2018 was both a historic and an exciting year. It marked the 61st Anniversary of Malaysia’s Independence, and it also witnessed the first-ever change of government in Malaysia, heralding a new chapter in the country’s history. Thus, this year’s national day celebration will be the first under the new government of Datuk Seri Anwar bin Ibrahim. The Prime Minister designs to strengthen bilateral relations between both countries, and to strengthen bilateral exchange and submitted proposals to promote the Malaysia-Japan Economic Association (JAMECA), organized events for promoting the economic relations of the two countries. In this connection, Malaysia appreciates the continued presence of Japanese investors in Malaysia. We hope more investors from Japan will choose Malaysia as their regional hub to tap into markets in the East-West. Investment Japan has been a major part of Malaysia’s growth as it has been among our top sources of foreign direct investment (FDI) since the 1980s. In terms of FDI stock, Japan stood as the second-largest foreign investor in Malaysia with total investments valued at $13 billion as of the first quarter of 2018. Additionally, Japan ranked as the largest foreign investor in the manufacturing sector. As of 2017, roughly 2,645 manufacturing projects with participation from Japan have been implemented with investments totaling $7.9 billion. These projects have benefitted more than 780,000 Malaysians, particularly as they are involved in sectors such as electronics and automotive. Malaysia welcomes high-quality investments, particularly in new growth areas with emerging technologies, as well as in capital-intensive, high-value-added, knowledge-based, skilled-intensive and export-oriented industries. Located at the heart of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Malaysia is a capable of offering multinationals corpora- tions and investors with unique access to a steady stream of talent, a modern business ecosystem, world-class infrastructures and connectivity, and competitive cost advantages and incentive packages. These corporations can utilize Malaysia as a base for conducting their regional and global operations, support their key functions. The government of Malaysia is committed to strengthening Malaysia’s pro-business environment with prudent and competitive fiscal and economic policies, as well as a conducive local cuisine along the journey. With Malaysia’s multicultural society, interests from Japan and other countries will have the opportunity to experience the diverse cultural landscapes comprising Malay, Chinese and Indian cultures along with the cultural landscapes of other ethnic groups in Sabah and Sarawak. In 2017, Malaysia was privileged to receive approximately 572,700 tourists from Japan. We hope more tourists from Japan will continue to visit and explore our beautiful country this year. Close ties Within the first three months of its term, Malaysia’s new prime minister had visited Japan twice. The first was a working visit to Tokyo from June 10 to 12, the prime minister’s first official visit to Japan since assuming the premiership on March 10. The second was a working tour to Osaka and Okinawa from August 5 to 9. Malaysia is also planning to meet with the leaders of Japan’s government, including Prime Minister Kono, to discuss the bilateral cooperation between the two countries. In the future, we hope to see more collaboration between our two countries. In the future, we hope to see more collaboration between our two countries. In the future, we hope to see more collaboration between our two countries.