

# An Evaluation of and Recommendation for the Look East Policy: Toward the ‘Discovery of Japan’s Second Wave’

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## Summary

In 1982, Malaysia implemented the Look East Policy programme, which sends Malaysian students to universities and institutes of technology and trainees to industries and training institutes in Japan. A total of approximately 15,000 Malaysian (about 14,000 in a Japanese source) have come to Japan over a thirty-year period, either to enrol in specialized courses of higher education or to receive industry and business training. In addition, the Japan International Institute of Technology (MJIT) was established in Malaysia in 2011; its Japanese professors allow Malaysian students to learn about the technology of Japan. The Japan Association for Malaysian Studies (JAMS) set up a research project to evaluate the achievement of the Look East Policy and to make recommendations for its future development.

Malaysia has attained global fame by its achievements in technology and human exploration and daring in 1990s. Today, Malaysia faces new and more difficult challenges, that of creating a society where the state and people foster cultural diversity and help the socially vulnerable, as well as of defining standards and offering an example to the world, particularly for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) countries, in the fields of *halal* certification, sustainable oil palm certification, and opportunities of higher education for foreign students.

Malaysia should be proud of its uniqueness in having three major ethnic communities and many smaller communities in a country where the majority is just above a half the national population; each community has its own cultural background, and yet Malaysia maintains a relatively high degree of democracy and has achieved economic development without serious ethnic confrontation. Malaysia and Japan have been pursuing economic, social and cultural development with the Look East Policy for the past 30 years. It is high time to shift the emphasis from the development of human resource, investment, and economic growth to cooperation in the invention of the definition of standards or models based on Malaysia’s resources and experiences.

The second wave of the LEP includes the innovation of new technology in the field of higher education in Malaysia and application and development of Japanese-style technology in accordance with the needs and local practices in Malaysia by innovating new technologies through the Malaysia Japan International Institute of Technology (MJIT), and by localising Japanese-style technology through the Alumni Look East Policy Society (ALEPS). This revision will enhance Malaysia’s position in the international arena and help the country to simultaneously maintain economic prosperity and social stability.

In 1982, Malaysia implemented the Look East Policy (or Dasar Pandang ke Timur) programme, which sends Malaysian students to universities and institutes of technology and trainees to industries and training institutes in Japan. These initiatives are funded by the governments of Malaysia and Japan, the latter of which dispatches Japanese teachers to Malaysia. A total of approximately 15,000 Malaysian

<sup>1</sup> With regard to the names of Japanese persons appearing in this chapter, family names are written in capital letters and are followed by given names, according to the Japanese style of address.

(about 14,000 in a Japanese source) have come to Japan over a thirty-year period, either to enrol in specialized courses of higher education or to receive industry and business training. In addition, the Japan International Institute of Technology (MJIIT) was established in Malaysia in 2011; its Japanese professors allow Malaysian students to learn about the technology of Japan.

With Malaysia's remarkable progress, the economic situation has drastically altered since the Look East Policy began. Government officials and business groups in Malaysia and Japan are reviewing the programme as they ready its second stage, all the while celebrating its 30th anniversary. However, contrary to the recognized importance of the programme, few studies of it have been undertaken by Japanese or Malaysian researchers, and those that exist largely concentrate on the human resource development or investment of the Look East Policy rather than on its social and cultural aspects. The programme must be understood in the wider context of the relationship of Malaysia and Japan and of their peoples.

Given this situation, the Japan Association for Malaysian Studies (JAMS) set up a research project in 2012 to evaluate the achievement of the Look East Policy and to make recommendations for its future development. As an academic association with a variety of scholars as members, the JAMS is able to study the Look East Policy in terms of its development of human resources and investment and its impact on society and culture. The JAMS' Look East Policy research project (JAMSLEP) has organized three conferences. This booklet reports on the research and the discussions undertaken by the JAMSLEP. It contains two parts: The first comprises selected papers with an introduction, the present chapter, written in English, and the second selected papers and conference documents of conferences with an introduction written in Japanese. The first and the second parts contain different papers, but all are discussed in the two introductions, which are identical<sup>2</sup>.

The author would like to introduce the organization and activities of JAMS and its Look East Policy research project.

