

INTERVIEW SERIES WITH ALUMNI OF

ABU HANIPAH BIN NAWI

Tell us about your study in Japan

I came to Japan in 1989 under the Look East Policy program. I was in Batch 6 at University of Malaya. I went to Yamagata University in March 1989. In my first year I stayed in Yamagata city but from 2nd year to 4th year I was in Yonezawa because our engineering campus was there. After I finished my first Degree, I furthered my studies in Master Degree at the same university the following year under the scholarship by the Rotary Yoneyama Foundation. Then, I returned to Malaysia and worked in water and wastewater treatment company. After that I applied for further study and was given a scholarship to go to Japan again to Yamagata University for post-graduate study. Later on, I secured a Monbusho Scholarship for post graduate study and placed again in Yonezawa Campus, Yamagata University.

What surprised you in Japan?

When I was at University of Malaya I studied standard Japanese but when I went to Yamagata and Yonezawa, they spoke a very different dialect, the Yamagata-Ben and Yonezawa-Ben. It was totally different, this would similar to a foreign student who came to Malay-

Melayu, then he went to Kedah or Kelantan. Even the professor too spoke in Yamagata dialect which was very difficult to understand.

Look East Policy & you

I applied for the Look East Learning Program in the University Malaya Offering program when I saw the pamphlet from the university after I finished my SPM. At first I did not have the plan to go to Japan but I intended to go to US for further study. But when I read the pamphlet and recalled learning a lot about Japan in our Geography subject in primary and secondary school, it changed my mind and decided to go to experience life in Japan.

Your favourite:

Person

I like the former Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Shinzo Abe.

Place

I like Yonezawa very much. There is a lot of snow during the winter time from December to March.

Food

What I like most in Yamagata and Yonezawa is rice. I used to be a farmer's son and we would get new rice every season. When I was in Japan, I managed to get new rice from the farmers and my Japanese friends.

Custom

Many of the customs of the Japanese are very relevant to me, especially they are very strict in time keeping and spend a lot of time in the work place. I used to work long hours in the company and very strict about the time when I came back to Malaysia. Japanese are very kind to the young and the elderly which I think is a very good habit.

Future of Malaysia & Japan

Malaysia and Japan should have a very good relationship. Previously when Look East Policy was launched, it aimed to have collaboration in technology transfer between Japan and Malaysia so that we can modernize our country. The good habits of the Japanese include hardworking, long working hours and being focused. I think we should practice and learn to have quality time management.

In Japan especially during working hours, everyone is focus and dedicate themselves to work to achieve their target. They don't do something which is not relevant to their work or is a waste of their time. Malaysian working adults should practice good time management and share this value to their workplace juniors. Good practice should be made better by continuing learn from Japanese ethics values at workplace. Malaysians should also learn from the Japanese to love the environment and always take care of the environment as a gift to our future generations. There should be a group of senior executives in a corporation or government body who fully focus on this issue and earnestly look for the best solutions to help to develop the country in conserving the nature or caring for the environment. The senior executives must be empowered to ensure the development and not be influenced by any political body. Japan has a good system where citizens have strong collective say in safeguarding the environment.



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