one house was estimated by the architect to be about US\$ 2,500.- (Thai Baht 100,000.-). However, the initial cost did not include the installation of electricity wiring and laying of water pipe in the house. The weakening of the US currency was another factor for the rise in cost; (the exchange rate is now between Baht 38.- to 38.50 to one US dollar). Furthermore, the increase in fuel price of over 20% from a month ago has resulted in the rising cost of building materials, etc. The total cost of a house now stands at about US\$3,700.- (Thai Baht 140,000.-) and could be more!

8) We are still closely negotiating with the various Government Agencies in the hope to acquire more locations to build the remaining 80 houses. Our goal is still 200 houses if the locations are provided and we have enough funds.

9) We are exploring the need to provide safe drinking water; fishing tools, and send medical teams (with volunteers from abroad) to the affected areas. We are discussing details of how this could work with the Health Authorities in Phang-Nga Province.

10) As of today, (4 April, 2005), we, the Thai Rotary Centre have received funds from local Rotary clubs and districts, and also clubs and districts from abroad as per details attached to this letter.

May I take this opportunity to kindly request clubs and districts which have pledged or have indicated their desire to help us in this operation, to please transmit their pledged funds, via Bank Transfer to us as soon as possible.

I will return to Bangkok on 2 May, 2005 and with my colleagues will go down to the affected areas again around the middle part of May before going to Chicago for the Convention in June.

I hope the third (3) Report to be sent out towards the end of May. And perhaps the final Report in July or August, 2005 with audited accounts.

11) I am also sending a map of Thailand focusing the affected areas, namely Phuket, Phang-Nga and Krabi Provinces.

12) Also are some pictures of the houses being built and other Rotary activities.

13) In the mean-time during my absence from Bangkok, please contact Miss Danucha Punitavorn, director of the Thai Rotary Centre, at E-mail : [rotaryth@ksc.th.com](mailto:rotaryth@ksc.th.com) or Tel. 66-2 661-6720 – 1, Fax 66-2 661-6719, for any information you may require.

With warmest regards and best wishes,

Yours sincerely,



Bhichai Rattakul

cc All DGs, DGEs, DGNs, PDGs in Thailand  
President Glenn E. Estess, RI  
President-elect Carl-Wilhelm Stenhammar, RI  
President-nominee Bill Boyde, RI  
Chairman Carlo Ravizza of The Rotary Foundation, RI  
General Secretary Ed Futa, RI  
All Rotary Clubs in Thailand