

Building Bridges for Disaster Preparedness and Response

Ernest Yeoh

My first encounter with Disasters was in 1977 when I did the rescue in the crash of JAL 715. Some of the problems encountered will be highlighted.

Then in the '94 National Conference on Emergency Medical Services held in Sarawak on 21st March there was a discussion on Disaster Management, *"Disaster Site Management in an urban Environment"*.

In November 1994 I was selected as the Malaysian representative to attend the Seminar on Emergency /Disaster Medicine in Osaka. It was through Courses like this that long lasting Bridges are built. There were Doctors from all over the world in this seminar, from Egypt, Jordan, Philippines, Indonesia and in fact I am still in communication with one from Costa Rica.

"Triage and Transportation" was presented at the 1st Mass Casualty Incident Management Course at the invitation of the Japanese Association of Disaster Medicine in Tokyo on November 6th 1997.

From the Malaysian standpoint, a document called *"Directive 20"*, was published by the National Security Council after *"the Highlands Tower tragedy"* in December 1993.

In December 2015, the National Disaster Management Agency (NaDMA) was made to be in charge of managing natural disasters in the country. Japan has a lot of experience in managing disasters and this was one area which NaDMA could benefit from.

"This includes training and the sharing of know-how in areas, such as early warning technologies, to help to predict and prepare for disasters, and advance planning on how to deal with major disasters"

Japan also has a comprehensive response system in the event of a major earthquake. Malaysia needs expertise on disaster-risk reduction to mitigate disasters from an early stage as well as organise large-scale exercises to develop our disaster response readiness."

