

CLAIR Singapore Newsletter *Volume. 58* March 2013

Regional Exchange Promotion Program 2012 (Singapore & Indonesia)

Fostering of mutual cooperative ties between local governments in Japan and the ASEAN region as well as India has always been one of the key fundamentals underlying the activities of CLAIR Singapore, and this aspiration is manifested particularly through the Regional Exchange Promotion Program, CLAIR Singapore's biggest annual project. Started since 2007, the Regional Exchange Promotion Program is a study mission implemented to provide a constructive platform for Japanese local government officials to interact with governmental organizations, enterprises as well as civilians in other ASEAN countries and India. Through the program, Japanese local government officials are able to gain first-hand knowledge pertaining to the many facets of administrative as well as economic reforms in the local context, and they will also be given an opportunity to establish important contacts with local counterparts which may lead to future cooperation.

CLAIR Singapore implemented the "Regional Exchange Promotion Program 2012" from 14 to 24 November 2012 in Singapore and Indonesia. This is the first time CLAIR Singapore organized the program across 2 countries, with the first half of the program being conducted in Singapore, and the remaining program implemented in Jakarta, Indonesia. Singapore and Indonesia have grown from strength to strength in the context of economic achievements, and many Japanese local governments have expressed their interests to learn from the experiences of both countries.

Singapore's success in implementing various highly acclaimed policies pertaining to economic development, urban planning, tourism promotion and incubation of new industries has very much leveraged the country's capability in achieving sustainable growth in the long term. With this in mind, CLAIR Singapore's "Regional Exchange Promotion Program 2012" has enabled the Japanese participants to visit governmental organizations in Singapore, including International Enterprise Singapore, Singapore Tourism Board, Urban Redevelopment Authority and Public Utilities Board. During the visits, participants from Japan were given an opportunity to learn and exchange views with their Singaporean counterparts on the policy factors contributing to

Singapore's success. Participants of the program also called on representative offices of Japanese local governments in Singapore, and visited local supermarkets as well as travel agents in order to acquire knowledge on the promotion of inbound tours from Singapore to Japan as well as distribution channels for Japanese specialty products in Singapore.

In Indonesia, participants from Japan called on the Ministry of Home Affairs and exchanged views with representatives from the Ministry on topics related to the latest reforms in Indonesia's decentralization and local autonomy. In addition, participants of the program also visited Jakarta Capital City Government, where they were briefed on the urban planning policies implemented by the city government, with special focus on policies pertaining to transportation reforms. Through these visits, program participants were able to gain insights to the concerns of local autonomy and other urban issues faced by local governments in Indonesia, in addition to how the key actors are striving to overcome these issues.

Indonesia's economic potential expanded rapidly in recent years against a backdrop of strong domestic demand and high influx of foreign investments. For the program participants to grasp a deeper understanding on the factors contributing to Indonesia's economic advancement, visits to trade organizations such as Indonesia Investment Coordinating Board and local industrial parks with high concentration of Japanese companies were also conducted, where participants were enlightened on the current situation and issues of doing business in Indonesia.

For the purpose of promoting friendly exchange between Japan and Indonesia, a Cultural Exchange Program was also implemented in conjunction with the main program in Indonesia. Students from local universities who are learning the Japanese Language were given an opportunity to exchange views with participants from Japan on a wide variety of topics relating to the culture and lifestyle of both countries. This program provided an invaluable platform for the participants from Japan to interact with young aspiring Indonesians who will be the key persons to bridge the cordial relations between Japan and Indonesia in the future.

CLAIR Singapore will continue to implement the Regional Exchange Promotion Program, and we aspire to strengthen the cooperative ties and widen the contact networks between local governments in Japan and ASEAN countries as well as India through this program.



A study tour at Singapore Changi Airport



A group photo with participants of the Cultural Exchange Program in Jakarta

Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar 2012

Held and hosted annually in Japan by CLAIR, the Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar (hereinafter referred to as 'the Seminar') is a platform that allows executives working in local governments and related organizations from both within and outside of Japan, to come together to exchange information and engage in discussions regarding the current situation and issues faced by their respective local areas. Aimed to raise awareness about the state of local governance in both Japan and abroad, the Seminar also provides an opportunity for all participating countries and local governments to further establish and develop their networks with one another.

