



# J.CLAIR Singapore

## Newsletter

### CONTENTS

#### ◆Recent Activities

- P.1 Indonesia-Japan Knowledge Exchange Seminar 2017
- P.3 Indonesia-Japan Knowledge Exchange to boost reform in Indonesia
- P.4 The 15th Surabaya Yosakoi Festival
- P.5 The Aichi Association of City Mayors visited Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore
- P.6 The 2017 Bon Odori Festival in Johor Bahru, Malaysia
- P.7 Voices from J.CLAIR Singapore Staff

#### ◆Travel Fairs in ASEAN Countries

- Promoting travel to Japan at:
- P.8 “Travel Madness Expo 2017” in the Philippines!
- P.9 “Thai International Travel Fair #21” in Thailand!

#### ◆Do you know Japanese Local Foods?

- P.10 “Kanten” of Akita Prefecture
- P.10 “Zunda” of Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture



#### The Japan Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (J.CLAIR), Singapore

6 Battery Road #26-01/02 Singapore 049909

Tel: +65-6224-7927 Fax: +65-6224-8376

Email: [info@clair.org.sg](mailto:info@clair.org.sg)

HP: <http://www.clair.org.sg/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/clairsg/>

Vol.70 October 2017

### ◆Recent Activities

## *Indonesia-Japan Knowledge Exchange Seminar 2017*



The “Indonesia-Japan Knowledge Exchange Seminar 2017” was held in Indonesia’s capital city of Jakarta on 27 July 2017. Themed “Policy Intervention to Develop Village Competitiveness”, this seminar was jointly organized by Indonesia’s National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA), The Japan Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (J.CLAIR), Singapore, as well as Japan’s Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC). The seminar served as a platform for local government officials in Indonesia to learn and benefit from the best practices of public administration in Indonesia as well as Japan

For the objective of providing the local participants with perspectives on both countries, 2 lectures from Japan and 2 lectures from Indonesia were delivered during the seminar. The first lecture from Japan was delivered by Mr. Yoshimasa Sekiguchi from Sumida Ward in Tokyo, whereby he discussed about topics such as public sector evaluation through the PDCA (Plan, Do, Check and Action) Cycle, utilization of the Policy Evaluation Sheet, establishment of evaluation criteria for program formulation, as well as the incorporation of a Third-Party External Evaluation which local residents participated in. Mr. Sekiguchi introduced 3 case studies that showcased the different methods of public sector evaluation, and he also stressed the importance of evaluating and improvising public services for the benefit of the local people.

Another lecture from Japan was conducted by Mr. Daiki Yamamoto from Toyooka City in Hyogo Prefecture. Mr. Yamamoto talked about Toyooka City's regional branding efforts through the oriental white stork, which is an endangered and protected species of bird in Japan. The lecture explained how the artificial breeding and reintroduction into the wild of the oriental white stork managed to promote environmental-friendly agricultural produce as well as the related processed products which resulted in the successful local branding of Toyooka City. In addition, he also showcased a case study of a local company which contributed to Toyooka City's local branding efforts through its environmental-friendly solar panels.

Mr. Lala Kolopaking, Senior Advisor in Social-Economy and Culture to Indonesia's Minister of Communication and Information Technology delivered a lecture that focused on village and rural areas development. The lecture explained topics such as the necessity of inter-village cooperation in devising masterplans so as to ensure the realization of local-based developments as well as enhancing villages' competitiveness. In addition, Mr. Lala Kolopaking also emphasized the importance of public consultation involving the local people, as well as the public and academic sectors in every stage of program implementation.

The Regent of Banyuwangi Regency, Mr. Abdullah Azwar Anas, showcased the actual programs and schemes implemented by the local government to

strengthen its competitiveness. Over the years, Banyuwangi Regency has made a concerted effort in developing the local tourism industry by utilizing the unique charms of the local region. This is an effort to create more employment opportunities locally so as to prevent the outflow of younger generations to urban areas. These initiatives successfully resulted in the increased income of the local people as well as the decrease in unemployment. The administration of Banyuwangi Regency also placed emphasis on conserving the traditional retail shops as well as maintaining the moral order by prohibiting convenience stores and entertainment establishments such as karaoke and disco.

