

“LIVING TOGETHER”

**Commemorative Lecture
By
Dato Paduka Haji Mohd. Adnan bin Buntar
At the
Honorary Doctorate Degree Conferment Ceremony
At
Kagawa University
On
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Kagawa**

Today is the greatest honor and a historic day for me, my wife and also the rest of my family, for me to be conferred an Honorary Doctorate Degree from the Kagawa University, especially when it is its first conferment since the merger of Kagawa University and Kagawa Medical University (now is the Faculty of Medicine) in 2003. This award is the greatest achievement I ever received in my career as ambassador. It is timely too as I have retired from ambassadorial career nevertheless, it is the beginning of long mutual cooperation between Kagawa University and University Brunei Darussalam for years to come. This honor is the symbol of close relation, cooperation and collaboration which have been started between the two institutions four years ago. This honor awarded to me today, I would like also to share it with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Brunei Darussalam as it was during my tenureship as ambassador when my work has been notified by the university and honoring me with the Honorary Doctorate Degree.

Here I would like to record my appreciation and gratitude to the Kagawa University for this honor and at the same time for its understanding and having the vision of the importance of such cooperation and collaboration, not only with University Brunei Darussalam but with others too, for the good of future generation.

I would also like to express my gratitude to University Brunei Darussalam, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and other relevant authorities which without their open-mindedness and readiness to accept and give collaborative and cooperative ideas from Kagawa University and vice versa, this award will not be taking place today. My gratitude also goes to Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade under whose umbrella I was able of having the opportunity to do my deed to both countries. Finally to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan which always bless such activities for the good of Japan to other friendly nations.

During my term in Japan, I have visited Kagawa University a number of times and every visit I made, I had the opportunity of learning and understanding its objectives and visions, especially the Faculty of Medicine. I was impressed by its plan to internationalize the university to other regions such as the US and UK and others in bringing academic people to work together and to find solutions to our ever increasing problems especially in those areas connected to human beings. This networking which the university is doing now implies a lot of things underneath it. We will be able to find out not only the good things but also the other way around. We can only cure or to find the remedies or to correct the situations once we know what are they and what causes them and why they happen.

One aspect I can think of is probably the contradictory and complex nature of the world today. With the development of new technology and communication, our world is getting smaller and yet difficult to control. They are rich nations and yet there are less fortunate ones. There are some of us living in clean and healthy environments but they are still people staying in remote and undeveloped areas. Some are living in prosperity but some are in hardship even they cannot have the necessary daily needs to live. There are nations can live in coexistence but some others are not. Human kind has been to the moon and there are people have not seen the cities yet. There are people who can sleep soundly at night but there are sleepless because of the “noise” of wars and riots around them. There are numerous of this

contradicting nature in life. Is the world supposed to be like this? How long is the world going to “live”? Then what is world? What is a country? In fact to me, the world is the people, because the man himself is the country itself. This also means the country itself is the world itself therefore the world is the man himself. What are we going to do in order to save the world - the mankind? We have all different ideas for every situation and happening. They are right for some and wrong for others and vice versa are also true. It was right to do it in the past but it is wrong to do it now and the vice versa also happens. We do not have common vision for the whole world except that everyone wants to live by oneself without caring for others which is impossible. World is a very, very complex place to live in but do we have a choice? Therefore we have to take care of the world. How and where do we to start? It is just like a vicious circle. Where is the most appropriate point of the circle to break? Politicians are with their visions, the economies are with their economic theories, the environmentalists with their nature and history. Are all of these converging to the government policies and visions? What about resources such food, energy, manpower? Sovereignty, problems of boundaries which lead to security related matters? It is endless to mention here. Again from where do we begin? Most people would say we begin from the beginning, as early as possible – at the “embryonic” stage, that is, the next generation. We have to take care the next generation while they are in still in their mothers’ wombs by making sure the mothers are medically well looked after and healthy to ensure that the babies will be born healthy. Once they come into this world, the parental guidance is critical until they go for proper education.

