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Prepared by: T E Tan  
President

## 34<sup>TH</sup> AGM OF PAAM

On 21<sup>st</sup> April 2019, PAAM convened its 34<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting at Sheraton Petaling Jaya Hotel. Prior to the commencement of the AGM, members and guests were treated to a sumptuous buffet lunch. A total of 31 members who signed in for the AGM were also surprised with a wonderful door-gift.



A group photo of the CCM and members

The 34<sup>th</sup> AGM was conducted in an orderly manner, with many noteworthy suggestions raised from the floor. One of the suggestions was for PAAM to conduct regular Japanese Language classes specially for members. This could be a benefit for members. The Central Committee would look into the feasibility of this and other suggestions.

We hope to see more members participating in our future AGMs and contribute positively by giving good implementable ideas for the benefit of the general membership.

So see you all in our next 35<sup>th</sup> AGM.  
Regards. Gambate!!



Members enjoying their buffet lunch before the start of AGM



A section of the members attending the AGM

### Central Committee members for 2019-2020

Name of CCM	Position	Name of CCM	Position
Tan Teng Ek	President	Siao Kent Wah	Committee Member
How Chee Seng	Vice President	Yang Chor Leong	Committee Member
Yap Choon Ming	General Secretary	Jacqueline Ooi Fatt Choo	Committee Member
Cheong Lye Foon	Asst. General Secretary	Stephen Wong Kam Sun	Committee Member
Khor Kai Tong	Hon Treasurer	Yeong Soon Seng	Committee Member
-	Asst. Hon Treasurer		

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Mr Tan Teng Ek  
President

In this issue of the Newsletter, I have received a contribution by a long-time member who had expressed his concerns about the future of PAAM.

No doubt, his observations and concerns are all very pertinent and relevant. For example, Mr Eric Koh expressed concern that PAAM had not been able to attract young people to join as members. He also observed that PAAM membership is largely an aging membership. Yes, he is spot-on on our aging membership, as members above the age of 55 account for more than 50% of our total membership.

The Central Committee of PAAM is aware of all the issues mentioned by Mr Eric Koh. In fact for many years already we have been struggling with these issues and how to overcome them.

We have made it our policy that all PAAM's outings, annual dinners and other activities are heavily subsidised so that, if possible, all members and their family members maybe able to participate. Alas, even our recent RM120.00/head Annual Dinner for which members only need to pay RM15.00 did not attract a full-house, only about 50 members and their family members turned up.

We in the Central Committee are ever so mindful that we are handling members' monies. Hence suggestions such as giving out scholarships must be thoroughly deliberated upon as they involved fairly huge funds and are an on-going commitment, that cannot be trifled with without properly thought-out framework.

Like I always say in my message to members, PAAM is only as strong as its members make it out to be. Whilst we have in our midst many members with various expertise, when the call goes out for contributions (albeit with a cash voucher thrown in as a token of appreciation), often these calls come back to us empty and without any response. Even the appeal for articles/write-ups of interest are met with almost zero response. We have to re-learn and catch the spirit of volunteerism. To change a little John F Kennedy's famous inaugural address "Ask not what PAAM can do for you - ask what can you do for PAAM."

We post on back cover the write-up by Mr Eric Koh highlighting his concerns on the future of PAAM for your perusal. Thank you and warmest regards.

Tan Teng Ek  
President of PAAM

### What is AOTS?

AOTS or the Association for Overseas Technical Scholarships, a Japanese agency, jointly supported by Japan METI and the industry, is entrusted with the task of developing human resources in the third world. It has trained over 8000 Malaysians over the last 3 decades. AOTS is now renamed as HIDA.

All AOTS ex-trainees are entitled to be admitted as a member of the Persatuan Alumni AOTS Malaysia (PAAM) which is the alumni association for all who have participated in AOTS training programs or even events conducted locally by PAAM.

To be a member all you need to do is to fill up a membership application form and submit it to the Secretariat office. There are 3 categories of membership ie life member, ordinary member and corporate membership.

