

## 20th Year of Japan Bhutan Diplomatic Relations



The bright sunny days in October saw Bhutan and Japan celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The celebration in Bhutan began on 15 October 2006 with a warm-up event consisting of Japanese food, cultural show, tea ceremony, calligraphy organized by the JICA Bhutan Office and JICA Alumni Association of Bhutan (JAAB) at the Swimming Pool Complex.

The celebration, “Japan Week,” was formally inaugurated on the 22 October at the Changlimithang archery range with a demonstration of Japanese traditional archery (KYUDO) by masters from the All Nippon Kyudo Federation, with the presence of the Hon’ble President of the Bhutan Archery Federation Lyonpo Kinzang Dorji. The celebration continued with many cultural events, including traditional Japanese music (Hogaku), Japanese film festival and photo exhibitions by Mr. Moritani, Japanese photographer, and by JICA.

On the occasion of this memorable celebration, the Chairman of the Japanese Parliamentary League for Bhutan Mr. Nobutaka Machimura (former Foreign Minister) led a 7 member delegation and called on His Majesty the King and the Hon’ble Prime Minister Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk.

The high light of the celebration in Bhutan was the joint reception and a mixed cultural programme at the courtyard of the Gyalong Tshokhang on the 28 October. Representatives from the Government, international agencies, business enterprises and the Japanese community in Bhutan celebrated the occasion with hopes and good wishes for further strengthening the friendly relations.

Bhutan and Japan established formal diplomatic relations in 1986 and continue to enjoy excellent bilateral relations with growing cooperation in the area of human resource development, education, health, communication and agriculture.

### 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 October

- ◆ JICA office staff: 16  
(7 internationals; 9 nationals)
- ◆ Experts: 7
- ◆ Senior Volunteers: 25
- ◆ JOCVs: 25  
(Short-term 4, Senior JOCVs 1)



*Japanese Tea Ceremony at JICA/JAAB event.*

## **Dasho Sangay Thinley Secretary of Ministry of Agriculture and Mr. Tetsuo Yabe Resident Representative of JICA sign Minutes of Discussion on KR2 Project**

The Resident Representative of JICA Office, Mr. Tetsuo Yabe and the Secretary of Agriculture Ministry, Dasho Sangay Thinley, signed the minutes of Meeting on 20 September, whereby Bhutan will be considered as one of the possible candidates for receiving the grant assistance for Under Privileged Farmers 2006. Popularly known as 2KR project, it is one of the oldest and successful projects providing direct support to the farmers in terms of essential agriculture machinery.

The Meeting also discussed the manner in which will be made available, criteria for distribution of machines and procedures for utilization of counter-part fund amongst other issues.



## **Project News: The Local Governance and Decentralization Project ends**



The Local Governance and Decentralization Project in the three pilot districts of Bumthang, Haa and Trashigang has been completed at the end of October 2006. Mr. Tomoaki Tsugawa, Project Coordinator, who had been with the Project since October 2004 left Bhutan on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2006. According to the Department of Local Governance, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, the project's achievement is high and that it has fulfilled its initial purpose in strengthening local governance and decentralization in RGoB. If there are further queries on the project, please contact Mr. Rinchen Tshering, Local Technical Coordinator at JICA Bhutan Office.

## **New Arrivals: New Volunteers arrive, Old depart**

One short term JOCV and six Senior Volunteers joined the JICA force in Bhutan in the months of September and October:

1. Ms. Junko Asuma , short term JOCV for Veterinary Hospital, Thimphu
2. Mr. Takao Sugo, short term Senior Volunteer for RNR-RC, Jakar
3. Mr. Katsumi Kaneki, Senior Volunteer for Bhutan Communication Authority, Thimphu
4. Mr. Kenichi Shimokawa, Senior Volunteer for National Institute of Zorig Chusum, Thimphu
5. Mrs. Akiko Kondo, Senior Volunteer for National Institute of Zorig Chusum, Thimphu
6. Mr. Akira Minagawa, Senior Volunteer for Dept of Civil Aviation, Paro
7. Mr. Masatoshi Kano, Senior Volunteer for Rinchending College of Technology, Phuntsholing.

At the same time, three Senior Volunteer members completed their assignement and left Bhutan in October.

1. Mr. Tokushi Terashima, Senior Volunteer for Department of Agriculture
2. Mr. Yukio Negishi, Senior Volunteer for Department of Information and Technology, Thimphu
3. Mr. Hiroji Ono, Senior Volunteer for Construction Machinery Centre, Jakar

## **ODA News: ODA Evaluation Team to visit Bhutan**

An independent mission for the evaluation of Japanese ODA in Bhutan will arrive on 13 Nov to 20 November. The team will hold series of discussions with senior government officers, other donor agencies and beneficiaries to evaluate the impact of past 20 years of Japanese ODA in Bhutan. The mission is led by Ms. Kiyoko Ikegami from UNFPA Tokyo and also includes Mr. Shunichi Murata, former head of UN office in Bhutan.

### **For more information**

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