

JENESYS2025 Malaysia-Japan Young Political Leaders Exchange (Invitation Program) Report

1. Program Overview

【Objectives and Overview】

Five Malaysian political representatives visited Japan from March 24 to March 28 with the primary objective of deepening their understanding of how Japan addresses various social challenges by means of lectures, site visits, and exchanges of views with experts.

The delegation visited Kyoto Prefecture and Tokyo, where they observed the Kyoto gubernatorial election process and made a number of courtesy calls, including a visit to Ms. KUNIMITSU Ayano, State Minister for Foreign Affairs and an exchange of views with members of the Japan-Malaysia Parliamentary Friendship League. Throughout the program, participants shared their experiences, insights gained, and the appeal of the host locations through social media and other platforms.

【Participants】 Total: 5 participants (5 young political figures from Malaysia)

【Locations】 Kyoto 5, Tokyo 5

【Schedule】

■ Online Pre-study Program :

Mar. 17 (Tue) 【Pre-departure Orientation】

Set Period Prior to Arrival 【Task-based Learning (VOD)】 “Overview/Mission”, “Lecture on Japan”, “Virtual Home Visit”, “Message from Minamisanriku”, “Study Japanese Culture in Kyoto”, “Learning Japanese”

■ Invitation Program :

Mar. 24 (Tue) Arrival at Kansai International Airport

 【Post-arrival Orientation】

 【Observation】 Shimadzu Foundation Memorial Museum

 【Observation】 Nishiki Market

Mar. 25 (Wed) 【Theme Related Lecture and Observation】 Kyoto Gubernatorial Election

1. 【Theme Related Lecture】 “The Electoral System”

Lecturer: Mr. YAMAMOTO Shigeki, Secretary-General, Secretariat, Kyoto Prefectural Election Commission

2. 【Theme Related Lecture】 “Election Initiatives in Muko City”

Lecturer: Mr. MURANISHI Masaya, Director, General Affairs Division, General Affairs Department, Muko City

3. 【Theme Related Observation】 Early Voting site in Muko City
 【Courtesy Call】 Mr. FURUKAWA Hiroki, Vice Governor, Kyoto Prefecture
 【Cultural Experience】 Yuzen Dyeing Experience
 【Observation】 Yasaka Shrine and Chion-in Temple

Mar. 26 (Thu)

Travel from Kyoto to Tokyo

- 【Courtesy Call】 Ms. KUNIMITSU Ayano, State Minister for Foreign Affairs
 【Briefing】 Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Speaker: Mr. AOKI Takashi, Senior Regional Coordinator, Second Southeast Asia Division, Southeast and Southwest Asian Affairs Department

Mar. 27 (Fri)

- 【Theme Related Observation】 National Diet Building
 【Theme Related Lecture, Opinion Exchange】 Institute of Geoeconomics (IOG)
 “Economic Security to achieve Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)”
 Lecturer: Mr. Yoshiyuki Sagara, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Geoeconomics (IOG)
 【Opinion Exchange】 Japan-Malaysia Parliamentary Friendship Association
 【Reporting Session】

Departure from Haneda Airport

2. Program Photos

Online Pre-study Program

	
March 17, 2026 【Pre-departure Orientation】	March 17, 2026 【Pre-departure Orientation】

Invitation Program

	
March 24, 2026 【Observation】	March 25, 2026 【Theme Related Lecture and

Shimadzu Foundation Memorial Museum	Observation】 Kyoto Gubernatorial Election
	
March 25, 2026 【Courtesy Call】 Mr. FURUKAWA Hiroki, Vice Governor, Kyoto Prefecture	March 25, 2026 【Cultural Experience】 Yuzen Dyeing Experience
	
March 25, 2026 【Observation】 Chion-in Temple	March 26, 2026 【Courtesy Call】 Ms. KUNIMITSU Ayano, State Minister for Foreign Affairs
	
March 26, 2026 【Briefing】 Ministry of Foreign Affairs	March 27, 2026 【Theme Related Observation】 National Diet Building
	
March 27, 2026 【Theme Related Lecture, Opinion	March 27, 2026 【Opinion Exchange】 Japan-

Exchange】 Institute of Geoeconomics (IOG)	Malaysia Parliamentary Friendship League
	
March 27, 2026 【Reporting Session】	March 27, 2026 【Reporting Session】 Group photo

3. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

◆ Working Youth

The visit to the Kyoto Prefectural Election Administration Commission was one of the most impactful aspects of the program

What stood out most was the clarity, discipline, and integrity of the electoral system. The entire process - from voter registration to early voting - was conducted in a manner that was highly structured, transparent, and strictly procedural.

We also had the opportunity to observe early voting preparations, which were carried out in a calm and orderly environment.

It reflected a system designed to prioritize accessibility while ensuring that procedures are carried out accurately and securely.

