NEWS HIGHLIGHT

The 28th Meeting of the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and Other Relevant Meetings

NEWS STORY

Introducing the New Identity of AHA Centre
Myanmar Earthquake
Japan Earthquake

INSIGHTS

4 Principles Guiding International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law
The AHA Centre Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) is a committee that serves to review and enhance regional cooperation on disaster management under the framework of the AASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER).

This year, the 28th Meeting of ACDM was held in Semarang, Indonesia. The meeting was held back-to-back with the 4th Asia Summit and the 3rd AADMER Partnership Conference, all held from 26 – 29 April 2016.

During the meeting, the ACDM held a plenary session to discuss the implementation of the new AADMER Work Programme 2016-2020. One of the highlights of this year’s meeting was the handover of chairmanship of ACDM and the Governing Board of the AHA Centre from Cambodia to Indonesia. The handover ceremony was held on 28 April 2016.

The meeting was held in parallel with discussion and exchange of experience on responding disasters to Japan. It is important to have a strategic plan for the whole period, including pre-disaster, during disaster, and post-disaster. When disaster occurs, we should remember that our colleagues in ASEAN have a lot to offer. Therefore, we should be ready – how to relocate them to safer areas, provide them with basic needs and other kinds of basic necessities, and also come up with a plan on how to facilitate early recovery.

Mr. Prasong Sokphirom, ACE Programme Officer from Lao PDR, reported the activities of the current ACE Programme.

Vimala and Sacksy

Vimala

Yes, we enjoy it very much. This programme has allowed us to expand our networking amongst ASEAN Member States (AMS) within the field of disaster management. We have heard good things about the programme from our colleagues in previous batches, but now we get to experience for ourselves the usefulness of this programme as we put our knowledge into practice.

Sacksy

I think a good leader should be knowledgeable. He or she should have sufficient knowledge and understanding about the disaster itself, also regarding the locals that he/she will be dealing with. Lastly, a leader should have good management and planning skills to ensure the welfare of all their teammates proud. Second, a leader should be friendly, to listen to others, be open-minded and have relevant qualifications in order to build and maintain relationship with many different people.

Vimala

When we handle a disaster, I think it is very important to have a strategic plan for the whole periods, including pre-disaster, during disaster, and post-disaster. When disaster occurs, we should remember that our colleagues in ASEAN have a lot to offer. Therefore, we should be ready – how to relocate them to safer areas, provide them with basic needs and other kinds of basic necessities, and also come up with a plan on how to facilitate early recovery.

Vimala

Through the ACE Programme, you are being trained to be a leader. What do you think are three essential qualities that a leader in the disaster management field should have?

Sacksy

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Vimala

First, a leader should have confidence, because a leader will deal with so many people – victims and local agencies. Confidence will allow a leader to gain insight on how to project themselves and make their teammates proud. Second, a leader should be friendly, to listen to others, be open-minded and have relevant qualifications in order to build and maintain relationship with many different people.

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Vimala

When I want to be a good leader, so I am very much looking forward to the leadership training. I also hope to improve my English skills, gain more knowledge and skills in disaster management especially in managing emergency responses, and build good relationship with other fellow participants. Last but not least, I want to learn how to operate the Disaster Management & Response System (DMRS), EOC, ICT, and logistics needs so I can perform my responsibilities in responding to emergencies and providing relief items for the victims of the disaster events.

Sacksy

I want to be a better communicator, I hope to improve my English communicating skills, and also I want to expand my knowledge surrounding the disaster management field.
As a future leader in disaster management, what do you think are the qualities a leader should have?

**Rohaizat**

Not only for the victims, but also our colleagues and other members in the team. We have to be able to structure a plan and execute it effectively and efficiently, so that the results can match their expectations and needs.

**Fazlisyah**

Based on the training and experience I gained from the ACE Programme Third Batch 2016, leaders should be sensitive enough in fulfilling their staff's needs and welfare. Good leaders need to have the ability to understand others. Moreover, leaders should understand how to deal with the victims – meaning to deal with people from different backgrounds.

**Rohaizat**

As a future leader in disaster management, what kinds of responsibilities do you think you will take on?