## ■ 1. Japan Association for Malaysian Studies (JAMS)

The Japan Association for Malaysian Studies or JAMS was officially established in 1992 to research Malaysia and related issues. The association currently has about 200 scholars as members. Its current president is Prof MIYAZAKI Koji of the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (April 2012-March 2014), and its daily activities are conducted by a steering committee, whose chairperson is the author of this report (April 2012- March 2014); the secretariat of the association is at Kyoto University.

The JAMS has maintained a good relationship with the Malaysian Embassy in Japan since its establishment. In 1993, the association paid a courtesy visit to Datu H. M. Khatib, the Ambassador of Malaysia to Japan. The association's members were invited to a reception given by Yang diPertuan Agung in Tokyo in 1993, and the first JAMS President, Prof TACHIMOTO Narifumi, was a guest speaker at 'Malaysian Evening' Seminar organized by the Malaysian Embassy in the same year. The JAMS also has ties to the Malaysian legislative missions to Japan. The writer and other steering committee members were invited to receptions of Tan Sri Datuk Seri Utama Pandikar Amin bin Haji Mulia, Speaker of the Dewan Rakyat (House of Representatives), in May 2009 and of Senate President Tan Sri Abu Zahar bin Dato' Nika Ujang in November 2011.

Apart from annual conference, the JAMS holds regional meetings of the chapters of East Japan (Tokyo), West Japan (Osaka), and Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur). It organizes research projects, such as the

2 The findings and recommendations in this chapter are based on the research of the JAMSLEP; their author is the Chair of the Steering Committee of the JAMS; however, the statements of this chapter are his personal opinions and do not necessarily represent the official position of the JAMS.

Jawi Document and Society study group (facilitated by Dr TSUBOI Yuji) and the Research on Film and Society of Malaysia or Refsom (facilitated by Dr SHINOZAKI Kaori). The JAMS publishes the journal 'Malaysian Studies' (in Japanese) annually and discussion papers occasionally; it releases information on the association and on Malaysia in a newsletter, 'JAMS News', that appears three times a year and on the association's website<sup>3</sup>.

As one of its main features, the JAMS focuses on academic social responsibility through its social action programme. It set up the Social Action Wing under the steering committee to collaborate with the professionals of government, business, media, and humanitarian organizations. The research project on the Look East Policy is included in the activities of the Social Action Wing, which is currently headed by Mr KAWABATA Takashi, who now works in the business sector, after a sojourn in the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## ■ 2. JAMS' Look East Policy research project (JAMSLEP)

In 2012, the JAMS organized the JAMSLEP research project to evaluate the achievement of the Look East Policy and to make recommendation for its future development. The project consists of 18 members, who are senior and younger scholars in various research fields (see appendix). Research on the Look East Policy is conducted by the following research groups: 'Looking back on 30 years of the Look East Policy: An evaluation of the social impact on East Asian industry, government, and academia through the exchange of education and research', facilitated by Prof KANEKO Yoshiki and sponsored by the Centre for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) of Kyoto University; and 'Academic Social Responsibility of Area Studies', facilitated by Mr KAWABATA Takashi and sponsored by the Japan Consortium for Area Studies (JCAS). The JAMSLEP organized and participated in the following domestic and international conferences.

### (1) International Conference (June 2012)

The JAMSLEP's members attended the International Symposium on 'The 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Look East Policy', organized by the Centre for Foundation Studies in Science of the University of Malaya. The conference was held at the Palace of Golden Horse Hotel in Selangor, Malaysia on 26 June 2012. Papers were presented by 16 speakers, seven of whom were JAMSLEP members, in three parallel sessions. Among them, four younger scholars were dispatched to Malaysia under the JENESYS Programme (Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths) of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs; they joined two senior scholars at the conference. Dr TOJO Tetuso also presented his paper, while assisting the secretariat of the conference.

#### **Parallel Session 1: Economy & Policy**

"Industrial Catch-up and Look East Policy" (ANAZAWA Makoto)

"Japanese Companies and Malaysia: Look East Policy and Beyond" (YOSHIMURA Mako)

"Emerging "Look Malaysia" in Japanese Tourism-Related Mobility" (ONO Mayumi)

"Rebranding "Look East Policy": A Suggestion to Policymakers" (KAWABATA Takashi)

"From "Look East" to "Look Malaysia": Malaysia as a mediator for Islamic Economy" (MITSUNARI Ayumi)

#### **Parallel Session 2: Human Resource Development**

"Look East Policy: History and Future" (TOJO Tetsuo)

#### **Parallel Session 3: Education**

"Multicultural Dialogue for Japan: Lessons from Practice of Multicultural Co-Existence in Georgetown, Penang with lens of Cultural Heritage" (SUZUKI Mayumi)

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3 <http://jams92.org/>.



