

THE NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS FROM JICA BHUTAN OFFICE

The year 2005 saw several changes at JICA Bhutan Office which is indicative of the Japanese government's strong assistance to Bhutan. Japanese staff members have now reached seven from a humble two in the initial years.



Another important event was the delegation of more tasks to JICA Bhutan Office from the Embassy of Japan for the smooth and timely implementation of Japanese technical cooperation projects. This in itself is a source of immense satisfaction and reward for the hard work and dedication put up by the members of this office.

We look forward to yet another challenging year in this beautiful country. With the support and cooperation from the Royal Government, donor partners and various agencies involved, we are fully convinced and geared to help the Royal Government achieve its noble goal of Gross National Happiness. We wish all readers and patrons a very successful and enriching year ahead.

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)

BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION FOR RELIABLE ACCESS: GRANT AID PROJECT

The Project Formulation Advisor Ms. Doyle and the JICA Bridge Expert Mr. Tsujino visited the five project sites: Wachy, Bjee, Mangde, Chamkar and Kuri Zam of the Grant Aid Project. The purpose of this visit was to survey the present conditions of the bridges and the demand for Follow-up cooperation project for this project.

The constructed bridges were in excellent condition and well-maintained. However, one of the bridges, the Chamkhar Zam in Bumthang was blemished by the pedestrians with garbage and the theft of drainage plates. JICA Bhutan Office would like to strongly request the Bhutanese people's cooperation to keep these bridges clean.

The study team surveyed the impact of the bridges. This project supported the reliable road network for Bhutan. The heavy vehicles and public buses could pass the bridges safely. It helps not only for transport but also for emergency relief. In a visible impact, Kuri Zam in Mongar was survived by the flood in 2004 and could bring the impact into the community, economy and the road users.



JICA members in Bhutan as of January

- ◆ JICA office staff: 16
(7 internationals; 9 nationals)
- ◆ Experts: 9
(short-term: 2)
- ◆ Senior Volunteers: 23
(Short-term 1)
- ◆ JOCVs: 27
(Short-term 1)
- ◆ Senior JOCVs : 3



COLLABORATION WITH THE WORLD BANK PROJECT: JOCV

Mr. Matsuyama, JOCV was assigned for School Planning & Building Division (SPBD) as an architect. He supports the Light Gauge Steel Frame (LGSF) Project funded by the World Bank. It was newly introduced to reduce the labour costs and construction periods in Bhutan. SPBD completed two pilot projects with six-classrooms building in Rinchen Kuenphen Primary and Changjiji Lower Secondary Schools in Thimphu. At present, another five schools are under construction. Ministry of Education plans to build twenty nine schools in total using this new technology instead of the traditional methods. He also supervises the construction at the project sites.

WORKING FOR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN CONSTRUCTION : SENIOR VOLUNTEERS

Three Senior Volunteers are working at Standard and Quality Control Authority (SQCA), Ministry of Works and Human Settlements.

Mr. Kimura, a structural engineer specialized in seismic analysis, was assigned for ten months. He surveyed and diagnosed the three types of buildings by the means of the Japanese guideline adjusting to the Bhutanese buildings and has been proposing the retrofitting plans with earthquake resistant walls. SQCA plans to conduct a pilot project of reinforcing a government apartment in this fiscal year. He will continuously support this project.

Dr. Yamamoto, a quality control advisor, surveyed and analyzed the concrete quality in Bhutan. He collected the data of materials for concrete in Dzongkhags and established the database of over two thousands results of concrete tests at SQCA. He analyzed the existing concrete mixing design and is now working for the manual of qualified concrete design. He plans to hold the seminar on concrete design for not only government engineers but also engineers of private construction firms.

Mr. Yamaga, another quality control advisor, is working on introducing the certification system of civil engineers to improve the quality in construction. He plans to hold a seminar and qualifying examination for civil engineers in Bhutan in this year. The qualifying examination includes four fields: project supervision and inspection, safety and environmental management, project progress management, and quality and cost control.

DESIGN THE SAFE BUILDINGS FOR PEOPLE : JICA TRAINING IN JAPAN & JOCV

Mr. Karma Jamtsho, an engineer of DUDES recently returned from eleven month diploma training in Tsukuba, Japan. He completed seven months course work and four months individual research study. He is planning to modify the Japanese guidelines of building for the earthquake into Bhutanese situation.

A JOCV, Mr. Yasuhara is assigned for Health Infrastructure Development Project (HIDP) as a structural engineer. He works with a Bhutanese counterpart and an Indian consultant, and has been involved with these projects: hospitals, hospital quarters and laboratories in Dzongkhag. He also designed Public Health Laboratory (PHL) which is the reinforced concrete building with a basement and five stories. Its floor area is approximately 6000m². The construction starts in next summer.

JICA BHUTAN NEWS IN BRIEF

- Next month's focus will be on **Health**.
- Mr. Yamaguchi**, a short-term expert arrived in December to support the optical fiber training at Bhutan Telecom until the end of March. He was an expert for four years in Bhutan.
- Mr. Sakurai**, an expert will be arriving in Bhutan on 17th of January. He will work for the Agriculture Machinery Center (AMC) in Paro and other Dzongkhags as an agricultural machinery engineer to support the Farm Mechanization.
- JOCV Physical Education instructors** plan the workshop on Physical Fitness Test at the National Institution of Education on 1st and 2nd of January.
- JOCV and SV requests were closed by 6th of January**. Totally more than 20 requests were submitted to the JICA Head Quarter in Tokyo. The results will be informed after April, 2006.
- Ten community and primary school teachers visited Japan for a period of three weeks from 22 Nov to 15 Dec 2005 to participate in the Youth Invitation Program of JICA. This is the 10th group from Bhutan all from the education sector.
- JICA Bhutan office renewed its website: <http://www.jica.go.jp/bhutan/index.html>. You can download the recent newsletters there. This newsletter was redesigned by Mr. Ueno and Ms. Doyle.



For more information

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