

International Affairs Department

Dear friends,

Happy New Year!

My first newsletter of 2018 as a JICA expert is about VietWater 2017 in Ho Chi Minh and Teacher's Day in Vietnam.

1. VIETWATER 2017 IN HO CHI MINH

I visited VietWater 2017 in Ho Chi Minh. VietWater, annually hosted by Vietnam Water Supply and Sewerage Association (VWSA), is a Vietnamese Sewage Works Exhibition.

Visitors from France, Germany, and Belgium, in addition to Asian countries including Japan, China, South Korea, and Thai, not just Vietnam, joined the international event.

At the entrance, visitors receive an admission pass and a flyer after check-in (photo 1.) I had to reapply because my application did not completed with no confirmation.

On the floor, various business institutions from many countries showed their booths (photo 2.)



Photo 1: An admission pass



Photo 2: Event venue of VietWater

There were not only wastewaters but also water-related exhibitions. In the wastewater display, energy-saving technologies, including ultrafine bubble generation, sensing & control system, etc., or sludge treatment technology, including reduction of sludge generation by carrier addition, highly efficient compact dehydrator, etc., were noticeable.

I found some Japanese companies with which I am familiar. But what I was interested in was the joint booth of the Tokyo SME Support Center. The public organization supports the global business of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs.) The booth exhibited commercial products of Tokyo area's SMEs, which challenge global operations and provided support to their business meetings. Some SMEs had personal exhibitions, and they looked successful. Japanese SMEs who try to expand their business to Vietnam to explore the overseas markets inspired my feeling of respect.

2. TEACHER'S DAY IN VIETNAM

Did you know that November 20th is Teachers' Day in Vietnam? I had not known about it before I came to Vietnam.

The article of VIET JO life says Teacher's day in Vietnam originates from the memorial day of the "World Federation of Teachers Unions" organized in July 1949 in France. In 1957, the Federation decided to make November 20th the Day of the International Manifesto of Educators. Based on the adoption, communist North Vietnam celebrated its first anniversary on November 20th, 1959.



Photo 3: Ceremony site

After that, various events related to educators on November 20th, mainly in North Vietnam. After the unification, "Teachers Day" took root in its society and officially became Vietnamese Teachers' Day in 1982.



Photo 4: Awarded teachers

On Teacher's Day, people express gratitude and respect to their or their children's teachers. The government tolerates people sending gifts to teachers. I've heard teachers of public schools get only ten thousand yen a month which is the lowest level of unskilled laborers. Under the circumstances that many teachers tutor or have private tutoring schools to earn a second income, the authority

with less ability to afford teachers has to blink at the tradition.

On Teacher's day, many schools have Teacher's day events where children entertain teachers with their songs or dances. Some communities honor good teachers.

The JICA project team also had an opportunity to join the Teacher's day event. CUWC (College of Urban Works Construction), in which we had a training program, invited us to their annual celebration on November 20th.

At the ceremony of CUWC, I saw some women wearing "ao dai" that we seldom see. The decently decorated event site (Photo 3) described how important Teacher's day is, but the event timetable surprised me a little. I expected "ceremony" first and then "entertainment." But, the ceremony finally came (Photo 4) after the performance, with seven student groups for an hour and over. When the event started, the guest seats were half empty. Guests arrived one after another during the performance. I supposed the host allowing for the late arrival, delivered the performance before the ceremony.