

"The National Astronomical Research Institute of Thailand (NARIT)"

Dr Saran Poshyachinda, Executive Director of NARIT

Background

The development of Space Science in Thailand is being led by the National Astronomical Research Institute of Thailand (NARIT), based in Chiang Mai. Astronomy in Thailand started from a relatively low base, but led by NARIT in just over a decade, among many notable achievements, Thailand has now built and successfully operates the largest optical telescope in the region (the Thai National Telescope - TNT); is home to a global network of robotic telescopes; is nearing completion of a 40m diameter radio telescope which will be part of a SE Asian radio telescope network; runs 5 large public observatories with associated planetaria distributed across the country and each typically attracting around 100,000 visitors per year, and is now well on the way to developing Thailand's first space satellite, with ambitions for a lunar probe by the end of the decade. Through BIUST, Botswana's links to NARIT are increasingly strong and developments in Thailand are an exemplar of the path that Botswana wishes to follow.

Caption: Parts of one of the Regional Public Observatories run by NARIT - Observing deck and main telescope dome (left); Visitor Centre and Planetarium (right). Something similar is envisaged for Botswana.

Brief Biography

After graduating with a B.S. from Chiang Mai University, Dr Saran gained an M.Sc. from the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology and then a Ph.D. from the University of Bradford, UK. He then moved back to Thailand to take up a position at the Metal and Materials Technology Center of Thailand's National Science and Technology Development Agency, ultimately becoming Chief of the Technical Service there. He joined NARIT at its inception as its first Deputy Director, becoming Executive Director in 2017.

Caption: Dr Saran Poshyachinda, Executive Director of NARIT