**Fazlisyah**

As an ACE Programme Officer from Malaysia, I think the training will benefit us mostly in terms of learning to use the Disaster Monitoring Response System (DMRS). That's where we can monitor and gather information about disaster locally and globally. Through DMRS, we can also facilitate us to monitor, provide, and receive information, and thereby handle disaster management.

As a future leader in disaster management, what do you think are the qualities a leader should have?

**Rohaizat**

The ACE Programme also provides us with knowledge and skills on how to communicate with people effectively, because there were times when we delivered relief items and it did not match the victims’ expectations and needs – this mostly happens to those with higher economic status. Communication skills will help us find ways to deal with that. I also hope that through this programme, we learn how to deal with the media as well.

The The Opening Ceremony of ACE Programme Third Batch 2016

The AHA Centre Executive (ACE) Programme is a six-month training programme worth 1000 hours, which includes practical exercises to implement the knowledge shared by qualified trainers and speakers from various organisations in the disaster management field. Participants of this programme are representatives from ASEAN Member States (AMS), who are pursuing a career in disaster management.

The ceremony was attended by H.E. Dr. AKP Mochtan, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for Community and Corporate Affairs; H.E. Mr. Kazuo Sunaga, Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN, representatives of ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Dialogue Partners and partner agencies supporting the ACE Programme.

As stated by Mr. Said Faisal, Executive Director of the AHA Centre, large-scale disaster can exceed the capacity of affected countries to cope – both in terms of logistics and capacity to deliver relief items. Therefore, the ACE Programme was initiated to provide on-the-job training and capacity building for professionals from National Disaster Management Offices (NDMOs) and AMS who are pursuing a career in disaster management.

Supported by the Government of Japan through Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF), the AHA Centre manages and facilitates the programme to provide exposure and capacity building in disaster management, with a primary focus on the regional emergency response logistics systems. “Japan has supported the AHA Centre since its establishment in 2011 through various projects including the ACE Programme. We are pleased to provide the ACE Programme Officers with an opportunity for training in Japan, and hope it will contribute to sharing the lessons learnt from the Great East Japan Earthquake experienced by Ms. Adela Adam, Director of the network for disaster management between ASEAN and Japan,” said H.E. Mr. Kazuo Sunaga, Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN.

“Through this Programme, ASEAN is enhancing the capacity of NDMOs in the region by equipping them with necessary skills and competencies that will enable them to embrace future challenges,” said H.E. Dr. AKP Mochtan of the necessity of the ACE Programme.

Ms. Yukiko Okawa, Mission Counsellor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, who is the Chair of the ACE Programme, expressed her gratitude for the ACE Programme. "I have high hopes for this batch’s graduates. I’ve seen major improvements in the programme so far."

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As the new logo was endorsed at the 3rd Meeting of the Governing Board of the AHA Centre in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, December 2015, the AHA Centre is pleased to incorporate the new logo as the new identity for the AHA Centre.

The AHA Centre hopes that the spirit of unity embodied in the new logo captures the solidarity and the collective efforts of ASEAN, as the AHA Centre moves toward the vision of ‘One ASEAN One Response’.

In this month's edition, The Column talked with The CEO of AirAsia Indonesia, Mr. Sunu Widyatmoko after his inspirational discussion on the Leader Talks – ACE Programme. As the number one leader in AirAsia Indonesia, Mr. Sunu Widyatmoko’s experiences, knowledge, and professional outlook as a leader have embodied us through the interview with The Column.

Can you share how your journey in AirAsia began? How was the industry always interested your attention?

I joined AirAsia Indonesia in 2013 as Chief Financial Officer. Prior to joining AirAsia Indonesia, I spent more than 17 years in the corporate finance field. I was also involved in bringing big-scale enterprises public, including airline companies, which has proven to be valuable experiences.

In July 2014, less than a year as AirAsia Indonesia’s CFO, I was entrusted to take the helm of AirAsia Indonesia. I vividly remember when Tony Fernandez (AirAsia Group CEO and Founder) said to me that I was “first” as the CEO of AirAsia Indonesia. At that time, I was asked to find a replacement for the CFO position as I would become a new role of CEO of AirAsia Indonesia. I was taken aback, but I did not say coming.

