

Opening Report for
**The 3rd PSU International Teaching Platform (PSU-ITP) Workshop on
"Immunological Activity Determination of Medicinal Plants"**

December 6-11, 2004

Dept of Biomedical Sciences, Faculty of Medicine,
Prince of Songkla University

The memorandum of understanding between Prince of Songkla University (PSU) and University Pierre et Marie Curie -Paris 6 (UP 6)/Institut Pasteur (IP) was signed in January 1999, two years after the first visit made by Dr. Adrien Six in 1997. The teaching collaboration on the subject of Molecular Immunology course was started in the year 2000 under the graduate (MSc-PhD) program in Biomedical Sciences. Two years later, the activity has been expanded to benefit a larger and broader audiences and become The 1st PSU International Teaching Platform (PSU-ITP) on "Cytokines" during September 9-14, 2002. The 1st PSU-ITP was very well accepted by most audiences and all participants in the workshop and obviously encourage us to organize The 2nd PSU-ITP on "Tumour Immunology and Immunotherapy" last year (Dec 15-20, 2003).

The activity of this year PSU-ITP is slightly different from the previous ITP. Instead of having a combine 3-day lecture/seminar and 3-day laboratory practice (workshop), it become an entirely 6-day workshop on "Immunological Activity Determination of Medicinal Plants". This modification is partly full-fill our MANPD (A Multidisciplinary Approach on Natural Product Research and Drug Development) proposal that have been submitted to the Thai-French Co-operative Program in Higher Education and Research earlier this year. The Thai-French Cooperative Program is under the responsibility of the CHE (Commission of Higher Education, Thai government) and the French government (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research).

The main objective of this international teaching platform is to deliver the most updated education and training in Biomedical Sciences and Technology in particular Immunology for the human resources development. Hopefully, our biomedical training and networking will lead to more collaboration in biomedical study and research among institutions both inland and oversea.

As to the other PSU-ITP, our participants came from different institutions all over the country. Though the number of this year's participants was limited by the accommodation capacity in our lab. We have altogether 26 participants in this workshop including coordinator and instructors from University of Paris 6 and Institut Pasteur, Dr. Adrien Six, Dr. Sylvie Garcia and Ms. Sophie Dularoy. Eleven (42%) of our participants are from Prince of Songkla University (PSU), 4 from Mahidol University (MU), 3 from Khon Kaen University (KKU), 2 from Naresuan University (NU), and 1 individual from Chiangmai University (CMU), Suranaree University of Technology (SUT), Srinakharinwirot University (SWU), and the National Cancer Institute (NCI). Though majority of our participants is in biomedical and pharmaceutical sciences, only 20% is in the field of Microbiology and Immunology. Could this indicate that our subject has become attracted to a wider audiences.

Last but not least, it is not possible to organize this workshop without many individuals coordination and financial support from both Thai and French Government & Institutions, the MUA-PED program, Institut Pasteur, Universite' Paris 6, and Prince of Songkla University . Additionally, without the helping hands from a very few members in our Department and the graduate students in Biomedical Sciences program we will not be able to provide you all the facilities and conveniences during this workshop. On the behalf of the organizing committee, I would like to apology for any inconvenience that may arise.

Finally, I would like to invite the President of PSU, Associate Prof. Dr. Prasert Chitapong, to deliver his welcome speech and opening remark for all participants in The 3rd PSU-ITP Workshop on "Immunological Activity Determination of Medicinal Plants".



Suvina Ratanachaiyavong, M.D, Ph.D

Dept Head and Director of Biomedical Sciences Program