

## The 41st IATSS Forum

18 participants from Southeast Asian countries arrived at Chubu International Airport on Monday April 9<sup>th</sup>. Although they did not have enough sleep due to their overnight flight, they were all enthusiastic, imagining their 55 days in Japan. Through participating in "Gasshuku", a 3-day, 4-night Team Building Training in Ise City, a visit to Nara and Kyoto, seminars and Group Study, they have already gotten used to and are enjoying life in Suzuka, cooperating with each other. Especially, the experiences of the volunteer-run Japanese Cultural Introduction and home-stay gave them a deeper understanding and encouraged their further interest in Japanese culture and customs.



41st IATSS Forum Logo

## Participants' Message before Leaving for Japan



Phalla

Reading the IATSS pre-travel information kit, I cannot wait for the time to start my journey to attend this Forum soon. Getting to know new cultures and being exposed to a totally new learning and living environment, in

a well-developed country like Japan, has always been my greatest dream. Either for personal or professional development, I somehow have a very strong feeling that this is going to make me really good. There is still over one month to go, but I'm starting to prepare already. I'm arranging my work, I'm planning what items to bring for the Cultural

Exchange Day, I'm thinking of the national clothes and cultures I'll be showing to people at the forum; I'm even picturing the homestay I'm going to have with a Japanese family! I'm flying to Japan! To think and to learn together! What a great pleasure every time I remind myself of that! You're no longer that far away, Japan! I'll be seeing you soon!



Cambodia

What a great opportunity!!! I have to apply for the IATSS Forum because I have always dreamed of going to study in Japan one day. Why not profit from this opportunity to view and share my views and knowledge with others? So what I have acquired could be useful and re-used in the favor of the

world's development. This was my first thought when I first saw the advertisement for IATSS Forum in a Cambodian Daily Newspaper. It is very ambitious, isn't it? Voilà, now I have a chance to do what I have expected. I am looking forward to seeing you all and to be good friends with everyone on this planet. So what I have acquired could be useful and re-used in the favor of the world's development. This was my first thought when I first saw the advertisement for IATSS Forum in a Cambodian Daily Newspaper. It is very ambitious, isn't it? Voilà, now I have a chance to do what I have expected. I am looking forward to seeing you all and to be good friends with everyone on this planet.



Ravy



Hai

What will I do for the 55-day-period in Japan in order to maximize the benefits and not waste my golden time in Japan? This question has consistently been dancing in my mind since the day I got the good news of having been selected as a participant in the 41<sup>st</sup> IATSS

Forum. I was so happy and excited! I never dared to think that Japan would be my first destination in my dream of getting out of Vietnam to travel around the world. Surely, I will explore Japan as much as possible, by visiting places, experiencing a new lifestyle, and meeting and having more friends, not only from Japan, but also from other ASEAN countries, and to have a chance to share knowledge and experience in both work and life with other participants. In addition, I feel that I should have a responsibility to let my new friends know and understand more about Vietnam and its people. I will try my best in the next 55 days in Japan. Let's say: work hard and play hard!



Vietnam

## Participants' Messages before Leaving for Japan (Continued)

Attending the IATSS Forum is a great opportunity for me to get in-depth understanding of Japan and ASEAN countries, ranging from socio-political and cultural issues to current problems that they are facing in their respective countries. On my part, I also wish to share answers with other participants about a variety of questions about Vietnam, such as its achievements of 20 years of reformation, traditional culture, as well as pressing issues. With the convergence of 18 members from 9 ASEAN countries in the Forum, I do expect that we can study in an international environment, where a wide range of ideas and opinions will be shared and learned on the basis of openness, friendship and cultural sensitivity. As this is my first time traveling to Japan, I am also very eager to discover Japan in terms of lifestyle, culture, food, and landscapes as well as other current issues in Japanese society (aging population, low birthrate, etc).



Dao



Indonesia

It's approximately 1 month before I will leave everything behind and go to participate in the IATSS Forum in Japan. I've finally received all the information I need to prepare for the Forum. After recovering from the initial excitement, once again I'm feeling ecstatic, nervous, happy, but somewhat in disbelief. I can't believe that I'm being given this great opportunity to visit Japan and to learn not only about its culture but also about the other 8 ASEAN countries. I can't wait to have a first-hand experience of not only living in Japan, but with real Japanese families and in their homes. I am definitely looking forward to the various seminars, field studies, tours, and activities. But even more than that, I am eager to introduce Indonesia to everybody, discuss the seminar topics and possibly bring back solutions to share with my fellow Indonesians. I thank IATSS Forum for giving me this priceless life-changing opportunity and will strive to maximize my experience in Japan.



