



# Friendship programme

## MoU signing formalises ties between MPSJ and Japanese city

By JADE CHAN

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**T**HE management of Subang Jaya Municipal Council (MPSJ) is hoping to learn from Hioki City how and what it takes to create a more environmentally conscious community and to better manage solid waste.

"We want to learn the secrets of the Japanese — how disciplined and concerned they are when it comes to separating and disposing garbage properly, and how they can implement the practice without being coerced," said MPSJ president Datuk Asmawi Kasbi.

"We also want to learn how to successfully implement the biomass town project. MPSJ is collaborating with Universiti Putra Malaysia and several agencies for the Serdang Biomass Town pilot programme to process domestic waste into reusable energy sources.

"But Japan already has 300 biomass towns to date, and will double that number to 600 by the year 2020."

Asmawi was speaking after signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between MPSJ and Hioki City of Japan for the Friendship City programme.

Hioki, a city located in Kagoshima Prefecture, Japan, was represented by its Mayor Takamitsu Miyaji.

The MoU aims at creating a strategic relationship for mutual learning and knowledge sharing on aspects like community development, environment, innovation, education, economy, sports, culture and tourism.

The cooperation and smart partnership would also contribute towards knowledge transfer, innovation development and human capital growth between the two cit-

ies and countries.

"We hope to leverage on Japan's expertise in green technology and environmentally friendly initiatives in particular," said Asmawi.

"There will be aspects that need to be adapted. For example, Japan choose incinerators to dispose its solid waste while Malaysia uses landfills, but it is an opportunity for the local authorities and federal government to learn how to manage waste more efficiently."

In addition, Asmawi expressed hope that the MPSJ workforce would emulate the systematic and dynamic work culture of the Japanese.

Miyaji said the relationship between Hioki City and Malaysia

dates back some 15 years through friendly ties between its people, before the establishment of an informal strategic relationship and knowledge transfer programme, then finally formalising the exchange with the Friendship City programme.

"We hope to learn from Malaysia how it harnesses its natural resources, like water and wind, and convert that into energy," he said.

"We will also look into the possibility of technology and economic exchange."

Miyaji noted that what Malaysia is presently experiencing on waste management issues was similar to what Japan went through three dec-

ades ago.

"One method to address this matter was to educate the public on the impact of improper waste management on the environment," he said.

"Japanese households are required to separate garbage into several different categories, including flammable and non-flammable garbage, plastic, PET bottle and aluminium."

Hioki City, which has a total area of more than 250km-square, was founded on May 1, 2005, from the merger of four towns — Fukiage, Higashiichiki, Hiyoshi and Ijuin.

Miyaji said Hioki City is known for its agriculture, forestry and fishing industries, as well as its rich and



**Strategic relationship:**

Asmawi (left) and Miyaji (right) at the MoU signing ceremony between MPSJ and Hioki City for the Friendship City programme.

traditional culture that has been handed down for generations.

Asmawi said MPSJ will be sending a delegation to Hioki City in October to learn about the practices and technologies that can be introduced in Subang Jaya.

Present to witness the MoU signing was Japanese ambassador to Malaysia Shigeru Nakamura.

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