Tun Dr Mahathir Muhammad (centre) with representatives from Japan and Korea at June conference



Presenters of JAMSLEP at June conference

I will not offer details of the conference, since selected papers are available in this booklet. I would, however, like to draw attention here to the research abilities and communication skill of the younger scholars. These individuals, who were born just about when the Look East Policy began, spoke fluently in both English and Malay<sup>4</sup>, an accomplishment rare among the senior scholars, who generally spoke proper English and tended to use Malay just for greetings. The difference in the two groups may be interpreted as an expression of the sense of attachment that each feels toward the local society of Malaysia, which may be reflected to their presentations. As we can see from the presentations of Dr ONO, Ms MITSUNARI, and Ms SUZUKI, younger scholars think as Japanese looking at Malaysia rather than as Malaysians looking at Japan.

## (2) JAAS Panel (October 2012)

JAMSLEP organized a panel on ‘Thirty Years of Malaysia’s “Look East” Policy: Review of the Policies and Recommendations’ at the annual conference of the Japan Association for Asian Studies (JAAS) on 14 October 2012. The panel was organized and chaired by Mr KAWABATA Takashi. Three papers

‘The Impact of the “Look East” Policy on Japan-Malaysia Economic Relations’ (ANAZAWA Makoto)

‘Thirty Years of Japan-Malaysia Diplomatic Relations: From the “Look East” Policy to Misperception’ (SUZUKI Ayame)

‘Career Path under the “New Economic Policy” and the “Look East” Policy’ (SHINOZAKI Kaori)

were presented:

This author joined the panel as a discussant.

## (3) JAMS Conference (December 2012)

The conference on the ‘The “Look East” Policy: 30 Years and Beyond’ was organized at the annual conference of the JAMS on 16 December 2012. It was the final conference of the JAMSLEP. Mr YAMAMOTO Toshio, director of the Second Southeast Asia Division of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs was invited to give the keynote speech and to be a panellist; Mr Akmal Abu Hassan, an ex-LEP student and currently managing director of the Malaysia Halal Corporation Co., Ltd. was summoned as a panellist. Scholars of various fields attended the conference and discussed many aspects of the Look East Policy.

<sup>4</sup> Tun Dr Mahathir Mohammad was surprised when he was asked a question by Mr KAWABATA Takashi in fluent Malay in the Q & A session of the conference as reported in the Star (24 June, 2012).

## Part I. Keynote Speeches

Opening Address: MIYAZAKI Koji (JAMS President)

Introduction: KAWABATA Takashi

## Keynote Speeches

YAMAMOTO Toshio / YOSHIMURA Mako

## Part II. Panel Discussion

Introduction: KANEKO Yoshiki

Panelists

YAMAMOTO Toshio / Akmal Abu Hassan / YOSHIMURA Mako / ANAZAWA Makoto / KAWABATA Takashi

Discussants

TORII Takashi / YAMAMOTO Hiroyuki

Closing Address: MIYAZAKI Koji

## ■ 3. Achievement and Impact of Look East Policy<sup>5</sup>

### (1) Investment, Economic Relationship and Human Resource Development

It is often pointed out by many scholars that Look East Policy was based on the anticipated economic development of the early 1980s. At that time, Malaysia's economy was about to shift from a dependence on the export of primary commodities to the development of a heavy manufacturing industry<sup>6</sup>. In other words, the Look East Policy was introduced with the hope of developing Malaysia's economy with Japanese technology, investment, and human resources.

The achievement of the Look East Policy must first be evaluated by surveying the dispatch of Malaysian students to Japan to study technology and to receive business and industrial training, an initiative that improved the environment for Japanese investment to Malaysia and hence the latter's economic development<sup>7</sup>.

By any measure, this aspect of the Look East Policy has been a success. In the course of more than 30 years, Japanese investment supported 2,360 projects in Malaysia. In 2011, Japanese companies were the largest investors in Malaysia; in all, 1,400 companies, including such large corporations as Toyota and NEC, were active in that nation. Japanese investment has created employment opportunities for about 420,000 people in Malaysia. These figures are imposing, considering the size of Malaysian economy and labour market.