From 30 September to 7 October 2012, 6 participants from the ASEAN and India region, namely, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Laos, Cambodia and India were invited to Japan to take part in this Seminar.



A visit to the National Diet Building

The week-long seminar consisted of 2 parts; a seminar held in Tokyo and an exchange program at a Japanese local government. At the Tokyo seminar, lectures on the Japanese local administration system, an overview of CLAIR's programs, a welcome reception and study visits to places such as the National Diet building and the Edo-Tokyo Museum were conducted.

For the exchange program at a local government, the participants visited Sakai City in Osaka Prefecture, which is famous for its historical sites as well as local traditional arts such as knife and incense making. Corresponding to this year's program theme of 'Promotion of Tourism through Historical Heritage and Local Traditional Arts', participants were briefed on Sakai City's tourism promotion efforts, including how the city government is actively working on improving its tourist attractions and sites; planning projects to promote the city's historical scenic beauty; as well as conducting distinctive inbound tourism promotion campaigns targeted towards Asian tourists, with plans to further expand these promotional activities both domestically and internationally. Participants were also given tours to the Nintoku-ryo Tumulus and Sakai City Traditional Crafts Museum, where they experienced making their own Japanese sweets. They also had the opportunity to



A visit to Sakai City Traditional Crafts Museum

go on home visits for further interaction with Japanese host families.

Having experienced Sakai City's various distinct tourist attractions and cultural assets, the participants actively contributed many useful suggestions to enhance the city's tourist appeal during the opinion exchange session held on the last day. To the participants, the Seminar had not only been a trip to learn about the latest policies of Japan, but also a valuable occasion to get acquainted with counterparts from different countries and deepen the cultural understanding among them.

■ Seminar Itinerary

Date	Itinerary	Accommodation
30 Sept Sunday	Arrival in Japan	Tokyo
1 Oct Monday	Tokyo Seminar (Briefing on CLAIR's activities, courtesy visit to the Chairperson of CLAIR's Board of Directors, presentations on Japanese local government system and tourism promotion efforts, welcome reception)	Tokyo
2 Oct Tuesday	Study Tour of Tokyo (National Diet Building, East Imperial Gardens, Edo-Tokyo museum, Asakusa)	Tokyo
3 Oct Wednesday	Travel to Sakai City Exchange programs in Sakai City (Courtesy visit to Mayor and Assembly Members, briefing on the city, reception hosted by the city)	Sakai City
4 Oct Thursday	Exchange programs in Sakai City (Briefing on the city's tourism promotion policies, tours to Yamaguchi Residence, Nintoku-ryo Tumulus and Traditional Crafts Museum, tea ceremony, Japanese sweets making, home visit)	Sakai City
5 Oct Friday	Exchange programs in Sakai City (Visits to Osaka Prefecture University's plant factory and research center, Bicycle Museum Cycle Center, opinion exchange session, dinner hosted by CLAIR, accommodation in a Japanese-styled room)	Sakai City
6 Oct Saturday	Return to Tokyo Free Time	Tokyo
7 Oct Sunday	Departure from Japan	

Specialist Dispatch Project in Surabaya, Indonesia



Mayor Tri Rismaharini of Surabaya City Government(left) and Mr. Adachi Masahide, Director of CLAIR Singapore(right)

Surabaya, a metropolitan city in the heart of Indonesia's East Java Province has grown from strength to strength, transforming itself from a seaport town to a vital commercial hub that catalyzes economic developments in the region today. The milestones achieved by Surabaya today are results from the city administration's tireless efforts in continuously improving local infrastructures and creating a conducive environment for foreign direct investments. With incredible foresight, the city administration has propelled Surabaya to international status through establishing cooperative ties with foreign cities such as Kochi, Kitakyushu and Kobe in Japan.

Famous for its Clean and Green policy, Surabaya City is one of the most beautiful cities in Indonesia with various public parks and immaculately clean streets. In this regard, Surabaya City Government envisions to create an environmentally friendly city that complements local industrial and commercial developments, so as to achieve sustainable growth for the city in the long run. It is this vision that drives Surabaya City Government to constantly look for urban solutions to its environmental needs.

