

19/05/1998

Four `ambassadors' head for Japan

Sager Ahmad

FOUR new participants to the International Association of Traffic and Safety Science Forum held in Suzuka, Mie Prefecture, Japan left for Nagoya last Wednesday morning.

The four lucky young "ambassadors" representing Malaysia are Daniel Liew Ming Ch'ze, Norhana Yahya, Esther Boucher and Sharifah Hafizah Syed Abdul Kadir.

They will be joining their Asean counterparts from Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam for the 26th forum in the series held between May 15 and July 24.

Liew, 25, the only male member of the group, is a senior corporate training consultant with Direct Impact Training Consultancy based in Malaysia and Singapore.

A graduate from Hawaii Pacific University majoring in psychology and human resource development, Liew began his career six years ago and had since worked with more than 60 companies in Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Brunei and Malaysia.

Sales, leadership, psychology, human development, group dynamics, personality development, management and communications were among the areas he covered.

Liew said besides being a regular speaker at schools, non-profit organisations, colleges and institutes, he is also the founder and author of a series of programmes called Neuro Development Seminars, which are psychology-based seminars to help people understand themselves and others better.

He said he was also one of the very few trainers in Malaysia to be qualified to administer the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator instrument which is the main base of his seminars.

He has also been a faculty lecturer with the Malaysian Institute of Training and Development and a child advocate and youth affairs co-ordinator for the Malaysian Child Resource Institute.

He has conducted several summer camps and outdoor training for youths, juvenile delinquents, adults and the underprivileged.

Among his achievements are getting the coveted Able Toastmasters award from Toastmasters International and the Select Distinguished Area Award. He was also the past president of MII Toastmasters and past president of HPU Toastmasters Club in Hawaii.

Liew, who speaks fluent Japanese, has black belt in shorin ryu karate-do and shinden kenpo and is also a member of the Malaysian Armed Forces Reserve Corps.

From Kuala Kangsar, Perak is Norhana Yahya, 30, who graduated from the Mara Institute of Technology in investment analysis in 1990 and is now involved in running her family business in Ipoh.

Taking care of her family's sports shop RB Sports Collection, which is the sole distributor of Warisan sepak takraw balls to the Malaysian Schools Sports Council, Norhana said the chance to follow the forum was a welcome change.

Esther Boucher, 27, from Bangsar, Kuala Lumpur, was a contract teacher teaching English in a private school in Brunei and completed her three-year contract just in time to participate in the programme.

Boucher, who is a graduate in English from Universiti Malaya, said she planned to leave for the United Kingdom in September to pursue her masters

in English at Cambridge University.

The fourth member, Sharifah Hafizah Syed Abdul Kadir, is a journalist with the Malaysian Industry magazine, which is part of George Town Holdings Bhd.

A graduate in economics from the International Islamic University Malaysia, Sharifah Hafizah, who is from Johor, served with the national news agency Bernama as well as a few dailies before venturing to write for the magazine.

IATSS Forum began as an idea to help Malaysia but today, it is recognised as a medium for personal exchanges between Asean professionals and those of Japan and was subsequently extended to other Asean countries.

IATSS Forum, which was funded by the Honda Foundation, offers a unique opportunity for young people from Asean countries to be exposed to Japan, its people and culture, their way of life and work ethics since the mid-1980s.

The idea began when Soichiro Honda, the founder of Honda Motor Company, met Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in Kuala Lumpur in the early 80s.

At the forum, participants learn about the various aspects of the Japanese lifestyle, economy, philosophy, way of thinking, decision-making and problem-solving, corporate planning as well as their art and culture.

The group will be taken on visits to cities like Nagoya, Kyoto, Nara, Osaka, Okayama, Hagi, Ise-Shima, Hiroshima and Tokyo as well as take part in home-stays with Japanese families and on-the-job training.

For details on the programme, call the Malaysian IATSS Forum national committee at Universiti Malaya (Tel: 03-7577032).

(END)