It is true that China became the biggest trading partner of Malaysia in 2008 and of the ASEAN countries as a whole in 2009. However, these developments do not mean that the position of Japan in Malaysia has been eclipsed, since China and Japan play different roles in the ASEAN countries. For example, more than 99% of Chinese direct investment to these nations is concentrated in mining, while most Japanese direct investment goes into manufacturing.

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5 The following discussion is based on research of the JAMSLEP or individual JAMS' members, except when stated otherwise. The names of JAMS members are shown in the footnotes.

6 ANAZAWA Makoto (Otaru University of Commerce) has published *Industrialization in Developing Countries and Multinational Corporations: Formation of the linkage in Malaysia*. (in Japanese, 2010, ISBN9784830946714); YOSHIMURA Mako (Hosei University) on *Economic Development and Labor Structure in Malaysia: Ethnicity, Gender, Nationality*. (in Japanese, 1998, ISBN9784588645334) and on the economic situation of that nation under the Japanese occupation; SEGAWA Noriyuki (Osaka Gakuin University) on the Look East Policy and the Japanese ODA and direct investment trend in Malaysia; and OKAMOTO Yoshiteru (Utsunomiya University) on R & D interaction in Japanese audio visual companies in Malaysia. TOJO Tetsuo (Japanese Embassy to Malaysia) has researched Malaysia-Japan relations during his term at the Japanese Embassy in Malaysia, along with academic studies of the history of tin mining in that nation. KAWABATA Takashi (SMBC Nikko Securities Inc.) has looked into a wide range of issues in Malaysia, including Islamic political movements and Japanese investments.

7 The information in the following parts of this section was provided by Mr YAMAMOTO Toshio at the JAMS conference in December 2012.

Regarding human resource development, approximately 15,000 Malaysians (14,000 according to a Japanese source) have been dispatched to Japan to study or to receive training under the Look East Policy in the past 30 years. The Malaysian government is seeking to strengthen the programme by sending students to learn the technologies of high-value added industries, such as those of environmental management, energy saving, green technologies, healthcare, and education and tourism. The Japan International Institute of Technology (MJIIT) was established in 2011, and now Japanese professors teach students the technology of Japan in Malaysia. It is anticipated that with the help of the MJIIT Malaysians will invent new technologies.

## **(2) Social and Cultural Aspect: Background and Development**

It is not sufficient however, to assess the achievement of the Look East Policy from the aspect of economic development and human resource development alone. It is equally essential to consider the social and cultural aspects of this programme. To begin with, we should look back to the situation of the early 1980s and reflect on what challenges Malaysia faced then and how it managed to overcome them. The following discussion is based on the author's research and experiences since his first visit to Malaysia in 1984<sup>8</sup>.

One of the significant challenges confronted by Malaysia in the early 1980s was recognition by the international community. While it is hard to imagine today, Malaysian delegates at international conferences or meetings in those years were often asked 'Is Malaysia part of Africa?' or 'Is Malaysia a Latin American country?'

Clearly, the relative anonymity of the nation was intolerable in an increasingly integrated world, and the decision to gain a new international standing came from the pewter industry, one of the flagship sectors in Malaysia. When Royal Selangor made a pewter tankard 1.987 meters tall in 1985 to commemorate its centenary, it was designated the world's largest pewter tankard by the Guinness Book of Records. The news quickly spread around the world and brought recognition to Malaysia in international conferences. Thus, the idea was brought to Malaysia that even a young and small country can win worldwide acknowledgement if it achieves at a high level.

Consequently, Malaysia started to show its technological prowess in architectural structures. The 95-meter flagpole erected at Merdeka square in Kuala Lumpur in 1989 became the world's highest. The Kuala Lumpur Tower of 421 meters was completed in 1996. It is the highest tower in Asia and the fourth highest in the world. The highly significant Petronas Twin Towers were completed in 1997. These twin towers, 451.9 meters high and with 88 stories, were the world's highest office building. Its record height was later surpassed by buildings in other Asian countries, but the historical significance of its construction will never be denied, since it broke the 120-year dominance of the United States in the construction of tall buildings.

