Bangkok's Wat Prayoon bags Unesco award for restoration

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A BANGKOK temple has won the Award of Excellence from the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco) for the remarkable restoration of its principal pagoda.

The honour was won by Wat Prayurawongsawas Worawihan.

Unesco Bangkok Director Gwang-Jo Kim officially presented the award to the temple's abbot, Phra Brahmapundit, yesterday.

The restoration of the principal pagoda, known as Phra Borom-mathat Maha Chedi, and the attached hall, Pharin Pariyattitham-masala, marked the first time Thailand has received top honours at the Heritage Awards.
"The restoration took six years. It was started in 2006," Phra Brahmapundit said.

"The work was accomplished with a budget of Bt38 million."

Unesco has recognised the restoration effort for its technical mastery in marrying modern engineering with traditional techniques and for the exemplary cooperation between monks, specialists and locals in ensuring the sacred complex's place at the heart of life in the vibrant Kadeejeen community.

Wat Prayurawongsawas Wora-wihan is a royal monastery. Its whole compound has been registered as a historical site since 1949.

According to Phra Brahmapundit, the restoration of the Phra Borommathat Maha Chedi, and the attached hall, Pharin Pariyat-tithammasala, had got prior approval from the Fine Arts Department.

In 2011, this restoration project had already received an award from the Association of Siamese Architects under Royal Patronage.

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