After the conclusion of the lectures, a Group Discussion Session was conducted whereby the local participants were divided into 4 groups so that they could have the opportunity to exchange opinions with the 4 speakers. The Group Discussion Session saw local participants proactively participating in the discussions and asking questions related to their local governments, which included questions on effective measures to develop village competitiveness.

During the concluding session, representatives from each group presented a summary of their findings from the discussions, in hopes of sharing the gained knowledge extensively among local governments in Indonesia. For example, one of the representatives concluded that "Public sector evaluation through the PDCA Cycle should not be exhaustive in itself; instead it should encourage public officials to fulfil their accountabilities as civil servants".



*The Group Discussion Session*

## INDONESIA-JAPAN KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE TO BOOST REFORM IN INDONESIA



*~A Message from Dr. Tri Widodu WU, Deputy Chairman for Innovation, National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA), Republic of Indonesia ~*

In the last 3 years (2015-2017), J.CLAIR Singapore and NIPA have conducted knowledge exchange seminars on diverse topics. From the Indonesian side, such activities are tremendously important in providing inspirational success stories on managing government affairs in particular aspects. It is widely acknowledged that since 2014, the government of Indonesia has promoted 2 ambitious policy reforms; they were Law No. 23 on autonomous local government and Law No. 30 regarding village development. Both of these laws reflect a new orientation by the central government on empowering local government and communities.

Under Law No. 23/2014, local governments will be encouraged not only to be more democratic, but also more innovative. Innovation is explicitly mandated in the law, despite the fact that experience in innovating is relatively weak among local governments. The very basic argument is that innovation will strengthen local competitiveness as well as create a high-performing organization. Meanwhile, Law No. 30/2014 provides huge village grants to accelerate the creation of self-sufficient villages. In FY 2017, the total budget allocated for village development is Rp. 60 trillion, and will be doubled next year. By highlighting local government and village development, it is intentionally said that Indonesia is actually developed from below and from the periphery of the country.

Indonesian government has strong commitment to make such reform agendas succeed. But still, learning from the Japan experience is extremely beneficial in

providing creative and innovative strategies to deal with local complexities. One of the good lessons is how Japan implements administrative and financial reform. At least, there are 4 strategies that have been carried out to increase the effectiveness of local government which is stringency of financial affairs, enhancing public activities by the private sector and NPOs, reconsidering the inefficient nature of administrative organizations, and making organizations and work more efficient. Definitely, there are more lessons that have been scrutinized to be absorbed in the context of Indonesian reform.

Due to the significance of the program, I would suggest J.CLAIR Singapore and Japan's Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) to continue the collaboration with the Indonesian government to manage any fruitful program benefitting all parties mutually.



*With Japanese co-hosts and speakers*

## *The 15th Surabaya Yosakoi Festival*

### *~ Commemorating the 20th Anniversary of Sister-City Relations between Surabaya City and Kochi City~*

Jointly organized by the Consulate General of Japan in Surabaya City, Surabaya City Government and Kochi City, the 15<sup>th</sup> Surabaya Yosakoi Festival was held with much fanfare in Indonesia's Surabaya City on 9 July 2017, Sunday.



*Cultural performance at the welcome reception*

Held for the first time in 2003 as one of the highlighted events of the “ASEAN-Japan Exchange Year”, the Surabaya Yosakoi Festival was initiated from the friendly sister-city affiliation between Indonesia's Surabaya City and Japan's Kochi City and has since been held annually in Surabaya City as a major event for its local residents. With 2017 marking the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sister-city relations between Surabaya City and Kochi City, a goodwill mission of about 50 members from Kochi City took part in the Surabaya Yosakoi Festival this year, including Mr. Seiya Okazaki, Mayor of Kochi City, Ms. Tae Takagi, Chairperson of Kochi City Assembly, and Chairperson of the Surabaya-Kochi Sister City Committee.

