

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

We look forward to 2014 with some trepidation. The anti-democracy movement – some of whom are fascists and some just perplexed by capitalist modernity – seems determined to use violence to put an end to the rule of law in Thailand. Yet another military coup now seems possible. This would surely provoke more conflict as the great mass of the population has repeatedly demonstrated that they wish to be governed by a democratically-elected government and have shown that they prefer a party that rules in the interest of the majority of the electorate.

Hundreds if not thousands of Thais have been killed a variety of tyrants over the years in the name of democracy. Violence against pro-democracy demonstrators was witnessed as recently as 2012. It is routinely accompanied by mass arrests, falsified evidence, false accusations and perpetrators revelling in the culture of impunity that has done so much damage to Thai society. This is not a secret history; it has been played out in the full glare of publicity and it has been well-documented subsequently. I was, therefore, deeply shocked and angered to see so many westerners having joined (illegally) in one of the anti-democracy demonstrations a couple of weeks ago. Dressed up as ultra-nationalists, they laughed and cheered as anti-democracy demagogues shrieked abuse against the democratically-elected government and the useful idiots blew their whistles. It was a very shameful episode. There will be people who wish to obfuscate the

nature of the struggle with talk of populism, corruption and so forth; however, that does no more than camouflage the actual events. Despite the hard-won victory to achieve emancipation for the Thai people through blood-soaked massacres, thousands of people still wish to set it aside. It is hard to imagine how there can be a peaceful and positive resolution to this situation.

In this issue of the SIU Journal of Management, I am pleased to present five new peer-reviewed papers, with the authors of two of the papers coming from Thailand, one from Laos and two from India. I am glad that we are able to make a contribution to south-south dialogue in which researchers and scholars can search for solutions to problems they face themselves rather than having solutions imposed on them from outside. After all, many of the problems that people in our region face have been caused by the acts of those who imposed unwanted and inequitable conditions in the past and it is inappropriate for representatives of the same interests to be imposing new so-called solutions, which would work mainly to their own benefit. Having said this, I am still conscious that we suffer from a gender imbalance in author publications; I can only encourage more women to submit papers.

The first paper is by Mahmoud Moussa and concerns the interaction between information communications technology and management.

Although the introduction of such technology was once said to offer a means of liberation from Taylorist practices in the workplace but the reality has not turned out to be so simple. It is important, therefore, to consider how it should be integrated into the experience of work in a way that is beneficial for all concerned.

The second paper concerns trade facilitation across borders and takes a case study of India. It is written by Surendar Singh and R.C. Mishra. The rise of the Indian economy is one the most noteworthy economic phenomena of recent years but it is very uneven in nature. Comparatively small areas and sectors dominate the economic gains achieved and these are also distributed inequitably. One way of evening out the economy as a whole is to provide enabling technology such as infrastructure which will promote value-adding activities for a much wider range of people.

The third paper is written by Sithixay Xayavong and concerns an empirical survey of Thai tourists in the ancient Lao capital Luang Prabang, which has been designated by UNESCO to be a world heritage site. The paper contains a wealth of data on the tourists concerned and will be very helpful in understanding how to improve the service offerings of tourism providers in the city and in Laos as a whole.

The fourth paper takes us back to India and, in particular, the city of Kolkata. Authors Jayanta Banerjee, Ajay K. Garg and Indranil Bose

investigate the factors affecting brand loyalty when it comes to subscribers of mobile telephone services. This is a very popular subject in marketing and the product sector is very competitive, complex and rapidly changing. It is sometimes difficult to grasp the correct marketing strategy because of being overwhelmed by the day-to-day management of marketing tactics.

The fifth and final paper concerns the management of teams and how encountering and then confronting problems might provide opportunities to create learning events for eventual success. Ravee Phoewhawm and Worawit Janchai explain how this took place in the case study of a cooperative programme between an institute of higher education and prospective employers of students who received mentoring to help smooth their transition into the labour force.

In addition to the peer-reviewed papers, I am happy to include a report on the International Workshop on Korean Trade and Investment in the Greater Mekong Subregion, which was held at Shinawatra University at the beginning of November. This workshop was supported by the Academy of Korean Studies. The issue is completed with book reviews.

John Walsh, Editor, SIU Journal of Management. Opinions expressed in this introduction belong to the editor alone and should not be ascribed to Shinawatra University as a whole or any individual member of it.