After proving its achievement in the world-class technologies required to erect skyscrapers, Malaysia started to demonstrate its spiritual strength with the slogan of 'Malaysia Boleh' or 'Malaysia Can Do It!' In 1999, Datuk Azhar Mansor became the first Malaysian to sail solo around the world. His yacht, which was named 'Jalur Gemilang' or 'Stripes of Glory' after the name for Malaysian flag, indicates that his adventure was not simply a personal one but rather one of his nation to the world. The same enthusiasm can be observed in M. Magendran and N. Mohandas, the first Malaysians to conquer Mount Everest (1997), and in Gerald Read and Justin Read, the first Malaysians to reach the North Pole (1999).

<sup>8</sup> The writer first visited Malaysia as an exchange student and studied in the Lower Six at the Sekolah Tinggi Keluang (Keluang High School), the State of Johor from 1984 to 1985, when he lived with a local Chinese family as an adopted son. The writer later stayed in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah for six years, which includes two years as a lecturer at Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), where he resided with a local Malay (Bruneian) family as an adopted son.



The world's highest flagpole at Merdeka Square



The world's largest pewter tankard at Royal Selangor

The list became longer when Abdul Malik Mydin became the first Malaysian and Southeast Asian to swim the English Channel (2003), and Datin Paduka Sharifah Mazlina Syed Abdul Kadir the first Asian woman to reach the South Pole (2004). Thus, Malaysia has attained global fame by its achievements in technology and human exploration and daring.

### (3) Current Challenges: Malaysia's Definition of World Standards

Meeting world standards are not the goal of Malaysia. Rather, these are halfway points. Today, the nation faces a new and more difficult challenge, that of defining these standards and offering an example to the world.

The turning point came October 2007, when Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor became the first Malaysian to go into space. Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor was sent to the International Space Station (ISS) aboard a Soyuz TMA-11 and returned to Earth aboard a Soyuz TMA-10, after spending 10 days, 21 hours, and 14 minutes in space. Since Sheikh Muszaphar is a Muslim, and as his time in space coincided with the last part of Ramadan, the Islamic National Fatwa Council of Malaysia drew up the first comprehensive guidebook for Muslims in space. The eighteen-page guidebook, 'Guidelines for Performing Islamic Rites (Ibadah) on the International Space Station', details such issues as how to pray in a low-gravity environment, how to locate Mecca from the ISS, how to determine prayer times, and how to fast. This event has a profound significance, since it permitted Malaysia to define standards for and to offer an example to the Muslim world. Its astronaut equalled achievements, while practicing his Islamic faith in space.

Today, Malaysia is expected to define standards and provide an example in many fields. One such example is sustainable palm oil certification. The production of palm oil, which is a major agricultural product of Malaysia, has increased drastically since the 1960s. It has grown faster than that of any other oil or fat and overtook soybean as the most produced oil in 2005. Malaysia and Indonesia, which account for about 90% of the global area planted area with oil palms, hold a virtual global monopoly in this product. It is reported that Malaysia is considering the introduction of sustainable palm oil certification. Since Malaysia is a leading producer of the product, such certification will directly affect the global standard<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> ISHIKAWA Noboru (Kyoto University) currently leads the five-year research project of 'Planted Forests in Equatorial Southeast Asia: Human-nature Interactions in High Biomass Society'.



The highly significant Petronas Twin Towers completed in 1997

Another example of Malaysia's defining standards is in halal certification. Halal designates any permissible object or action in Islamic law. The original idea of halal derives from Islam, but if we take halal certification in the context of quality control, the concept may be acceptable to non-Muslims as well as Muslims<sup>10</sup>. Malaysia is the only country in the world in which the government fully supports the halal certification process in products and services, and it is reported that some countries are considering the introduction of such certification by learning from Malaysia. This indicates that the Malaysian standard of quality control is regarded as reliable and that Malaysia provides a model in this area<sup>11</sup>.

If we add other recent efforts by Malaysia, such as providing higher education to students of Asian and African countries, its leading position becomes even clearer.

#### **(4) Look East Policy's Second Wave: The Art of Coexistence in a Multicultural Society**

Malaysia has attained global fame by its achievements in technology and human exploration and daring in 1990s. Today, Malaysia faces a new and more difficult challenge, that of defining these standards and offering an example to the world. Given its accomplishments in technology and defining standards, a new form of association is needed between Malaysia and Japan for the future. Toward this end, the author would like to raise two points in relation to the second wave of the Look East Policy; coexistence in multicultural society and the role of an outsider.