A total of 30 teams (10 and 20 each for the children's and adult's division respectively) made up by about 600 participants from Surabaya participated in the festival that was held at the open field in front of Surabaya City Hall. Sounds of Japanese wooden clappers rang across the venue and attracted more than 500 visitors to the event. During the finale, dancers from Kochi City also joined in the dance, successfully bringing the Yosakoi festival to a grand close.

There are many Yosakoi teams that are led by local instructors in Surabaya City, and all of them were extremely well-prepared for the festival. From the participants' expressions after their dance performances as well as their nervous display of joy and disappointment upon hearing their scores, it is evident that the culture of Yosakoi is already deeply-rooted in the hearts of Surabaya City's residents and the Yosakoi Festival represents a symbol of the strong, friendly ties between the 2 cities. This sentiment was also further highlighted by Ms. Tri Rismaharini, Mayor of Surabaya City during the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebratory dinner held on the same night, as she stressed that the city looks forward to further collaborating with Kochi City in various areas in the future.



*Yosakoi teams from Surabaya performing their dances during the festival*

On the other hand, Kochi City has also recruited 5 Coordinators for International Relations (CIRs) from Surabaya City under The Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme over the years, and it can be expected that going forward, this long-standing cultural exchange and friendly relations between Surabaya City and Kochi City will continue to be an excellent success story of a sister-city affiliation between Japan and a foreign counterpart.

## *The Aichi Association of City Mayors visited Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore*

The Aichi Association of City Mayors, which is an organization jointly established by the 38 cities in Japan's Aichi Prefecture, visited Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore from 15 to 20 July 2017. This visit was organized to leverage tourism promotion of local destinations in Aichi Prefecture as well as sales promotion of specialty products from Aichi Prefecture, whereby meetings with local companies in Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore were conducted as these countries possess huge potential for future economic growths. 11 Mayors from cities including Tokai, Gamagori, Ichinomiya, Seto, Handa, Kariya, Tokoname, Chita, Aisai, Yatomi and Ama, as well as 2 Vice Mayors from Anjo City and Komaki City participated in the visit.

Aichi Prefecture is located in the middle of Japan and is famous as one of the leading industrial areas in Japan, where the headquarters of Toyota Motor Corporation is located. In addition, Aichi Prefecture is also blessed with an abundance of tourism resources including the enchanting natural sceneries of the four seasons, relaxing hot springs, refined urban spaces, delicious local cuisines, exciting shopping and unique cultures.

Apart from that, Aichi Prefecture will also gain much attention when it holds the 20th Asian Games in 2026, and after the opening of the Linear Chuo Shinkansen Line which will run between Tokyo and Nagoya in 2027.

During the visit in Indonesia, a "Networking Meeting" was held and attended by more than 30 invited guests that included Ms. Takada, Minister at the Embassy of Japan in Indonesia, Japanese government agencies, airlines, local travel agencies as well as local Japanese companies. During the meeting, participating Mayors and Vice Mayors from Aichi Prefecture delivered interesting presentations about the uniqueness of their localities, speaking enthusiastically about the Big Buddha in

Tokai City, the hot springs in Gamagori City, the artistic pottery products in Seto City and Tokoname City, the cosplay parade in Ichinomiya City and the floats parade in Handa City.

Many of the participating Mayors and Vice Mayors commented that they gained new knowledge by visiting the 3 countries, as they were able to understand the interests, tastes as well as needs that the local people have for Japan. The gained knowledge will greatly assist the cities with their efforts in tourism promotion and expansion of sales channels.

Mr. Atsuo Suzuki, Mayor of Tokai City, who was also the head of delegation, commented that: "I hope that the cooperation between the cities will be strengthened to promote the exchange in tourism and economy with other countries", and he also emphasized his intention to continue with the implementation of such programs in Asia in the future.

