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Malaysia-Model

JAPAN, S.KOREA RELEVANT MODEL FOR M'SIA, SAYS SAMSUDIN

KUALA LUMPUR, April 23 (Bernama) -- Japan and South Korea remain relevant models to Malaysia to emulate eastern work ethics, morale, values and management qualities, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Samsudin Osman said today.

He said the Look East Policy introduced by the Malaysian Government in 1982 had succeeded in inculcating positive values among Malaysians and contributed to the country's development.

"These (positive) values are the very thing that we look for in the Look East Policy.

"Without these positive values, we (Malaysia) would not be able to overcome the challenges and we may not be resilient enough to go through these problems," he told reporters after opening an international conference on "Malaysia's Look East Policy: Challenges and Contributions.

The two-day conference, which started yesterday, is part of celebrations for the policy's 20th anniversary to discuss its strength and weaknesses.

The policy, initiated by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in 1982 soon after he assumed office, is still being implemented and had been a model of international cooperation.

Asked whether the policy would be continued, Samsudin said: "God Willing, the policy will be pursued."

He said Japan and South Korea had given their commitment to support and further cooperate with Malaysia to ensure the success of the programmes under the policy.

On his suggestion that the policy be reviewed and fine-tuned, he said the policy had been implemented for the past 20 years and it speaks volume that there might be differences in terms of implementations that need to be looked into.

Samsudin said the government hoped to increase the number of students sent under the policy.

Meanwhile, Japanese Ambassador to Malaysia Masaki Konishi said the Japanese people had also benefited from the implementation of the policy as the exchanges with Malaysian students, not only in big cities but also in local areas, had been an eye-opening experience.

"They have learned more about their Asian friends and about different cultures and tradition. The acceptance of excellent and hard-working foreign students with various cultural backgrounds have also revitalised the advanced educational institutions in Japan, and improved the level of education at these institutions," he said.

No other country except Malaysia had sponsored as many as 3,000 students to study in Japan, he said.

Currently, there are about 1,800 Malaysian students all over Japan and they constitute the largest group among all Asean students and the fourth largest foreign student group in Japan.

-- BERNAMA

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