With regard to the role of offering an example to the world, Malaysia should take the lead in promoting the art or skill of coexistence in a multicultural society. It is of pressing importance in the world to find means of information sharing and decision making among culturally diverse people, as the world is

10 It may be argued that a state has the authority to define something as halal or non-halal, if we regard religion as an undertaking above human activities.

11 Information regarding the halal industry in Japan was provided by Mr Akmal Abu Hasan in the JAMS conference of December 2012. TAWADA Hiroshi (Osaka City University) is an anthropologist and has published *Anthropology of Malay Islam*. (in Japanese, 2005, ISBN9784888489218.) and many works on Malay Islam, including ones on halal certification, Islamic consumption cultures, secularism, and marriage law. TOMIZAWA Hisao (University of Shizuoka) has published *Royal Ceremony and State: Category of Political Culture in Modern Malay Society*. (in Japanese, 2003, ISBN9784130563017) and papers on the halal industry, the Malay diaspora, and the Malay royal authority; and SHIOZAKI Yuki (Doshisha University) on the political and social roles of *ulama* in modern societies. MITSUNARI Ayumi (Ph. D student, University of Tokyo) researches Islamic legal systems of Malaysia and Singapore and FUKUSHIMA Yasuhiro (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies) Islamic finance and related issues.

shifting fast in the direction of growing diversity, and Japan is no exception in this regard. Malaysia has mastered the skill of advancing multiculturalism through the experiences of some difficult moments in the past<sup>12</sup>, and it is time for Malaysia to promote the skill to the rest of the world.

The role of outsiders is important in extracting the practice of someone's behaviour and reshaping it into a way that is applicable to others. The Look East Policy is a good example for this. Before Tun Dr Mahathir Mohammad proposed the idea to learn work ethics and cultural values from the Japanese, most of Japanese never thought about these standards, since the Japanese adopted and lived with them over time. Only when outsiders pointed to them did the Japanese become conscious of their work ethics and cultural values.

Likewise, most Malaysian may not be aware of their skills in coexisting in a multicultural society<sup>13</sup>. I am not talking of the evident cultural diversity of Malays<sup>14</sup>, Chinese<sup>15</sup>, and Indians only; rather, I am also referring to that of the peoples of Sabah<sup>16</sup>, Sarawak<sup>17</sup>, and other smaller groups in Malaysia<sup>18</sup>. In addition, Malaysian society is increasingly composed of new groups from neighbouring countries<sup>19</sup>. The world is keeping a close eye on how Malaysia will handle such situation by applying the skill of coexisting in a multicultural society.

Malaysia should be proud of its uniqueness in having three major ethnic communities and many smaller communities in a country where the majority is just above a half the national population; each community has its own cultural background, and yet Malaysia maintains a relatively high degree of democracy and has achieved economic development without serious ethnic confrontation. Malaysia and Japan have been pursuing economic, social and cultural development with the Look East Policy for the past 30 years. It is high time to shift the emphasis from the development of human resource, investment, and economic growth to cooperation in the invention of the definition of standards or models based on Malaysia's resources and experiences. If Malaysia continues to develop the skill of social management in a multicultural society with the partnership of the Japanese as well-intentioned outsider in the second wave of Look East Policy, the author believes that Malaysia will create new values that may applicable to the whole world.