Through the visit, it is hoped that the cities in Aichi Prefecture will collaborate closely to further promote the uniqueness of Aichi Prefecture as well as to leverage the presence of the prefecture in the international arena.



*The Mayor of Tokai city delivering a speech at the Network meeting*

## *The 2017 Bon Odori Festival in Johor Bahru, Malaysia*

The 2017 Bon Odori Festival was held from 22 to 23 July 2017 in Malaysia's Johor Bahru. Organized by the Southern Branch of Japan Graduates' Association of Malaysia (JAGAM), this event has been held annually since 1999. J.CLAIR Singapore made its inaugural debut in the 2017 event by participating as an exhibitor.

As the year 2017 marks the 60th Anniversary of the Establishment of Malaysia-Japan Diplomatic Relations, this event was held in collaboration with The Embassy of Japan in Malaysia, and H.E. Makio Miyakawa, Ambassador of Japan to Malaysia graced the event to commemorate the cordial bilateral relations between Malaysia and Japan.

The 2017 Bon Odori Festival attracted many local visitors who have a profound interest in Japan and its unique cultures. Many locals visited the event dressed in the traditional Japanese yukata, which is a summer kimono worn by the Japanese.

J.CLAIR Singapore's booth at the event provided Japan travel information to local visitors in the form of pamphlets and brochures. In addition, large photo panels showcasing the beautiful four seasons in Japan

were also set up at the booth, so as to provide local visitors an opportunity to take photos. Visitors to J.CLAIR Singapore's booth enthusiastically browsed through the pamphlets and brochures from all regions in Japan, and proactively asked questions to obtain travel information such as the best season for cherry blossom viewing as well as transportation routes to a certain travel destination in Japan.

The popular Japan travel destinations among the locals include Hokkaido, Tokyo as well as Kyoto, and the locals prefer activities such as cherry blossom viewing, snow viewing, as well as experiencing the hot spring (onsen) when they are travelling in Japan. Through such a platform, J.CLAIR Singapore was able to disseminate travel information and promote the various travel destinations in Japan, including those located in the rural areas outside of the popular Golden Route.

Now in its 15th year, this event is a testament to the great support from alumni of Japanese universities towards Japan. It is hoped that such continuous efforts will reap tangible results in attracting more first-time visitors and repeat visitors to Japan.



*Many local visitors taking part in the Bon Odori*

**Voices from J. CLAIR Singapore Staff**  
*~Speaking at the Japan Local Administration  
Seminar at Universiti Utara Malaysia~*



**Mr. Yosuke Yasuda, Deputy Director**  
*(seconded from Shimane Prefecture)*

On 18 May, I participated in the Japan Local Administration Seminar held at Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), the only university in Malaysia with a graduate school in public policy. As one of the speakers, I conducted a presentation about the best practices in Shimane Prefecture, which I am seconded from. This seminar is jointly organized by J. CLAIR Singapore and UUM, and aims to explore the possibility of expanding local government exchanges between Japan and Malaysia in the future through sharing new knowledge on the best practices of Japanese local governments in English.

My presentation theme was 'Regional Revitalization through the Promotion of ICT Industry in Shimane Prefecture'. Shimane Prefecture is faced with a number of challenges such as a rapidly declining birthrate and ageing society, and the outflow of young people to urban areas. As such, Shimane Prefecture has aimed for the revitalization of the local area by developing the IT industry. Shimane Prefecture has a competitive advantage in IT, due to the fact that the world-renowned "Ruby" programming language was developed in Shimane, and there are numerous talented engineers and companies with cutting-edge IT capabilities.

Providing quality IT education to local school

children is one of the vital pillars that supports Shimane Prefecture's efforts in IT promotion. In this regard, programming classes are provided in secondary and high schools. In addition, training camps for computer programming intended for high school and university students are also held during their summer vacations. These measures have been successful, and the number of young people employed by IT companies in Shimane is gradually increasing. Also, with an increase in local IT talents, there are many examples of IT companies from other regions transferring their operations to Shimane.

