

## MoU signed on rice, ecosystem

THE NATION

BETTER RICE Initiative Asia (BRIA) recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the Rice Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives on "Promoting Sustainable Production of Rice and Ecosystem Resilience in Thailand" (PROSPECT).

The MoU constitutes a framework of cooperation and understanding and facilitates collaboration between the two parties to implement the BRIA Thailand project.

The areas of collaboration include enhancement of rice-based farming systems and rice technologies in identified areas; documentation of best agricultural practices to accelerate transfer of crop-management tech-

nologies; and promotion of decision-support tools through education programmes, training of trainers, and tailor-made extension materials to suit local needs.

Also included are improvement of the capacity of extension workers, community rice centres and farmer leaders; promotion of linkages along the rice value chain, market transparency and market guarantees; strengthening of networks of multi-stakeholder partnerships; and monitoring of collaborative training and extension activities and assessment of adoption farmer by farmers and their impacts. Chanpithya Shimpalee, director-general of the department, signed the MoU with Matthias Bickel, project director, representing the German International Cooperation.