

## APPENDIX III

### ANNIVERSARY OF A PERSONALITY

#### A. Information concerning the personality to be commemorated

1. **Family name:** Chakri Dynasty  
  
**First name:** Queen Sri Bajarindra, the Queen Regent of King Rama V, the Queen Mother of King Rama VI and King RamaVII, of Siam. (Née : H.R.H. Princess Saovabha Phongsri; promoted to the highest title of Her Majesty Queen Saovabha Phongsri The Regent by King Chulalongkorn; renamed Her Majesty Queen Sri Bajarindra The Queen Mother by King Vajiravudh RamaVI.)
2. **Born:** 1 January 1864      **Died:** 20 October 1919
3. **Fields of activity:** Education (Education for Girls and Women, Public Health Education), Culture, Applied Science (Public Health for all and for women), and Social and Human Sciences (Status of Women, Women Leadership)
4. **Brief description of the personality and of her most important works**

#### 4.1 *Description of the personality*

4.1.1 Her Majesty Queen Sri Bajarindra (See Photo 1), born H.R.H. Princess Saovabha Phongsri, was King Mongkut's (Rama IV) 66<sup>th</sup> daughter (See Photo 2). Her mother was Somdetch Phra Piyamavadi Sri Bajarindra Mata (Chao Chom Manda Piam). Like all the King's children, she was born within the compound of the Grand Palace.

When she was 15, she became a Royal Princess Consort to King Chulalongkorn (Rama V), with the title of Phra Nang Ther (See Photo 3). Previous to this, her two elder sisters, born to same mother, had also been the Royal Princess Consorts before her with the same title: Phra Nang Ther Sunanda and Phra Nang Ther Savang Vadhana (later named Queen Sri Savarindira). (See Photo 4)

In 1895, H.R.H. Princess Saovabha Phongsri was promoted to the title "Phra Nang Chao Phra Akra Raja Devi ".(See Photo 5) This title indicated her rank as the first Princess Consort following the royal proclamation of her son, H.R.H. Prince Vajiravudh, as the Crown Prince. In King Chulalongkorn's time, succession to the throne was a very important issue, and therefore the rank and status of his Royal Consorts depended upon the survival and the status of their royal princes. The number, the health, the education, and the viability of the royal princes also contributed to the stability of the status of the royal consorts especially the Princess Consorts (who were daughters of the previous king) whose sons were most eligible for succession to the throne.

In this aspect, Queen Sri Bajarindra (at that time H.R.H. Princess Saovabha Phongsri) was blessed with 14 pregnancies, though 5 did not survive the full term, 9 children

were born to her and were given the royal title and name by King Chulalongkorn. The list of her royal children according to seniority is as follows;

1. Princess Bahurad Manimaya, Krom Phra Depnari Ratana
2. King Vajiravudh, Rama VI
3. Prince Tribej Rutamadhamrong (1881–1887)
4. Prince Chakrabongse Bhuvanath, Prince of Bisnulok
5. Prince Siriraj Kakudhabhandha
6. Princess, passed away on day of birth
7. Prince Asdang Dejavudh, Prince of Nakorn Rajasima
8. Prince Chudadhuj Dharadilok, Prince of Bejraburna
9. King Prajadhipok, Rama VII

Later, two of her children, one son and one daughter, passed away and the remaining 7 princes (See Photo 6, 7 and 8) were raised with strict attention and care. They were educated in the Palace Schools for Royal Princes and received the traditional Thai training in language, literature, Buddhism, palace etiquette and protocols, as well as basic military training. After the ceremony of cutting the "top knot", they were sent to Europe for modern education in selected fields in preparation for their future services to the throne.

Five of her sons who successfully completed their education and returned to serve the government however passed away, yet 2 of her sons, the first, Crown Prince Vajiravudh, and after his death, her last son, Prince Prajadhipok were enthroned as King Rama VI, and King Rama VII respectively.

4.1.2 Queen Sri Bajarindra, when she was young, received her education in the Royal Palace. Following is an excerpt from her funeral memorial book written by Prince Devawongse Varoprakarn, her brother and Minister of Foreign Affairs in King Chulalongkorn's reign, describing her life and her academic excellence:

*“Towards the end of the fourth reign, educational institutes were not yet available as they are today. In addition, the female members of the royal family well versed in the arts and sciences who had previously provided an education for the princesses of later generations, had by that time all passed away. Thus, there was very little opportunity for the Queen to study; but because of her perseverance and intelligence, King Rama V allowed her to accompany him from a very young age. Her Majesty the Queen was able to observe the Royal Court administrative tasks performed by the King and this, complemented by her studious, diligent, inquisitive and scholarly efforts, made it possible for her to be learned in available subjects, to a level equal to or higher than those having been formally schooled in the field. This fact is evident to all in the many letters she wrote and the most important administrative function she assumed as Regent during His Majesty the King's trip to Europe in 1897. At that time, there was a difference of opinion between ministerial leaders, but Her Majesty was able to graciously decide the matter on her own, to the satisfaction of all and without negatively affecting the country's administration.”*

Queen Sri Bajarindra, as a young princess, often accompanied His Majesty King Chulalongkorn on his visits to various places thus enabling her to learn from observation and

from first-hand experiences, sharing a common concern for the well being of the people in all parts of the country. Their Majesties would normally donate their personal funds to the sick and the elderly. They also took great interest in the welfare of soldiers by providing them with necessities and providing treatment by royal physicians for wounded or ill soldiers. Following is an excerpt from Her Majesty's address to members of the military corps:

*“True it is that I am a woman; but I have a heart like yours that is filled with patriotism, faith for the religion and loyalty to the King. In any incident, I am committed to the tireless support of our brave soldiers.”*  
(Reference: *The Diary of H.R.H. Prince Maha Vajirunhis (the Crown Prince and the son Queen Sri Savarindira)*, Mahamakut Buddhist University Publishing House, BE. 2525 (1982))

4.1.3 The life and works of Queen Sri Bajarindra was the subjects of many books written by recent scholars and researchers as well as those who had known her during her lifetime. They mostly remembered her for her moral and scrupulous conduct, her committing herself to accomplishing the tasks entrusted to her by His Majesty King Rama V with genuine loyalty and gratitude. She was described as being a devout believer of Buddhism who donated her personal funds for the restoration of various temples and monasteries inside and outside the kingdom. Her donations also went to regular sustenance for certain monks, food for all monks and novices at many monasteries, and utility and maintenance allowances for various monasteries.

