



### *Feature:* **Specialist Dispatch Project in Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia**

Truly, 9th to 17th February 2006 was a memorable week for local potters in Rolea Boier District of Kampong Chhnang Province. This was because they were given the opportunity to learn the various Japanese pottery techniques under the Specialist Dispatch Project jointly organized by Tochigi Prefectural Government of Japan and Kampong Chhnang Provincial Government of Cambodia. CLAIR Singapore was the coordinating body for this mission.

“Local Authorities International Cooperation Specialist Dispatch Project” is an international cooperation project initiated by CLAIR. Under the project, an employee (including retiree) of a Japanese local authority with specialized knowledge or experience is being dispatched upon receiving request from an ASEAN local government, in order to improve technology in the

local area, train local personnel, and promote friendly cooperative relations between Japanese and ASEAN’s local governments.

CLAIR Singapore has received a request from Kampong Chhnang Provincial Government for a Japanese pottery specialist to be dispatched to the area. With the cooperation and support of Tochigi Prefectural Government in Japan, CLAIR Singapore has arranged for Mr. Tsukamoto Junichi, a Senior Researcher at the Ceramic Technology Support Centre established by Tochigi Prefectural Government to conduct training in Kampong Chhnang. The project took place from 9th to 17th February 2006 in Rolea Boier District of Kampong Chhnang Province, whereby 28 local potters participated in the project. During the implementation of the project, the following activities have been conducted:

- (1) Survey on raw materials: Samples of local clay being used for making pottery were taken from 3 locations for further analysis in Japan.
- (2) Survey on level of skills: Local potters were observed while performing processes such as moulding, designing and firing, where the level of their skills, and also the problems which are commonplace in the traditional methods of manufacturing pottery in the village were surveyed.

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*Participants and all parties involved gathered for a group photo*

(3) Training on pottery techniques: Pottery techniques, especially in regards to the moulding, designing and firing of pottery were introduced.

(4) Training on marketing know-how: Participants were given insights on the importance of understanding local needs in order to market their products effectively.



Participants were given technical training under Mr. Tsukamoto's guidance. >



## Comments from the Specialist, Mr. Tsukamoto Junichi

Kampong Chhnang Province has been famous for its pottery industry which possesses a long tradition. In this respect, pottery production is regarded as an important source of income for the locals. Even though the pottery currently produced in Kampong Chhnang is not so durable and therefore could not be used for a variety of purposes, local demands for these products do exist, where the balance between supply and demand is maintained. In my opinion, technical assistance especially in terms of design and shape should be implemented to improve the present quality of local pottery, so as to further enhance Cambodian pottery's image.

Clay and high-temperature firing are actually the most important factors in determining the quality of pottery. In this regard, however, there is no scientific data on the highest fire resistance temperature and also the compositional characteristics of clay in Kampong Chhnang. Apart from that, the lack of equipments and machineries also poses a problem to the local pottery industry. It might take a long time to overcome these issues.

In my opinion, assistance from overseas is vital in catalyzing Cambodia's development and at the same time, promote the villagers' standards of living.

I am very impressed by the participants' enthusiasm in learning new skills, and their innocent yet bright smiles have left a lasting impression on me. Essentially, the continuous technical and financial assistance from CLAIR or other organizations are imperative in bringing Kampong Chhnang's pottery industry to greater heights.

Last but not least, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone at Kampong Chhnang Province and CLAIR Singapore for their enormous support which leads to the success of this project.



Mr. Tsukamoto was giving lessons on moulding to participants >



## His Excellency Touch Narin, Kampong Chhnang Provincial Governor's Comments on Specialist Dispatch Project

Historically, traditional pottery production in our Kampong Chhnang Province started around 700 years ago and has played important roles not only in contributing to the improvement of socio-economic statuses of poor rice farmers as off-farm activity, but also in distinguishing and making the long-lasting tradition, value and attractive feature of our province unique from other provinces in Cambodia. Nowadays, around 200 rural households, around 1% of total households in Rolea Boier District, have relied partly on pottery production.

Generally, pottery industry here is still not good enough, in terms of quality and design, to attract consumers' attention for successful marketing. In this respect, many efforts have been made by foreign and local expertise institutions in recent years to assist potters in strengthening their technical and marketing skills, production equipments and management structures.

On behalf of the people of the whole province and as the Provincial Governor, I would like to express my deep appreciation to CLAIR for conducting a very valuable Specialist Dispatch Project which aimed at improving and modernizing the techniques, design and marketing of pottery products.

During the project (9-17 February 2006), we were extremely impressed by Mr. Tsukamoto, the specialist and CLAIR's staff for their excellent professional expertise and efforts in conducting a very special technical training to the twenty-eight potters. The experiential learning and practices enabled all participants to learn and acquire a wide range of skills in all processes of moulding clay, designing, painting and firing pottery. Moreover, they learned a special marketing and leadership concept to be successful potters in a competitive atmosphere and this could provide potters with a fundamental knowledge to push this industry forward. We felt that the training assessment, conducted by the specialist prior to actual training, was a key step in making a good training curriculum which could build on the potters' existing skills.

We are very confident that the technical skills, knowledge and attitude learnt from the project, coupled with the pottery production equipments brought by the specialist as training materials and as souvenirs for the community, would help all participants to improve their skills and production techniques, and also expand it to other non-participant potters.

We expect there will be further follow-up projects to build on this favourable result. With this expectation and our people's hard-working culture and continuous supports from local and provincial authorities, the pottery industry will become very successful and famous, and finally tremendously contributes to socio-economic prosperity as well as poverty reduction aimed by the Cambodian Royal Government's current \*SEILA Program.

