The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has extended JPY 21,787 million (approx. Rs 1,150 crore) in Official Development Assistance (ODA) loan to augment power transmission infrastructure in Odisha. The assistance has been provided for construction of substations and transmission lines across Odisha to enhance stability of power transmission system and reliability of power supply, and reduce transmission losses.

The economic growth in Odisha has propelled demand for energy, from rural and urban households and commercial complexes, irrigation and industries such as steel, aluminum, petrochemicals manufacturing and IT. To address the demand, power generation capacity in the state is planned for increase from 5,511 MW in 2014-15 to 10,932 MW by 2021-22, which could also address demand from neighbouring states. The assistance from JICA will contribute towards the endeavor of providing affordable and stable 24x7 electricity to industrial, agricultural, commercial and household consumers.

The construction of substations and transmission lines would be completed by 2020 by Odisha Power Transmission Corporation Limited, Government of Odisha. Also, the substations will be designed and constructed to be resistant to natural disasters.

JICA has extended JPY 1,241,200 million (approx. Rs 65,260 crore) in ODA loans since 1958 for enhancement of power generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure in various parts of India. The assistance has enabled construction of 9.3 GW of power generation capacity.

Shinya Ejima, Chief Representative, JICA India Office (left) signed the loan-agreement with S Selvakumar, Joint Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India.
Forestry workshops spread best practices

JICA facilitates organization of national level forestry workshops on an annual basis, which bring together state Forest Departments from JICA assisted states and other states of the country as well. The workshops promote cross learning with respect to experience sharing on best practices by different project/states for implementing the projects. The 7th such annual workshop was organized in Lucknow under the aegis of JICA-assisted Uttar Pradesh Participatory Forest Management and Poverty Alleviation Project, on the theme, ‘Sustainable Forest Management through Community Partnership’.

At the workshop, best practices on use of Geographic Information System (GIS), impact of soil and moisture conservation on forests and agriculture, skill development of local communities for their sustained livelihood improvement, empowerment of village institutions and women, sustainability of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and value addition in forest produce, among others were shared. The workshop also included technical sessions on technology based monitoring, Carbon Financing and REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) initiatives, among others.

Workshop on operations and maintenance of a water supply system

JICA organized a workshop in Hosur, Tamil Nadu on institutional mechanisms for operation and maintenance of water supply and sanitation facilities. JICA’s assistance is facilitating development of water supply and sewerage infrastructure in various parts of India, and the workshop would lead to optimal utilization of such facilities into the future.

The workshop was attended by Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage Board, Kerala Water Authority, Odisha Water Supply and Sewerage Board, Public Health and Engineering Department of Rajasthan Government, Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board, UP Jal Nigam and Delhi Jal Board among others, which are executing JICA assisted projects to enhance water supply and sewerage infrastructure across Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Odisha, Rajasthan, Bengaluru, Agra, Varanasi and Delhi, respectively.

JICA’s assistance has facilitated construction of pipelines for water transmission, development of water reservoirs and pumping stations and recycling of water to enhance water supply, and construction of sewerage network, pumping stations and sewage treatment plants to enhance sanitation.

The workshop entailed presentations and field visit to the water supply facilities in Hosur which are being developed as part of the JICA assisted project for providing safe and stable water supply in Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri districts of Tamil Nadu, and mitigate dependence on fluorosis causing groundwater there.

JICA is supporting 29 projects to enhance water supply and sanitation in various parts of India through ODA loan of JPY 527,000 million (approx. Rs 27,000 crore) cumulatively.
Groundbreaking for new building of Children’s Hospital, Chennai

The Institute of Child Health and Hospital for Children (ICH) in Chennai, known as Children’s Hospital, is a public tertiary care hospital providing services free-of-cost to over 2,500 children from Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, daily in the OPD. JICA has extended Grant Aid of 1,495 million Yen (approx. Rs 88.20 crore) for improvement of ICH.

Under JICA’s grant, a new Out Patient Department (OPD) building is being constructed, the emergency department is being enhanced and the latest medical equipment procured for ICH. The new OPD building will be spread across 68,800 sq ft over four floors, and will be user-friendly to minimize movement of patients and medical personnel. Groundbreaking for this new OPD building has marked the commencement of its construction, which is scheduled for completion by November 2016.

JICA has previously extended Grant Aid of 667 million Yen (approx. Rs 40 crore) to ICH in 1998 which was utilized for procurement of equipment for diagnosis, treatment and surgeries. Over 3,00,000 newborns, 50,00,000 pediatric patients and 5,000 children who have received corrective cardiac surgeries at ICH have availed of enhanced facilities enabled through the previous grant. The present grant will contribute to improving neonatal and child healthcare and achieving reduced child mortality, particularly among vulnerable communities.

National Symposium on Excellence in Training awards JICA assisted forestry project

The JICA assisted project for ‘Capacity Development for Forest Management and Personnel Training’ has received the National Award for Excellence in Training at the inaugural National Symposium on Excellence in Training (NSET). The award was received for the innovative initiative, ‘Trainer/Faculty Development in State Forest Training Institutions’. JICA has extended ODA loan of JPY 5,241 million (approx. Rs 225 crore) for this initiative which has been implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India.

The initiative has included development of training pedagogy, training implementation and refurbishment and new construction of training facilities for sustained, effective and structured skills-enhancement of forest management personnel. Over 1,750 men and women Forest Department officers have received training under the initiative, which has been implemented across 13 states, namely Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Nagaland, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram.

A state’s Forest Department is in everyday contact with communities dependent on forest resources for livelihood. The activities of the Department include facilitating non-timber related income opportunities and empowering the communities through development of SHGs, which enable improvement of their living habitat, in conjunction with afforestation.

The inaugural NSET was organized by the Department of Personnel and Training, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Government of India in partnership with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
Chennai Metro’s first line opens

The first line of Chennai Metro extending over an elevated 10 km stretch from Koyambedu to Alandur has opened for public. The Chennai Metro system will extend over 46 km, of which 25.2 km will be underground. On completion, the Chennai Metro is expected to have over 260 trains running in either direction each day, transporting an estimated 60 lakh people each day by the year 2018.

JICA has extended JPY 130,293 million (approx. Rs 8,000 crore) in ODA loan over three tranches since 2008 for development of a metro rail system in Chennai.

The assistance from JICA has facilitated construction of underground and elevated rail-tracks, associated electrical, telecommunication and signaling systems and procurement of the trains. JICA’s assistance also includes consulting services related to the metro system design, assistance for bidding, supervision of construction works, and planning for operation/maintenance.

Chennai Metro will mitigate traffic congestion and enhance ease of travel; reducing traffic congestion raises local economic output significantly. The project has originated from Tamil Nadu State Government's urban transport policy of development of a mass rapid transport system to relieve traffic congestion and reduce vehicle pollution, thereby contributing to development of the regional economy and improvement in the urban environment. The Chennai Metro is integrated with other forms of public and private transport including buses and sub-urban trains for seamless travel by commuters.

JICA has promoted development of economic infrastructure which facilitates sustained growth. Opening of the first metro line by Chennai Metro Rail Limited is a step towards fulfilling Chennai Metro’s mission of providing safe, fast, reliable, accessible, convenient, comfortable, efficient, affordable and sustainable public transport service that is preferred by all.

Inauguration of first line of Chennai Metro