JICA supports project to improve drinking water supply in Agra

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has signed a 16,279 million Japanese yen (approximately Rs 974 crore) loan agreement with the Government of India as part of the Japanese Official Development Assistance for the Agra Water Supply Project (II). The project aims to improve drinking water supply to Agra.

The agreement was signed by Shinya Ejima, Chief Representative of JICA India, and Rajesh Khullar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Government of India. In 2007, JICA provided a loan of 24,822 million yen (approximately Rs 1464 crore) to the project.

Agra is a major tourist destination. Yet, it receives water for only three-four hours a day. The drinking water, principally sourced from the Yamuna river, is heavily chlorinated due to pollution arising from the release of untreated sewage into it. This has raised concerns about the adverse impact on health and escalating treatment costs.

JICA funds are being used to build facilities that transfer water from the Ganga to Agra and its surrounding areas. The funds will also be used for overhauling and expansion of existing water supply facilities.

Executed by Uttar Pradesh Jal Nigam, the project is expected to be completed by end of 2017.

Commenting on the occasion, Ejima said: “In Agra, drinking water supply has not kept pace with the growing population. This project would greatly benefit the people of Agra and its tourists.”
JICA organizing sessions to help recycle/reuse municipal waste water

The Government of India has been trying to develop water supply and sewerage facilities, thus reducing water loss and improving management. The growing water scarcity in urban areas has made recycle/reuse of waste water an important policy agenda. In order to tackle this issue, JICA has initiated a study to collect data and develop a guidance document on waste water recycle and reuse specific to India.

For this purpose JICA organised brainstorming sessions on ‘Recycle/Reuse of Municipal Waste Water’ in New Delhi, Chennai, Ahmedabad, Mumbai and Bhopal. The objective was to understand the views of the stakeholders and discuss implementation models related to the reuse and recycle of waste water.

In order to incorporate the views of the various stakeholders and authorities in the final report, a national workshop co-hosted by JICA and Ministry of Urban Development will be held. This report will be presented to the Government of India along with the concerned agencies and stakeholders and will serve as a guidance document for wastewater recycle/reuse. It will also act as a reference for further actions to set up comprehensive regulations, water quality standards, monitoring mechanism and implementation frameworks.

Reducing non-revenue water in Jaipur, Goa and Delhi

The access to safe drinking water in India has improved from 72% in 1990 to 88% in 2008, but a lot of challenges including Non-Revenue Water (NRW) still exist. NRW is water that has been produced but lost before it reaches customers.

JICA has taken initiatives in Jaipur, Goa and Delhi where officials of water supply agencies and Japanese experts are working on reduction of NRW utilising Japanese technical know-how as Japan is the lowest NRW achiever in the world (below 10%).

In Jaipur, Public Health Engineering Department of Rajasthan State and Japanese experts are currently preparing annual NRW reduction program, based on which on-the-job training will be conducted at pilot project sites. The long term execution plan on NRW reduction will be finalized by March 2017 and ultimately the NRW ratio in pilot areas will be reduced.

In Goa, JICA has been contributing to the improvement of water supply and sewerage facilities since 2007. Since the time of JICA’s engagement, the high level of NRW ratio - approximately 40% - was recognised as serious issue.

Household surveys were conducted to understand the actual usage condition and map out the transmission network of the pilot area. It was followed by finding water leaks using listening rods and repairing/replacing water meters, pipes and valves. This resulted in drastic reduction of NRW from 45% to 18% in the pilot area.

In Delhi, the study on improvement of water supply systems was completed in 2011 with support from JICA. Followed by the study, JICA and Government of India mutually agreed on implementation of loan project which aimed at improving water supply service by rehabilitation and improvement of facilities under the Chandrawal Water Treatment Plant Command area.

Besides, to maximize the outcome of the loan project, it was decided technical cooperation project would be implemented to enhance the capacity of Delhi Jal Board (DJB).

By successful completion of all these three projects, not only reduction of NRW but also 24x7 water supply is expected in parts of Jaipur, Goa and Delhi.

“JICA decided to implement this study to move forward the recycle and reuse of waste water, which is indispensable for India. The problem of water shortage in many cities is getting serious and it will remain so in the future. JICA will continue to enhance awareness and understanding among stakeholders to promote waste water management in India.