Finally, we fully dedicate this project result as a foundation for stronger friendship, great overall development, mutual understanding and respect between Japanese people and Cambodian people in Kampong Chhnang. We look forward to having future projects and are ready to do our best for effective cooperation. Moreover, we would like to take this auspicious opportunity to show our sincere thankfulness and gratitude to CLAIR and Japanese Government for providing indispensable assistance to the development of Cambodia.

\* Started in 1996, The Cambodian Royal Government's SEILA Programme is aimed at catalyzing rural developments and alleviating poverty in Cambodia at the provincial and commune levels.

### Feedbacks from participants

"The method of teaching was very systematic and easy to understand. I feel that I can put the skills that I have learnt to good use."

"We were given opportunities to practice and experience the various pottery techniques during the training. This was very beneficial."

"I would like to learn more on how to create designs that will suit the market needs."

Participants were very enthusiastic about the trainings and they have concentrated fully in order to learn as much as they can. >



# NEW STAFFS

## FROM Fukuoka Prefectural Government

“ International regional exchange is conventionally regarded as a promotion of mutual understanding, with emphasis placed on human interaction. However, it's becoming increasingly necessary to consider such exchange in terms of its benefits to the regions, especially to regional economies. Given this situation, it's getting more important than ever to achieve specific outcomes in the activities of CLAIR.

I will do my best to support in particular the promotion of economic exchange between local governments in Japan and those in ASEAN and India, regions which are increasingly gaining the attention of Japan and the world for their expected higher economic growth. In so doing, I hope to contribute towards the further development of the different regions of Japan. ”



Senior Deputy Director, Mr. TAKEDA Seichi

## FROM Kagoshima Prefectural Government

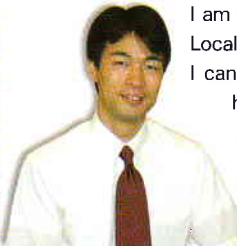
“ I am interested in the unique history and culture of Southeast Asian nations. My hometown, Kagoshima Prefecture, is the Southern Gateway to Japan and it also has a lot of historical and cultural heritages. For example, conserved archaeological remains like Uenohara Jomon-no-Mori, events like the Ohara Festival, traditional handicrafts like Satsuma Pottery and many others. For the next two years, I am going to travel to many places in ASEAN and I will endeavor to become a good bridge between ASEAN countries and Japan through the experience gained in my visits. ”



Deputy Director, Mr. UCHIYAMA Kazuhiro

## FROM Tokyo Metropolitan Government

“ It is a privilege for me to be able to work in Singapore. Though I have visited ASEAN countries many times for business, I never imagined that I would have an opportunity to experience life in one of the countries.



I am in charge of activities such as "The ASEAN Region Local Administration Forum" among others. I hope that I can make the most of the 2 years' term of my job here, and bring a lot of good memories back to my parent organisation, Tokyo Metropolitan Government. ”

Deputy Director, Mr. IKEDA Kazutomo

## FROM Miyazaki Prefectural Government

“ I'm from Miyazaki Prefecture which is located in the southern part of Japan. Blessed with a mild climate, many sports training camps such as those of professional baseball and football teams are located here.

This is my first experience working overseas and I'm very glad to work for CLAIR Singapore whose activities extend over the ASEAN region.

I'm hoping to interact with many people in ASEAN countries through international cooperation projects between local governments.

I also look forward to introducing the splendid cultures and good systems of these countries to Japan. I will do my best to promote the exchange between local governments in Japan and their counterparts in Southeast Asia. ”



Deputy Director, Mr. HAYASE Tetsuro

# CLAIR NEWS

## Japan-Vietnam Local Administration Seminar

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan (MIC) has successfully held the Asia Local Administration Seminar in Hanoi on 5th July.

Since 1999, MIC has conducted the seminar in several Asian countries with the aim of bringing together management level officials of the respective countries to promote greater cooperation and exchange of information in the area of local administration. This year, MIC's counterpart for the seminar was the Ministry of Home Affairs, Vietnam (MOHA).

CLAIR Singapore had been liaising closely with both MIC and MOHA from the preparatory stages

An audience of about 90 people including central and local administration officials from Vietnam, as well as officials from MIC attended the seminar. Following the opening addresses of Mr. Keiji Araki, Director-General of Policy Coordination MIC and Mr. Tran Huu Thang, Vice-Minister of MOHA, Mr. Araki and Mr. Nguyen Duc Chien, Director-General of State Organization and Staffing Department MOHA, each presented a keynote speech on "The History & Development of Local Administration and Public Finance of Japan - Its Current Situation and Future Plans" and "Decentralization Policy of Vietnam and The Measures Taken" respectively.

After the keynote speeches, 3 speakers from MIC each gave a presentation on topics such as the history of Japan's decentralization and its present state.

Spontaneous Q&A sessions followed each of the presentations, enabling the seminar to conclude successfully with abundant meaningful exchange of ideas about local administration in Japan and Vietnam.



CLAIR is a joint organisation founded in 1988 by 47 prefectures and 12 major cities in Japan in order to assist Japanese local authorities with the implementation of their international exchange policies. With its headquarters in Tokyo, CLAIR has seven overseas offices in New York, London, Paris, Singapore, Seoul, Sydney and Beijing.

CLAIR SINGAPORE office was set up in April 1990. It supports and promotes international activities and friendly relations between local authorities in Japan and their counterparts in Singapore and the ASEAN countries.

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