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D03059



Distr.
LIMITED

ID/WG.77/CP.14
15 November 1971

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Seminar on Industrial Information
(for the ECAFE and ECA regions)

Tehran, Iran, 14 - 25 September 1970

COUNTRY PAPER ^{1/}

THAILAND

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and

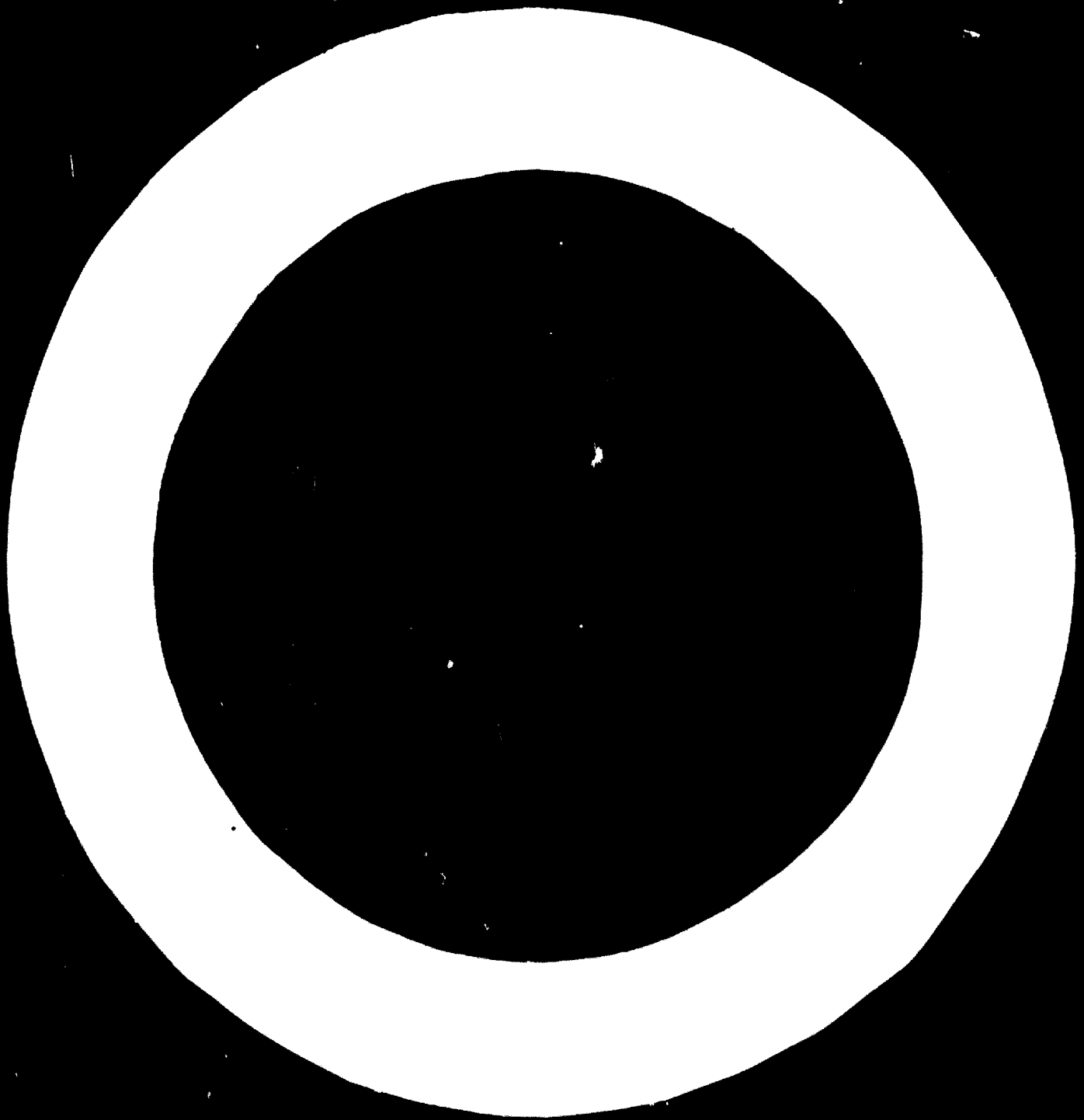
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Organised in co-operation with the Iranian Government

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Country Paper: THAILAND

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Thailand

The economy of Thailand has developed rapidly during the past decade, and manufacturing has been one of the most dynamic sectors, showing an annual growth from 1960 to 1968 of 12.7 per cent. While ten years ago industry played a negligible part in the national economy, it now contributes over 15 per cent to the Gross Domestic Product. This rapid growth can be attributed largely to the government policy of import substitution and to the investment promotion system. Although the Government plays an active role in stimulating and directing industrial development, the emphasis is on a private market economy. This policy is reflected by the Industrial Finance Act of Thailand Act of 1959, which was directed towards the provision of assistance in the establishment, expansion and modernization of private enterprises. A further step towards the promotion of foreign and local private industrial investment was made by the passing of the Industrial Investment Act of 1954, with its subsequent periodic amendments to meet the changing economic and political conditions. Under this Act a guarantee is given against nationalization and expropriation.

