

Seminar on Local Governments' Best Practices at Universiti Utara Malaysia

J.CLAIR Singapore

J.CLAIR Singapore successfully held a joint seminar with the Universiti Utara Malaysia (hereafter, UUM) on November 15th. The seminar showcased various best practices adopted by local governments in Malaysia and Japan to drive much-needed innovations in the post-COVID era for the wellbeing of the local people. Through the seminar, staff of J.CLAIR Singapore were given the opportunity to share their insights on the latest developments in Japanese local governments with local participants in Malaysia, through a series of presentations as well as group discussions in English.

UUM is a prestigious national university which is established in the northern state of Kedah, and is close to the border of Thailand. Nearly 30,000 students study various academic fields such as business, humanities, law, government and international studies. The university is equipped with a variety of facilities ranging from sports stadiums to a shopping mall that welcomes students not only from Malaysia, but also from all over the world. The seminar on November 15th was attended by more than 80 students and 10 professors mainly from the School of Government.

1. Presentations by J.CLAIR Singapore staff members and Ms. Nur Halimah Mohd Yusoff

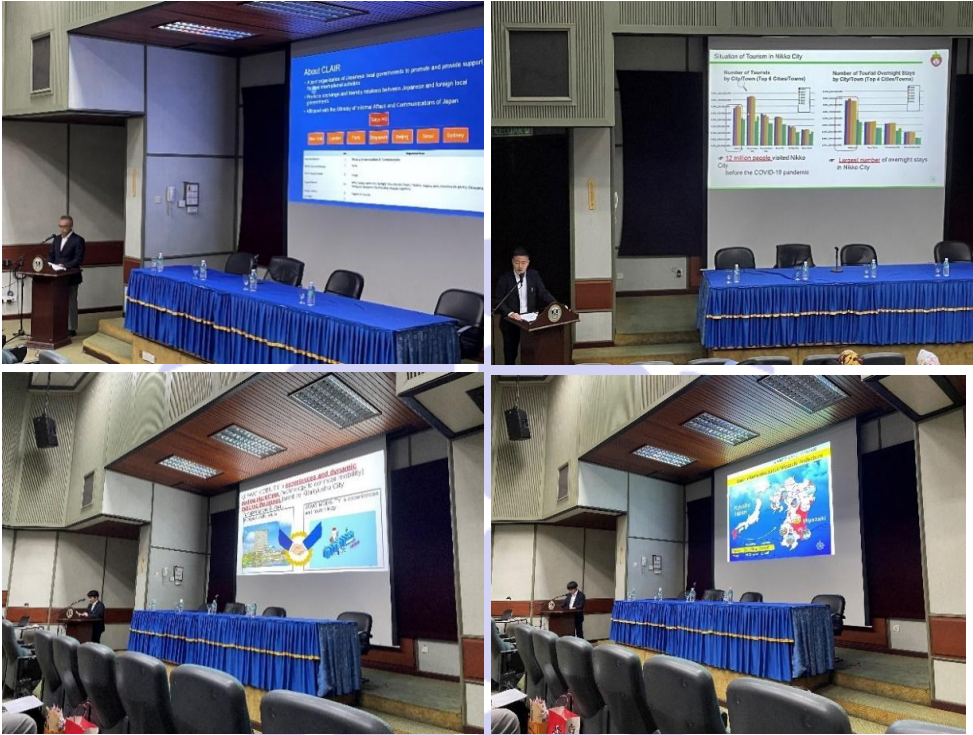
Prior to the seminar, J.CLAIR Singapore and UUM had discussed the theme that should be covered in this program and it was finally decided as 'Empowering local governments through innovation in the post-pandemic era: Experiences from Malaysia and Japan'. In line with the theme, J.CLAIR staff prepared their presentation contents based on the innovative projects implemented by their respective local governments.

On the day of the seminar, Deputy Executive Director Mr. Yamamoto Takahiro first explained about J.CLAIR Singapore's activities. Following that, three Deputy Directors who are dispatched from Tochigi Prefecture, Kitakyushu City (Fukuoka Prefecture) and Miyazaki Prefecture delivered their presentations entitled 'Carbon Neutral Initiatives in Tourism Destinations: A Case Study of Tochigi Prefecture', 'Kitakyushu City Startup Initiatives -Pilot Project on Improving the Efficiency of Bus Operation Schedules-', and 'Tourism Promotion through Sports Training Camps by Miyazaki Prefecture' respectively.

The seminar was highly successful as all local participants were very enthusiastic to learn Japanese local governments' public policies by actively participating in the presentation sessions. In the Q and A session following each presentation, students as well as professors proactively

interacted with J.CLAIR staff members.

On the other hand, Ms. Nur Halimah Mohd Yusoff from the Local Government Department, Ministry of Housing and Local Government of Malaysia delivered a presentation on the local government system in Malaysia, as well as introduced some leading innovations implemented by both the central and local governments. Through this presentation session, staff member from J.CLAIR Singapore gained invaluable insights into Malaysia’s local autonomy system.



Presentations at UUM

2. Group discussions between J.CLAIR Singapore staff members and UUM students

In the afternoon after the presentation sessions, group discussions between J.CLAIR Singapore staff members and UUM students were held. In this regard, J.CLAIR staff members joined groups of about 5 UUM students, and changed group at a 30-minutes interval. During the group discussions, J.CLAIR Singapore’s Deputy Directors introduced tourist spots, delicacies, and other attractions of their respective local governments by using brochures and other souvenirs they brought to UUM.

Through the group discussions, J.CLAIR Singapore staff members were given the opportunity to understand Malaysian young generation’s perspectives on Japan as well as the operations of a national university in Malaysia. On the other hand, UUM students were able to acquire hands-on information about Japan from Japanese local government officials, whom they could rarely meet in their daily lives.



Presenters joined groups of UUM students

3. Further collaborations in the future

During the seminar, representatives from UUM expressed their interests for further cooperation with J.CLAIR Singapore in the future. In addition, UUM professors expressed their appreciation and gratitude for the precious opportunity to learn from Japanese local governments.

Through various initiatives, J.CLAIR Singapore will continue to strive to build and strengthen networks with related organizations in ASEAN, India, and Sri Lanka, and will contribute to the overseas activities of Japanese local governments.



Group photo of J.CLAIR Singapore staff members and UUM representatives