



**PRESS RELEASE  
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**ASEAN: Japan's Important Partner**

**Jakarta, Kominfo Newsroom** - Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Kiya Masahiko emphasized that ASEAN is an important partner so that his country is committed to increasing cooperation with the regional organization.

"Geopolitically, ASEAN lies in a strategic location in the Indo-Pacific which connects the two oceans. In addition, ASEAN population which reaches 670 million people with a continuously growing economy has. Become the reason for Japan to continue maintaining relations with ASEAN," Masahiko said in Jakarta, Thursday (13 April).

Japan became ASEAN's first dialogue partner and had its first informal dialogue in 1973 before it was formalized in March 1977.

This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of friendship and cooperation between Japan and ASEAN. As a peak event in the commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ASEAN-Japan partnership, a meeting is scheduled to be held in Tokyo in December.

Indonesia assumes its ASEAN Chairmanship this year by carrying out two big themes, namely "ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth".

There are three important elements contained in ASEAN Matters, namely the strengthening of ASEAN capacity and effectiveness, ASEAN unity, and ASEAN centrality.

Meanwhile, within the Epicentrum of Growth pillar, Indonesia seeks to ensure important elements consisting of a health architecture, energy security, food security and financial stability.

Masahiko said, as one of ASEAN's partners, Japan is committed to working with ASEAN to increase its relevance to the Southeast Asian region communities.

"Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has committed to contributing, working with ASEAN in a number of important areas such as maritime and connectivity , including in improving the quality of infrastructure, tackling climate change, disaster management, and cooperation on economic agendas such as supply chain resilience, digital technology, and food security," he concluded. (Shofi/Budi Santoso/Elvira/Rauf)

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Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN Kiya Masahiko (right) in a special interview with ANTARA, in Jakarta, Thursday (13 April). ANTARA/Shofi Ayudiana

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