After I delivered my presentation, I was able to gain positive feedback from the local participants that "Shimane Prefecture's case study is a good example that can be practiced even by local governments in non-urban areas. I am very happy that I could have the opportunity to learn new knowledge and experience from a Japanese local government officer." Even though it took a lot of time and effort to prepare for the presentation, I felt that it was all worthwhile because the experience was very fulfilling and I was able to enhance my English language abilities through the whole process. Due to the overwhelming and positive response at UUM, the university has considered the possibility to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with J. CLAIR Singapore on the strategic alliances of both organizations. J. CLAIR Singapore shall coordinate with UUM in the future for concluding the MOU.



*Group discussion with local participants*

◆ **Travel Fairs in ASEAN countries**

*~To promote travel to Japan and gather information about Japan tourism,*

*J.CLAIR Singapore actively participates in Travel Fairs held in ASEAN countries~*

***“Travel Madness Expo 2017” in the Philippines!***

**1. Outline of the Travel Fair**

Organized by Travel Innovators Inc., the “Travel Madness Expo 2017” was held at the SMX Convention Center in Manila, Philippines, for 4 days from Thursday to Sunday, on 6 – 9 July 2017. J.CLAIR Singapore promoted travel to Japan at the event by helping out at the Visit Japan booth put up by the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO).



**2. Which are the most popular destinations in Japan for Filipinos?**

Visitor arrivals to Japan from the Philippines hit a record-high of 347,861 visitors in 2016 (a Year over Year (YoY) growth of 29.6%), exceeding 300,000 visitors for the first time, largely due to the expansion of low-cost carrier routes and active promotion of travel to Japan. The growth rate of the Filipino market was the second-highest recorded among Southeast Asian countries following Indonesia’s 32.1% YoY growth, and is expected to continue to rise going forward.

Ranking	Destination	Travel Interests
1st	Tokyo	Tokyo Disney Resort is still very popular, and many were planning to travel to both Tokyo and around its vicinities (Yokohama and Hakone) at the same time.
2nd	Osaka	The popularity of Universal Studios Japan is high, and there were a lot of people who purchased discounted tickets to USJ in advance.
3rd	Kyoto	Many visitors were interested to see the autumn leaves, and we were often asked about when would be the recommended period to view them (usually around mid to late November).
4th	Hokkaido	Hokkaido seems to be often associated with being a maker of confectionaries and sweets rather than as a skiing destination, and it is this image that helps to create the “Hokkaido brand” among locals.
5th	Okinawa	There were many people who showed interest in Okinawa’s local cuisine that uses a lot of healthy superfoods.

For a lot of Filipino travelers, the main objective of their visit to Japan includes “to see cherry blossoms”, “to experience snow”, or “to take the Shinkansen (bullet train)” etc. In addition, many of the locals also had the preconception that there was only snowfall in Hokkaido, and a lot of them were surprised to know that they can also experience snow in areas that are closer to Tokyo and upon hearing the information, decided to change their itinerary to the nearer regions instead.



**3. What does the future hold for tourism to Japan in the Filipino market?**

While there are not as many repeated travelers to Japan from the Philippines, many of the Japanese local governments and businesses who participated in the travel fair expressed the opinion that the purchasing power of Filipino travelers is much higher than they had imagined, and thus, the Philippines is still a highly-anticipated market with huge potential in the future.

***“Thai International Travel Fair #21” in Thailand!***

**1. Outline of the Travel Fair**

Organized by the Thai Travel Agents Association (TTAA), the “Thai International Travel Fair #21” was held at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center in Bangkok, Thailand, for 4 days from Thursday to Sunday, on 10 – 13 August 2017. J.CLAIR Singapore promoted travel to Japan at the event by helping out at the Japan Zone set up by the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO).



**2. Which are the most popular destinations in Japan for Thai visitors?**

According to the level of popularity of pamphlets that were distributed at the Japan Zone, below are some of the top well-liked destinations in Japan among Thai visitors. The locals were especially receptive to pamphlets with pictures of beautiful flowers, temples and shrines etc. printed on the front.