Queen Sri Bajarindra was convinced that for the country to prosper, it was necessary for the people, both men and women, to get an advanced education. In particular, she viewed that Thai women lagged far behind men and she donated her personal funds for the establishment of schools for girls to provide Thai women with opportunities to learn the Thai language, foreign languages and many different vocational subjects. To the present day, these educational institutions continue to perform their dedicated tasks as accorded to them upon their founding by Queen Sri Bajarindra, producing human resources for all sectors of the country.

Furthermore, Queen Sri Bajarindra graciously extended her kindness to people in sickness and supported the establishing of Siriraj Hospital, donating her personal funds to set up the School of Midwifery and Nursing as a place that would provide education in nursing and midwifery for women. She also participated in the establishing of the Red Unalom Society, of which she was President for 26 consecutive years.

4.1.4 In 1897, she became the first Queen Regent when King Chulalongkorn went on his first trip to Europe and appointed her to the Regency overseeing the administration of the country in his absence. King Chulalongkorn in appreciation of her good work as the Regent for 9 months, conferred on her the title “Her Majesty Queen Saovabha Phongsri the Queen Regent”, making her Thailand's first Queen. Her Majesty Queen Sri Bajarindra later also became the mother of two Thai kings in the Chakri Dynasty: King Vajiravudh (Rama VI) and King Prajadhipok (Rama VII).

4.1.5 Later on in 1910, when Crown Prince Maha Vajiravudh was enthroned as King, he officially elevated her to the title of Queen Mother and renamed her with an auspicious name "Somdetch Phra Sri Bajarindra". He entrusted upon her with an absolute power in administering the inner court, the court of the female royalty and their female

officials. To the members of the Royal Family and members of the Royal Court, she was also referred as “Somdetch Phra Pan Pee Luang” (Queen Mother of Thousand Years) a term traditionally used with the mother of Thai kings, signifying highest loyalty and adoration at the same time.

**[Reference:**

1. *Somdetch Phra Sri Bajarindra Baromma Rajini Nath Pra Pan Pee Luang, (in Thai) by U-Thomporn, First publication B.E. 2509 (1964) Sixth edition B.E. 2552 (2009), Prae Pitaya Publishing House.*
2. *Leading Women in the Asian History (p. 25–78) by Dr. Suwadee Chareupong and Professor Dr. Piyanart Bunnag, editor, 1987, Ban Pitak Akson Publishing House.*
3. *Khatiya Naree Sri Bajarindra by Sukanya Chavanich, (in Thai), published on the occasion of 100th Anniversary of the Rajini School, B.E. 2547 (1994)]*

4.1.6 Queen Sri Bajarindra passed away on Monday, 20 October 1919 at Phayathai Palace, at the age of 55 years, 9 months and 19 days.

4.1.7 The Biography of Somdetch Phra Sri Bajarindra Baromma Rajini Nath, by Mom Rajawongse Devatiraj P. Malakul, presented in the Royal presence of His Majesty the King on the occasion of His Majesty's presiding over the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration of her birth held at the Saovabha School, 1 January, BE 2507 (1964).]

**4.2 Her important works were mainly in the fields of UNESCO's works:**

- A. Education for girls and women
- B. Health Education and Public Health for all, particularly for women
- C. Status of women
- D. Culture
- E. Social and Human Science

**5. Full list of her works and/ or action**

**5.1 Education for Girls and Women**

Education was an important policy in the reform policies launched by King Mongkut and King Chulalongkorn. Being a woman, Queen Sri Bajarindra received only formal basic education provided to royal princesses in the Palace, but she was an intelligent and committed to self improvement and continued to learn throughout her life from observation and experiences, mostly by observing King Chulalongkorn's style of work and administration and also from her visits to many places.

She was also a keen observer of the developments in all the countries she visited, from her accompanying King Chulalongkorn on his state visits to Singapore, Malaysia and Java.

All her sons were sent to many countries in Europe for modern education and she attentively monitored their progresses and obstacles regularly through periodical reports and correspondents with the Thai Representatives in those countries.

Queen Sri Bajarindra recognized the utmost importance of education for personal development and for the development of individual capacities to contribute to the national development. At the same time, she realized that girls and women were not given equal access to education and therefore they did not enjoy the equal status as men in many ways.

Her own elevation to the highest rank of royal consorts and as the first Queen Regent during King Chulalongkorn's visit to Europe was an exceptional and outstanding achievement. As a trusted wife, a mother of many royal princes, and as a woman, she performed her duties to the best of her ability, yet she took the opportunity of her high status to act upon her own initiative, and with her personal funds, to promote the education for girls and women by establishing 9 schools of for girls both in Bangkok and in the provinces.

#### 5.1.1 Founding of Rajini School

In 1904, Queen Sri Bajarindra donated her personal funds for the setting up of the first Thai school for girls, to provide the opportunity to girls to study the arts and sciences, and graciously named it "Rajini School", the Queen's School. Providing her royal patronage, Her Majesty Queen Sri Bajarindra was personally involved, in the initial stage, the management of the school, i.e., the hiring of teachers from Japan to teach English and handicrafts; and the provision of teachers' salary, food expenses and miscellaneous expenses. Today her life-sized statue is still an important monument enshrined at the Rajini School. *(See Photo 9)*

Queen Sri Bajarindra also formulated a concise policy for the school to provide considerable instruction in the crafts as to allow students to enter a trade and support themselves, instruction in the Thai language that would allow them to communicate with others in writing, instruction in English that would basically allow them to read and write in the language and instruction in etiquette and ethics that would make them accomplished persons. This policy very well reflected Her Majesty Queen Sri Bajarindra's competence and important role in the development of Thai women in the society of those days which provided the necessary foundation for the promotion of gender equality in Thailand.