Hanny



Rina

I love many things about Japan. I think the culture and the people are very unique. They retain many of their old traditions, but on the other hand, they are not reluctant to change. Although my main sources of this little knowledge is mostly from fiction (I am a big fan of Manga and Japanese movies), I get the strong impression that "change" has become a part of daily life in Japanese society. How can this be? I hope that's what I can come to understand from IATSS Forum. From this point of view I'd like, particularly, to understand, through one or two experiences, about how Japan (government and society) manages changes relative to employee-employer relations, as well as, how workplace-safety has become a top priority in Japan. The latter topic has become a main concern in my country, since many disasters and accidents have occurred, and I hope I can also get input about this from other participants from Southeast Asia countries.



Lui

"IATSS forum is an amazing and unique program which allows young professionals from ASEAN countries to learn more about Japan. I truly believe that by joining this forum, it will help me to enhance my perspectives in life. In addition, I will gain more knowledge and new experience of Japan & ASEAN countries from the forum. IATSS and Honda have developed a very good program for Lao people as well as its ASEAN neighbors.



Laos

I've been waiting for the opportunity to study or travel to Japan since I was in high school. This is because of Japan's charming culture and economic self-development. Last year, one of my friends told me about IATSS Forum. After that, I didn't hesitate to ask about the details and an application form from my country committee secretary. Finally, my time has come. When the IATSS Forum Steering Committee announced last December that I was selected to be one of the participants to attend the 41<sup>st</sup> IATSS Forum, I just had no words to explain my emotion at that moment. Still now, I'm very excited about coming to Japan and I am counting down the days when I will meet new friends from Japan and ASEAN countries in order to exchange points of view on various issues. Together we can build more solidarity, safety and peace in our world.



SK



Dan

The IATSS Forum is an opportunity to learn as well as share. A better perspective can be attained on today's society through the program's activities. An enhanced understanding, particularly on the different concerns, issues and emerging forces shaping communities and our nations, regions and the world in general, can be achieved. In the spirit of solidarity through sharing, achievable and sustainable strategies and solutions can be learned and accomplished. With mixed emotions, as I will leave my family behind and face an interesting opportunity, the following are my objectives:

- (1) To achieve a holistic view on society's concerns and issues (because ultimately these will affect health)
- (2) To make new friends among all persons involved in IATSS Forum through the sharing of knowledge and ideas in the spirit of camaraderie and solidarity.
- (3) To experience the Japanese way of life and imbue myself with virtues and qualities worth emulating.

I learned about the IATSS Forum 6 years ago from my alumni-boss, who incessantly nagged me to follow suit until I finally handed in my application. Thanks for the 1month extension, I met the 2<sup>nd</sup> deadline. My participation will be a major breakthrough in my life, being my first time to travel abroad and meet new faces. More significantly, it will not be there for rest and relaxation; but to represent my country in an international assembly and to pick up and share knowledge/experience in the process. But I am sure there will be lots of fun...there will always be thrills and pleasure in discovering and doing new things. I am definite that the learnings and exposure we will all acquire will enrich us and our own cultures; thereby contributing to better international relations and understanding. I am indeed fortunate that Japan (the epitome of industrial and technological advancement) so generously endowed me this rare opportunity. Counting the days, the excitement is firing-up my system to accelerate momentum (to finish the workload here) and be ready to say Konnichiwa JAPAN!



Philippines

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Sar



Zain

Hi friends! I can't wait to meet you all and hope to develop lifelong relationships with each and every one of you. I can just imagine how much fun we're going to have listening to seminars and having discussions about various interesting topics, not to mention getting to visit some cool spots in Japan. I run an education business in my country, and I aim to bring back my experience from the forum to share with my audience, who are mostly young Malaysians. I would like to take this opportunity to convey my appreciation to everyone who has been involved in organizing this wonderful event. I hope to return the gesture by giving my full participation. I'm sure that the IATSS Forum will be a very important chapter in my life.



Malaysia

I was rendered speechless and overjoyed when I received a phone call from IATSS only a few days after I had attended the interview. To be accepted as part of the IATSS family was one of the best birthday presents I have ever recieved. This chance of a lifetime is like a dream come true. Knowing that it's Japan that I will be heading to made me more determined than ever to prepare myself for the challenges ahead. As more work pours in without any sign of mellowing out, my anticipation and excitement is undeterred. At the end of the forum, I aim to take with me invaluable experiences and knowledge that will promote self development and advancement. I am anxiously looking forward to sharing, learning and growing with fellow participants and IATSS members. Let us all work hand in hand and make this trip a memorable chapter in our lives!



