

# CLAIR Singapore Newsletter *Volume. 54* *November 2011*

## CLAIR Singapore's Participation in the 35th Bon Odori Festival in Shah Alam, Malaysia

The Great East Japan Earthquake that occurred on 11th March 2011 had affected several areas in Japan, and thanks to the heart-warming support from all over the world, these areas are progressing rapidly on their roads to recovery.

In order to show its support for the revitalization of tourism industry in these affected areas in Japan, CLAIR Singapore exhibited special graphic panels that showcased the various attractions such as local festivals and tourist spots in Miyagi Prefecture, Sendai City, Iwate Prefecture and Ibaraki Prefecture at the 35th Bon Odori Festival held in Shah Alam, Malaysia on 16th July 2011.

Jointly organized by The Japan Club of Kuala Lumpur, The Japanese School of Kuala Lumpur and The Embassy of Japan in Malaysia, the Bon-Odori Festival is a traditional Japanese summer event which has been held in Malaysia since 1976, and



• Visitors looking at information on the tourist attractions in several of the affected areas



• Visitors writing heart-warming messages for the people in Japan

marked its 35th anniversary in 2011. The theme of this year's festival was 'Arigato Malaysia (Thank you, Malaysia)', so as to show Japan's appreciation towards the kind support rendered by Malaysians during the Great East Japan Earthquake. Around 35,000 visitors participated in this year's festival, whereby a majority of them were Malaysians who are big fans of Japan, and who love Japan deeply.

Many visitors studied information printed on the graphic panels and wrote heart-warming messages of hope for the people in Japan on a special message panel that CLAIR Singapore had prepared. On behalf of the affected areas, CLAIR Singapore wishes to take this opportunity to thank all the people in Malaysia for your gracious support.

## JET Sending-off Reception 2011

This year, a total of 26 participants from Singapore, consisting of 25 Assistant Language Teachers (ALT) and 1 Coordinator for International Relations (CIR), were selected for the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme. Prior to their departure for Japan, a sending-off reception hosted by the Embassy of Japan in Singapore was held at The Japanese Association on 28th July 2011. During the event, Minister Hiroyuki Yamamoto not only offered words of encouragement to the participants but also expressed his appreciation for their decision to choose Japan in the midst of the country's recovery from the earthquake and tsunami that struck earlier this year.

The reception also saw the attendance of many JET alumni members who gave the participants helpful advice on life in Japan and answered their various queries.

As JET participants play an important role in enhancing ties between Singapore and Japanese local governments, CLAIR will gladly provide support for their active involvement in Japan as



• Commemorative photo after the reception

well as their future contribution towards bridging the relations between Singapore and Japan or the local regions to which they have been posted.

## Tokyo Fire Department's Specialists conduct training program in Thailand



• *Demonstration held on the last day of training program*

Under CLAIR's Specialist Dispatch Project, 3 specialists from the Tokyo Fire Department, namely Fire Captain Mr. Fujiwara, Fire Lieutenant Mr. Nakayama and Fire Sergeant Mr. Endo were dispatched to Bangkok Fire and Rescue Department for 3 weeks from 7th to 24th February 2011 in order to conduct a training program on fire-fighting and rescue techniques.

The objectives of this training program were to assist Bangkok in acquiring skills on the administration, inspection and maintenance of equipment and to master fire-fighting and rescue techniques in an urban setting of high-rise buildings and narrow spaces. A total of 74 trainees, consisting of 2 trainees from each of the 35 fire stations within the Bangkok Metropolitan area, participated in this program. In addition, 6 staff from Bangkok Fire and Rescue Department who had previously completed a training course on rescue techniques held at the Tokyo Fire Department in Japan in October 2010, had also joined in this program to assist the 3 specialists in the instruction of the other trainees.

The first half of the training program was conducted at a civilian training facility in Rayong province and included instruction on

techniques such as rope handling, transportation of victims and emergency rescue using a 3-section extension ladder. The group then moved on to Petchaburi province for the latter half of the program where skills such as emergency medical relief and fire-fighting procedures were further honed.

On the last day of the program, a fire-fighting and rescue demonstration was held, in which the trainees were to put into practice what they have learnt in the past 3 weeks, in the presence of the Deputy Director-General of the Bangkok Fire and Rescue Department as well as the Director of CLAIR Singapore. The rigorous training was visibly beneficial as evidenced by the leadership and skilled coordination of the trainees in the demonstration.