Although the important part played by information in industrial development is realized, Thailand does not, as yet, have a well-established industrial information service. The following bodies can supply information and, in some cases, have plans for the improvement of the services offered.

Government Ministries

1. The Ministry of Industry - which includes the following offices that are presently, or shortly will be, in a position to supply industrial

information:

a) The Industrial Registry. The Register contains data on approximately 50,000 industrial establishments employing more than seven workers or utilizing machinery with more than two horse power.

b) The Central Office of Industrial Information and Studies. The Government, with the assistance of the UNDP Special Fund, is to set up this Centre which will have the following units:

- Data Bank to study the present and potential requirement for data on industrial establishments; to analyse sources of information; to organize and process data; and to disseminate data and promote the use of the bank.
- Economic Studies Unit (using the information contained in the Data Bank) to study the impact of certain policy measures; to undertake studies and calculate parameters for planning purposes; and to undertake studies for general use by agencies and private enterprises.
- Library, which will hold books and periodicals on industrial economics, econometrics, economic statistics, information systems and data banks and data processing.

c) The Planning Office. It is planned that this Office will provide information on the feasibility of industrial projects, including data on production capacity, number of types of manufacturing plants in current operation.

d) The Industrial Promotion Department. This Department is expected to issue documents and publications on industrial progress and to provide technical advice in the fields of industrial finance, industrial promotion, marketing, etc.

2. The Ministry of Economic Affairs.

3. The Ministry of Finance.

Government Offices and Departments

1. The Board of Investment - the functions of the Board include the provision of up-to-date information on the economic conditions and trends in the country

and in the region, information on the investment climate and other relative information in this field. Its Investment Information and Service Division performs the following information functions:

- the collection of information on marketing conditions, investment opportunities, employment, transport and communications, and on industrial sites;
 - provision of information on specific subjects on request;
 - the editing and printing of promotional literature;
 - the issuing of publications and periodicals on industrial investment, the economy and industry in Thailand;
 - maintenance of contact with news media for the dissemination of information;
 - organisation of meetings;
 - operation of a question and answer service for inquiries from abroad.
2. The National Statistical Office - the Office carried out an industrial census in 1964 and also publishes an annual survey of industry.
 3. The Department of Labour - which publishes an annual survey on manpower and employment.
 4. The Customs Department - which publishes annually import and export data at the enterprise level.
 5. The Revenue Department - which makes an annual collection of data at the enterprise level and a monthly collection at the establishment level.
 6. The Industrial Science Department.

National Organizations and Associations

1. The Thai National Documentation Centre (TNDC) - which was established in 1961-62 with the technical assistance of UNESCO and is now attached to the applied Scientific Research Corporation of Thailand. It deals with all

fields of natural sciences, applied sciences and technology. Document procurement, bibliography compilation and translation services are provided. TNDC has compiled a Union Catalogue of periodical holdings of the libraries of Bangkok. Reproductions from the holdings of the special libraries of Bangkok are provided on request in the form of microfilm or photocopies. The Centre compiles bibliographies on an ad hoc basis as well as in response to specific requests.

2. The Association of Thai Industries - which acts as a Chamber of Industry and has initiated a request to the Government for the establishment of a central information service.

3. The National Economic Development Board - which is in charge of overall planning.

4. The Industrial Finance Corporation of Thailand.

5. The Marketing Association of Thailand.

6. The Small Industries Institute.

7. The Bank of Thailand.

Conclusion

Thailand's requirements for industrial information become more obvious as industrialisation proceeds. Although in the past little attention was paid to the organisation of industrial information, and the existing services were often not in a position to provide comprehensive information, the country is now taking steps to remedy this situation. This is demonstrated by the government request for UN assistance in the establishment of the Central Office of Industrial Information and Studies within the Ministry of Industries, which is expected to play an important role in the co-ordination and standardization of information sources. Furthermore, individual bodies, such as the Board of Investment, have plans to improve the scope and efficiency of the information services offered.





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