Linda



Eunice

I'm really excited and blessed to have been selected for the IATSS forum. I've always liked Japan and enjoyed the delicious food and rich culture. Although it will not be my first time in Japan, it will be a new experience for me to interact with my ASEAN counterparts for 2 months. Personally, I can identify and appreciate IATSS's motto of "Thinking and Learning Together". I look forward to exchanging thoughts and views with people who have the same passion to share and learn. I believe that such international exchanges are invaluable as we get to network with people of diverse political, economic, cultural and social backgrounds and forge friendships across geographical boundaries. So, see you guys soon!



Singapore

## Participants' Messages before Leaving for Japan (Continued)

The IATSS Forum is a unique opportunity for young Asians to reflect on our region's economic, sociological and cultural diversity. I am indeed honoured to be attending the 41<sup>st</sup> IATSS Forum this April. Through this experience, I hope to learn more about other nations and help others learn more about Singapore. I expect the forum to be an eye-opening experience, where preconceived notions of ASEAN and Japan will be challenged; where I will learn something new in every seminar, every local encounter and every conversation. Opinions are sometimes formed too easily through books, television and the Web. But to quote a tired cliché, "you'll never ever know if you never ever go". I am going to Japan with an eager and open mind. I look forward to meeting my fellow participants and building closer, more meaningful multilateral relationships between our countries and peoples.



Adrian



Marlar

The theme of the IATSS Forum Program: "Thinking and Learning Together, Getting to know Japan, Getting to know Each Other" is very fascinating to me. It gives me added pleasure to find that the Forum is also a place for participants to develop a greater understanding of their ASEAN neighbours and to address current ASEAN-Japan issues. In addition, I will gain a wealth of experience by participating in the field study, group study, seminars and study tours. This Forum is very important for me professionally, and I will have a golden opportunity to study the process of development and modernization of Japan. After completing IATSS Forum, I believe I will return to Myanmar as a better and highly knowledgeable manager in terms of technological "know-how". I will also join the IATSS Forum alumni association in my home country and carry out the functions of the association enthusiastically.



Myanmar

I am quite excited that I have been selected to participate in the IATSS Forum, where young people from most ASEAN countries will meet with Japanese participants to learn, share and exchange information, culture and experience, and ultimately build friendships and a net-work between these countries. I believe that my knowledge will be broadened by studying and discussing through the seminars and group study. A unique experience will be the home-stay, where I can understand and narrow down the gap between language and culture difference. In addition, I am quite enthusiastic about planning and exploring modern cities to see how civic society and lifestyles have developed in Japan. I am sure that the factory tours will also improve our technological knowledge in fostering the development of our countries. Therefore, I really look forward to meeting new people and having challenging new experiences...



Sai Sai



Thailand

At first, in my quest for "IATSS", I wondered what "IATSS" was, since it implies traffic and safety science, which is not related to my profession. Proudly, after the final round of selections, I am one chosen from Thailand to participate in the 41<sup>th</sup> IATSS Forum. Then, I have come to realize that not only the forum will cope with traffic and safety, but also IATSS will widen our business, cultural and social perspectives. Having reached this achievement, I tell myself that I shall do my best in "Learning and Thinking Together". Establishing friendships, attending activities as well as learning and accepting cultural differences, particularly during the homestay, shall especially contribute to a uniquely invaluable experience for me. To broaden our visions, we can jump start discussions and seminar sessions, where I aim to exchange my knowledge and experience as a Thai with other ASEAN members and Japanese. Moreover, I hope the bridge between the participating countries shall closely connect us to each other and further develop our IATSS family together. Thank you very much for allowing me to be able to grow in my life. I cannot wait to see my new family and let's 'Learn and Think Together.'



Bia

## Participants' Messages before Leaving for Japan (Continued)



Pang

Being selected by IATSS Forum is a great opportunity, since I will have a chance to learn about Japanese culture, simultaneously practicing my leadership skills and creating a network in South-East Asia. Those are the very first advantages to my mind. After receiving the syllabus, I found out that I would have a chance to gain more experience than I had expected. Considering its objectives, it aims, not only to create a network and teaching leadership skills, but also in simulating problems in each country, how they are interlinked, and how problems in one country can affect another. Hence, this is a goal of the Forum that we need to think and learn about together. I feel that I am going to be a small part of the jigsaw to drive my country and South- East Asia toward the future. J I am really looking forward to seeing everyone and gaining experience in Japan!

## IATSS Forum Secretariat News

Our staff member Mr. Toyoji Isihda (Toyo-san) has been moved from IATSS Forum at the end of February. And we also have had a new staff member Mr. Tomoo Oba (Tomo-san) to join at the 1st of February. The following are messages from both of them:



**Toyoji ISHIDA**

I had been working at IATSS Forum for 4 years and 8 months and have moved on to Honda Motor Co., Ltd. Customer Service, Parts Supply Division on 1st March 2007.