#### PAAM OFFICE

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### Announcements

#### Articles for Newsletter

To make your newsletter more interesting, we would like to appeal for interesting articles from members. Your articles can be on any topic but should not be too technical. We would appreciate articles that are original and will make an interesting read, between 100 to 200 words. As a token of appreciation, PAAM will send you cash vouchers for articles that are published in PAAM Newsletters.



#### Japanese Language Teacher - Vacancy

**WANTED** – PAAM is looking for a free lance Japanese Language teacher who can teach small groups preferably in the evenings in clients' office premises. The person we are looking for must have teaching experience and must be able to speak the language fluently, if he/she is not a native speaker. Must have own transport. Interested – please write in to paam@aots.org for further details etc.





## VISIT TO THE WORLD OF PHALAENOPSIS ORCHID FARM IN ULU YAM

November 10<sup>th</sup> 2018 was a bright and sunny day as 8 cars wound their way through scenic highways to an Orchid Farm in Ulu Yam about an hour's drive from Petaling Jaya. Altogether 22 people joined in the excursion including 2 young children.

Founded by 2 local orchid enthusiasts with the passion of growing beautiful, but highly difficult-to-grow Phalaenopsis orchids, Steven Cheong and Yap Y.K, began their journey of researching, cultivating and propagating Phalaenopsis orchid in 2006. The farm occupies a 6 acre agricultural land and is now open to visitors.

We were given a tour of the farm that show-cased all the different varieties of Phalaenopsis orchids besides being taught how to take care of these precious plants. Their expert on propagating gave us a step-by-step lesson on how to propagate new plants too.

This trip was truly a memorable one when we saw nature at its best in so many different colours.



PAAM team taking a group photo



The Orchid Expert from Taiwan giving us tips on orchid cultivation

## COURTESY VISIT BY ABK PENANG CENTRAL COMMITTEE

On 15 Mar 2019, PAAM was privileged to receive a courtesy visit by the newly-minted ABK Penang Central Committee led by its President Mr William Khiung and accompanied by their Hon General Secretary, Mr Lau Eng Wah.



Central Committee members having dinner with ABK Penang visitors



Central Committee members with ABK Penang visitors

## UPCOMING EVENTS



**7<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2019 (SUNDAY)**

**9:30AM - 1.30PM**

**PAAM OFFICE**

52C Jalan SS22/25 Damansara Jaya (+603-7726 2863)  
Participation is free of charge.



### SEKINCHAN DAY TRIP

Tentative date: Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2019

Time: from 8.30<sup>am</sup> - 3.30<sup>pm</sup>

Assemble at PAAM premises

More details will be confirmed later, please call PAAM office.

## JAPANESE LANGUAGE PECULIARITIES



*This is a regular column contributed by Mr Tan Teng Ek on the peculiarities of the Japanese language as well as his observations and insights on everyday life in Japan.*

The student of the Japanese language will invariably notice that the Japanese like to use certain words twice to give a particular meaning. For example, “peko-peko” actually is the sound of a growling empty stomach. So, when the Japanese says “**Watashi wa onaka ga peko-peko**”, he is saying my stomach is making the “peko peko” sound, meaning he is hungry.

Another word which they like to repeat is “dan-dan” meaning gradually or slowly. For example, we can describe some unpleasant incident and add “**Watashi wa dan-dan shinpai ni natte kita**” – “I gradually became worried”



The word “ma-ma” means so so, not-good-yet-not-bad or not fantastic. If a Japanese friend asks you for your opinion on the movie you’ve just watched and your reply is “**ma-ma desu**”, you are saying “so so, not really fantastic.”

Zen-zen means completely. For example, if we wish to explain why we fail to do something and we say “**Watashi wa zen-zen wasuremashita**”, it means I completely forgot it.

Another favourite Japanese word is naka-naka, meaning considerably, quite, very or not easily



なかなか  
nakanaka

“considerably; quite very;  
not easily”

ときどき  
時々  
tokidoki

“sometimes; once in a while”

もしーもし  
moshi moshi

“hello”

For example, “**Tabemono ga naka-naka umai desu**” – the food is very good

Or, “**Kare wa supōtsu ga naka-naka jōzudesu**” – he is quite good in sports,

The word toki-doki means sometimes or once in a while. For example “**Watashi wa toki-doki Nihonryōri wo tabemasu**” (I sometimes eat Japanese food).

