

20 DEC 2002

Japan-Success

JAPAN PRAISES MALAYSIA'S SUCCESS

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 20 (Bernama) -- Japan today praised Malaysia for its efforts to improve the economic well-being of the nation while preserving peace and harmony among the people.

Its ambassador to Malaysia, Masaki Konishi, said that the Malaysian experience over the last few decades had proven to the world that economic development was indeed possible in a multiracial and multireligious society.

"Malaysia's 'look-east' policy has also contributed to the development of this country, so we (Japanese government) are really proud of it and appreciate the excellent relationship with this country," he told a news conference during the handing-over of a school van for abused, neglected and abandoned children at Rumah Hope, here.

He said that during Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's recent visit to Japan, many Japanese listened eagerly to what he had to say, not only on his "look-east" policy but also on how he looks at the Asian situation, issues of today like terrorism and globalisation, and they learned a great deal from it.

Konishi said the relationship between the two countries was not limited to political and economic ties but also extended to social aspects.

Since 1989, the Japanese government had extended to the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and local governments in Malaysia more than RM 8.2 million in total through its Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects to contribute to many small but socially important projects at the grass roots level.

Since then, Japan had supported 75 projects under this scheme in which it sent groups of Japanese volunteers to work in charity homes.

Rumah Hope, established in 1994 to cater to the needs of abused, neglected and abandoned children, received the first van from the Japanese government in 1996 but was in need of a second one as the number of children had increased from 15 to 56.

-- BERNAMA

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