I would like to thank all the persons who helped me during my stay at IATSS Forum.

While I worked at IATSS Forum, the most impressive thing for me was receiving a message board upon which the participants wrote their thanks message for me; these are their words: "Thank you for your extreme concern shown to us. I felt a 'fatherly' warmth in you! It has been wonderful knowing you!" "Dear my Japanese "Daddy" I'm really appreciate your extreme bareness patience. I really enjoyed Kyoto & Tokyo trip with your companion. Thanks you very much" " Thank you for your support & advises & guides for our Individual Planning Day. Your effort helped me tremendously (sic)"

When I received this message from the participants, I could not help but be moved to tears because I was so impressed by the wonderful message of thanks from the participants. Each participant wrote the thank you message with this feeling of gratitude toward me. I think that this impressive message is not only for me, but for all the people who have helped me at IATSS Forum.

My new job is maintaining warehouse facilities for spare parts at it's best. I think the best way to maintain a plant well, is to check the condition with love. I would like to do my best by using my experiences at IATSS Forum. I would like to say thank you very much to all the people who have helped me and I hope to see you again in the near future.



**Tomoo Ooba**

[Residence]

Between Tsu and Suzuka,  
close to mountains

[Hobby]

I enjoy watching and  
driving old cars

Although the quality and efficiency of old cars are not as good as modern ones, they have their own characteristics and personality. I would like to enjoy driving both kinds of cars to compare them in the near future.

Luckily, Suzuka Circuit, where IATSS Forum is located, is the Mecca of cars and so I enjoy having a chance to encounter old and new rare cars on the weekends around the city.

As I have lived mainly in the eastern part of Japan, I do not have a locality in the western part of Japan, including Mie. I am looking forward to exploring new places through IATSS forum activities as well as in my spare time on the weekends.

I would like to give good support to the running of the IATSS programme and also to enjoy experiencing various programme activities.

At the end of March, 2007, Ms. Masumi Taniguchi and Ms. Oriie Kitamura resigned from IATSS Forum. New staff members joined the IATSS Forum in April and May.. The following are messages from the new staff members.



**Mikio Koganei**

Hello, my name is Mikio KOGANEI and I have been a member of IATSS since this MAY. DOUZO YOROSHIKU ONEGAI SHIMASU!

I worked at IATSS Headquarters in Yaesu, Tokyo, for 4 years and 8 months. As I have attended the Opening Ceremony in Suzuka, accompanying with visiting Ambassadors, there are some volunteer members and lecturers that I have met before. The job here is 180 degrees different from what I had been doing in Yaesu. I always keep my original enthusiasm that I had when I began my work after graduating university, and try my best.

I also would like to do my best to support the role of IATSS Forum, "Offering a place to encourage talent through International Exchange". Personally, I spent 8 years of school from primary to high school in Madrid, Spain, so I have been working without taking "International Exchange" as a special thing. I would like to display my abilities full here in Suzuka.



**Maiko Tsuneki**

I am Maiko Tsuneki, a new staff member at IATSS Forum. When I graduated from university and started to work for Honda Motor Co.,

Ltd., I was engaged in the sales and service operations for Asian countries. When I joined the 37<sup>th</sup> IATSS Forum as a Japanese participant, I had really valuable experiences which I could not experience at work. At that time I was inspired by the excellent participants, too. In order to enjoy a meaningful and pleasant 55 day stay in Suzuka, I will do my best as a coordinator for the participants.

Since I had only lived in Tokyo, I have found some difficulties in my unfamiliar surroundings. I hope I will discover as many fun things as possible.

Thank you.

<Hometown> Nerima, Tokyo  
 <Present residence> Suzuka  
 <Hobbies> Tennis, Travel  
 <Passion> Driving



**Masumi Shima**

Hello, my name is Masumi Shima. I have been working for IATSS Forum since the end of March. I grew up in Suzuka and have been interested in IATSS Forum activities since I was student, when I took part in some programmes, such as the Homestay, seminars and field studies. I am

very happy to have this opportunity to be involved in the IATSS Forum program as a staff member this time.

I have studied Drama in Education in England and worked in the education department of the performing arts organization where we provided various educational programmes like IATSS Forum. I hope I can use these experiences to give my best support to the participants so that they can spend a fruitful time during their stay in Suzuka.

[Hobbies]

Travel, making things  
(Cooking, Handicrafts, DIY),

[Special Talent?]

Big eater though I am small!



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