Ranking	Destination	Travel Interests
1st	Hokkaido	Other than to see snow, many also had travel plans to view flowers in Hokkaido.
2nd	Kyushu	Many people knew about Kyushu partly because of a popular Thai TV drama that was filmed in Saga Prefecture.
3rd	Tokyo	Apart from well-known sites such as Asakusa, Ginza and Shibuya etc., many also asked about other lesser-known sightseeing spots in Tokyo.
4th	Osaka	Universal Studios Japan is very popular among the locals.
5th	Okinawa	Many people were making travel plans to Okinawa because of the direct flight from Thailand that started operation since February this year.

**3. What does the future hold for tourism to Japan in the Thai market?**

About 900,000 Thai visitors travelled to Japan in 2016, which is the highest visitor arrivals recorded among Southeast Asian countries in the same year. Out of these Thai travelers, over 60% had already been to Japan before and there is also an increase in the number of Thai visitors who are travelling to other regions outside of Japan’s “Golden Route” (which is Tokyo, Mt. Fuji, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka and so on). Going forward, we can expect to have more visitors from Thailand to visit and enjoy the various attractions all over Japan.



## ◆ Do you know Japanese Local Foods ?

*~In Japan, each local area has its own local food that cannot be found in other areas. We will introduce a few of them here~*

### *“Kanten” of Akita Prefecture*

Akita Prefecture in Japan is famous for its delightful traditional confectionaries, including “Babahera” ice cream, butter rice cake, tofu castella cake and many more. “Kanten” is one the local confectionaries much-loved by people in Akita Prefecture as it is easy to make, and is representative of the Prefecture’s spirit.

Kanten is a jelly-like local dessert made from agar, which is a substance freeze-dried from seaweed. You can make kanten by dissolving agar in water, then add in milk or fruits and wait for it to harden and become jelly. Kanten is such a popular dessert that mothers in Akita Prefecture make them with a variety of ingredients, such as fruit, egg, walnut, spinach, mushroom and even potato salad.

Kanten is a special treat commonly made by mothers in Akita Prefecture, and you can see Kanten making guest appearances as snacks in school children’s lunch boxes during sports events and school trips, as well as during important occasions such as wedding ceremonies and birthday parties.



*Photo by AKITA Pref., Japan*

In Akita Prefecture, mothers in the neighborhood always gather for afternoon tea parties where they would make various kinds of interesting Kanten and share with each other the special recipes. Through such tea parties, mothers are often inspired with new ideas and they will always come up with new varieties of beautiful and delicious Kanten which everybody enjoys.

In Akita Prefecture, Kanten is a special dessert that is filled with a mother’s love. You could also try making Kanten at home.

### *“Zunda” of Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture*

Sendai is a castle town founded by Date Masamune, one of the most famous feudal lords from Japan’s Tohoku region. As a result, a rich culture of foods and ingredients that are distinct to Sendai City has been deeply ingrained in its history, one of which is “Zunda”.

Zunda is a sweet edamame (young soybeans) paste that is unique to Sendai. It is made by boiling the edamame beans, before crushing and seasoning them with sugar and salt. This paste is often coated on mochi (rice cakes) or dumplings to make Zunda mochi, and it has a special green color with a sweet and smooth taste. As edamame beans are very rich in dietary fiber, Zunda is also often seen as a healthy food product.

Recently, Zunda milkshakes are also getting more popular in Japan. At first taste, you will pick up the rich aroma of vanilla and feel the refined taste of edamame beans spreading through your mouth. The milkshake also has a gritty texture that is distinct to



Zunda mochi and tastes just like the real thing. Other than in milkshakes, Zunda can also be enjoyed in a variety of ways, such as in roll cakes, pudding, daifuku (Japanese rice cakes filled with fresh cream) and many other confectioneries, and the taste of Zunda varies across different stores. How about making Sendai your next stop in Japan and trying out the many types of Zunda while you go around the city? The City of Sendai looks forward to welcoming you!