

ROYAL ACHIEVEMENT

King wins UN's highest award

Lauded for his water management projects

His Majesty the King has been given a United Nations award for his work in reducing pollution in Bangkok's canals and other environmental projects, a UN statement said yesterday.

The Habitat Scroll of Honour Award — a hand-crafted gold plaque — will be formally presented to the King today at his provincial palace in Hua Hin by Anna Tibaijuka, a UN undersecretary-general.

It is the highest award conferred by the UN to individuals, projects or institutions in recognition of significant con-

tributions to improving human settlements.

The annual award is normally presented every October at a ceremony marking World Habitat Day, which last year was held in Brazil.

Since protocol does not allow the King to travel to receive such awards, the UN brought it to Thailand to be presented in private. The Habitat Scroll of Honour will be accompanied with a special citation recognising the King's "outstanding contribution to improving water resource management in Thailand."

It says the Royal Pa Sak River Basin Development Project has reduced water pollution in Bangkok and other major cities of central Thailand while other

projects have targeted the management of floods and the salinisation of water resources in the South.

The Pa Sak Basin project, which became operational in 2000, is aimed at irrigating Saraburi province north of Bangkok from the Pa Sak reservoir.

A large amount of water from the reservoir is also released into the lower basin toward Bangkok, allowing industrial discharge and household waste in the city's canals to be flushed down the Chao Phraya river.

"The comprehensive and integrated nature of His Majesty's royal development projects is a lesson to all of us eager to protect our natural environment," the statement quoted Mr Tibaijuka as saying. — AP