

News flash from Asia (Oct.2007-Feb.2009)

by KAIZAWA Shinichiro (Kai), General Secretary of NVDA

October 2007 - 15 June

Good news from Iran!

NAKAMURA Satoshi, a member of NICE, was kidnapped by the terrorist group in Iran in Oct. 2007 while he was travelling there after the LMTV project in Nepal by NIFC. And finally, he was safely released this June!

11 March -

Green Lion and "Voluntourism"

The issue was originally raised at the "EC plus" meeting of NVDA (Network for Voluntary Development in Asia) in March by its member which was severely damaged by performance of the commercial company named Green Lion (GL) offering "voluntourism" programs in some Asian countries. GL is operated by some people who are the leaders of the workcamp organizations in Asia and has some structural connection with at least one of NVDA members.

By the request from the members, President and General Secretary of NVDA tried to research the facts and raised the issue more widely to different i.v.s. networks in the world, also because it involves some travel agencies in Europe and US.

The issue has also brought a wider topic in our i.v.s. movement, how to deal with this fast growing "voluntourism" in general.

01 April

NVDA Secretariat was moved

from Indonesia to Japan in April by the result of the General Assembly in Jan. 2009.

New secretariat, ISHIGURO Tomoe who is a member of NICE and has some workcamp experience, started to work from May voluntarily (2 days a week in the office and many evenings of a week while she has a different job for 5 days a week!).

Beginning of June -

Group Workcamp with Hong Kong

NVDA and Hong Kong Institute of

Education (HKIEd) started cooperation from this year. They would like the member organizations of NVDA to host group workcamps (workcamp organized for specific groups) for their students who will become schools teachers and would like to have experience of voluntary service and intercultural exchange. The first pilot project was successfully done in Vietnam for 7 weeks in June-July by VPV and 5 more projects will be done in Dec. (RUCHI India and EYES Philippines), Apr. 2009 (NICE Japan and NIFC Nepal) and Jun.-Jul. 2009 (MCE Mongolia).

26-30 June

2nd UNESCO Asian Youth Forum

was organized in 26-30/06 in Gwangju, Korea by KNCU. The main topic was "Sustainable Community in Asia" and NVDA President was invited as a special observer while a few NVDA members also sent participants.

27 June - 10 July

G8 Summit and Special Workcamp

G8 Summit was held in Toyako, Japan in 07-09 July where political leaders discussed on different global issues such as global warming, MDGs and especially, food/ oil crisis even though they could not make really effective results in total (as usual...).

French President proposed to double the size of G8 since they feel to need China, India, etc. to tackle with those issues. But this kind of scheme is anyway fundamentally unfair and undemocratic for the world people.



Our i.v.s. NGOs made a quite big action to

G8 Summit by World Tanabata Action (WTA. See the other report of Thematic actions) and Special G8 Workcamp (SGW).

SGW was organized by NICE (Host), NVDA, CCIVS and HIF (local NGO) in 27/06-10/07 with 12 vols. from 6 of G8 (Japan, Canada, France, Germany, Russia and US) and 2 special guest countries (Indonesia and Vietnam, President of NVDA and Director of SJV) sponsored by International Foundation of Mitsubishi Bank and National Forest Agency.

They planted trees and maintained 3 different forests, visited 3 elementary schools for special programs of WTA, helped Indigenous People's Summit and organized two special forums. Over 1,000 local people and children were involved and 5 press companies reported the project bigly, so it could contribute to raise recognition of i.v.s. quite much.

08-20 September

Art Diem project in Vietnam

5th NVDA Special Workcamp: Arte Diem Asia 2008 Promoting a culture of peace and solidarity" was organized in 08-20/09 in Hanoi and Hai Duong by SJV (Host), NVDA and YAP.

The project promoted peace education through different forms of arts such as theater, music, media, dance and painting/ sculpture. Professional singer from Indonesia also joined together with NVDA President.

09-15 October

Asia-Europe Tft of leaders in Vietnam

Asia-Europe Training for Young Volunteers, "Learning the Unimaginable" - Volunteering as a Tool for Mutual Understanding" is just being organized in 09-15/10 in Ha Long, Vietnam by VPV (Host) and ASEF as one of results from AEVTP in 2007 (by NICE, NVDA and ASEF).

This is actually focusing camp leader training. Let's wait for the report!

05-19 November

AEYVE 2008 in Thailand (+@)

will be organized in 05-19/11 by CCIVS, GW (Host) and ASEF. The participants will focus on ESD and visit also the neighboring countries during the project. (More details

should be mentioned in the Secretariat Report).

11-17 February 2009

Asia-Europe Tft for LMTV in Japan

Asia-Europe Tft for LMTV (officially "Asia-Europe Training for Trainers, Exploring the Impact of Middle and Long-Term Youth Voluntary Service in Health Education and Community Development in Asia and Europe") is planned to be co-organized by NICE (Host), NVDA, ASEF and ALLIANCE in cooperation with CCIVS and ICYE, though the official answer from ASEF will come in the end of Oct.

Dates: 11th (arr.) - 17th (dep.) Feb. 2009

Place: Tokyo, Japan

Objectives (all for Asia/ Europe...):

- + Analyze the situation of Health Education
- + Analyze the difference on LMTV
- + Share experience & improve skills on LMTV
- + Create action plans and develop its tools
- + Develop methodologies to measure the impact
- + Develop cooperation among youth NGOs

Participants: 24 (aged 24-40) preferably full time staff of the NGOs who are in charge of LMTV projects (either sending or hosting) or who would like to start/ develop LMTV projects.

So far, there has been very few opportunities for LMTV organizers to meet together internationally.

Let's expect that this project can contribute to develop and improve the quality of LMTV projects and exchange!

all through the year!

Common Actions in Asia

Besides World Tanabata Action, some other common actions have been actively done in Asia including;

- * Promotion to use acrylic sponges
- * Notebook action (between Nepal and Japan)
- * Sister School Project (Bangladesh and Japan)
- * Sister Forest NGOs (UK and Japan)

Don't hesitate to ask more details and please also add any other news if you have!