"In Bangkok, there are far fewer fire occurrences than in Japan. Consequently, the fire-fighting and rescue techniques here are underdeveloped and there is a lack of attention to the safety of firemen. Moreover, the equipment in-use is outdated and most trainees are not familiar with their specifications and handling, which contributes to the difficulty of instruction at the beginning of the training program," recounted one of the specialists from the Tokyo Fire Department. He added that besides instruction on fire-fighting techniques, the importance of being proficient in the handling of the equipment and of ensuring the safety of firemen were also stressed in this training program. He believes that the trainees have made substantial improvements in their skills and hopes that "they will become good instructors and impart the skills learnt in this program to their fellow firemen when they return to their respective stations."

From fire-fighting and rescue techniques, to environmental or sanitary management, the Specialist Dispatch Project allows for the transfer of a wide range of expertise held by Japanese local governments to overseas local governments that are in need of them. CLAIR Singapore will continue to support international technical cooperation between local governments and promote regional exchange through the implementation of these projects. Applications for specialist dispatches are accepted every year and enquiries about the application procedure should be directed to CLAIR Singapore.

## CLAIR Singapore visits Myanmar's Ministry of Home Affairs

CLAIR Singapore's Director and staff paid a courtesy visit to Myanmar's Ministry of Home Affairs on 16th June 2011 and conducted a brief meeting with our counterpart U Tun Hla Aung, Director-General of the General Affairs Department. The main objectives of the meeting were to promote greater awareness for CLAIR's programs as well as to exchange views on future cooperation for our various activities.

The Director-General remarked that with the development of a local administration system currently underway in accordance with the adoption of the new constitution, he hopes to see more exchanges between the local officials of both countries. In response, CLAIR also hopes to further strengthen the collaboration with the Ministry with respect to our programs and activities.



• *CLAIR staff in a meeting with counterparts in the General Affairs Department*

## CLAIR Singapore welcomed delegates from Surabaya City



• Group photo of delegation from Surabaya City with staff from CLAIR Singapore

On 26th July 2011, a delegation consisting of five District Heads from Surabaya City visited CLAIR Singapore office. District Heads from Sawahan District, Krembangan District, Semampir District, Wiyung District and Sukolilo District held constructive discussions with the new Director of CLAIR Singapore, Mr. Masahide Adachi pertaining to the prospective future collaborations between Surabaya City and CLAIR Singapore.

On behalf of the Mayor of Surabaya City Government, the delegates expressed appreciation towards the cooperation between CLAIR Singapore and Surabaya City Government thus

far. In addition, detailed discussions related to Surabaya City Government's participation in several of CLAIR Singapore's programs, such as the Specialist Dispatch Project were also held. Both organizations are proactively looking to further enhance their collaborative ties through various projects.

Surabaya City Government is one of CLAIR Singapore's most preponderant counterparts in the region, and both organizations have been able to establish cordial ties through cooperation in various projects. For instance, under CLAIR's Local Government Officials Training Program (LGOTP), Surabaya City has thus far sent 12 trainees to Japan in the period from 1998 to 2011. These trainees were given opportunities to receive professional trainings in various Japanese local governments, so as to acquire the latest knowledge and technical skills in their respective fields of specialization.

In addition to exchange programs, the friendly relations between Surabaya City Government and CLAIR Singapore are also enhanced through visits by the key personnel from both organizations. For example, the Director of CLAIR Singapore paid a courtesy call to the Mayor of Surabaya City, Ir. Tri Rismaharini in March 2011.

It is hoped that the cooperation between CLAIR Singapore, Japanese local governments and Surabaya City Government could be further leveraged in the future.

## Singapore International Water Week 2011

Inaugurated in 2008, The 4th Singapore International Water Week 2011 (SIWW) was convened for 5 days from 4th to 8th July 2011 at Suntec Singapore International Convention and Exhibition Centre. With the theme of 'Sustainable Water Solutions for a Changing Urban Environment', the event attracted around 13,500 visitors from 99 countries worldwide. A series of programs were implemented during the event, including the 'Water Leaders Summit' that brought together leaders from the global water industry, and also the 'Water Expo' which showcased some of the latest advancements in water technologies. The Singapore International Water Week is the world's largest water-related event held on a yearly basis.

Over 600 exhibitors participated in the Water Expo held from 5th to 7th July, where approximately 2.4 billion US dollars' worth of business deals were generated and MOUs on research and development were signed. This exceeded the number recorded in the previous year. Mr. Lee Hsien Loong, the Prime Minister of Singapore also graced the event.

The Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) set up a Japan Pavilion in the Water Expo this year, whereby a total of 27 organizations (an increase from last year's 16) including companies, associations and local governments from Japan exhibited their latest products, technologies and achievements related to water treatment and management.

Since 2009, Japan has concentrated its efforts to enhance its contribution in the field of water treatment internationally, and at the same time, promote its water businesses on a global scale. This is in line with Japan's vision of contributing to the improvement of global water-related issues through businesses that integrate the advanced technical skills from Japanese

companies with management knowledge from Japanese local governments.

Among the Japanese local governments that participated in this year's Water Expo are Tokyo Metropolitan Government (Bureau of Waterworks), City of Yokohama, City of Osaka (Team Kansai-Osaka for Water and Environment) and City of Kitakyushu (Kitakyushu Overseas Water Business Association).

It is hoped that through such activities, Japan will be able to share its experience and know-how in securing safe and clean water resources especially in the Asian region.



• Japan Pavilion at the Water Expo 2011

## Greetings from CLAIR Singapore's New Director : Mr. Masahide ADACHI

I am Masahide Adachi, and I have been newly-appointed as the 7th Director of CLAIR Singapore.

Dispatched from Japan's Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), I was working at the Akita Prefectural Government as the Director-General of General Affairs Department until March 2011, and I have also previously held positions at the MIC Local Administration Bureau, MIC Local Public Financial Bureau, Cabinet Office and Fire and Disaster Management Agency. During this period, I have also been seconded to the local government offices of Miyagi, Nara and Hyogo Prefecture, where I had handled work such as policy planning, local government finance, local administration, merger of municipalities and election administration.

It is my pleasure to assume my duties at CLAIR Singapore on this occasion, and to be able to work together with both the Japanese staff, who are dispatched from Japan's various local government offices, and the local staff in our office, as we continue to help disseminate information and carry out various exchange activities within the region.

At the same time, I also wish to take this opportunity to offer my sincerest appreciation to all those who have shown your kind support to Japan since the Great East Japan Earthquake. I am deeply aware of the tremendous amount of support that Japan has received from all over the world and has once again realized the significance of international cooperation and mutual assistance.

Founded by Japanese local authorities, CLAIR is a joint organization that works closely with local governments in Japan to help promote and facilitate their activities overseas. With the deepening interdependence of the global economy and as relations among governments, businesses, organizations and people over the world strengthens, it is becoming ever more important to promote greater understanding and cooperation at the regional level. Amidst this, the ASEAN and India region which is showing remarkable economic growth and also possesses strong geographic and economic ties with Japan, is especially garnering a great amount of attention from Japanese local governments.

At CLAIR Singapore, we have been increasing efforts to expand our activities and promote exchanges between local governments of Japan, ASEAN and India through the implementation of various activities and programs such as the Specialist Dispatch Project, Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar, regional exchange programs,



administration seminars and tourism or product promotion events. As a result, CLAIR Singapore has to date, since the opening of our office in 1990, helped to receive and assist within the region, more than 13,000 Japanese local governmental delegates, including governors, mayors and village mayors; with the number showing a rising trend especially in the recent years.

In addition, our office also conducts research and disseminates information on the local administrations and policies of ASEAN countries and India to Japan; while at the same time help to provide information about Japan's local administration to the region as well.

Through numerous opportunities since the assumption of my duties at CLAIR Singapore, I have been able to deeply sense and feel the strong "Kizuna" (emotional ties) that both Japan and our office share with all our good neighbors in Asia. With the achievements that CLAIR Singapore has accomplished to date, I sincerely look forward to being able to further contribute to strengthening our cooperative ties within the region.

Finally, to further expand and facilitate our exchanges with all our counterparts in the region, should you have any enquiries or suggestions and feedback towards any of our office's activities or programs, please do not hesitate to contact us. We sincerely look forward to hearing from you.

Masahide ADACHI

Director  
CLAIR Singapore

## About CLAIR

CLAIR is a joint organization founded in 1988 by 47 prefectures and 19 major cities in Japan in order to assist Japanese local authorities with the implementation of their international exchange policies. With its headquarters in Tokyo, CLAIR has seven overseas offices in New York, London, Paris, Singapore, Seoul, Sydney, and Beijing.

CLAIR Singapore office was set up in October 1990. It supports and promotes international activities and friendly relations between local authorities in Japan and their counterparts in Singapore and the ASEAN countries as well as India.

For further information on our activities, please contact CLAIR Singapore.

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