Next we have to prepare them to face the world which is full of challenges which mentioned earlier. This means a good education which will enable them to live in a society, contributing to their nations and also be able to live in coexistence with their neighbors and within other nationalities. The education should not only to take care of the domestic purpose of its own national development but it also be to take care of international community. In other words, the domestic curriculum of the education is for the domestic requirement of its nation and the international curriculum is for international coexistence. Therefore, the curriculum needs to include international

elements in the education system, as we are going to create international young people who will be responsible not only to their own country but also the world community. To begin with, each nation needs to consider its own individual national requirement, next one, the regional requirement of the region, for example South-east Asian region, there must be a common curriculum among the South-east Asian countries so as to understand the different nationalities and hence the region in term of culture, history, development and the aspiration of each country. Having intra-understanding within the South-east Asia region itself next should be inter-regional for example South-east Asia with Middle-east or Europe and so on. So we need common intra- and inter - regional curricula amongst these countries and regions.

Having partial common curricula is one thing, but how do we get access into the system to interact with one another in implementing and making beneficial use of the system? What mechanism are we going to use? Therefore we must have a medium or media or other means through which this aspiration, that is the partial common regional curricula, can be achieved. It is none other than the language itself. Therefore learning foreign languages is of great importance to the young generation and they need to be well equipped to face those challenges coming ahead of them. Through the language one can penetrate into the knowledge of a nation, understanding the people, the culture, belief and the aspiration of the people, their sensitivity and hence we can live in coexistence with our neighbors – to live peacefully in the spirit of helping one another. We have to help the young generation to be aware of such situation from very early stage – as the Malay proverb says “Kalau melentur buloh, biar lah dari rebong nya” meaning if you want to bend the bamboo so as not to break it, it should be done while it was still at the shoot stage. This is what we should do if we want our young generation to understand what is going on in the region and in the world. We have to expose them to those nations which are cosmopolitan, so as to understand what is living like in a multi-racial environment so that when they are in power running their own countries, they will take into consideration the sensitivities of other foreign nations. They will make reasonable policies which will be

acceptable by their neighbors – cooperating not only during time of prosperity but also hardship and difficulties, sharing knowledge and expertise to help each other, collaborating in areas such as research and development trying to make man contributive in their responsibilities.

Basically, what I am saying is that we have to make our young generation international minded, aware what is happening in the world especially in their region and be responsible to contribute in term of knowledge and to care them as mentioned earlier. Having produced such generation, we have to look at the mechanism through which they can implement and convey the knowledge they have, the objectives and visions to the needy ones.

Having diplomatic relation among nations is one of many ways of communicating between nations, where normally embassies, consulates, honorary consul generals exist in either one or both countries as we know very well what it is all about. Basically they are the mouths, the eyes and the ears of the governments. Apart from those, the embassies are also having their own initiatives in bringing the two countries' relation closer through people to people contact in many other areas and by other means.

The non-governmental organizations are numerous, ranging from the United Nation and its subsidiary bodies like UNESCO, WHO, ICAO to regional ones like ASEAN, GCC, SAARC and national NGOs like Japan Foundation. These bodies cover all areas like labour, health, education, culture, economy, security and others through which the young generation can apply and play their vital roles.

Japan, as it well known, is the second largest economy in the world after US. The South-east Asia region is fortunate to have Japan in the region as its development will trickle down to other nations in the neighborhood and hopefully share its prosperity for mutual benefits such as their technology advancement, development, environment, and security aspects. Japan just cannot be left out in this respect. So what do we expect from Japan? I think basically almost in all aspects of their ability and capability – ranging from

political stability, peacefulness, culture, motivation, economy, education and understanding. This sharing can be done through government to government and also non-government to non-government including institutions to institutions and people to people.

Japan is one of the earlier members of ASEAN-Dialogue Partner, through which a lot of contribution has been given to the region and also to individual countries, and also through many Japan's organizations such JICA, Japan Foundation and others. Japan and Brunei Darussalam has warm relationship that we can make good use of it to work together to attain some of the objectives if not all. Japan is a partner for Brunei Darussalam's economy, importing Brunei Liquefied Natural Gas (BLNG) for energy for some time now. One in every four bulbs in Tokyo is lit with BLNG. Japan also give technical assistance allowing and giving scholarship to students to study here and many exchanges of students through programs such as the Ship for South-east Asian Youth Program (SSEAYP), Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youth (JENESYS) and Fukuoka Asia-Pacific Children's Convention (FAPCC). These programs are not only to Brunei Darussalam but also to other Asia Pacific and East Asian countries. These programs are going very well and fruitful and hoped to continue in future.