Finally as a last example of Japanese words that are repeated, the word “moshi” means “if” but when used twice “moshi moshi”, it means “hello” as when answering the telephone call or calling out to another person.

Why do the Japanese have to say moshi in pair? Apparently, according to tradition, saying “**moshi-moshi**” twice was the way to prove that you are not a ghost. It seems that the Japanese do believe that ghost can only say “moshi” once! So when answering the telephone and if just say “moshi”, you can expect a long silence over the other end of the line....

ありがとうご  
ざいました。  
またね。

Thank you.  
See you again!





## TENACITY BRINGS SUCCESS TO THE BUSINESS



*By Stephen Wong who is also a  
Committee member of PAAM*

**S**uccess, whether in business, entrepreneurship or academia, is really our own choice; it is very much determined by ourselves. Our own personality characteristics or psychological factors, often called motivational or non-cognitive factors, can be nurtured in the right direction to help us achieve such success. These factors matter even more than cognitive (intellectual) factors, in the determination of our performance and success. Our beliefs about ourselves, our feeling about work, our habits of self-control and discipline are part of these factors mentioned above.

The psychology of the entrepreneur is to think of himself/herself and his/her business in ways that will shape his/her behavior, in order to act successfully. When these non-cognitive factors are in place, the entrepreneur will behave and be motivated beyond all imaginations. In fact, these non-cognitive factors constitute what social psychologists call motivation. They foster mindsets and self-regulation strategies can motivate the entrepreneur to work incessantly, in fact more than what money and other rewards can do.

In the past, a popular belief that money and glory to a successful business venture eventually will promote a success story. Unfortunately, this often backfires as the resource-scarce entrepreneur finds it hard to endure the lonely journey of frugality and sacrifice, with a good measure of “confidence-bashing” experiences of discouragement and failures thrown in along the way.

The entrepreneur therefore needs to know which mindset and non-cognitive skills matter and how best to nurture/develop and utilise them.

Non-cognitive factors that help entrepreneur to behave, act and achieve eventual success in business can be brought together under a key personality trait called TENACITY. The nature of tenacity or perseverance provides the entrepreneur with endurance to overcome challenges and obstacles (Holland & Shepherd, 2011) in times of extreme hardships. How does tenacity, identified as an archetypical personality trait (Locke, 2000) of the entrepreneurs, help in achieving success?

First, at its most basic level, tenacity is about hard work, and working smart for the longest time.

Specifically, tenacity is about having mindsets and skills that allow the entrepreneur to look beyond the short-term sufferings and concerns to the longer term or higher-order goals, and to withstand challenges and setbacks as he/she perseveres toward these goals. Short-term concerns might involve worries about how others look at us servicing, carrying and delivering small packages to customers, entertaining and taking orders from customers personally, and an unwillingness or inability to put off immediate gratification in favor of longer-term achievements. Any of these factors may make the entrepreneur less engaged with his/her business and thus, less likely to take advantage of opportunities to venture further, coupled with a waning (recessing) passion for the work. (This shall be dealt with in my next article).

Second, what does tenacity look like? The tenacious entrepreneur exhibits the following characteristics and behaviors:

- (1) He/she believes the business is part of him/her, professionally as well as socially. The firm is part of his/her whole being, and is seen as a route to future goals, such as providing for his/her family or contributing to the community or society to which he/she belongs.
- (2) He/she is engaged in developing the business, views every effort positively and is able to forego immediate pleasures for the sake of the business. For example, he/she seeks challenging goals/tasks and seeks opportunities to learn new things to expand the business, rather than remain in the comfort-zone of things.
- (3) He/she is not derailed by difficulties of any kind, be it competitive challenges, failure, and even losses. Setback is seen as an opportunity for a problem to be resolved or an improvement for future advancement, rather than a humiliation or condemnation of his/her ability/worth or a symbol of future failures or a confirmation that he/she does not belong.
- (4) He/she knows how to remain engaged over the long-haul, be relevant all the time and knows how to deploy new strategies to effectively move forward.