Shinya Ejima
Chief Representative of JICA India

JICA is experienced in supporting such projects, including the pilot activities of use of treated water for car washing under the Yamuna Action Plan in Delhi, and potential horticultural use under the Hussain Sagar Lake Improvement Project in Hyderabad.

Measuring water pressure in Jaipur
Delhi Metro Phase 3 gets funds boost

JICA has extended an official development assistance loan of 1,40,000 million Japanese yen (approximately Rs 8,383 crore) for construction of Phase 3 of the Delhi Metro. The agreement was signed by Shinya Ejima, Chief Representative of JICA India, and Rajesh Khullar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Finance.

Since 1997, JICA has provided 502,644 million Japanese yen (approximately Rs 30,098 crore) for construction of the Delhi Metro in phases 1 to 3.

Delhi Metro is known as a shining example of Japan’s assistance in India. Phase 3 is planned to develop ring lines, connecting the existing lines so that the transport system can become even better.

Financial aid to help Haryana to beat power crisis

JICA has provided an official development assistance loan of 26,800 million Japanese yen (approximately Rs 1,604 crore) for the Haryana Distribution System Upgradation Project.

Haryana, where rapid industrial development and economic growth have led to a drastic rise of electricity demand, faces an acute power crisis in the form of shortages, inadequate distribution and theft. In Haryana, it is said that the AT&C loss (transmission & distribution loss including commercial loss) is around 30%. The loan would be used to augment and to upgrade power distribution facilities in areas with increasing demand and reduce electricity distribution losses in the state.

The power distribution system needs to be upgraded on a priority basis to meet the growing demand for power from industries and domestic consumers. The loan will help Haryana to meet this objective and achieve overall improvement in economic and social well-being.
Kolkata Solid Waste Management Improvement Project completes 7 years

The Kolkata Solid Waste Management Improvement Project has completed 7 years. JICA supports the project through an official development assistance loan of 3,584 million yen (approximately Rs 210 crore). JICA’s assistance followed the assessment that sudden population influx into urban areas is leading to discharge of waste exceeding disposal capacity. As a result, public health and living environment of citizens is being threatened by diseases like diarrhea and hepatitis.

The project is being implemented by the Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority in six contiguous municipalities—Uttarpara-Kotrung, Konnagar, Rishra, Serampore, Baidyabati and Champdani. In all these localities, mounting garbage volumes and its management is a formidable problem.

To help these municipalities improve their waste management services, the project not only provides facilities such as compost plants, transfer stations, secondary collection points, and sanitary landfills. It also grants equipment at grassroots level, such as household bins for segregation at source, community bins, tractor trailer containers for secondary storage, drain cleaning and road sweeping equipment, vehicles of different sizes, tractors for secondary transportation, transportation of inert materials and septic tank sludge and so on.

The most unique and innovative feature of the project is its “soft component” to enhance public awareness and environmental education. For instance, the project’s highlight has been the creation of a team of 36 volunteers named ‘Social Mobilisers’ who lead public awareness programmes and social mobilisation.

These awareness efforts are underscored by the creation of a mascot named ‘Suchi Didi’, which helped people to identify with the programme. Three PR vehicles were launched to carry the project message across the targeted areas.

Various stakeholders such as youth clubs, Integrated Child Development Service workers, self-help groups, students and teachers also got involved to work as messengers. The project visited more than 2,77,073 families across 103 wards in the six municipalities to repeat the message of behaviour change communication. Awareness was created to segregate waste at household level and handing over stored waste only to municipal waste collectors instead of throwing them here and there.

Significant impact was shown on the ground. Through involvement of stakeholders and a steady effort to spread the message, the project succeeded to impact behavioral change. People were encouraged to participate not as beneficiaries but as stakeholders of the project. More than half the families segregated waste perfectly. More than 85% families are paying user fee of Rs 10 per month regularly and have welcomed the system.

This project exemplified that strong political will is important for such public welfare programmes. The achievements encouraged people that changing mindsets and behavior is possible, even though it is painstaking. It was also learned that public awareness and environmental education need strong PR exercises.