

INTERVIEW SERIES WITH ALUMNI OF 'LOOK EAST POLICY'

Muzafar Shah Bin Mohd Shah

Tell us about your study in Japan

Assalamualaikum and greetings.

The first time I went to Japan was in 1995 to pursue a Bachelor's degree in engineering at the Polytechnic University, Kanagawa. I studied there for 4 years under a full scholarship from the Ministry of Labour, Japan. Students who have successfully completed the training will receive the recognition as an engineer and will be awarded with a licence as a technical instructor.

In comparison with other engineering courses in other universities, the engineering course for this program has the most credit hours. 5 days a week, from 9am to 5pm every day with no free time. It was quite tiring and challenging but the university always provides programs that help to reduce our tension such as the mentor-mentee programs and leisure activities to name a few.

What surprised you in Japan

I remember it was autumn when I enrolled in the University Polytechnic some times in October. The temperature was cold and the weather was stormy. On top of that, another unforgettable experience personally for me was experiencing an earthquake for the first time. That is definitely a memory that I will not ever forget. Also, seeing the snow fall for the first time was a magical experience for someone like me. However, when spring arrives, things become more cheerful and colourful. I can still recall the beautiful cherry blossoms blooming accompanied by various other flowers in Japan.

Besides its natural beauty, Japanese automobiles are another thing that I am very fond of. There are many beautiful cars in Japan that are not available in Malaysia. Among those cars, I love sports cars the most and these cars are easily seen on the road in Japan. Some of my favourite cars are Nissan GTR, Mitsubishi GTO, Honda NSX and many more. I also had the opportunity to drive cars such as Toyota Supra, Mazda Savanna, Mitsubishi Evo 4 and Nissan Sylvia.

Look East Policy & you

The Look East Policy gave me plenty of opportunities - from the starting point where I had the chance to pursue my studies as well as to securing a job. Now I work at the Japan-Malaysia Technical Institute. Located at Penang. This institute was established in collaboration between two governments, Malaysia and Japan as a result of the 'Look East Policy'. In addition, several programs have been established till today to further strengthen the management at JM TI, funded by JICA.

Your favourite:

Person

- Miake Sensei. He was my class coordinator and a lecturer. He is a nice person, very helpful and supportive during my bachelor studies.
- Takashi Sorimachi, Norika Fujiwara, Emi Wakui (GTO, Virgin Road)

Place

Nara, Kyoto. A very beautiful and interesting place. Many historical remains include Shogunate cities and religious buildings.

Food

My favourite food is takoyaki, senbei and kare raisu.

Custom

Japanese people take great care of the relationship between seniors and juniors. This relationship allows them to create a continuum in improving organisational performance. This relationship also helps juniors to better understand the field of work they are working on, join hands and continue the legacy left by their seniors.

Future of Malaysia & Japan

The relationship between Malaysia and Japan will certainly be closer over time. With great similarities in our way of life, it will definitely help the people from both nations to understand each other more easily. The strength of Malaysia, which is known to easily compromise and cooperate well with other nations as well as the modernity of Japan, if the two are combined will definitely boost the economic growth of both countries.

Additional

I would like to thank the organisers for giving me the opportunity to share my story. Additionally, I am also thankful for what we have achieved from the 'Look East Policy' which has personally helped me a lot to become what I am now.