Beyond the technical aspects, what was most impressive was the level of public trust embedded within the system - a result of consistent practices, strong institutions, and adherence to rules over time.

This experience offered valuable insights into how electoral integrity is not only about laws and regulations, but about institutional culture, discipline, and public confidence - lessons that are highly relevant for strengthening democratic processes in other contexts, including Malaysia.

◆ Working Youth

I was impressed not only by the amazing architecture, but also by the opportunity to learn how the National Diet of Japan functions as a whole.

Although it adopts a constitutional monarchy similar to Malaysia and the United Kingdom, its plenary sittings and political dynamics are distinct and more refined, reflecting Japanese culture.

I also learned about the remarkable history behind the building and how the deliberation of bills is conducted in the National Diet.

◆ Working Youth

We were truly honored—and admittedly a little starstruck—by the number of Members of Parliament and distinguished figures in Japan’s political scene who took the time to engage with us.

We gained invaluable insights from their vast political experience, and the sharing sessions helped us realise how many Japanese politicians have close ties with Malaysia, as well as how they have shaped and influenced the political landscape and bilateral relations between our two countries. I look forward to continuing this relationship by helping to bridge the gap—not only between our two nations, but also between our respective political parties—towards stronger cooperation and mutual understanding.

4. Voices from the Receiving Parties (excerpt)

◆ Observation Destination Representative

We felt that while there is a high level of interest among people from Southeast Asia in recent economic security policies, their knowledge of Japan’s diplomatic and international economic policies from the 1970s and 1980s is relatively limited. We hope to help broaden their understanding by also addressing these areas.

In addition, outreach to the political sectors of other countries can be challenging for our office alone, and the exchange of views with the participants therefore proved to be a valuable opportunity.

5. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt), Articles, etc.

March 24, 2026 (Instagram) Working Youth Honored to be invited by the Embassy of Japan to join the Malaysia-Japan Young Political Exchange (JENESYS). Today was all about cultural immersion. We kicked things off at Kyoto Station, an architectural gem with the iconic Kyoto Tower standing proudly in the skyline	March 25, 2026 (Instagram) Working Youth A valuable exchange with Mr. Hironori Furukawa, Vice Governor of Kyoto Prefecture, on regional governance and policy coordination. A key reflection from our session with the Kyoto Prefectural Election Administration Commission was how clearly the system separates politics from patronage.

Then we made our way to Nishiki Market - once a traditional fish market, now a vibrant hub filled with food, pre loved items and everything in between. But my highlight of the day was definitely the Shimadzu Foundation Memorial Museum. We learned about SHIMADZU Genzo, a pioneering Japanese inventor and entrepreneur known for modernizing science and technology in Japan. What began as a humble family business eventually grew into one of the country's major companies today. Truly impressive. Ok I guess that's a wrap for Day 1 till the next one.

In Japan, politicians are strictly prohibited from giving donations or gifts to constituents at any time, not just during election periods. Voters, too, are not allowed to request them.

MPs are not expected to be welfare providers or problem-solvers for their constituents' financial needs. Instead, their role is to shape laws, design policies, and debate national priorities.

How much of our political energy is spent managing requests, rather than building solutions? Ultimately, good leadership isn't about how much you distribute, but how well you design systems and policies that no longer require it.

We also had the opportunity to observe early voting in Muko city, as the city prepares for its local elections.



March 27, 2026 (Facebook Reel video of Mr. FURUYA Keiji, President of the Japan–Malaysia Parliamentary Friendship League)
An exchange of views meeting with young Malaysian representatives was held under the auspices of the Japan–Malaysia Parliamentary Friendship League (President: Mr. FURUYA Keiji).

March 31, 2026 (Institute of Geoeconomics' X)
“[Activity Report] On Friday, March 27, five young representatives visiting Japan from Malaysia paid a visit to the Institute of Geoeconomics.”
Based on a lecture delivered by Mr. SAGARA Yoshiyuki, Senior Research Fellow, on economic security, the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP), and the potential for strategic cooperation between Japan and Malaysia, the participants engaged in a lively and substantive discussion.

6. Presentations of Program Findings (excerpt)

Locations: Tokyo, Kyoto

- ◆ Through this training, we learned that Japan's modern parliamentary system was not modeled on any single country, but was instead established by integrating the systems and ideas of several Western countries. We also deepened our understanding of the mechanisms of industrial growth by examining how small-scale cottage industries developed into global enterprises through technological innovation and market expansion. In addition, we learned that early voting and absentee voting are widely accessible to ordinary citizens, about various initiatives to address the challenges of an aging society, and about the importance of economic security in supporting the stability and development of the nation. Overall, this program proved to be a highly meaningful opportunity for reflecting on contemporary society.

Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)