

INTERVIEW SERIES WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF JAPAN-RELATED ORGANIZATIONS (No. 7)

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Penang Japanese Language Society (PJLS)

Introduction of your organization

I am from Penang Japanese Language Society (PJLS). This society was formed on the idea that additional knowledge was good for the betterment of Malaysians as in the year of 70's and 80's, there was an influx of Japanese investment setting many factories in Malaysia and as an applicant or job-hunter, proficiency in Japanese language surely would help him/her in the ease of communication and also enhance his/her chances of working in Japanese companies. Therefore, Japanese language might be a tool to help all interested Malaysians. In April 1982, the Penang Japanese Language Society was formally recognized and registered as an organization, thus to open its doors for all Malaysians to study and learn Japanese language in the premises of PJLS.

What is your relationship with Japan?

I was working in a steel mill which was the partnership between Japanese Steel Mill known as Yawata Tetsu and a Malaysia government-linked company. The cooperation between Malaysia and Japan formed the Malayawata Steel Berhad, arising from the combination of Malaysia and Yawata. It was the first

Japanese investment in the heavy industry in Malaysia and there were hundreds of Japanese technicians and engineers. For the convenience of communication with these Japanese, I decided to learn Japanese language, subsequently became acquainted with Japanese cultures through learning.



How is your involvement in Japanese related activities?

Through the learning of Japanese language, I acquainted with some of the Japanese teachers. The teachers were friendly and time after time, they would invite the whole class students to their houses to share Japanese food and movies.



What is the most interesting element about Japan?

The cleanliness of the environment is the most interesting element that attracts me. In most of the roads and streets in Japan, you can hardly find a single dust-bin or rubbish bin and yet you can't find any rubbish scattering around.

Who is the Japanese person who has influenced you the most?

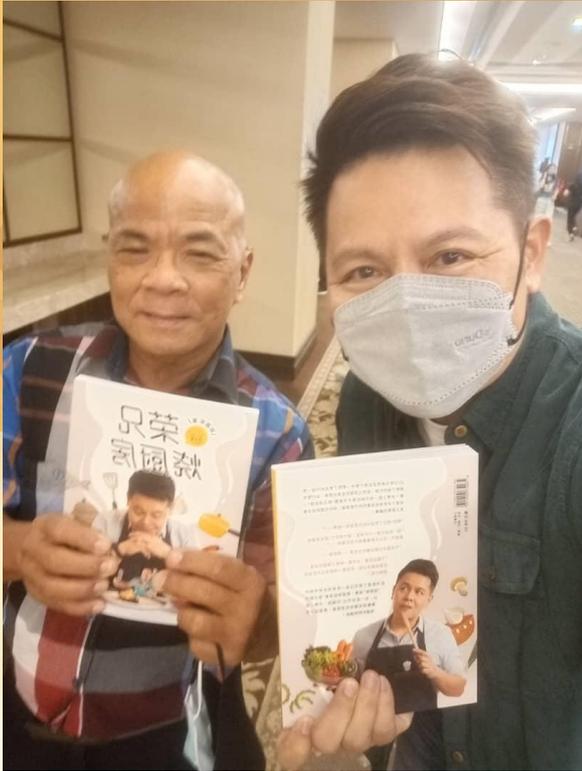
The person who influenced me most must be my Japanese language teacher, Miss Asako. She taught me Elementary Japanese language with translation in English if I could not understand. In the class, she would often share with us some interesting stories to cultivate our interests towards Japanese cultures and language.

What is your favorite place in Japan?

My favorite place in Japan is Hokkaido and I have been there at least three times with different mode of transport and travel arrangement. For the first time, my wife and I went there on our own arrangement focusing on Sapporo city. The second time, we went there on a company trip touring around some historical places such as Otaru Canal, Asahi-yama Zoo, Shiroi Koibito Park, Hell Valley etc. The third time, my wife and I again went there but with our son. My son rented a car and we went around Hokkaido visiting factories such as Sapporo Beer Museum, Chocolate factory and Cheese factory.

What is your favorite Japanese food?

My favorite Japanese food is ramen. When I went to Dazaifu, Kyushu, I came to know that there was pentagon bowl for ramen. Pentagon is 5 sided polygon. The 5 sided polygon in Japanese means "gokaku". To any student, "gokaku" is his/her ultimate aim in study because "gokaku" means "pass". Yes.. pass the examination.



around us. Only through love, we will preserve and protect our nature. Sakura viewing will arouse and awaken our conscience on love towards nature.

What are the future plans of your organization in terms of promoting Japan?

As the method of learning is far different after the wide spread of coronavirus Covid-19, on-line learning or non-physical attendance becomes a norm. Our organization may have to study and emulate ways to promote learning through on-line, at the same time, our society will still launch classes with physical attendance.

What is the Japan custom/culture that you like the most?

“ Hanami “ or cherry blossom viewing is the culture that I always admire and love. Through this event, it will instill into our heart the love for nature. It is an undeniable fact that our environment is facing continuous destructive phenomena because of our lack of love and passion on the nature

