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## DepEd welcomes Indonesian Education Chief

The Department of Education welcomed recently Dr. Bambang Sudibyo, Indonesian Minister of Education, who visited the country in the fulfillment of his mandate as President of Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO).

DepEd Secretary Jesli Lapus met with Dr. Sudibyo during the latter's courtesy call in the Department, part of the minister's itinerary in his visit to regional centers of the SEAMEO being hosted by the Philippines.

"Regional cooperation is the trend in the international community. SEAMEO is a venue in exchanging best practices in the delivery of education that allows us to share and learn innovative approaches in teaching and learning," Lapus said.

Three SEAMEO centers are located in the Philippines. These are SEAMEO Regional Center for Educational Innovation and Technology (INNOTECH) at the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman, Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) based in UP Los Baños, Laguna, and Tropical Medicine and Public Health Network - Regional Center for Public Health (TROPMED Philippines) in UP Manila.

Established in November 30, 1965, the SEAMEO as a chartered international organization promotes cooperation in education, science and culture in the Southeast Asian region. Its priority areas of cooperation are agriculture and natural resources, culture and tradition, information and communications technology, language, poverty alleviation, preventive health education, and quality and equity in education.

SEAMEO member countries include Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam. Most of these countries host at least one of the 15 specialist institutions or regional centers. The Philippines annually sends teachers, administrators, and officials to these centers for trainings and seminars.

Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Netherlands, New Zealand, and Norway are recognized as associate member countries of SEAMEO and Japan as a partner country. Meanwhile, the International Center for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) joins the organization as an affiliate member.

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