

listic perspective of education as one that emphasizes personality development, rather than examination scores.

The Fathers of Students Preparing for the Entrance Exam was formed in April 1994. Initially composed of 30 fathers, mostly in their 50s, with children in the third grade of high school, it now has 150 members including fathers of middle- and

high-school students. The group is led by professor Chun Jong-deuk, 56, of the Department of Mathematics of Kyounghee University.

According to Chun, the main agenda of The Fathers of Students Preparing for the Entrance Exam is to initiate changes in the educational system so that a child undergoes education not only to pass the

entrance examination but also to develop the student's whole personality. The group envisions each student's being able to master a skill through the close linkage of school and society, as done in Germany.

source: *Korean Women Today*, No. 43, Summer 1994; The Korean Women's Development Institute, C.P.O. Box 2267, Seoul, Korea

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# MEN FOR GENDER AWARENESS

In Australia, men have formed groups such as Men Against Sexual Assault (MASA) and Men Against Patriarchy (MAP) as fora for an exchange of ideas among gender-sensitive men. These groups function as mechanisms to educate the public—especially men—and to lobby decision-makers, besides supporting one another. Something similar has taken place in Thailand over the past few years. There are some men who have already begun to take action in support of the women's cause for gender equality. These men come from nearly all walks of life—government officials, teachers, academics, monks and priests, lawyers, journalists, artists, writers and NGO workers, to mention a few. With the increased awareness of human rights issues in Thai society and the current debates on gender-related issues such as prostitution, a number of these men believe that the time is ripe for Thailand's first men's group.

Calling itself Men for Gender Awareness (MEGA), the group intends to promote gender awareness among men and to work toward their achieving an understanding of themselves, of other men, and of relationships between men and women.

MEGA came about for the same reason that men's groups have been formed in other countries—the men find it easier and therefore more effective to accept suggestions and criticism from other men, and for them to take action on gender issues as a group. MEGA shares the belief that patriarchy is the root cause of many problems in Thai society.

MEGA has also decided to remain small for a few years and work toward developing a grassroots network, rather than aim for an organizational structure immediately, much like how women's groups developed into permanent organizations. And although the group remains loosely structured, it has already received mental and physical support from other organizations.

As for the work to be done, members have already been discussing a campaign against prostitution. Sharing the view that a patriarchal culture causes oppression and exploitation of women in many forms, the group believes it is in a good position to grapple with this key issue. The issue may have been repeatedly tackled for years, but this was mostly by women's groups and from a woman's point of view. A campaign against prostitution by a men's group will add to the legitimacy of the issue as a social problem. MEGA aims to educate men that contrary to what they think, buying sex from a prostitute does not indicate manliness. Rather, it is treating women as sex objects and destroying their families, mentally and physically. A MEGA campaign to fight against prostitution will contribute to changing men's values and attitudes, which consequently should reduce the spread of AIDS.

To know more about MEGA or join its activities, contact Phiphop or Chris at Men for Gender Awareness, 124 Wat Thong Nopphakhun, Somdej Cheophraya Road, Bangkok 10500, Thailand; tel: 437-9445; fax: 437-9450.

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