

“Bridge Reconstruction Project (phase III)” handed over to Government of Bhutan



Dasho Yanki T Wangchuk Finance Secretary, officials from the Department of Roads, and Dzongkags officials of Tsirang and Dagana attended the handing over ceremony of the “Reconstruction of Bridges phase III” project at Sunkosh on November 24, 2007. The project constructed Waklaytar bridge on Wangdue-Tsirang highway, Tangmachu bridge on Mongar-Lhuntse highway and Sunkosh bridge on Sunkosh-Dagana highway with Japanese government assistance. The phase I of the project was completed in 2003 and phase III is under study by the Japanese government. The Japanese government was represented by Mr. Daiki Suemitsu, First Secretary from the Embassy of Japan in New Delhi and officials from JICA Office in Thimphu at the handing over ceremony.

JICA schemes

- ◆ Technical Cooperation Projects
- ◆ Grant Aid
- ◆ Training Programmes
- ◆ Development Studies
- ◆ Emergency Disaster Relief
- ◆ Citizen Participation
- ◆ Follow-up Cooperation

JICA target areas in Bhutan

- ◆ Agriculture and rural development
- ◆ Infrastructure development
- ◆ Local governance
- ◆ Social services development
(health, education and IT)

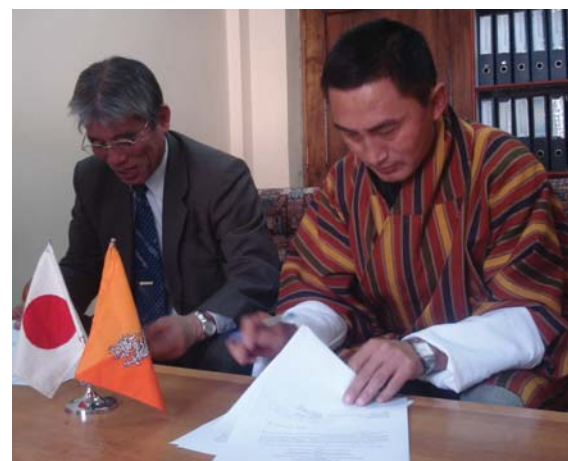
JICA members in Bhutan as of June

- ◆ JICA office staff: 16
(7 internationals; 9 nationals)
- ◆ Experts: 9
- ◆ Senior Volunteers: 21
- ◆ JOCVs: 30
(Short-term 3)

Local Government and Decentralization Project (phase II) commences

At a meeting signed between the Planning Commission, JICA on 13th December 2007 Thimphu, Trashiyangtse and Tsirang Dzongkhags will mainly benefit from Integrated Capacity Building Plan (ICBP) implemented under the Local Governance & Decentralization Project Phase II. All eight Gewogs namely Bumdeling, Jamkhar, Khamdang, Ramjar, Thetsho, Tongzhang, Yalang and Yangtse under Trashiyangtse Dzongkhag will be implement small projects for monitoring purpose of ICBP.

A study will be done in collaboration with UNDP’s DSP (Decentralization Support Programme) to document the experiences and lessons learned from LGDP I. Ms. Hiroko Tanaka, a short term expert is fielded from 17th December 2007 to 18th January 2008 and is expected cover 57 Gewogs - 25 Gewogs of LGDP I under Bumthang, Haa and Trashigang Dzongkhags and 32 Gewogs of DSP under Gasa, Lhuentse, Pemagatshel, Trongsa and Zhemgang. The findings will be referred as an input during the preparation of Panning Manual and Block Grant Manual by the Planning Commission. **By Rinchen Tshering**



International Volunteers Day (IVD) Celebration, 2007



Mr. Masayuki Nagano, a JOCV at Kilo Music School played the piano to "Heal the World". Miss Kisu, a midwife at JDNRH displayed in her superior movements a Japanese traditional dance. Miss Kabata, Japanese language Instructor at DoT filled the air with melodious tunes of her flute. Young and old, the volunteers danced the action-packed Japanese dances-leaving the spectators engrossed in their energetic steps, twists and twirls. The day was 2nd December, the place, Clock Tower Square Thimphu, and the occasion International Volunteers Day Celebration 2007. A large number Japanese Volunteers (JOCVs and Senior Volunteers) working in Bhutan made their presence truly felt to a big crowd gathered to witness the event. The day really provided a platform for an exhibition of Japanese tradition & culture and above all their concept of volunteering through team spirit.

Her Royal Highness *Ashi* Sonam Dechen Wangchuk graced the occasion. *Ashi* mentioned that Volunteerism has always

been embedded in the Bhutanese culture of Buddhism and compassion, and if pursued for the right purpose, it can contribute towards achieving equity in development.

Today there are more than 50 Japanese Volunteers (the largest number of international volunteers) working in fields like IT, Physical Education, Agriculture and Engineering, not only transferring their skills to Bhutanese counterparts, but also spreading Japanese culture, friendship and their spirits of dignity of labour.

Volunteers in Bhutan (VIB) organized this International Volunteer Day (IVD) event. VIB consists of Volunteer Organizations (national and international), agencies, government bodies, and individual enthusiasts. The fund for IVD celebration was provided by UNV (UNDP) Bhutan. Other volunteer organizations like Tarayana Foundation, REWA, RENEW, Friends of Thimphu Public Library, VSA and UNV also displayed their activities through stalls. The Friends of Library conducted an impressive reading session for children. The IVD this year was observed on 2nd December (Sunday) to enable volunteers to take time off from their routine work and volunteer. VIB's theme is: *Everyday is a Volunteer Day, Did you Volunteer today?* **By B . B . Mishra**

News in Brief

- Takio Yamada, Minister from the Embassy of Japan visited Bhutan from 26 to 29 November carrying with him a letter to His Majesty the King of Bhutan, signed by HE Mr. Nobutaka Machimura, Chief Cabinet Secretary, Government of Japan and Chairman of Japan-Bhutan Parliamentary Friendship League, concerning the Japanese decision to extend emergency grant aid to Bhutan for the elections. The grant amount of 1.07 million dollars is extended through the United Nations Development Fund.
- JICA Office welcomes Mr. Kurosu Hirota, who is dispatched to Bhutan office for a short period from 9 to 21 December 2007 to familiarize on the operation and management of overseas offices. Mr. Kurosu is amongst the newly recruited staff who will join JICA HQ from next year.
- Mr. Tetsuo Ikenaga, Senior Volunteer, Civil Engineering Lecturer at College of Science and Technology (CST), Rinchending had to terminate his assignment prematurely owing to poor health.
- JICA Alumni Association of Bhutan (JAAB) organised a blood donation campaign on 15 December at the Royal Institute of Health Science. A total of 60 volunteers including Dasho Gado Tshering, President of JAAB and Mr. Tetsuo Yabe, JICA Resident Representative participated in the event. This is one of the regular events organised by JAAB every year.
- Follow-up cooperation applications are now open for submission. Follow-up cooperation can be provided to support JICA trainee Alumnis, technical projects, dispatch of volunteers, etc. to supplement the initiative for further impacts and sustainability. For further information on Follow-up cooperation application, please contact Ms. Mayumi Miyata, Project Formulation Advisor at miyata@jica.org.bt.

For more information

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