#### 5.1.2 The establishment of 9 other schools for girls in Bangkok and in 5 provinces

Throughout her lifetime, Queen Sri Bajarindra extensively pursued the goal of expanding education for women by donating her private funds for the setting up of schools and for payment of teachers' salaries. Queen Sri Bajarindra provided support and royal patronage for the establishing of numerous schools in Bangkok and the provinces. These included Rajini School, Saowabha School (at present Saowabha Vocational College), the School of Midwifery and Nursing (at present, the Faculty of Nursing, Mahidol University), Wichienmatu School and Sapparachinee School in Trang province, Chomsurang Upatham School in Ayutthaya province, Rachineeburana School in Nakhon Pathom province, Siyanusorn School in Chanthaburi province, Satirachinuthit School in Udon Thani province.

### 5.2 *Health Education and Public Health for all, and particularly for Women*

5.2.1 The Red Unalom Society was established in 1893 by Queen Sri Bajarindra, when the Franco-Siamese Conflict broke out, causing many Thai soldiers and citizens to be injured. She recognized that medical assistance for all people during the armed conflicts was needed regardless of their affiliation. The Queen even invited members of the Royal Family

and charitable persons to donate funds as fitting to their capacity and inclination. These people were also invited to work as volunteer administrators for the organization, contributing to the success of the Red Unalom Society, which later changed its name to the **Siam Red Cross Society**, a society which shares common goals with the Red Cross Societies of other countries. For 26 years, Queen Sri Bajarindra was President of the Siam Red Cross Society, until her death.

5.2.2 Panchamathirat Uthit Hospital in Ayutthaya Province was built with Queen Sri Bajarindra's donation as well as donation from the general public, in 1912, by royal command to promote equal access to modern public health care and to dedicate to the memory of King Chulalongkorn. The Hospital is now a governmental hospital serving the people in Ayutthaya and surrounding areas.

#### 5.2.3 Clean water for the public.

During Queen Sri Bajarindra's time, clean water for the general public was not widely available outside the home. At home, people boiled water for drinking or saved clean rain water in the jars for home consumption. Travelers to Bangkok from the provinces therefore did not have public access to clean drinking water. Queen Sri Bajarindra graciously ordered a statue of the Earth Goddess to be constructed from her personal on the occasion of her 55<sup>th</sup> birthday anniversary, with a drinking fountain that could be used by the public. The statue water fountain was put in place according to Her Majesty's wish to provide passers-by with pure, hygienic drinking water. The fountain is still in use today. (See Photo 10)

During her visit to one of the provinces, she discovered that the people were facing with the problem of water scarcity, especially in the dry season. She commanded that a public reservoir be dug to store rain water during the rainy season so that people in the villages would have access to clean water.

#### 5.2.4 Education in the Field of Modern Midwifery and Nursing

In addition to providing funds for the mentioned public utilities, Queen Sri Bajarindra was interested in the promotion of modern midwifery and nursing in Thailand. Seeing that modern postnatal care practices ensured safer survival and better care and development for both the mother and child, the Queen herself declined the traditional practice of lying by the fire after the delivery of her sons and daughters and adopted modern treatment and care instead. This set the trend for the modern practice in the inner court and throughout the high society.

Queen Sri Bajarindra then provided scholarships for four Thai girls to study midwifery in England and donated her personal funds for the setting up of the Nursing and Midwifery School at Siriraj Hospital. The hospital was founded by King Chulalongkorn in 1888, two years after a worldwide cholera outbreak. It was named after the king's 18-month old son, Prince Siriraj Kakudhabhandha, born to Queen Sri Bajarindra, then called H.R.H. Princess Consort Saovabha Phongsri, who had died from dysentery a year before the opening of the hospital. The medical school was established two years later in 1890. New graduates from this school received the Queen's gift of midwifery tools as a reward, and permission was granted for them to refer to Queen Sri Bajarindra as user of the modern midwifery service. A program was also started to reward women who delivered their children at hospital, using modern midwifery, with 4 Baht and a set of mattress and diapers to encourage the people to turn to modern midwifery.

### 5.3 *Arts and Culture*

Queen Sri Bajarindra was very talented in literature and poetry, and was also gifted in handicrafts of all sorts which very well reflected the Thai identity. Her Majesty the Queen was however interested in every form of art work including the arts and crafts practiced by the minority/ethnic groups, such as sewing, fresh flower arrangement, potpourri making. She also provided patronage for craftsmen from various countries to work in Thailand. She engaged a member of Vietnamese embroiderers as royal crafts persons.

In 1902, her son, Crown Prince Vajiravudh, returned to Siam from England via Japan and told her about the advancement in the training of girls and women in the fields of art and crafts. He suggested to her that she should select some talented young women in her palace and send them on her scholarship to Japan for further training in this area. Queen Sri Bajarindra therefore personally selected 4 girls to be given her scholarships to study Japanese language and Japanese art and crafts for 4 years. They traveled to Japan by ship with Mr. Tokichi Masao and his wife. Mr. Masao was engaged by King Chua as a legal advisor and later became Japanese Ambassador to Japan during the reign of King Rama VI. Mr. Masao arranged for the Thai students to live with respectable Japanese families, studied with famous teachers from the Tokyo Koto Joshi Shihan Gakko (Okanomizu Josi Dagaku). At the same time, the Crown Prince selected 4 young men to receive his scholarships to study the art of silk rearing and silk weaving as well as goldsmith technology. (See photo 11 and 12) When the girls completed their training in Japan and returned home to continue to live and work in the palace. Soon they were sent to teach the arts and crafts at the Rajini School which was founded by the Queen.

