

CLAIR Singapore Newsletter

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Specialist Dispatch Project in Sisaket Municipality, Thailand



The expert conducting sanitary inspection at a local restaurant

Food safety and sanitation is one of the key focus areas of local governments in the ASEAN region in ensuring the general wellbeing of their local residents. Known to many as a food paradise with its heavenly street foods and vibrant night markets, Thailand and its local governments have been making a concerted effort through the years in ensuring the highest level of food safety locally. Realizing the importance of food safety and sanitation, Sisaket Municipality, a town located in the northeastern part of Thailand participated in CLAIR's Specialist Dispatch Project for fiscal year 2015.

Ms. Hiroko Mizuno, an expert in food safety and sanitation from the Public Health and Sanitation Division of Japan's Aichi Prefectural Government was dispatched to Sisaket Municipality from 23 ~ 30 November 2015 to provide necessary trainings to the employees as well as local residents of Sisaket Municipality. The trainings focused on enhancing the skills and knowledge of staff from Sisaket Municipality in conducting sanitary inspection at food establishments, as well as creating awareness among local residents in maintaining sanitary conditions to prevent food poisoning.

During the course of the program, the expert conducted sanitary inspections at markets, restaurants as well as local food stalls, and explained to the owners about methods to further improve the sanitary conditions of the establishments. The highlight of the program was a 3-part lecture series implemented by the expert, which saw staff as well as local residents of Sisaket Municipality actively learning new

knowledge in aspects such as methods of preventing food poisoning, ways of maintaining sanitary conditions, and also the proper techniques of hand washing. The program concluded with a meaningful exchange of ideas between the expert and the local participants.

Through the Specialist Dispatch Project, CLAIR aspires to further strengthen knowledge transfer between local governments in Japan and the ASEAN region as well as India. Kindly contact CLAIR Singapore for further information on the project.



Lecture conducted by the expert



Group photo of the expert and local participants

Japan-Vietnam Regional Exchange Promotion Program 2015

With a growing population of about 90 million, Vietnam is not only an attractive manufacturing destination in the region, but also a highly potential and significant market that cannot be overlooked, as it continues to garner increasing attention of both investors and local governments in Japan. Apart from Vietnam's strong and stable economic growth in recent years, a rising number of Vietnamese tourists in Japan especially after the relaxation of visa regulations since 2014 are factors behind a continued growing interest towards the country.

It is against such market conditions and background that CLAIR Singapore decided to conduct our Japan-Vietnam Regional Exchange Promotion Program in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City in 2015, over the period of 7 – 13 November, with a study mission consisting of 11 participants from various Japanese local governments and related associations.

To obtain a basic understanding of the overall governing structure and local administration system of Vietnam, Japanese participants first visited local government agencies such as Vietnam's Ministry of Home Affairs, and the People's Committees of both Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City respectively, where they learnt about the utilization of information technology in administrative reform measures adopted by local governments, as well as the approaches taken to attract further foreign investments from countries including Japan. With more Japanese companies venturing into the Vietnamese market over recent years, together with the implementation of several infrastructure development projects that are aided by Japan, bilateral relations between the 2 countries have been very positive and friendly, as similarly demonstrated from the harmonious atmosphere at all of these courtesy visits and meetings.

In order for Japanese participants to have a better grasp of the current economic situation and market penetration rate of Japanese companies in Vietnam, visits to JETRO and Japanese companies operating in Vietnam were also conducted. While there has been a shift in the investment trend of Japanese companies in recent years from large factory-building projects to smaller ones that involve providing support to companies, the vast market size of Vietnam and its massive workforce population continues to complement the growth and high potential of the market in the future.

Finally, to further promote friendly exchange between Japan and Vietnam, a cultural exchange program was also held with Japanese language students from Vietnam National University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Hanoi, where the students and Japanese participants were given an opportunity to speak and exchange opinions in

Japanese about differences in cultures and lifestyles in both countries.

CLAIR Singapore will continue to implement the Regional Exchange Promotion Program and through such activities, strive to strengthen the cooperative ties and networks between local governments in Japan and ASEAN countries as well as India.

