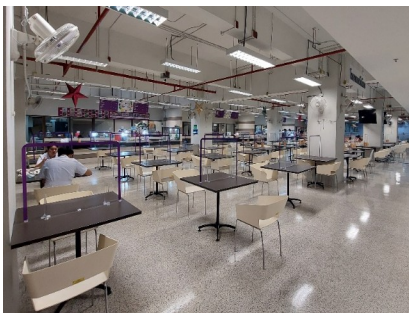


Moe Kyaw: My Student Life in Thailand

My name is Moe Kyaw from Myanmar. I got my bachelor's degree from the University of Community Health (Myanmar) in January 2013. After that, I served in health and nutrition related programs of non-governmental organizations in both humanitarian and development contexts in my country for over 7 years. Now, I am studying at the Faculty of Public Health of Mahidol University in Thailand with the support of Bettina Kattermann Foundation and KAAD scholarship program (Germany).



My student life of international program in Thailand is amazing and interesting. The education system here is very good and the professors are very kind and skillful. I have 8 classmates from Nepal, India, Pakistan, Yemen, and Japan. It provides me more opportunities to study the unique ideas and diverse perspectives of my classmates from different countries. Currently, the classes are hybrid (both onsite on campus and online) because of the COVID-19 situation; some students who live in Thailand must attend face-to-face classes, and some are online for those who have not come here yet. I really like to go to the faculty, meet with teachers and friends in person, because we can discuss more with each other, and can use a big university library and student lounge.



Something I've enjoyed most is how every food item in the canteens at the university is delicious and much cheaper than in other places. As most of the Thai foods are spicy, sweet, and sour, I had trouble when I arrived here because I do not like peppery dishes. So, I really missed my family and my country during the first 3 months, but I gradually got used to it. Among Thai foods, my favorites are Khao tom (rice soup), Guay Teow (noodle soup) and Tom Yum (hot and sour soup).

Moreover, Bangkok is a big city and very exciting for me, but it is a little bit more expensive than in my country. There are many cafes and public places around the city that are very quiet and good for studying. Other amazing things about living in Thailand are safety

and warmth for foreigners and international students; many shopping malls and restaurants with reasonable prices; and a good public transportation system that allows you to go easily where you want.

Most of the people in Thailand are Buddhists, and the religious cultures are very similar to Myanmar's. I also recognize, regarding social customs, that Thais normally do not shake hands when they greet each other, and they prefer to talk in a low voice when speaking with them. In addition, the Thai people have a deep traditional reverence for their royal family and must also take care to show respect for the King, the Queen, and the royal children.

In my free time, I sometimes go to Myanmar restaurants nearby my apartment, where I can eat Burmese foods and meet with people from my country who are living here for work and other reasons. On occasion, I go to the park and gym to exercise. During my last new year holidays, I visited Ayutthaya, which is an ancient city and the capital of the Kingdom of Siam, with my friends who are KAAD scholarship holders from Assumption University. It was so funny and a memorable trip for us.



All in all, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone from Bettina Kattermann Foundation and KAAD scholarship program for the support and for giving me this great opportunity to attend Master of Public Health (MPH) Program at Mahidol University. Thank you so much.

Moe Kyaw, Bangkok, January 12, 2022

Moe Kyaw is the 2021/22 scholarshipholder of Bettina-Kattermann-Foundation. More information can be found on www.bettina-kattermann-stiftung.de.

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