The opportunity for the women from the Queen's palace to work as a teacher in a public school started a new tradition and provided the palace women with more freedom of mobility. One of the women who received the queen's scholarship to study in Japan and went out to teach at the Rajini School latter married an official of the Ministry of Education. The wedding was sponsored by the Queen. Later her husband was posted as the Education Attaché at the Thai Embassy in London.

Queen Sri Bajarindra was a fashion designer in her own right who introduced new styles of dressing into the inner court which also spread wider throughout Thailand, by harmoniously integrating eastern and western dress cultures. (See photo 13) Queen Sri Bajarindra made frequent public appearances, accompanying the King as well as representing the King on some special occasions. Therefore, her various dresses styles were seen and photographed by Thai and international photographers. Her styles were appreciated and praised as the model for graceful adoption of western elements into the traditional Thai style of dress while continuing to uphold Thai cultural values.

### 5.4 *Role model as a trusted wife*

The story of Queen Sri Bajarindra's life, work and ethical conduct, published in many books, revealed to the readers her faithful dedication to the King, her husband, and her unflinching devotion to the upbringing of her children, supervising closely their early care and education. Her concerns for the security of the nation as well as the betterment of life and the living conditions of the people in general were also reflected in her speeches and her royal decrees issued during her Regency. Throughout her life, Her Majesty

Queen Sri Bajarindra was a giver, a model of an honorable Queen and the Mother of the royal children. She shared the virtues of the Thai people's respected King, His Majesty King Chulalongkorn - Thailand's beloved and eminent Monarch.

Queen Sri Bajarindra was a model of refinement for Thai ladies, a wife most loyal to her husband and a mother most worthy of praise for the rearing of her 9 sons and daughters. Her continued quest for knowledge and her integrity in confronting and solving the problems and overcoming obstacles made her an exemplar of a good leader and a good follower.

More importantly, throughout her life, Queen Sri Bajarindra held common interest above her own personal benefit, an attitude which helped her to serve alongside His Majesty King Chulalongkorn and bring Siam successfully through the crises of those days, making it the prosperous and established state it is today. In 1910, when King Chulalongkorn fell seriously ill and was closely taken care of by the royal medical staff and nurses. On 19 October of that year, 4 days before his death, the King sent a letter asking Queen Sri Bajarindra to take "official ownership" of his illness, thus entrusting her as his wife, with the responsibility of his last rites.

## 5.5 *Status of Women*

### ♦ **The first Queen Regent of Siam**

When His Majesty King Chulalongkorn went on a nine-month Europe trip to strengthen Siam's relations with western countries, he issued a 20-articles law on the Appointment of The Regent which was published in the National Gazette proclaiming on the title of "Somdech Phra Baromma Rajini Nath" or Her Majesty Queen Saovabha the Queen Regent. Previously she received the title of "Phra Akra Raja Devi" which already ranked her as the first Royal Consort, but her appointment as the Queen Regent was unprecedented in Siam. It was the first time Siam had a Queen Regent holding command over the country's administration and performing important royal functions of great benevolence to the nation. These included visits made to the various ministries, sub-ministries and departments; and receptions of foreign guests. Queen Sri Bajarindra also presided over the country's administrative meetings, where she displayed keenness for the task, to the liking of His Majesty King Rama V and the appreciation of Royal Family members and government officers in charge of the country at the time. According to Prince Damrong Rajanubhab:

*"Whenever Her Majesty the Queen presided over the Regent Council meeting or the meeting of ministers, she never offered random advice; but would always consult the meeting. If there were issues she was in doubt of, she would clarify those issues before providing counsel. She would never be in error and it was clear that she was as capable as a man."*

**[Reference: Prince Damrong, Kwam Song Jam (in Thai), Krung Thep Mathichon, B.E. 2546]**

*"In this instance, Her Majesty the Queen proved herself worthy of His Majesty the King's trust in that she would clarify all tasks new to her before taking any decision. She would not just let issues pass by, but would competently decide royal affairs. At times when there were differences of opinions among the lords of the ministries, Her Majesty would herself take*



*decisions to end the dispute in a way that was satisfactory to all, without doing harm to the interest of the country.” (Prince Damrong, ibid)*

♦ **The Queen Regent's Royal Decrees**

During her 9-month regency in the absence of the King, it is interesting to note that Queen Sri Bajarindra not only chaired the Council of Cabinet and the Council for the Royal Administration for day-to-day administration only (See Photo 14), but she also signed many important Royal Declarations, Orders, and commitments totaling 84 in number. (See attached list of the Queen Regent's Decrees in Annex I)

**5.6 Support for Buddhism**

Queen Sri Bajarindra was a devout and committed Buddhist who supported the religion through continued merit making throughout her life. Not only did she donate her personal funds for the construction of religious venues and religious objects, but she also provided financial support for the repair of Bangkok and provincial monasteries, including Wat Phra Buddhachat, Saraburi Province and Wat Ampharam, Hua Hin District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province. Queen Sri Bajarindra supported the creation of the Rama V Siamrath Tripitaka and provided patronage for certain monks and novices. Furthermore, she habitually presented food to monks and novices at many royal temples and even supported the construction of Buddhist monuments in other countries, in dedication to Buddhism.

During her time as Regent, Queen Sri Bajarindra's work in Buddhism included overseeing that care and support in the basic necessities required for the production of textbooks and educational materials be provided to Buddhist education institutions such as the Mahamakuta Rajavidyalaya.

**6. Please state whether this commemoration related to the work as a whole or to a particular work or action [If so, which?]**

The commemoration is related to all achievements of Her Majesty as a whole, with particular emphases on the improvement of the quality of life, the education for women, health education, not only of the Thai people, but also those in states which are now Thailand's neighbouring countries.

