

## INTERVIEW SERIES WITH ALUMNI OF 'LOOK EAST POLICY'

# IDNIN PASYA BIN IBRAHIM

### **Tell us about your study in Japan**

My name is Idnin Pasya Bin Ibrahim. I'm currently working as a Associate Professor in School of Electrical Engineering, UITM Shah Alam. I went to Tokyo in 2001 and obtained by my bachelor's degree in Communication Engineering in 2004, at Tokyo Denki University. I continued to pursue my Master's degree at the same university and graduated in 2006. I then managed to work as an engineer in Toshiba PC & Network in Ome, Tokyo until 2009. Then I came back to Malaysia to work in UITM as a lecturer. From 2012 to 2015 I went back to Japan again to pursue my PhD in Tokyo Denki University under the Monbugakusho (MEXT) scholarship. Basically I have lived in Tokyo, Japan for around 11 years. It has been a long time living in Japan, where I learned and experience a lot of wonderful things.

### **What surprised you in Japan**

First, because I have worked in Japan, I managed to experience a lot of Japanese culture when working with professionals. One thing that really surprised me is how hardworking the Japanese are. For example, if the normal working hours is from 8am to 5pm, and when it is already 5pm, the bell will ring, but nobody goes back. Normally they seem to continue until maybe eight or nine o'clock in the evening. So I was quite surprised at first, but after a while I realized that they were truly dedicated to their work. They were also very professional in dealings with work matters, to mention one example; if they made a mistake in their work, they will honestly apologize to everyone for the mistake and then they will together to come up with a solution to solve the problem.



## Look East Policy & you

So I am actually very fortunate to have been a part of the Look East Policy Programme whereby I obtained a degree scholarship from MARA to go to Japan for my study from 2001 to 2004. That scholarship was part of the Look East Policy that I've benefited from. As for my Master's and PhD degree, I've managed to secure the scholarship from the Japanese government, which is the Monbusho (MEXT) that really benefited and gives me the opportunity to be in to Japan.

## Your favorite:

### Person

My favorite person was a Japanese footballer, Hidetoshi NAKATA. I really like football. During my stay in Japan, it was the peak of Mr. NAKATA's career and he was the person who is leading the Japanese Team to participate in the World Cup. He continued his career in Europe, showing to the world that Japanese are very capable to compete with western countries, especially in sport. I really admire him as a professional and also as a sportsman.

### Place

My favorite place in Japan is Hokkaido. I really like snow, the cold weather and the nice sceneries. I went there a few times, especially in Sapporo and Hakodate to see the beautiful scenery at night on top of the hill.

### Food

Talking about Japanese food, the first thing that came into my mind is sushi. I really like the sushi that I eat in Japan, because the freshness of the food is different from what we can eat in Malaysia.

The taste is also very good and authentic. The second food that I like is Tenzaru Soba. When people asked me the food that I like in Japan, they will be surprised when they heard its Tenzaru Soba, especially the Japanese. Normally foreigners don't like to eat cold soba. Most people like to eat hot soup.

### Custom

I also like the Japanese culture of greetings. When you meet them, they'll greet you and say `Ohayo gozaimasu` even though you do not know them. When I go to workplace, everyone will greet you in the morning `Ohayo gozaimasu` and they will say `otsukaresama deshita` when we finish our work.

Another thing that really surprised me was when I was taking lunch with my colleagues in my workplace, I noticed that the Japanese were trained from their childhood to finish their food, without having likes/dislikes. When we go to lunch and when I have some leftovers from my food, they will ask why I didn't finish my food? Since then, I realized that they were really being taught to finish everything in their meal from their early age. This is a very good custom.

## Future of Malaysia & Japan

As for future of Malaysia and Japan, I think Malaysia and Japan has a good relationship right now. I think in the future, Malaysia and Japan should increase their collaboration together. For example, Malaysia will be happy to benefit from the advanced technologies from Japan. On the other hand, Malaysia is very rich in natural resources, the plantations agriculture which we can share with Japan in a win win situation.



## Additional

Actually being a foreigner in Japan, I have experienced that what it feels to be the minority. Malaysians only gather around Malaysians. When I am back to Malaysia I get to know that there are a lot of Japanese staying here too. I think we, especially those who graduated from Japan, can interact with them to get to know each other and help each other. Perhaps we can organize a lot of programs together, which promotes the interaction between Japanese graduates and Japanese community in Malaysia.