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- 12 IGUCHI Yufu (Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University) has published papers on the concepts of colonialism, plural society, modernity, and post-colonization in Malaysia. SUZUKI Mayumi (Ph. D student, Kyoto University) researches the cultural heritage of and multiculturalism in Penang, Malaysia.
  - 13 SUZUKI Ayame (Fukuoka Women's University) argues in her book, *Freedom and Order in 'Democracies': Rethinking Malaysian Political Regime*. (in Japanese, 2010, ISBN9784876989393) that Malaysian politics can be understood as concerned parties putting a hoop on each other.
  - 14 TSUBOI Yuji (Oriental Library) has published papers on the development of Malayness in Selangor under British rule, focusing on the role of the immigrant population. TOGARI Yasuko has researched the language and culture of East coast Malays, with a special interest in shadow puppets.
  - 15 KANEKO Yoshiki (Dokkyo University) has published *Politics and Ethnicity in Malaysia: Chinese Politics and National Integration*. (in Japanese, 2001, ISBN9784771012639); MASUTANI Satoshi (Rikkyo University) on Malaysian Chinese literature; SHINOZAKI Kaori (University of Kitakyushu) on the historical development of Chinese consciousness in the Strait settlements. ICHIKAWA Tetsu (Rikkyo University) conducts fieldwork in Papua New Guinea and Sarawak and has published articles on the local Chinese community in the region.
  - 16 YAMAMOTO Hiroyuki (Kyoto University) has published *Decolonization and Nationalism: Formation of National/Ethnic Identities in British North Borneo (Sabah)*. (in Japanese, 2006, ISBN9784130261272) and papers on ethnic, state and national identities among the people of Sabah, TAMURA Keiko (University of Kitakyushu) on *Nation-Building in Singapore: Nationalism, Ethnicity, Gender*. (in Japanese, 2000, ISBN9784750312651) and on Chinese schools in Sabah, and NAGATSU Kazufumi (Toyo University) on East Coast Bajaus or Sama people.
  - 17 ISHIKAWA Noboru (Kyoto University) has published *Between Frontiers: Nation and Identity in a Southeast Asian Border Zone* (2009, ISBN9788776940508). INOUE Makoto (University of Tokyo) researches human-forest relationships in Borneo and has published many books and articles.
  - 18 KURODA Keiko (Kagoshima University) is and historian and has published papers on the Siamese in Kedah and on the history and current political development of Patani in southern Thailand. ARAI Kazuhiro has published papers on Arabs (Hadhrami) and their networks in Southeast Asia.
  - 19 NISHI Yoshimi (Kyoto University) researches the development of Indonesian schools in Malaysia and has published papers. ONO Mayumi (Chiba University) researches long-stay tourism in Malaysia, with a special interest in the Japanese community.

## ■ Recommendation: Toward the Second Wave of the Look East Policy

For the second wave of the Look East Policy (LEP) to succeed, it is important to revisit the development of Malaysian society over the past 30 years and to understand the challenges faced by Malaysia at present. After Malaysia has achieved rapid economic development over the past 30 years, particularly in its peninsular states, Malaysia today faces domestic challenges in creating a society where the state and people respect each other, foster cultural diversity, address poverty, and help the socially vulnerable. Malaysia also faces the external challenge of setting an example for the world, particularly for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) countries, in the fields of *halal* certification, sustainable oil palm certification, and opportunities of higher education for foreign students.

The second wave of the LEP includes the innovation of new technology in the field of higher education in Malaysia and application and development of Japanese-style technology in accordance with the needs and local practices in Malaysia. This revision will enhance Malaysia's position in the international arena and help the country to simultaneously maintain economic prosperity and social stability.

### (1) Innovating Net Technologies through the Malaysia Japan International Institute of Technology (MJIT)

MJIT, which delivers Japanese-style engineering education in Malaysia, was launched at the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur in 2011. In Japan, a Japanese university consortium was formed by 25 leading universities to supply academic staff for four programmes at MJIT; Electronic System Engineering, Mechanical Precision Engineering, Environment Engineering and Green Technology, and Management of Technology. MJIT offers cutting-edge education based on the distinctive feature of Japanese engineering education. The current staff consists of 13 Japanese, 35 Malaysians, and 8 professors of other nationalities. The number of enrolled students is 341 which include 36 international students. In 2017, the number of students is likely to increase to 2,500.

One of the characteristics of MJIT is that it focuses not only on Malaysian students but also on students from other Asian and foreign countries, which makes the institution an engineering education hub in Asia. The significance of MJIT lies not only in its intellectual contribution to Asia but also in the 'export' of the Japanese-style of education. MJIT will transit itself into a world-class institution through genuine and long-lasting cooperation with the Japanese universities. Also, strong links with Japanese



Malaysia Japan International Institute of Technology (MJIT)

industries are required to sustain a Japanese-style engineering education.

One of MJIT's principles is to strengthen the link between design and production. Prof. Yamamoto Takashi, Deputy Dean of MJIT, emphasises that designing products without understanding the reality of producing them will never lead to success. As an analogy to this claim, designing products without understanding the reality of using them will also not lead to success. The collaboration with researchers of Area Studies on Malaysia and other Asian countries (who have an insider perspective of the local society) will enhance the position of MJIT in innovating new technologies by applying Japanese-style engineering to the needs of Asian consumers. In this regard, JAMS can significantly contribute by fusing the Japanese and Malaysian perspectives.