**7. Describe how this work/ action has had a genuine impact at the regional and/or universal level**

**7.1 Encouragement of Modern Education for All Her Royal Children**

Modern education was promoted as part of the reform policy by King Mongkut, her father, and King Chulalongkorn, her husband. Queen Saovabha Phongsri enthusiastically supported this policy by allowing all her sons to be sent abroad for modern education at a very young age. Throughout her long service as the Royal Consort, she gave birth 7 princes and 2 princesses. She personally looked after the royal children during their infancy. Together with the King, she closely supervised their education, especially in the decision to send abroad for a long education pursuit. She supported all her sons in the preparation for their travelling. She kept regular correspondences particularly with the Thai ambassadors of the countries where her children were studying to monitor the progresses and

problems of the education of her children. Her attentive interests in and her unfailing support for the education of her sons made her a role model for a mother who encouraged the education of their sons to best of their abilities in anywhere in the world.

### **Education for her Daughter**

Unfortunately, all her two daughters passed away at early ages, and she asked her sister, Her Royal Highness Princess Consort Savang Vadhana (Queen Sri Savarindira) who had two young daughters born only 2 years apart, to allow her to adopt one of them as her own. Therefore, H.R.H. Princess Valaya Alongkorn, Princess of Bejraburi (See Photo 15), her own niece was subsequently adopted and raised as Queen Saovabha Phongsri's own daughter. She was sent to the School for the Royal Daughters in the Grand Palace together with other royal children of the same age, and was tutored in English by a number of private tutors at the royal residence of Queen Saovabha Phongsri. She lived a long and healthy life and gracefully grew up to become an ideal royal princess with traditional Thai knowledge and traditional values, as well as the necessary competency in the English language and the knowledge of modern world. She was a specialist in the art of flower arrangements and embroidery, enjoyed reading in Thai and English as well as writing. She played many modern games such as chess and scrabble. She later took over the patronage of the Schools founded by The Queen Mother and actively presided over several school ceremonies and functions. In the reign of King Rama VI, she was granted with the royal title of Krom Luang Bejraburi Rajasirindhorn, together with the rank of a full colonel and special commander of the Second Calvary Unit. She visited Europe twice to seek medical treatment and to observe the development of the European countries.

Later, Queen Saovabha Phongsri became seriously concerned about the real need for formal schooling for girls in Siam and for their specialized training in certain necessary areas. She therefore donated her personal funds for the construction of a number of schools for girls, in Bangkok and in the provinces, and offered them her policy and her Royal Patronage. She also gave her own scholarships to female students in midwifery and nursing.

### **7.2 *The Queen Regent and the Inspiration for Higher Status of Women***

She acted as the Queen Regent, in the absence of King Chulalongkorn who went on the state visit to Europe, for almost one year. This was an unprecedented proclamation and was great news which made headlines in Siam and abroad. Being the first woman in Thailand to attain this high and important status, she set a good example and became a great source of inspiration for all women as well as provided the impetus for the promotion of the status of women in Asia and in Thailand.

### **7.3 *Foreign visits***

Queen Saovabha Phongsri accompanied His Majesty King Chulalongkorn on his state visits to Singapore (1900) and Java (1906). Photographs of the royal visits featuring many international personalities at the time are now kept in the National Archives. Some of these photographs have been printed showing King Chulalongkorn and Queen Saovabha Phongsri, together with the western and local dignitaries in Singapore and Java, and many important places at that time. (See Photo 16 and 17) These photographs serve not only the national memory but also the regional and international memory.

In 1911, after King Chulalongkorn's Royal Funeral in Bangkok, Queen Sri Bajarindra, now the Queen Mother of King Rama VI, still could not recover from her deep grief and mourning. Two of her younger sons who returned from their European studies to attend the Royal Funeral and had to go back to Europe by ship strongly recommended that the Queen Mother accompany them on board the Royal Ship Maha Chakri to Indochina where they had stop over in order to transfer onto a European Steamer to continue the trip to Europe. She agreed and decided to make an informal visit for the duration of 40 nights to the cities of Saigon, Haiphong, Hanoi, Turin, Cam Run and Cam Pod, along the Indochina Coast. Though not a state visit, she was cordially received with honour and dignity such as the flying of the Siamese Flag and the Queen's Flag and saluting in her honour by the authorities of those port cities.

7.4 *As the Queen Regent*, she specially welcomed representatives of the government of many countries to the court of Siam, for example, the Ambassador of Great Britain, the Ambassador of Japan, the representative of the Southern states of Thailand (including the States which now become the State of Kelantan and Terengganu in Malaysia). Queen Saovabha Phongsri also accepted many invitations from foreign ambassadors and visiting dignitaries to attend the grand dinner receptions organized by them outside the Royal Palace, thus promoting the visibility of the female leadership of Siam.

#### 7.5 *Decree on Prevention of Trans-border Epidemics*

During her 9-month regency, several laws were issued to the royal decrees and proclamations. (See attached list of the Queen Regent's Decrees in Annex I) In one important decree, issued on 26 April B.E. 2440 (1897), for example, Queen Saovabha Phongsri in her capacity as the Queen Regent of Siam, issued a very important Royal Declaration that saved the lives of many. The Royal Decree (printed in the Royal Gazette, Volume 14) prohibited all ships coming from the town of Shantou Province in South China to come to moor in the vicinity of Bangkok. The reason behind this decree was the spreading of the "Black Disease" which had killed thousands of people in that town and the neighbouring area. The decree was a decisive and timely one which effectively blocked the possibility of the disease from spreading into Thailand via the people coming on board the ships. This decree helped preventing the terrible epidemic from spreading into Thailand which could have caused the lives of hundreds and thousands of Thai foreign people lives in Bangkok and nearby.

#### 7.6 *Promotion of role of women in the Royal Palace.*

Being the first Queen Regent and attending public functions on behalf of His Majesty King Chulalongkorn, Queen Saovabha Phongsri also promoted the role of Thai court women of Siam, allow many of them to accompany her in the public functions, giving permission to the female court officials to have a free movement in and out of the palace, and encouraging their children to go to school.

