

# Bridging ASEAN and Japan for 40 years

Since 1981, the ASEAN-Japan Centre (AJC) has been working to strengthen economic partnerships between the ASEAN member states and Japan in the areas of trade, investment, and tourism, as well as promoting exchanges of persons between the two parties. As ASEAN-Japan relations evolve and assume greater importance over the years, the AJC has been expanding the scope of its activities in order to better address new challenges faced by ASEAN and Japan.

The AJC's activities highlighting Brunei Darussalam this year include a webinar to introduce the latest tourism information on Brunei to the tourism industry in Japan, issuance of the research paper "Brunei Darussalam: Aquaculture Feasibility Study for Investment" and a webinar/business meeting to follow the paper "Aquaculture Investment Opportunities & Business Matching in Brunei Darussalam," which is going to be organized on Thursday, November 11, in cooperation with the Embassy of Brunei Darussalam in Tokyo, the Department of Fisheries, the Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism of Brunei Darussalam, and Brunei Economic Development Board.

Also, two webinars for the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) on trade, investment and tourism areas are scheduled to be held by the end of the year. One will be the BIMP-EAGA trade and investment promotion webinar designed to provide Japanese stakeholders with unique insight into the business opportunities available in one of ASEAN's sub-regions.

The other BIMP-EAGA webinar will aim to provide updated information on the Japanese travel market and consider ways to promote the BIMP-EAGA sub-region as a tourism destination among the Japanese people, focusing on ecotourism. The webinar will also include a presentation about tourism promotion explaining effective ways of using social media.

These BIMP-EAGA webinars will be conducted in English and Japanese, and open to anyone interested in the topics. The latest information on the webinar schedule can be found on the AJC website (<https://www.asean.or.jp/en/>).

## New Secretary-General of AJC



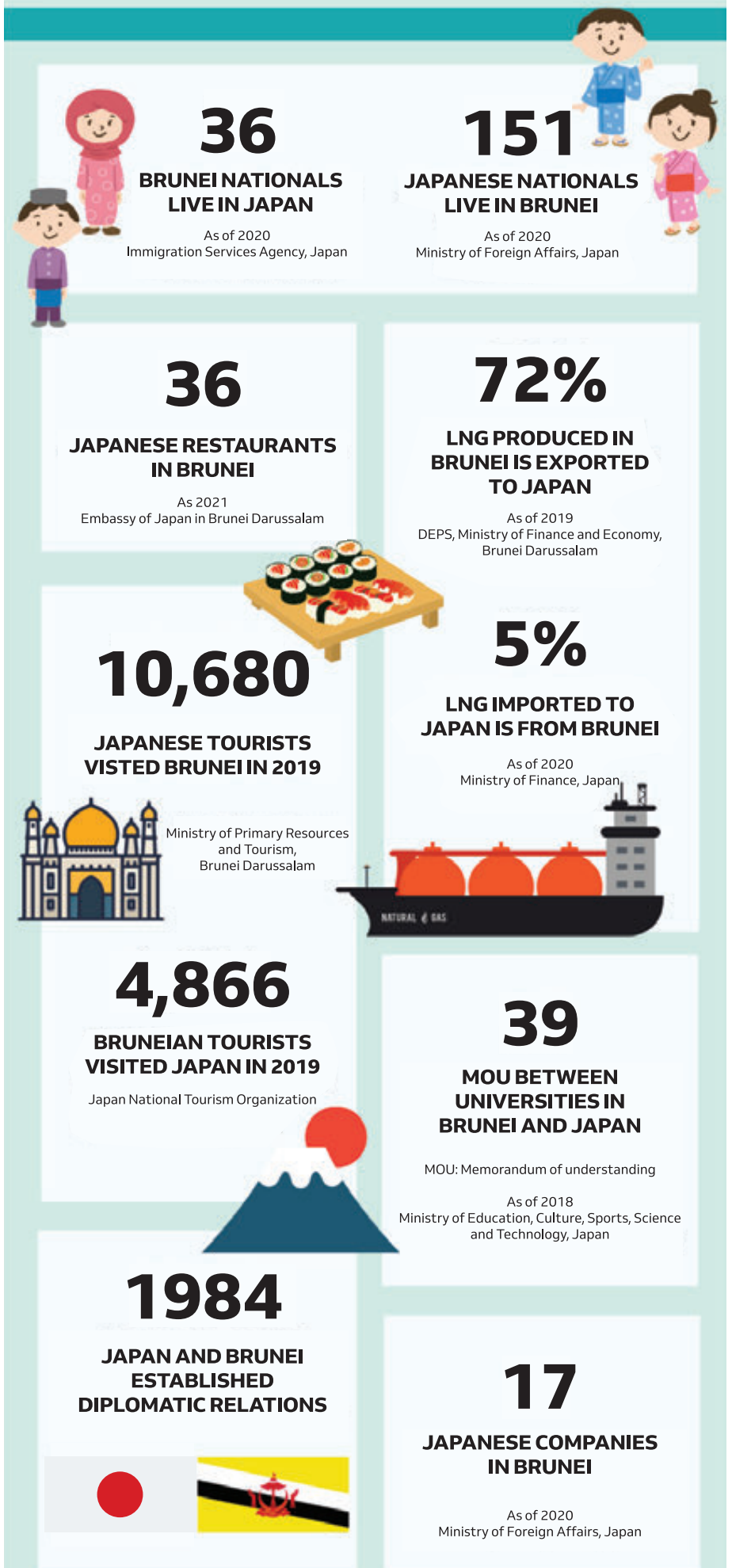
Mr. Kunihiro Hirabayashi has been appointed as the Secretary-General of the AJC in Tokyo as of September 1, 2021. Being a cardiac surgeon and the former Regional Advisor Regional Chief of Health, UNICEF East Asian and Pacific Regional Office, Bangkok, Thailand, Mr. Hirabayashi devoted much of his 40-year professional life for the best interests of people and children in Asia-Pacific and ASEAN countries.

In his message as the new Secretary-General of the AJC, he stated, "The ASEAN-Japan Centre has a 40-year history of excellence in serving as a bridge between ASEAN member states and Japan to promote trade, investment, tourism and people-to-people exchanges. The Centre also has diverse committed experts with vitality, who are devoting all their efforts to expand and deepen the partnership between ASEAN member states and Japan. With my trusted colleagues, I will play an integral role in reimagining the Centre and will commit myself to contributing toward a sustainable, integrated, peaceful and stable future for people in ASEAN member states and Japan."

He also touched on the partnership between Japan and Brunei, adding that he looks forward to visiting the country. "Not only Brunei has been an important partner for Japan but also it has everything that a visitor would love. I definitely want to visit Brunei as my first official visit as Secretary-General."

Mr. Hirabayashi encouraged visitors in Japan to drop by the AJC located near the Tokyo Tower. "We, the ASEAN-Japan Centre, will always welcome you from the bottom of our hearts," he said.

## BRUNEI-JAPAN RELATIONS FACTS



## About ASEAN-Japan Centre

The ASEAN Promotion Centre on Trade, Investment and Tourism, or the ASEAN-Japan Centre (AJC) for short, was established in 1981 in Tokyo, Japan with an agreement between the governments of Japan and ASEAN namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand in order to embody the "Fukuda Doctrine" (1977) into their relationship that emphasized, among others, the significance of "heart-to-heart understanding" and "equal partnership." Later on, Brunei Darussalam, Viet Nam, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar, in that order, acceded to the agreement. The AJC is celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.

ASEAN-JAPAN CENTRE  
(ASEAN Promotion Centre on Trade, Investment and Tourism)

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