Some entrepreneurs bring these mindsets and skills with them at the start-up of their businesses. However, for those who lack the experience and know-how, these mindsets and skills can be taught. In the entrepreneur's journey, such mindsets and skills can be used to predict and will ultimately determine his/her success as well.

## COURTESY CALL BY OUTGOING AOTS REPRESENTATIVE TANAKA HAYATO AND THE NEW AOTS REPRESENTATIVE, TANAKA MASAAKI



*By: Jacqueline Hui  
She is a member of the  
Central Committee.*

The outgoing Representative of AOTS based in Indonesia, Mr Tanaka Hayato paid a visit to the PAAM Office in Damansara Jaya on the morning of Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May. He came to say 'good-bye' to us as well as to introduce the new AOTS Representative to us. The new AOTS Representative is Mr Tanaka Masaaki who comes from Tokyo to take up the position in July.

Four members of the Central Committee welcomed them and we sat together for a short meeting.

Our PAAM Vice President, Mr How made a request that AOTS Japan inform us of the Malaysian students who have completed their programmes in Japan so that we can contact them on their



*From right: VP Mr How, Mr Tanaka Masaaki (incoming AOTS Rep), Mr Tanaka Hayato (outgoing AOTS Rep), Committee members Ms Jackie Hui, Mr Yeong & Gen Secretary Mr Yap*

return. This is to help increase the membership of our Alumni. The pre-departure briefing is not done at PAAM, so we would welcome information about the returning trainees who will be recruited as our members. Mr Tanaka Hayato informed that after screening the candidates in Indonesia their information is given to the Alumni in Indonesia so it should not be a problem with Malaysia.

## JAPANESE LANGUAGE CLASSES



*Trainees from Denso*



*Aeon staff with Ms Misako, Japanese teacher*



*Trainees from Panasonic Malaysia*



Denso signed a contract with PAAM to train 7 of their staff, 4 in December and 3 in early January 2019. 2 of their best staff were selected for training in Japan in April 2019 for a stint of 1 year.

AEON sent a total of 7 staff to participate in this year's training. The reduction in staff was part of their budget constraint allocated for Japanese Language training. The 7 staff left for Tokyo in May 2019 for a 6 months intensive departmental training. Upon return they will be posted to other branches of AEON chain of departments.

Elsewhere, our sensei Ms Bevis Chia had completed Japanese Language training for 30 staff from Panasonic Malaysia. This training is to get more staff to learn the language and help them to communicate with the Japanese management.



## REPORT ON JAGAM'S 45<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AND FUND RAISING DINNER



By: Yap Choon Ming  
Hon. General Secretary

On 1<sup>st</sup> December 2018, The Japan Graduate's Association of Malaysia (JAGAM) held its 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration-cum-Fund Raising Dinner in The International Gallery at ALYA Kuala Lumpur. About 200 guests from various Associations attended this auspicious occasion.

YB Tony Phua graced the occasion as the Guest of Honor. It was also announced that the Association had raised more than twenty thousand ringgits during its morning Golf Fund Raising section and part of it was donated to their CSR Projects.



Guests of JAGAM with YB Tony Pua after the Annual Dinner

## CELEBRATING THE ENTHRONEMENT OF THE NEW JAPANESE EMPEROR



By: Yap Choon Ming  
Hon. General Secretary

The sunny morning of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019 found 7 of the Central Committee of PAAM attending a cocktail reception on the grounds of the Japanese Ambassador's residence in Ampang. The celebration was on the occasion of The Enthronement of His Majesty, the New Emperor of Japan.

About 300 people from various NGOs and Japanese business associates attended this occasion. Even though the occasion was one of joy and festivity, we could feel the tension because of the very tight security conducted, with all cars of every registered guest being subjected to a thorough search!



