Singaporean university hands over school facilities in Vientiane province

Times Reporters

Nanyang Technological University (NTU) of Singapore under its Overseas Exposure Programme (OEP) is continuing to help improve education facilities in Laos through community service.

NTU on Wednesday presented an building annex to Nong Luang Primary School in Hinheub district, Vientiane province after 250 undergraduate students participated in the community service project since 2015.

The handover ceremony was attended by Singapore Ambassador to Lao PDR, Mr Dominic Goh, Deputy Governor of Hinheub district, Mr Vone Vudasan and Deputy Associate Provost (Student Life) of NTU, Associate Professor Victor Yeo.

Associate Professor Yeo remarked during the annex handover that the ceremony marked the 10th anniversary of collaboration between NTU and Lao people with their OEP beginning in July 2008.

The programme is organised by student organisations to expose students to unique overseas experiences including community service, culture and sport exchange, and friendly competition.

Members of the NTU Welfare Services Club were also involved in building a 56 square metre library in Xayseththa High School in Vientiane and a 24 square metre library in Pongsong village, Hinheub district.

To date, NTU’s OEP has supported 76 teams of 1,700 students in Lao community service projects such as laying pipes and constructing water tanks to deliver fresh water to remote villages, along with building school facilities and community halls, and teaching English and maths to schoolchildren.

Associate Professor Yeo believed experiential learning outside of NTU and participating in overseas community projects was very important and would give students an appreciation of different cultures and help them better understand what it means to be a global citizen.

"It also inspires our students with a spirit of service and helps develop a broader perspective of world issues and life in general," he said.

Speaking at the event, Mr Dominic Goh said over the past three years, more than 2,000 Singapore students have visited Laos for community service projects.

"The generosity of students would help to improve the lives of Lao rural students with a better study environment while connecting people of the two nations through enhanced friendship and strengthened relations.

"The new annex constructed by NTU students will help Nong Luang Primary School students and teachers benefit from a clean study space, electrical access, fans and beautiful classrooms which will be more a conducive environment to learn and work in," Director General of the school, Mr Bounhieung Phommachanh said.
Students from Nanyang Technological University (NTU) of Singapore entertain guests on Wednesday with two special songs during the handover ceremony for an annex at Nong Luang Primary School in Hinheub district, Vientiane province. --Photo Ounkham