

International Seminar
“Transforming Urban Transportation in ASEAN Big Cities”

Greeting by Honored Guest Kozo Fujita,
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Let me first say how gratified I am that so many of you are participating today in this International Seminar.

I also am deeply appreciative that illustrious instructors from Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam will be giving lectures here. Those of you at JTTRI who are holding this Seminar have my respect as well.

I understand that representatives of Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam will be giving lectures regarding the theme of this Seminar, “Transforming Urban Transportation in ASEAN Big Cities”. The economic growth of Jakarta, Manila, and Ho Chi Minh City has been spectacular, and they have accomplished great changes. So how their public transportation has changed and how it is to be further transformed is a theme of extreme interest.

The ten countries of ASEAN have a total population of 650 million, and the economic output of this economic zone has reached 2.8 trillion U.S. dollars. Even further growth is anticipated in the coming years. Thanks to this rapid growth, there are now urban areas with populations of more than 10 million in ASEAN as well, in Jakarta, Manila, and Ho Chi Minh City. These cities can be said to be leading ASEAN to become advanced nations. I also hear that public transportation construction in these giant cities is proceeding rapidly. For example, in Jakarta, my memory of the opening of the MRT North-South Line in March is still very fresh. Also, in Manila, an agreement regarding a subway in the metropolitan area etc. is being carried out, and MRT No. 3 Line renovation which started this May is now progressing steadily. Further, in Ho Chi Minh City, construction of No. 1 line of Ho Chi Minh City Railway is now proceeding. The public transportation systems of these three cities are similar in that Japanese companies have contributed greatly to their construction. Japan has developed urban public transportation for long period. In 1872, Japan opened its first railway between Shinbashi and Yokohama, and since then, Japan’s big cities and its network of railways have developed together.

Public transportation bodies such as bus lines have developed primarily in cities. Japan has a great deal of accumulated experience in the construction of public transportation in big cities. I believe that Japan can cooperate with other countries' development of transportation in many ways.

I hope that through today's lectures and panel discussion, we all can more deeply understand the visions created by each of three countries regarding public transportation in big cities and the problems that confront us. In addition, I hope we have the opportunity here to consider what should be learned from the efforts of each of three countries and what kind of cooperation Japan can provide them with based on its experience and know-how.

Today we are honored to have lectures by personages who can describe "Transforming Urban Transportation in ASEAN Big Cities" from a broad overall viewpoint. Let me end my greeting with the sincere hope that through this Seminar, knowledge will be shared that leads to meaningful advances in the development of transportation in the big cities of ASEAN.

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