Program Itinerary:

7 Nov (Hanoi)	Delegates from Japan arrive at Hanoi
8 Nov (Hanoi)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing by CLAIR Singapore City tour
9 Nov (Hanoi)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embassy of Japan in Vietnam JETRO Vietnam Thang Long Industrial Park II
10 Nov (Hanoi)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Home Affairs Hanoi People's Committee Hanoi Urban Planning Exhibition Center
11 Nov (Hanoi → HCM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Exchange Program with Vietnam National University, Hanoi Vietnam-Japan Human Resources Cooperation Center, Hanoi
12 Nov (HCM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consulate - General of Japan in Ho Chi Minh City Ho Chi Minh People's Committee Agricultural Hi-Tech Park Japanese Universities Alumni Club in Ho Chi Minh City
13 Nov (HCM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acacock Vietnam AEON Mall Vietnam Site visit to Japan Festival H.I.S. Song Han Vn Tourist, Ho Chi Minh City Branch *Delegates return to Japan



Opinion-exchange session at Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee



Group photo of all students and participants of the cultural exchange program

EROPA's 61st Executive Council Meeting and Conference in Shanghai, China

Established in December 1960, The Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration (EROPA) is an organization consisting of states, groups and individuals in Asia and the Pacific. Headquartered in Manila, the capital city of the Philippines, EROPA was founded in response to a common desire among developing countries to promote regional cooperation in improving knowledge, systems and practices of government administration so as to help accelerate economic and social development in the region.

CLAIR has been an active member of EROPA since 1989, and has been fulfilling its role in bridging cooperative ties between local government members of EROPA in Japan and Asia Pacific. As the elected Group Member Representative appointed to the EROPA Executive Council, CLAIR attended the organization's 61st Executive Council Meeting and Conference held in China's Shanghai from 17 to 21 October 2015.

During the 61st Executive Council Meeting on 17 October, a report on EROPA's overall activities in year 2014 was delivered. In the meeting, executive council members also exchanged their views on matters concerning the organization's efforts in enhancing its presence and membership through increased publicity, as well as feasible programs to strengthen its development of next generation leaders.

The EROPA Conference officially started on 18 October, with the opening ceremony as well as the 25th General Assembly. Based on the main conference theme of "Modernization of Governance: Reforms and Good Practices in Emerging Markets", a series of forums and workshop sessions was conducted from 18 to 20 October, witnessing 100 professional academic papers being presented at the conference venue of Shanghai Administration Institute.



The 61st Executive Council Meeting of EROPA



Opening ceremony

Mr. Nobuyasu Kubo, former Commissioner of Japan's Fire and Disaster Management Agency, represented Japan in the 6th Asian Leadership Forum, a concurrent session of the EROPA Conference, where he shared with participants his experiences in disaster management from the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred on 11 March 2011. In addition, several speakers from Japan, including professors and researchers from leading academic institutions such as Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Tokyo University, Nagoya University and Meiji University also presented their papers during the workshop sessions.

CLAIR was re-elected as the Group Member Representative of the EROPA Executive Council for another term from 1 Jan 2016 till 31 Dec 2018, and CLAIR aspires to continuously contribute to the sustainable development of EROPA and its members through the sharing of knowledge on Japan's best practices in public administration.

Held annually, the EROPA meetings will be conducted in Manila, Philippines for year 2016 and in Seoul, South Korea for year 2017.



A simultaneous workshop session

CLAIR Singapore Participates in Travel Fair in Jakarta

The “Japan Travel Fair 2015 Autumn & Winter” was held in November 2015 in Jakarta, Indonesia. CLAIR Singapore’s staff was dispatched to assist in the Visit Japan booth set up by the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) and to provide fair visitors with timely travel information on local regions across all of Japan.

Held for the 4th time, this year’s fair saw the participation of 19 Japanese local government-related organizations, 14 travel agencies in Indonesia and 3 airline companies as exhibitors. Among visitors, popular destinations included the “Golden Route” (Tokyo, Kyoto and Osaka), Hokkaido, Mt. Fuji area and Takayama (Shirakawago). In addition, visitors also showed much interest in places famous for winter snow activities and sakura-viewing.

There has been a continuous upward trend in Indonesian visitors travelling to Japan since the relaxation of visa regulations for Indonesian visitors in December 2014. It is hoped that the increase in visitors will contribute to future economic growth in Japan’s local regions as well as promote people-to-people exchanges between Japan and Indonesia.



Overview of the Japan Travel Fair in Jakarta

Introducing My Hometown

Miyazaki Prefecture - The Spiritual and Tropical Land of the South -

Miyazaki Prefecture lies along the Eastern coast of Japan’s Kyushu island and is surrounded by a 400km coastline along the sea to the North and South, with a mountainous inland area that is largely formed by the Central Kyushu Mountain Range. Due to its subtropical climate, Miyazaki is typically blessed with clear blue skies and a mild weather even during winter. Such abundance in nature and moderate temperatures have often been prided as not only the reason behind Miyazaki’s delicious produce, but also for cultivating the warm nature and laid-back lifestyles of its residents, as well as adding touches to Miyazaki’s local cultures and customs that are influenced by Japanese mythology.

From the Aya Teruha Suspension Bridge where one can overlook Japan’s largest evergreen forest, to the 100m tall high cliffs of volcanic basalt columns at Takachiho Gorge that was formed over time from the erosion of lava from Mount Aso; there are also many tourist spots and attractions at Miyazaki where one can experience the seasonal changes of nature.



