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Japan and South Korea pledge support

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Japan and South Korea pledged tonight continued support to Malaysia's Look East policy, which they feel has successfully served as a catalyst to promote regional cooperation.

This was stated by the Japanese Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs Masahiro Imamura and South Korean Embassy charge d'affairs Chun Hae Jin at a dinner to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the policy at the Palace of the Golden Horses.

Chun said a sense of community was emerging among countries in the East Asian region despite differences in political systems, level of economic development as well as culture and values.

He said Asean+3 countries had enhanced cooperation among themselves, especially in the area of financial cooperation.

"South Korea is committed to working with Malaysia to realise the common vision of cooperation among the countries in the region. We believe that continued prosperity and cooperation are vital to security and stability."

Chun said Malaysia had charted "amazing economic development" since Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad became Prime Minister in 1981.

Chun said Malaysia and South Korea had sponsored a series of programmes under the policy to share know-how and experiences in economic development and global issues.

Meanwhile, Imamura said under the policy, more than 7,000 Malaysian students and trainees were sent to Japan.

"About 1,800 Malaysians are studying in Japan."

He said the students had established several alumni associations to further promote ties between both countries.

Saying that the economic and social conditions of both countries had changed, he added that the policy must also undergo a change to be more effective.