She also took the initiative to elevate the division of female court officials to the level of Department, adding on the responsibilities of supervising to cleanliness and beautification of the inner court environments. Later, when his first son, His Royal Highness Prince Maha Vajiravudh, Crown Prince of Siam, educated in England, was crowned as King Rama VI, Queen Saovabha Phongsri was designated the Queen Mother with the official title of "Queen Sri Bajarindra Baromma Rajini Nath, the Regent Queen", and was designated with

the responsibility of totally administering all the inner court's works with the royal authority to bestow upon any personality with the royal decoration in the Order of Chula Chom Klao established by King Chulalongkorn in 1873, to be granted to female officials of the cabinet and the Royal court, as well as to the female officials. This Order of the Chula Chom Klao decoration is now considered the most prestigious and have been given to many foreigners who have officially served the royal court of Thailand.

[Reference: 1. *The Regent Queen*, by Daranee Srihathai, Art and Culture Series, Mathichon Publishing House, 2011]

**8. Website[s] <http://www.rajini.ac.th/queensribajarindra.html>**

**B. Anniversary to be celebrated**

- Fiftieth   
 Centenary   
 Multiple thereof (150th Anniversary)

Dates [s] chosen for the celebration: 1 January 2014 – 2015

**C. Information concerning the activities organized on this occasion by the country/countries concerned:**

There will be many celebration activities mostly organized by the governmental agencies, organization concerned, the schools and institutes bearing her name or built by her or in her honour. The school foundations and school alumni association will also be actively involved. The Ministry of Culture will also provide support and assistance to the celebration programmes.

Place	Type of activity	Institution responsible	Funds requested (under the Participation Programme)
In your countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commemorative ceremonies</li> <li>• Exhibition</li> <li>• Students Activities</li> <li>• Conference/Seminar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All the 10 School founded by Queen Sri Bajarindra</li> <li>• Governmental Agencies</li> <li>• Public and Private Sectors, NGO</li> </ul>	None
In other countries (please state which)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibition</li> <li>• Cultural Performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Royal Thai Embassies in countries visited by Queen Sri Bajarindra</li> <li>• UNESCO Headquarters</li> </ul>	None

**D. Links with UNESCO**

**1. Please indicate the field of competence of UNESCO to which this celebration is related**

- Education (Education for Girls and Women, Public Health Education)   
 Applied Science (Public Health for All and for Women)

Culture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Social and human sciences (Status of Women)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transdisciplinary Projects: Water for life and water for all	

2. **How do you wish UNESCO participate?**

- Provide exhibition & performance space
- Accept as UNESCO's celebration of World Great Personality
- Support for all projects without financial implications

3. **Please state in what way this commemoration is linked to, and promotes, UNESCO's objectives and missions**

The activities will enhance the UNESCO's role as an international organization that supports the role of women, women's education, and rights to public health care and clean water, and cultural arts and expressions by women.

**E. Please add any other information**

The works initiated and administered by the Queen Regent Sri Bajarindra (Queen Saovabha Phongsri) are wide-ranged and had many influences on various aspects of development in Thailand and in Asia. The celebration of the commemoration of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Birth of Queen Sri Bajarindra, to be held from January 2014 to January 2015, therefore will be participated by many organizations in Thailand which have indicated their readiness to organize activities during the celebration year, especially:

1. All the 10 schools for girls in Thailand founded by Queen Sri Bajarindra (Queen Saovabha Phongsri) as well as all schools established by honour of her name (See list attached in Annex II)
2. The Committee for the Administration of Scholarships in Queen Sri Bajarindra's Name
3. Institutes established in her honour, such as The Thai Red Cross (Sathan Saovabha) the Saovabha Institute, the Saovabha Vocational College.
4. In addition, Thai Embassies in the countries visited by the Queen Sri Bajarindra, such as Singapore and Indonesia, will be contacted to organize exhibition of photographs featuring the visits.

**A Collection of Queen Sri Bajarindra's Directives, Orders and Commitments  
While Performing the Duties of Principal Regent in Ratana Kosindra Era 116  
(23 April to 3 November, Ratana Kosindra Era 116)  
(Taken from Royal Gazette Vol. 14, Ratana Kosindra Era 116)**

1. Notification Prohibiting Ships from Shantou to Prevent Plague
2. Department of Interior Communication on the Prevention of Cross Border Elephant Theft at Lao Chieng Precinct, adjacent to Burma.
3. Notification Amending and Augmenting the Prohibition of Ships from Shantou
4. Nine Official Reports from Provinces Read out by an Officer while Her Majesty Presided over the Meeting of the Lords
5. Ministry of Interior Notification on Royal Acceptance of Estate Presented by Phrya Songsuradet
6. Ministry of Interior Notification
  - Royal Initiative on Assigning Common Format for the Administration of the Malay States (Syburi, Perlis and Satun)
  - Appointment of Chao Phraya Syburi as Thesapibal Intendent Overseeing the Three States, etc.
7. Notification of the Department of Civil Works (Telegraph Department) on a Slight Increase in Telegraph Fees to Reduce Burden on Royal Resources Which Have Been Put to Excessive Use, Starting 1 May Ratana Kosindra Era 116
8. The Royal Ploughing Ceremony, Assigning Chao Phraya Surasak Montri as Plougher, the Royal Rites Being Held at Sanam Luang and the First Ploughing Being Held at Sala Daeng Grounds
9. Ministry of Interior Communication on Royal Directive to Include Koh Samui and Koh Phangan in the Administration of Kanchanadit Town, Chumpon Precinct
10. Three Official Reports from the Provinces
  - The Payment of Sustenance Allowance to Pahang Guards
  - The Census of Miner Citizens in Phuket Province and of Chinese Mining Workers
  - The Census Review of Phuket Province
11. The Promulgation of the Local Administration Act, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
12. Communication on Special Judicial Hearing on Overdue Paddy Field Rent, Era 115
13. Three Official Reports from the Provinces
  - Submission of the Takua Thung Census
  - Submission of Books on Persons and Goods Exiting or Entering Phuket Town, Era 115, Submitted by the Phuket Customs Representative
  - Postal Services in Lao Gao Precinct
14. Notification Thanking Government Officers for Dedication in Work
15. Notification Cancelling Original Supreme Court Fees, Reducing Fees by 2.5 Percent
16. Royal Reception of the British Envoy Presenting His Credentials and the Charge d' Affaires and Consular Representative of France
17. Report on Restoration and Construction at Phra Buddhahat in Ratana Kosindra Era 115, the Phra Kiao Royal Coronet Procession and Celebrations
18. Royal Reception of the Japanese Envoy Presenting His Credentials and the American Charge d' Affaires Presenting the Credentials of the Maglebergenschwern Intendent
19. Official Reports from the Provinces
  - Lao Chieng Precinct Census Report
  - Report on the Propagation of Palmyra Palm from Java in the Precincts
20. Notification on Local Administration for Towns within Bangkok Precinct, 11 June 116