I have always loved challenges. Having been involved in the initial public offering process of one of Indonesia’s largest airlines, I knew that the aviation industry is exposed to multiple risk factors, from currency and fuel price volatility to external events beyond our control. I believed driving an airline to thrive in efficiency whilst maintaining service and operational excellence would be an interesting opportunity.

But more importantly, I was inspired by the people behind AirAsia Indonesia. When I was offered to join the company as CFO, one of the commissioners said that the company has a unique culture. It has no bureaucracy; instead it values openness, ideas, and a can-do attitude. Anyone can come up to the senior management to express their ideas or to simply have a casual chat. We’re a tight-knit family. I would be hard-pressed to find such a culture anywhere else.

In 2017, AirAsia Group was recognized by Forbes as one of the “World’s Most Innovative Companies”. It’s a huge recognition for all AirAsia employees including myself. How do you feel about this recognition?

The recognition is recognition for the entire company, including everyone from the Board to the ground staff. However, I personally feel humbled and although I am honored to be among the 100 most innovative companies globally, I do believe that all of us should be proud of ourselves.

Now that you are CEO of AirAsia Indonesia, what do you think will be the most challenging aspect in leading this company?

We do not take winning the World’s Best Low Cost Carrier for seven consecutive years for granted. It was a result of team work, driven by motivation to stay ahead. Seven years on, getting people to stay motivated and innovative in delivering not only the least but the best is a challenge for itself.

What do you think are the top three qualities that a leader should have?

Can we relate these questions to humanitarian workers?

The top three qualities a leader should have are accountability, ability to manage by heart, and to aspire.

Accountability is indeed important. When the leader shows up and leads, especially during a crisis, the situation may not necessarily get better, but it will undoubtedly induce confidence in the followers.

Equally important is managing your people by heart. Humanitarian workers should be able to put themselves in the shoes of the victims they are helping. Same goes with leaders. You need to consciously relate your decision and policy towards the situation you were and those you lead encounter.

Ability to inspire is also key. This is even more crucial during a crisis as people tend to be demotivated when they are faced with difficult situations.

Being a leader also means that you need to be able to make decision for the courtesy of your company, how do you feel has such a big responsibility? Can you share some interesting experiences when you have had to take on big responsibilities?

My biggest responsibility has always been and will always be to drive the company forward, even during the most challenging times.

One of the biggest responsibilities was to lead the team and keep them motivated during QZ8501. It was not easy for everyone involved, but having a great team behind me made it a lot easier. I kept each other motivated while we navigated the challenges together.

You were the speaker in Leader Talks of ACE Programme last month, what do you think of the programme? How do you think this will benefit the ASEAN community?

I am honoured to share my experiences and knowledge with AHA Centre Executives, and to help contribute in preparing them as ASEAN future leaders for disaster management. Our region is very prone to crisis. It is imperative that we prepare our future leaders for crisis management, I believe having disaster management experts becomes increasingly important.
One ASEAN
One Response

About ASEAN

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967. The Member States of the Association are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The ASEAN Secretariat is based in Jakarta, Indonesia. As set out in the ASEAN Declaration, the aims and purposes of ASEAN among others are to accelerate the economic growth, social progress, cultural development, to promote regional peace and stability as well as to improve active collaboration and cooperation.

About The AHA Centre

The AHA Centre is an inter-govermental organisation established on 17 November 2011, through the signing of the Agreement on the Establishment of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) by ASEAN Foreign Ministers, witnessed by the ASEAN Heads of States, from 10 ASEAN Member States: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam. The Centre was set-up to facilitate the cooperation and coordination among ASEAN Member States and with the United Nations and international organisations for disaster management and emergency response in the ASEAN region.

About AADMER

The ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) is a legally-binding regional multi-hazard and policy framework for cooperation, coordination, technical assistance and resource mobilisation in all aspects of disaster management in the 10 ASEAN Member States. The objective of AADMER is to provide an effective mechanism to achieve substantial reduction of disaster losses in lives and in social, economic and environmental assets, and to jointly respond to emergencies through concerted national efforts.

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