

Emergency disaster relief goods for victims of earthquake



Mr. Keizo Takewaka, Minister Counsellor, Embassy of Japan represented the Government of Japan to hand over emergency relief goods to the Royal Government of Bhutan on October 29, 2009 at Thimphu. A major earthquake on 21 September, 2009 in eastern Bhutan affected the lives of more than 3,747 households and 11 lives were lost. The emergency relief goods consisted of 350 tents, 1000 blankets, 1000 sleeping pads, and 500 plastic sheets. Foreign Minister Lyonpo Ugyen Tsering received the relief goods on behalf of the royal government of Bhutan.

Training of trainers on Solar Photo Voltaic

Training of trainers on "Solar Photo Voltaic (PV)" for staff of Department of Energy, Bhutan Power Corporation (BPC) and instructors from Vocational Training Institute (VTI) is a very important activity of the project "Improvement of Efficiency for Rural Power Supply in Bhutan". Many villages are still not connected to the main grid and solar lighting systems are very much in use. JICA invited two third country experts from Philippines who are certified PV trainers to conduct the Trainers Training from 18th to 24th of October 2009 at Begana Training Center (BPC) and villages at Gogona and Phobjikha in Wangduephodrang. As the result of the training, three participants are certified as the basic trainers and two are as assistant trainers.



JICA schemes

- ◆ Grant Aid
- ◆ Loan
- ◆ Technical Cooperation Projects
- ◆ Training Programmes
- ◆ Development Studies
- ◆ Emergency Disaster Relief
- ◆ 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 2009

- ◆ JICA office staff: 16
(7 internationals; 9 nationals)
- ◆ Experts: 8
- ◆ Senior Volunteers: 17
- ◆ JOCVs: 41

Monitoring the quality of water in Bhutan

JOCV Takeshi Nishimoto, Water Analysis, has been working in the Research, Monitoring and Statistics Section at the National Environment Commission (NEC) in Thimphu since January 2009. His main responsibility is to work with the NEC technicians in analyzing and monitoring the quality of water in Bhutan, specifically river water and industrial discharge. His work involves water sampling, water analysis and water quality monitoring. NEC Laboratory was established on July 1st, 2009 by the NEC. "At the moment, water quality is acceptable, however as population increases and if sanitation is not improved then there will be problems in the future", says Mr. Nishimoto. Additionally, "when human activity increases, this results in water pollution and the worsening of the quality of water. It is important to monitor the quality of water and for each Bhutanese to value water by not wasting water, and not throwing garbage in the rivers."

Mr. Nishimoto hopes that the technical knowledge of the NEC technicians will improve. He thinks NEC has the right ideas and plans but needs to build the capacity of the technicians.

There are six NEC technicians, and he guides them to accurately analyze and monitor water quality. When he first started working in NEC, there was limited data on water quality and the technicians did not know how to judge correct and incorrect data. In October 2009, he started monitoring the water quality of the Thimphu river and recently he and the NEC technicians visited eastern Bhutan to collect water samples for analysis. He thinks that this way NEC will have better water quality records; his goal is to improve water quality monitoring data in Bhutan.

NEC has water quality monitoring points in all dzongkhags. These monitoring points are for collecting water samples for analysis and monitoring. Mr. Nishimoto says that "laboratory work is important but the monitoring site is equally important because when we visit monitoring sites it gives us a chance to think and reflect on Bhutan's beautiful environment." Environmental conditions change quickly from good to bad; therefore he feels that Bhutanese people in general should be aware of this fact. Consequently, the Bhutanese people should value and take care of their pristine environment. They should be concerned about water pollution and environmental degradation.

He is happy to be working in Bhutan. He thinks that Bhutanese people are very kind and he feels at home here.



News in Brief

- ◆ JICA Alumni Association of Bhutan (JAAB) held the 6th Blood donation campaign on November 7, 2009 at the new complex of Jigme Dorji Wangchuk National Referral Hospital. A total of 81 donors turned up out of which 73 of them donated blood. Blood donation campaign is one of the main annual activities of JAAB.
- ◆ Mr. Kunihiro Shiraishi joined JICA office as successor to Mr. Taiji Usui, outgoing Project Formulation Advisor. Before coming to Bhutan Mr. Shiraishi was the Country Officer, Southeast Asia Division responsible for formulation of new ODA loan projects and supervision of on-going loan projects.
- ◆ Mr. Taiji Usui, out-going Project Formulation advisor left Bhutan on 1 December after two and half years of successful and colourful stay in Bhutan. We wish him good health and happiness for years to come.
- ◆ Mr. Tomoki Nitta, Resident Representative attended the ground breaking ceremony at Chanchay bridge on 26 November. Under the Grant Aid project "Reconstruction of Bridges phase III", six permanent bridges will be reconstructed along the Wangduephodrang-Sarpang highway.
- ◆ On 20th November, 2009 JICA Resident Representative and JICA staff visited the earthquake affected sites in Yangnere Gewog, Trashigang Dzongkhag. The Gewog's Gup met with the RR and showed him around the area affected by the earthquake. The primary school, religious structures such as the chorten and lhakhang, the Basic Health Unit (BHU) had been destroyed. A temporary school has been set up by using tents, and concerted efforts are being made to deal with the destruction caused by the earth quake.
- ◆ Four short-term JOCV members arrived in Bhutan on 15th December, 2009:
 - 1) Ms. Emi Nakazawa, Youth Activities, assigned to Department of Youth, Culture and Sports, MoE.
 - 2) Mr. Kazuya Kudo, Youth Activities, assigned to Department of Youth, Culture and Sports, MoE.
 - 3) Ms. Nozomi Suzuki, Youth Activities, assigned to Department of Youth, Culture and Sports, MoE.
 - 4) Ms. Tomoko Sakamaki, Art Instructor, assigned to Deaf Education, Drugyel Lower Secondary School.
- ◆ Meanwhile, one short-term senior volunteer completed his assignment in Bhutan and left for Japan:
 - 1) Mr. Yoshiyuki Nagatsuka, Automobile Maintenance Instructor, worked in Thimphu Institute of Automobile Engineering.

For more information

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