21. Notification Thanking Those Who Helped to Extinguish the Fire at the Old Mint
22. Notification Amending the Domestic Tariff Schedule, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
23. Notification of the Royal Naming of “Suriwongse Road” and “Decho Road”
24. Notification Amending Vassal State Court Organization Law, 21 June 116
25. Telegraph Notification of Royal Command for the Telegraph Department to Open Office at Ban Pan Thong, Wat Raja Sitharam (Wat Plub) Canal, 1 June 116
26. Notification on Appointment of Special Intendent for Prachin Buri Precinct Court of Justice, 19 June 116
27. Notification on Additional Management of Plague Prevention, 6 June 116
28. Notification of Postal Department Warning about Postal Communication and Postage Stamp
29. Reception of Foreign Guest Representing Lord of Kelantan, Presenting His Bunga Mas Tributes
30. Notification on Pariyatti Final Examinations for Monks and Novices, the Translation of the Tripitaka at Wat Phra Sri Rattana Satsadaram, List of Monk and Novice Examinees to be Presented for Royal Perusal
31. Dhammakan Ministry Communication on Queen Savang Vadhana Donating 16 Chang for the Construction of Patient Building at Siriraj Hospital
32. Notification on the Establishment of the Saraburi Court, 6 July 116
33. Report on 8 Agendas Discussed at the Cabinet Meeting
34. Ministry of Interior Communication on Transferring Supervision of Corvee Labour from the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Defense, 27 June 116
35. Royal Decree Amending the Royal Treasury Department Act, 29 July 116
36. Four Daily Minister Consultation Agendas
37. Nakhonban Ministry Notification on the Collection of Chinese Labour Exemption Fees, Number of Years, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
38. Telegraph Department Communication on the Cutting of 4 Telegraph Lines, Namely Phra Pathom Nakhon Chaisi-Samut Sakhon-Samut Songkram, from Chainat-Phrom Buri-Ang Thong-Suphan-Phra Pathom, from Krung Kao-Ang Thong, from Phrom Buri-Lopburi
39. Four Daily Minister Consultation Agendas
40. Notification on Additional Plague Prevention, 14 August 116
41. Minister or Foreign Affairs Communication on Muhammad Bila and Kadri
42. Royal Decree on Postal Services, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
43. Two Daily Minister Consultation Agendas
44. Telegraph Department Communication on the Royal Command to Open a Telegraph Office on the Corner of Ratsadakornpipat Hall, opposite the Ministry of Interior (12 August 116)
45. Report from Pitsanulok Precinct Intendent on the Construction and Repair of Old Roads and Bridges in Thung Yang Town, Lub Lae District
46. Notification on District Office Fees, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
47. Postal Department Notification on Postal Delivery Boats
48. Royal Decree on Sugar Tax, Ratana Kosindra Era 116, Amending the Domestic Tax Act, Ratana Kosindra Era 111
49. Notification on Person to Submit Royal Petitions, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
50. Daily Ministerial Consultations
51. Notification Amending Regulations on the Prevention of Cross Border Elephant Theft at Lao Chieng Precinct and Towns adjacent to Burma, 8 September 116
52. Reception of Heads of Vassal States: The Lords of Yaring, Nong Chik, Yala, Tani, Saiburi, Rangae, Raman and Party, Presenting Their Tributes and Chao Phraya Syburi and the Rulers of Perlis, Satun, Trenganu, Presenting Bunga Mas Tributes, Presenting of Decorations to the Ruler of Nong Chik and the Yala Assistant Intendent

53. Notification on the Conservation of Forests, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
54. Notification on the Renovation of the Royal Villa at Angsila, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
55. Nakhonban Ministry Notification on Merchants, Business Owners and the Public Extending His Majesty the King's Birthday Anniversary Wishes at the Nakhonban Ministry; While Civil Servants of the Ministry Gather at a Ceremony to Extend His Majesty the King's Birthday Anniversary Wishes-His Majesty King Rama V Was Informed While on His Trip Abroad and Replied by Telegram
56. His Majesty the King's Birthday Anniversary Celebrations
  - Anniversary Celebrations
  - Royal Opening of "Chalerm 44 Bridge" during the Celebration, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
57. The Ceremony on the Drinking of Oath Water and the Appointment of the Cabinet
58. Appointment of Royal Authorization Seal to Maha Mongkut Rajawittayalai
59. Act on Ang Yi Rebellion, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
60. The Royal Kathin Robe Ceremony, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
61. Notification on the Establishment of the Court of Justice in Prachin Buri Precinct, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
62. Notification on the Court of Justice in Prachin Buri Precinct, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
63. Notification on the Court of Justice in Nakhon Si Thammarat Precinct, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
64. Appointment of Royal Authorization Seal to the Vajiranyan Library Committee
65. Regulation on Siamese Railroads
66. Ministry of Interior Communication-Royal Command to Include Kraburi under Ranong Administration, 1 October 116
67. Notification on Appointment of Ang Yi Registration Officer, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
68. News Report on Presentation of Royal Krathin Robe and Royal Visit to Maha Mongkut Rajawittayalai, 15 October 116
69. Statement of Good Wishes from the Students and Rector of Maha Mongkut Rajawittayalai and Reply
70. Statement of Good Wishes from the Student Monks and Novices and the Board of Maha Mongkut Rajawittayalai and Reply
71. Notification on the Opening of Train Services from Krung Kao to Tambon Kaeng Koy from 1 November 116
72. Daily Ministerial Consultation
73. Royal Decree on Sanitation, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
74. Daily Ministerial Consultations
75. Royal Visit to Ministries
76. Notification on the Teak Tree Conservation Act, Ratana Kosindra Era 116
77. Notification on the Repeal of the Plague Prevention Management Act
78. Royal Visit to Ministries
79. Daily Ministerial Consultations
80. Royal Reception of Vassal States: Prince of Chiang Mai, Prince Regent of Nakhon Lampang, Prince Regent of Nakhon Lampun, Ruler of Prae and Ruler of Nan, Presenting Bunga Mas Tributes
81. Royal Visit to Ministries
82. News Report on His Majesty the King's Return from Europe
83. Her Majesty the Queen's Speeches
84. Royal Visit to the Naval Academy of the Royal Thai Navy, Celebrations for His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen, 7 January 116



