

OPENING SPEECH BY
YB TUAN HAJI MOHD ANUAR BIN MOHD. TAHIR
DEPUTY MINISTER OF WORKS
JOINT SEMINAR ON ROAD ASSET MANAGEMENT AND
DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
28th August 2018 (Tuesday)
Matrade Hall, Kuala Lumpur

Your Excellency Mr. Katsunori Takahashi,
Vice-Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism,
Japan or MLIT;

YBhg. Datuk Haji Sarani Bin Dollah,
Deputy Secretary General (Management), Ministry of Works,
Malaysia;

YBhg. Dato' Sri Ir. Dr. Roslan bin Md. Taha,
General Director, Public Works Department, Malaysia;

Mr. Hiroyuki Oriyasa
Minister Counsellor, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of
Japan;

YBhg. Datuk Ir. Dr. Hj. Md Nasir bin Md Noh,
Director-General, Department of Irrigation and Drainage (DID)
Malaysia;

YBhg. Dato' Sr. Aziz Bin Abdullah,
Acting Director-General, Malaysian Highway Authority,
Malaysia;

Mr. Junji MIWA,
Director, International Cooperation and Engineering
Infrastructure, Overseas Project Division, Policy Bureau, MLIT

Excellencies and Honored guests;

Distinguished speakers;

Ladies and gentlemen.

A very good morning.

I would like to thank all of you for taking your time to participate in this second Seminar co-organised by Ministry of Works, Malaysia and Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Japan. It is a great honour for me to be here today. Honourable Minister of Works send his warmest regards. He is unable to join this seminar due to other engagement with the Prime Minister of Malaysia.

Ladies and gentlemen,

2. Japan and Malaysia has established a diplomatic relations for over 50 years through the implementation of the Look East Policy, economic relations, cultural and people-to-people exchanges. Japan has played a major role in Malaysia's development and economy. Japanese companies continue to be major investors in Malaysia and many Malaysians received their education in Japan. In 2017, the total bilateral trade between the two countries was recorded at RM138.5 billion, an

increase of 14.7% as compared to 2016. Japan is Malaysia's 4th largest trading partner after China, Singapore and the United States.

Ladies and gentlemen,

3. 2018 is a busy year for Malaysia and Japan as we have witnessed some major events. In fact, several meetings were held between Malaysia and Japan to further expand the collaboration between the two countries. Our Prime Minister, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad had two working visits to Japan and it was his first official international engagement after being appointed as the seventh Prime Minister of Malaysia.

4. In June, Japan's Ambassador to Malaysia Dr. Makio Miyagawa made a courtesy call to our Deputy Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail and discussed collaboration in various areas including disaster management, training, advance planning on how to deal with major disasters and sharing of information such as early warning technologies which help to predict and prepare for disasters. This is beneficial to Malaysia as we need expertise on disaster-risk

reduction to help us mitigate disasters from an early stage as well as improving our disaster response readiness.

5. Last week, our Minister of Works also received a courtesy call from Japan's Ambassador to Malaysia and discussed on the progress of infrastructure development in Malaysia namely the Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) and multi-lane free flow. In the meeting, the Ambassador also informed on the programs organised by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and hoped for the participation of officers from the Ministry.

6. This October, our Minister is also scheduled to lead the Malaysian delegates to Yokohama for the bidding session to organise the World Road Congress 2023 in Malaysia. We hope that we will receive the support and trust from the relevant countries especially Japan to organise this world class event.

Ladies and gentlemen,

7. Malaysia is a tropical climate country that vulnerable to natural hazards including floods, forest fires, tsunami, cyclonic storms, landslides, epidemics, and haze. The uncertain

weather is a challenge to Malaysia to keep up with maintenance of roads which suffer due to our tropical weather consisting of heavy rains and extreme heat. The differences in soil types and conditions also contribute to various issues which crop up regularly. The effects of climate change have resulted in an increasing amount of climate related disasters, resulting in a newfound threat to Malaysia's development. Although it is an immense task to address each and every single challenge, the ministry has put in place a solid work plan to ensure the project implementation and our home ground construction industry will continue to grow and sustainable.

8. There are several initiatives being undertaken by the Public Works Department or JKR in reducing the risk of disaster. For example, JKR operates a disaster management Centre, called BiGBen, to coordinate with all the district engineers all over Malaysia regarding the flood situation. In the event of a flooding occurring, the district engineers of the area affected will inform staff manning the Centre of any roads which are impassable to traffic. They will also inform the Centre of alternative roads to be taken to avoid the flooded roads. The Centre will coordinate with other district engineers, if there is a necessity to build temporary bridges or provide boats to be used in the affected areas. With this, the public also will obtain

information on road conditions and also alternative roads to be used in the event of a flood situation from the Centre. To reinforce the initiatives, JKR is also currently collaborating with the Natural Disaster Management Agency or NADMA to provide a better and inclusive disaster management system.

Ladies and gentlemen,

9. This year's seminar will focus on the road asset management and disaster risk reduction which is an important element to be considered in maintaining the infrastructure in Malaysia. We are expecting a total of approximately 200 participants from various Ministries and Departments including the Malaysian Highway Authority or LLM, Department of Drainage and Irrigation, National Disaster Management Agency, Ministry of Land, Water and Natural Resources, Ministry of Housing and Local Government, CIDB and academicians from local universities.

10. Fourteen (14) papers will be presented regarding the road asset management and disaster risk reduction. Besides that, two separate site visits will be organized tomorrow. One visit is at the upgrade of federal route between Tanjung Karang-Sabak

Bernam project and the other one is at the Department of Irrigation and Drainage in Ampang and MEX II.

Ladies and gentlemen,

11. This is Ministry of Works and Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Japan second seminar. The first seminar was held in 2016 focusing on the slope or landslides. This successful collaboration is not just for knowledge sharing but we are hoping that this will bring more opportunities for both countries to explore on capacity building programs. For example, 'On the job' attachment training in Japan for a certain period of time to provide a real-life exposure to our engineers. The purpose of this programme is to develop specific or generic skills on road maintenance, exposure to current or new technologies, and to inculcate the Japanese work ethics. Through this valuable exposure, the participants will establish new network to enable them to discuss and solve issues related to their work using better ideas and up-to-date technologies from Japan.

Ladies and gentlemen,

12. I hope this seminar will succeed to act as a platform for knowledge sharing and cooperation in engineering, science and technology on road maintenance between Malaysia and Japan and also reducing the disaster risk in Malaysia. The issues discussed and information shared in this seminar with expert groups from Japan are expected to assist the Malaysian professionals, particularly JKR and LLM to further strengthen the management and maintenance of federal roads and disaster management in the country.

13. I wish all of us will gain significant knowledge and experience upon completion of this seminar. With these few words, may I once again thank you for your presence today and declare the Joint Seminar on Road Asset Management and Disaster Risk Reduction, **open**.

Thank you.