To realize its vision of creating an eco-city that utilizes recyclable resources such as biomass, Surabaya City Government participated in CLAIR's Specialist Dispatch Project, whereby Mr. HORIBE Takashi, a specialist in the field of environmental conservation from Aichi Prefecture was dispatched to Surabaya from 5 to 9 November 2012 in order to conduct the relevant trainings.



A scene from the lectures

Based on the specific requests from Surabaya City Government, Mr. Horibe conducted 4 lectures throughout the dispatch period, namely, "Biogas Production System and Technique", "Smart City Model of Aichi Prefecture", "Aichi Ecotown Plan" and "Environmental Impact Assessment System in Aichi Prefecture". The lectures were designed in such a manner that the contents were interconnected to provide a seamless understanding for the participants.

Participants of the lectures, who came from related departments such as Environment Department, Cleanliness and Parks Department in addition to other personnel from Surabaya City Government have shown great interest towards the lectures, especially pertaining to the production of biogas and waste management as there exist an abundance of biomass that could be recycled locally.

In addition to delivering lectures, Mr. Horibe also conducted field trips to the various related facilities which included sewerage treatment plant, composting facilities, and an experimental small-scale facility for biogas production. He provided in-depth analysis on the areas that need to be improved for more efficient operation of the facilities.

During the dispatch period, Mr. Horibe also conducted a courtesy call on the Mayor of Surabaya City, Ir. Tri Rismaharini, who was instrumental in the implementation of the Specialist Dispatch Project this time. Under Mayor Tri Rismaharini's able helm and driven by her enthusiasm to bring progress and prosperity to Surabaya City, CLAIR Singapore was able to implement its first Specialist Dispatch Project in Surabaya City. During the meeting, the Mayor expressed her wish to see the cooperation between Surabaya City and CLAIR Singapore to continue to flourish in the future.

2012 Specialist Dispatch Project in Phitsanulok, Thailand

As the gateway to the Indochina Corridor, Phitsanulok Municipality in northern Thailand has played a strategic role in the region's economic development. With an area of 18.26 km² and a population of around 73,323 people (as of 2011), Phitsanulok Municipality has traditionally functioned as a transportation hub connecting cities such as Danang (Vietnam), Yangon (Myanmar), Kunming (China) and also Bangkok(Thailand). In recent years, the municipality has transformed itself to become the industrial and commercial core of Thailand's Lower Northern Region, with a concentration of more than 30 branches of commercial banks, 127 hotels and restaurants in the locality.

With incredible foresight and a strong desire to achieve sustainable development in the long term, Phitsanulok Municipality is constantly striving to advance itself in all aspects. In this regard, Phitsanulok Municipality has been concerting efforts in identifying and developing new industry sectors that will reap sustainable economic benefits to the municipality and its people. One key area identified was the promotion of tourism industry in Phitsanulok Municipality. The municipality administration is currently implementing various initiatives to develop the local tourism industry, and it is actively sourcing for successful reference models. This has resulted in the municipality participating in CLAIR's "Specialist Dispatch Project".

Phitsanulok Municipality is one of CLAIR's most valued counterparts in the implementation of the "Specialist Dispatch

Japan Travel Seminar and Business-Meeting Session 2012 in Manila



The Specialist delivering a lecture

City was dispatched to Phitsanulok Municipality from 30 October to 9 November 2012.

During the first half of the program, Mr. Mamitsuka visited the major tourist sites in Phitsanulok Municipality and analyzed the strengths and weaknesses of these places. In addition, he also participated in some of the experiential tour programs offered in the municipality such as tours that provide agricultural experience and health tourism. These visits provided the specialist with a foundation to work on, so that he could propose new tourism promotion strategies for the municipality administration. Mr. Mamitsuka also conducted lectures to officials from Phitsanulok Municipality that showcased several case studies of tourism development in Japan.

The specialist concentrated on formulating the relevant tourism promotion strategies for Phitsanulok Municipality during the second half of the program. He emphasized on the preponderance of cooperation between the various stakeholders, including the municipality administration, private sector and local residents in strengthening the tourism industry in Phitsanulok Municipality. Local officials were also lectured on the importance of establishing a tourism promotion organization, and also on methods to explore new tourism resources locally.

During the program's closing ceremony held on 8 November 2012, Mr. Boonsong Tantanee, Mayor of Phitsanulok Municipality commented that "I sincerely hope that through enhancing the collaboration between the municipality administration, private sector and local residents, we will be able to further leverage Phitsanulok Municipality's achievements to become a regional tourism hub in the near future".