**List of schools for girls in Thailand founded by Queen Sri Bajarindha  
and schools established by honour of her name**

1. Committee for Fund raising in Queen Sri Bajarindra's name
2. Rajini School
3. Rajinibon School
4. Saovabha Vocational College
5. Rachineeburana School
6. Wichienmatu School
7. Chomsurang Upatham School
8. Siyanuson School
9. Saparachinee School
10. Satirachinuthit School
11. Faculty of Nursing, Mahidol University
12. Red Cross College of Nursing
13. 23<sup>rd</sup> Provincial Military Command (Bajarindra Baromma Rajini Nath Camp)

Photos as indicated in the text above



**Photo 1 :** H.R.H. Princess Saovabha Phongsri



**Photo 2 :** H.R.H. Princess Saovabha Phongsri as a royal consort to King Chulalongkorn



**Photo 3 :** His Majesty King Mongkut (Rama IV)



**Photo 4 :** The three Royal Highness Princess, daughters of King Mongkut (Rama IV), born to the royal consort Chao Chom Manda Piam, who later become the royal consorts to King Chulalongkorn.

From right

- (1) H.R.H. Princess Savang Vadhana (later designated H.M. Queen Sri Savarindira, the Queen Mother)
- (2) H.R.H. Princess Sunanda Kumariratana (died during the boat trip accident)
- (3) H.R.H. Princess Saovabha Phongsri (Queen Sri Bajarindra)



**Photo 5 :** King Chulalongkorn and the Queen Regent



**Photo 6 :** Queen Sri Bajarindra with 4 of her sons



**Photo 7:** Painting from photograph – King Chulalongkorn and Queen Sri Bajarindra with 5 of their sons (Two sons passed away earlier)



**Photo 8 :** King Chulalongkorn posed in a photo with Queen Saovabha Phongsri, (extreme right) the Crown Prince Vajiravudh (later become King Rama VI), H.R.H. Prince Chakrabongse (Queen Sri Bajarindra's second son), and H.R.H. Prince Prajadhipok (Queen Sri Bajarindra's 9<sup>th</sup> son who later become King Rama VII)



**Photo 9 :** The Statue of Queen Sri Bajarindra on the garden of the Rajini School today



**Photo 10 :** The Statue of the Earth Goddess with clean drinking water for Thai public, constructed at the initiative and with the funding from Queen Sri Bajarindra. The Statue is still in use until the present day



**Photo 11 :** 4 Thai girls who received Queen Sri Bajarindra's scholarships to study Japanese language and Japanese art and crafts in Japan



**Photo 12 :** Mr. Tokichi Masao and Thai students in Japan



**Photo 13 :** Queen Sri Bajarindra with the western dress



**Photo 14 :** Queen Sri Bajarindra during her regency, chaired a meeting of the Cabinet on behalf of King Chulalongkorn





**Photo 15 :** H.R.H. Princess Valaya Alongkorn, Princess of Bejraburi and her mother, Queen Sri Savarindira and her brother, H.R.H. Prince Mahidol of Songkla



**Photo 16 and 17 :** Queen Sri Bajarindra accompanying King Chulalongkorn on the trip to Singapore and Indonesia

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- 1.2 The Royal Archives of King Chulalongkorn (Rama VI)

### 2. Primary and Published Sources

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- 2.2 Royal Gazettes B.E. 2440 (1897)
- 2.3 Royal Gazettes B.E. 2454 (1911)

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- 3.1.2 Pipada Jomchareon and Suvadee Tanaprasitchana, “Education and the influence on Thai Society in the Bangkok Period; B.E. 2325 – 2394 (1782 – 1851), published B.E. 2525. (1982)
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- 3.15 Chatraporn Chindaly, “The Administration of the Inner Court during the reign of King Chulalongkorn”, published in Journal of Historical Articles, Vol. 25, B.E. 2546. (2003)
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#### 3.2 *Books*

- 3.2.1 Uthumporn Sunthanavej, “The Life of H.M. Queen Sri Bajarindra, the Regent Queen”, B.E. 2536. (1993)
- 3.2.2 “72 Years of The Chom Surang Upatham School; History of the School” (founded by H.M. Queen Sri Bajarindra, the Queen Regent
- 3.2.3 Sunan Amornvivat, Sawat Changkol, Paitoon Sinlaratana, “Prichayansayam”, An Analytical Study of King Chulalongkorn’s Policy of Education Reform, including women’s Education.
- 3.2.4 “The Schools founded by Queen Sri Bajarindra”, published on the occasion of 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Queen Sri Bajarindra.

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