One can enjoy the beautiful scenery and magnificent view of Manai Waterfall on a boat through the Takachiho Gorge

Asako Oshikawa, Deputy Director, CLAIR Singapore

Oyama City - A Tranquil Town of Traditions and History -

Situated 60km away from Tokyo lies Oyama City, a tranquil town blessed with beautiful waters, lush greenery and rich soil that portrays the different beauties of all four seasons throughout the year. Home to the Watarase water basin, it is also an important breeding ground and habitat to a wide variety and rare species of plants and animals.

Easily accessible by the Shinkansen (bullet train), Oyama City is a great choice for a short getaway from the busy urban city life, where you may engage in activities such as fruit-picking, touring of sake breweries and factories, participating in seasonal festivals, or learning about Japanese traditions and cultures that have been passed down since ancient times. In addition, Oyama City also offers safe and delicious foods and produce throughout the year, such as wagyu beef, seasonal fruits and Japanese sake etc. Please visit Oyama City when you have time!



Traditional wear made from a unique silk-weaving technique, yuki-tsumugi, which is found in Oyama City

Kazumi Horie, Deputy Director, CLAIR Singapore

Kagoshima Prefecture - A Treasure-Trove of Hot Springs, Nature and Delicacies -

Located at the Southwest tip of Japan's Kyushu island, Kagoshima is the only Japanese prefecture that has enjoyed a strong and long-standing bilateral relation of over 30 years with the city-state of Singapore. Since its inception in 1982, the Kagoshima-Singapore Conference has been held alternately in both Kagoshima and Singapore every 2 years, facilitating a lively exchange between the two that spans across a wide range of areas such as economic, tourism, culture, arts and youths etc.

Boasting a total of 2,753 hot spring sources, Kagoshima ranks as the prefecture with the second-most number of hot spring sources within Japan, and is also the only place in the world that possesses a natural steam sand bath – the Ibusuki Sand Bath. In addition to hot springs, Kagoshima is also blessed with an abundance of nature such as Yakushima Island, the first island in Japan to be registered as a World Heritage in 1993; and the subtropical Amami Islands that are

surrounded by the beautiful sea and inhabited with numerous rare species of animals and plants.



Sakurajima, one of the world's greatest active volcanoes and the symbol of Kagoshima

Kotaro Mihara, Deputy Director, CLAIR Singapore

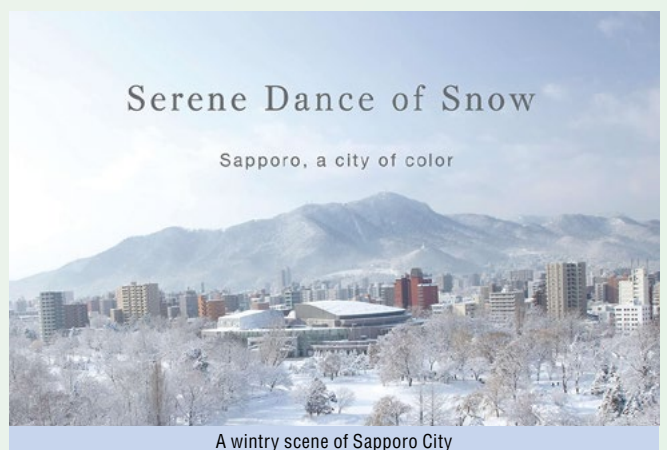
Sapporo City - Capital of Japan's Northernmost Island -

With a population of 1.9 million, Sapporo is the 5th largest city in Japan and also one that enjoys a rich and lush nature. Characteristically defined by its four distinct seasons, summertime in Sapporo is marked with crisp weather and clear skies throughout, while the city gets blanketed in a sea of white during winter, with an accumulated snowfall of up to 6m every year.

In addition to internationally-renowned events such as the triennial Sapporo International Art Festival and the Sapporo Snow Festival that is held annually in February, Sapporo also boasts a myriad of tourist attractions that draws a large number of both domestic and foreign tourists into the city. These include the symbolic Sapporo clock tower; Mount Moiwa, where one can get a spectacular view of the city; and its variety of delicious seafood and cuisine, as well as modern and sophisticated confectionaries and pastries that are made using Hokkaido's freshest ingredients.

For more information about Sapporo, please visit the

city's official tourism website at: www.welcome.city.sapporo.jp.



A wintry scene of Sapporo City

Yuichi Sasaki, Deputy Director, CLAIR Singapore

During our participation at various events around the region, we have often been enquired about the Fukushima Nuclear incident and any updates on the situation. In line with the 5th Anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake, we would like to bring you the latest updates in Fukushima Prefecture and at the same time, offer our condolences and thoughts to all affected by the disaster.

