

Japan to fund pvt sector RE projects

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Japan is looking at financing private sector renewable energy projects in India, the India head of the country's development agency said in an interview. Saito Mitsunori, chief representative in India of JICA, or Japan International Cooperation Agency, said in an interview that so far the agency has provided lines of credit to state-run Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd (IREDA) and India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL) for renewable energy capacity of 8 GW. Now, with a strong focus on renewable energy in the country, the agency plans to finance projects in the private sector as well. Mitsunori also said that JICA recently signed an MoU for developing four railways stations along the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train route. These are Sabarmati and Surat in Gujarat, and Virar and Thane in Maharashtra.

Edited excerpts:
How was the last financial year for JICA in terms of



disbursals in India?

In the last fiscal year, 2022-2023, we were able to make new commitments totalling nearly around \$6 billion, which is a record high. When we look back, during the past decade our average annual commitment was \$3-4 billion.

Thanks to the progress of Mumbai-Ahmedabad high speed rail, we were able to make additional financial commitment to that project and to other new projects and ongoing projects combined, we came up with \$6 billion of commitment.

We signed 7 projects in total last year. There are a couple of parameters to assess our work.

While making commitments we need to get go-ahead (approval) for the projects and actual work needs to be done. We did disbursements of \$5 billion in last fiscal.

Will JICA increase its presence in the green energy space?

We do have a lot of projects to increase renewable energy generation capacity. We have kind of a line of credit to IREDA and IIFCL.

Over the years, our total contribution in terms of renewable generation capacity is around 8 GW. We are in active discussion with our

frequent customers to have more credit lines to enhance their capacity. On the other hand, the increase in renewable capacity brings more fluctuation and instability of the grid. So, stabilization of a transmission and distribution network is also another important pillar of the whole thing. So, we are working with various state transmission compa-

nies to increase transmission capacities. We are in talks with Tamil Nadu, Odisha and Haryana and we are ready to take up more states. We also have communication with Gujarat and Rajasthan.

We have sovereign landing schemes, but also we have private lending window. We are ready to mobilize that window to support private players in the sector.

Though we don't have much track record in the past, we are in talks with various players, but the talks are in the initial stage. We do not have direct financing of a

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Saito Mitsunori

Chief Representative of JICA in India

project at this moment, but we are always looking to... When we talk about renewable energy, generation and grid stabilization are two important pillars. In terms of stabilization we also have another activity which is promotion of pumped storage. Currently, we have one ongoing project in West Bengal, with almost 1 GW capacity.