Talking about Kagawa Prefecture and Brunei Darussalam through Kagawa University and University Brunei Darussalam and Ministry of Health perspectives, I had the opportunity to observe the development of the relation between the institutions – especially in the field of medicine, during my ambassadorship here from September 2005 until October 2008. This relation has been growing, developing and deepening further amongst the institutions for mutual benefits. This is only the beginning. I am certain this promising connection will spread to other areas of professions. During this time too, there were also exchange of visits of medical students and high level officials between the Faculty of Medicine, Kagawa University and Institute of Medicine, University Brunei Darussalam. Bilateral exchange programs have been developed by the institutions for future development between them, of which several of the programs have already been implemented. As results of that,

YDM Pehin Hj. Hazair, Deputy Minister of Health, made a visit to Japan to study health related institutions including medicine manufacturing factories, centers for cancer research and children hospital and to the Faculty of Medicine, Kagawa University itself. This visit has opened more opportunities for Kagawa University, University Brunei Darussalam and Ministry of Health for collaboration.

One of the possibilities is to establish a joint research center between Kagawa University and University Brunei Darussalam in Brunei Darussalam itself. This center will work together with Kagawa University, University Brunei Darussalam and Ministry of Health to do research and analysis on herbs and trees from the richness of the tropical forest in the hope of to discover medicinal values. Another one is to make a study on causes and prevention of common diseases in Brunei Darussalam especially those diseases related to food intake, to change the mind set to eat and live healthily, to prevent it personally and by regular diagnostic means. The center also can become national research laboratory for all kinds of things.

Another one is exchange or attachment of medical doctors not only from Kagawa University but also from other prefectures too to exchange and to share knowledge and experience between Japan and Brunei Darussalam.

Another possibility is to form a joint faculty at University Brunei Darussalam with Kagawa University, where the faculty can concentrate on comparison of knowledge on disease discoveries, by research and development in the medical fields or education based on the experience and back ground of Japan and Brunei Darussalam. With this, either from Kagawa University or University Brunei Darussalam can also invite their other associations with other international network to share their work, knowledge and any other relevant information with Kagawa University and University Brunei Darussalam working together to solve or reduce the problems or to find cures for the ever growing numbers of diseases in human, animals and environment. From this medical cooperation, both institutions can venture into other areas.

Indirectly, the institutions have strengthened Brunei Darussalam and Japan bilateral relationship from the above perspectives.

From here, we can see that, how the institutions can help to produce a healthy, cooperative, motivated and understanding young generation to achieve the objectives mentioned earlier and to contribute prosperity of the two countries. Certainly there are many other means and ways to reach the goals.

This cooperation and collaboration would not be possible and successful in not because of the farsightedness of Kagawa University and University Brunei Darussalam and other high-level authorities, their willingness to work together and their realization of the importance of going international. In this respect both universities have played an essential part in educating people, making them understanding one another, to share, knowledge and experience, to bring young generation to be aware and responsible for future generation. It is a bridge for the two countries for future generation to cross over. Therefore institutions like these also can play diplomatic roles in bringing good relation between the countries, after all the man himself is the country itself and hence the world itself.

For these roles, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate both institutions for their initiatives and motivation in order to work together for the purpose I mentioned earlier. I believe this symbiotic association will develop and deepen further in their endeavors to bring good will of humanity so we can live in harmony and peace – respecting one another and sharing what we have with those who have not.

In a nutshell, what I have said is, we must produce and train our young generation to be international, open-minded, equipped with knowledge, to be tough, ready to face the challenges of the world wisely and peacefully from natural or man-made disasters, caring for the less fortunate ones, to become the agents for sharing peace and happiness, to be responsible for the generation after them and try to make the world a peaceful place to live on by

understanding and appreciating and uplifting international common visions through good health, culture, belief, education, economy, science and many other aspects.

In this respect, Kagawa University has contributed a lot in doing above mentioned qualities and objectives and to congratulate them for having such vision and innovation by developing people to people contact on which all the points mentioned, evolve around this humane contact. I congratulate Kagawa University again for having such vision and contribution, not only to Brunei Darussalam but also to the other parts of the world.

It is my utmost desire to wish them and those who have been involved in this successful cooperation in order to bring people together in collaboration – in aiming their common vision for the benefits of the people of Japan and Brunei Darussalam, - a very, very successful future.

I would also like to thank to those at all levels who have been involved in preparing for this wonderful ceremony and making a beautiful occasion for us all.

With that, I wish to end my speech here and wish everyone here good health, prosperous and successful years to come and may All the Mighty will always be blessing us all for the good deed we have done for all mankind.

Domo arigato gozamashta.

“Living Together”

Dato Paduka Haji. Mohd. Adnan bin Buntar

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