Alumni Look East Policy Society (ALEPS) Dream Factory

## **(2) Localising Japanese-Style Technology through the Alumni Look East Policy Society (ALEPS)**

The ALEPS was established in 1988 after the return of the first batch of graduates from Japan. The society comprises former graduates of Japanese universities and technical colleges. Its objectives are to support the implementation of the LEP by the government, pursue the policy's objectives to realise technology transfer from Japan, assist government agencies in enhancing mutual relationships with Japan, and organise training and leadership programmes for members on enhancing their career development. ALEPS assists newly selected Malaysian students to Japan by organising orientation programmes and forums such as sharing the experiences of former LEP students. ALEPS also helps the students to adapt to the Japanese culture by sharing its experiences and knowledge.

Our research revealed that many Malaysian students who have studied in Japanese universities or technical colleges under the LEP programme have found, upon their return, steady employment in Japanese companies in Malaysia. These students then quit the companies and started their own business. The ALEPS Dream Factory is an example where Mr Syed Putra, the President of ALEPS, and other staff provide wheelchairs, particularly those suited to the requirements of disabled children, who have been dependent on ready-made products that are not properly suited to their individual conditions and may hinder their growth potential.

The former students of the LEP programme are highly motivated and skilled. They are well organised under ALEPS; however, they face some obstacles in contributing to the development of Malaysian society, owing to the lack of proper administrative institutions that are willing to gainfully absorb them. Currently, the LEP programme is under the Public Service Department of Malaysia, and its main task is to handle Malaysian students dispatched to Japan. However, no specific department handles the LEP students after their return to Malaysia. Without the proper government institution, the potential of the returnees are not completely used. Besides, as most of the LEP students are specialised in technology and apparently prefer to be engineers rather than government officials, they appear to have less influential connections in the government. It is strongly recommended that the government appoint a particular department to handle the returnees of the LEP programme in the short term and that it increase the subject areas of LEP programme by including humanities and social sciences in the long term.

## [Appendix] JAMS Look East Policy research project members

### 1) Prof. ANAZAWA Makoto

Professor, Department of Commerce, Otaru University of Commerce  
Research interest: Industrialization in Malaysia

### 2) Prof. ISHIKAWA Noboru

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Research interest: Transnationalism and state in Sarawak, Malaysia

### 3) Prof. KANEKO Yoshiki

Professor, Faculty of Foreign Language, Dokkyo University  
Research interest: Politics of Malaysia

### 4) Prof. KURODA Keiko

Professor, Faculty of Law, Economics & Humanities, Kagoshima University  
Research interest: History on Peninsular Malaysia

### 5) Prof. MASUTANI Satoshi

Professor, College of Tourism, Rikkyo University  
Research interest: Malaysian Chinese literature

### 6) Prof. TAMURA Keiko

Professor, Faculty of Foreign Studies, University of Kitakyushu  
Research interest: Politics, National Integration and Ethnicity in Singapore

### 7) Prof. TAWADA Hiroshi

Professor, Graduate School of Literature and Human Sciences, Osaka City University  
Research interest: Islam and Politics in modern Malaysia

### 8) Prof. TOMIZAWA Hisao

Professor, Faculty of International Relations, University of Shizuoka  
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### 9) Prof. YOSHIMURA Mako

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Research interest: Economic development and labor structure in Malaysia

### 10) Dr. SHINOZAKI Kaori

Associate Professor, Faculty of Foreign Studies, University of Kitakyushu  
Research interest: Border-crossing and ethnic relations in Malaysia

### 11) Dr. YAMAMOTO Hiroyuki

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### 12) Dr. SUZUKI Ayame

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### 13) Dr. SHIOZAKI Yuki

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### 14) Dr. ONO Mayumi

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### 15) Dr. TOJO Tetsuo

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Research interest: History of tin mining in Malaysia

### 16) Mr. KAWABATA Takashi

SMBC Nikko Securities Inc.  
Research interest: Politics and foreign diplomacy in Malaysia

### 17) Ms. MITSUNARI Ayumi

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### 18) Ms. SUZUKI Mayumi

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