Fukushima for a Brighter Future

Fukushima prefecture extends its heartfelt gratitude to ASEAN countries and India for their considerable support. Next month, it will be 5 years since the Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster struck. However, even now Fukushima's recovery efforts are still being hampered by harmful rumours and misinformation regarding its prefectural produce and tourism.

Fukushima is the third biggest prefecture in Japan, situated in the south of the "Tohoku" region in the Northern part of Japan's main island of Honshu, which is about 90 minutes from Tokyo by Shinkansen or 3 hours by car.

Revival

Fukushima Prefecture has been working together with the national government and municipalities to enhance and strengthen decontamination efforts and radioactivity monitoring in order to restore the environment to one in which its people can feel safe to live in. The prefecture is also building the Fukushima Prefectural Center for Environmental Creation, a research center to create an environment residents can continue to feel safe in the future.

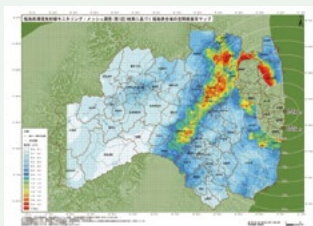
Air dose rate within Fukushima Prefecture

Air dose rate within the prefecture is decreasing significantly from the levels in April 2011, and is now at a level roughly equivalent to the major global cities (except within the evacuation order zone).



▲ Air dose rate in Fukushima is roughly equivalent to those of major global cities(except evacuation order zone). (values in Fukushima prefecture are as of November 24,2015)

Air dose rate map of Fukushima Prefecture based on the Fukushima Prefecture Environmental Radiation Monitoring in Mesh Survey



▲ 1st mesh survey measured between April 12 to 16, 2011



▲ 8th mesh survey measured between June 13 to June 10, 2015

Decontamination efforts

Decontamination work is ongoing in the prefecture to remove radioactive materials released from the nuclear power plant incidents. The national government, prefecture, and municipalities are working together to decontaminate the living areas, including schools, roads, and farmlands.



Decontamination of farmland (deep tillage)



Decontamination of school yard (removal of surface soil)



Decontamination of residential houses (removal of deposited materials)

For food safety and security

Fukushima Prefecture is working together with producers and distributors to conduct tests for radioactive material at multiple stages, from production to distribution and consumption, in order to secure safety of the agricultural and marine products from the prefecture. Agricultural and marine products on the market are all checked and confirmed to be safe for consumption, and shipment of these products are controlled at the municipality level that does not allow the shipping of any items that exceed the stated criteria.

Monitoring tests

Fukushima Prefecture conducts monitoring tests on agricultural and marine products before shipment using a germanium semiconductor detector, mainly at the Fukushima Agricultural Technology Centre.

Tests at the food producing regions

In addition to the monitoring tests conducted by the prefecture, tests are also carried out at the food producing regions across Fukushima.

As for rice, the staple food, specialized testing equipment is used to test all rice grown in the prefecture.

Bags of brown rice confirmed to be safe for consumption have a label attached showing that they have been tested.

Test results for all rice produced in the 2014 term (August 21, 2014–July 23, 2015)

Samples tested	Samples exceeding criteria limit	Ratio of samples exceeding criteria limit
Approximately 11 million	2	0.00002%

Test results made publicly available

“Fukushima Shinhatsubai (Toward a new future of Fukushima)” (<http://www.new-fukushima.jp/monitoring/en/>) is a website where visitors can search for the past results of the monitoring tests on agricultural and marine products. You can search by item or by area from a map. Results of tests on rice or horticultural crops are available at the website of “Fukushima-no Megumi Anzen Taisaku Kyogikai (Fukushima Food Safety Council).” (<https://fukumegu.org/>) For any further enquiries or information about this matter, please contact the International Affairs Division of Fukushima Prefecture at (<http://www.pref.fukushima.lg.jp/site/voice/>)



All bags of rice are tested



Germanium Semiconductor Detector

Monitoring test results for agricultural and marine products in FY 2014 (April 1, 2014–March 31, 2015)

Food group	Samples tested	Samples exceeding criteria limit	
		Number of samples	Ratio
Fruits / vegetables	5,850	0	0.00%
Livestock products	4,867	0	0.00%
Cultivated mushrooms	835	0	0.00%
Sansai(wild plants)/ Wild mushrooms	729	25	3.43%
Marine products	9,688	75	0.77%



ABOUT CLAIR

CLAIR is a joint organization founded in 1988 by 47 prefectures and 20 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 October 1990. It supports and promotes international activities and friendly relations between local authorities in Japan and their counterparts in Singapore and the ASEAN countries as well as India.

For further information on our activities, please contact CLAIR Singapore.

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