The group photo shows the PAAM committee members with the polite & friendly Japanese Ambassador (tall gentleman in the centre)

## JAPANESE INTERN

Mr Kenya Kato was posted to Malaysia for an internship stint of one month late last year. Mr Kato was accepted for internship at Industrial Quality Management Sdn Bhd in Shah Alam. Committee member, Ms Valerie Cheong joined by the President, Mr Tan Teng Ek met up with Mr Kato just before he left Malaysia to discuss more about the benefits he had gained from the internship. A short report was submitted by PAAM to AOTS Japan as part of its follow up with the interns from Japan to Malaysia. Mr Kato was quite pleased with the outcome of his internship based in Malaysia.



Mr Kato, the intern having a simple dinner with Central Committee members

## HOW TO SUPPORT PAAM'S SUSTAINABILITY?



By Mr Eric Koh

### General overview:

It is a fact that, in the years past, AOTS was one of the few Japanese agencies that had successfully promoted and assisted many under-developed and developing country in human resource development and technology-transfer. Through cooperation with Japanese investment Multinational Companies, many scholarship programmes were awarded to young managers and engineers of recipient countries. As a result, AOTS was able to be instrumental in having about 71 Alumni Societies established in 43 countries.

In this respect, a key question to be answered is can AOTS still be able to play such an important role in the 43 countries mentioned above?

### Overview of Persatuan Alumni AOTS Malaysia (PAAM)

It is a fact that in those hey days in the eighties and nineties when AOTS played a key role in the human resource development in Malaysia, PAAM's membership grew by leaps and bounds. Malaysians were very eager to be involved in PAAM's activities because there was an abundance of scholarships awarded to young Malaysians to be trained in Japan. Furthermore, the biggest investors in Malaysia then were the Japanese MNCs who would readily rally around AOTS Kuala Lumpur whenever its AOTS General Manager contacted them for support.

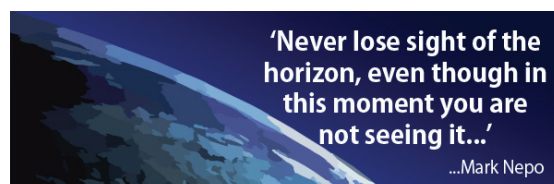
Unfortunately, in these recent years with AOTS facing severe budget constraints, not only has AOTS closed its representative office in Kuala Lumpur but also in many other countries such as Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines, etc. Scholarships awarded to Malaysians, if any, are far and few. Because of our weak ringgit, it is no longer feasible to send our employees to Japan for training as they have become very expensive.

It is a fact that PAAM's membership has taken a hit, with very few new members applying to join PAAM either as ordinary member or life member.

It is also a fact that PAAM's membership faces an aging problem.

The questions that beg to be answered:

1. How do we attract young people to be interested in joining PAAM as members?
2. With an aging membership and significantly diminished support from AOTS, how does PAAM propose to be sustainable in the years to come?



***"Any day you learn a lesson is a great day."***

### My suggestions

Below I would like to propose a few suggestions:

1. We need to have a specially designed mechanism such as incentive or royalty to encourage members to participate in our activities;
2. To interest young people, have some kind of strategies, maybe offering scholarships to young people to increase our membership;
3. Sharing our rich Alumni resources to build our public image, use our wealth of knowledge to attract the young talent because we have in our membership many professionals with wide and varied expertise;
4. Re-activate those relevant sub-committees so that members can contribute in; and
5. Work together with other similar alumnus for possible program cooperation and idea sharing.

### Conclusion

I hope that, arising from my views and suggestions expressed herein, more ideas and discussions will be forthcoming from members to assist our PAAM to get back to those glory years....

*(Editor – Thank you Mr Eric Koh for your invaluable input. We will escalate your comments to the Central Committee for their deliberation. PAAM needs members like you who have great ideas to come in and work together with the Central Committee to make it stronger. No doubt the issue of the need to attract young members into PAAM to ensure that there is sustainability in its leadership has long been discussed and debated. But somehow we have failed to attract them.)*