Through the Specialist Dispatch Project, CLAIR Singapore aspires to promote a higher level of knowledge transfer between local governments in Japan and the ASEAN region as well as India.



The beautiful Buddha statue of Wat Phra Sri Ratana Mahathat

Parties interested to apply for the Specialist Dispatch Project, please contact CLAIR Singapore Office.



Participants from Philippines' travel industry attending the seminar in Manila

Following Southeast Asia's rapid economic growth and development over the recent years, a growing number of Japanese local governments have been increasingly shifting their attention towards the markets in this region, as they set their sights to attract more Southeast Asian tourists to Japan. CLAIR Singapore, therefore, also directs our efforts to support Japanese local governments and related organizations in their tourism promotion efforts in this region.

In December 2012, CLAIR Singapore hosted and organized a 'Japan Travel Seminar and Business-Meeting Session 2012' in Manila, together with support from the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) Bangkok Representative Office and the Embassy of Japan in the Philippines. Held at a hotel in the city center of Manila, the event aimed to introduce some of the latest attractions and travel destinations in Japan to Philippines' travel industry players, as well as provide an opportunity for travel partners from both Philippines and Japan to interact and network with one another.

While it was CLAIR Singapore's first attempt to hold a travel seminar in Manila, such a Japan-centric travel seminar was the first-of-its-kind to be held in the Philippines and the event received an enthusiastic response from travel industry players in both Philippines and Japan. A total of 29 groups of participants from Japan took part in the event, including 10 groups from Japan's various local governments and tourism



Business-meeting session between Philippines and Japan participants

organizations; and an estimated 70 attendees from various travel agencies and airline operators in the Philippines joined in the seminar and business-meeting session.

The event started with representatives from various organizations from Japan speaking to the Philippines attendees on Japan travel-related issues and news, including the situation of Japanese visa application in the Philippines, as well as the numerous travel attractions and destinations that are available in different regions of Japan. A more detailed list of the speakers and topics during the seminar is as follows:

1. Welcome Address	Mr. Adachi Masahide, Director of CLAIR Singapore
2. Japanese Visa Application	Embassy of Japan in the Philippines
3. Visit Japan Projects in the Philippines	Mr. Masuda Hiroshi, Executive Director of JNTO Bangkok
4. Tokyo	Tokyo Convention & Visitors Bureau
5. The Secrets of Osaka	Osaka Convention & Tourism Bureau
6. Wakayama, A Place to Relax	Wakayama Prefectural Government
7. Welcome to Kyushu	Kyushu Tourism Promotion Organization

Following the seminar was a business-meeting session, where individual tables and chairs were set-up to allow participants from both Philippines and Japan to conduct one-to-one discussions on how they can collaborate to further develop their Japan travel packages and products. As they seldom get such opportunities to directly interact and network with their counterparts in another country, most of the seminar participants expressed that they found the Japan travel seminar and business-meeting session very helpful and that they hope such events could be held on a more frequent-basis.

CLAIR Singapore will continue to contribute in the promotion of Japan-bound tourism and assist in the building of stronger networks between Japan and Southeast Asia through the implementation of such events, and we would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the supporters and participants to this seminar.

CLAIR Singapore's Visit to General Administration Department in Myanmar

Delegates from CLAIR Singapore visited the General Administration Department (GAD) under The Ministry of Home Affairs in Myanmar on 11 October 2012, with the aim to further enhance the cooperative ties between both organizations. GAD is CLAIR's official counterpart for its programs and activities in Myanmar, and the two organizations have enjoyed many years of constructive relations.

Mr. Tin Myint, Deputy Director General of GAD who welcomed the delegates from CLAIR Singapore during the visit, expressed that he hopes CLAIR Singapore would play a proactive role in bridging the friendly ties between local governments in Myanmar and Japan.

It is hoped that CLAIR's cooperative relations with the General Administration Department could be leveraged to greater heights in the future through CLAIR's programs such as the Specialist Dispatch Project, Local Government Officials Training Program, and Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar.



(from left) Mr. Adachi Masahide, Director of CLAIR Singapore and Mr. Tin Myint, Deputy Director General of GAD

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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