On February 17, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) signed loan agreements with the Government of India to provide three Japanese ODA Loan Projects for the first half of Fiscal Year 2010, total of which amounted to 46.401 billion Japanese Yen (eqvt. To 2559.3 crore INR).

Given the rapidly increasing population and growing environmental burden in Asia, much attention is being focused on “green growth,” a concept of developing the economy while creating a low-carbon society. Having launched economic reforms in 1991, India has achieved an annual economic growth rate between 4 and 9 percent, standing out as one of the remarkable BRIC countries. It is predicted that India will attain high economic growth rate of 9 percent in fiscal year 2010 as well, having demonstrated a swift recovery from the global economic crisis. At the same time, there is a big challenge for India to achieve growth targets while ameliorating the environmental burden. JICA is therefore, providing assistance through Japanese ODA loans to support a model of development which is environmentally harmonious and preserves the nation’s biodiversity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Amount (million yen)</th>
<th>Annual interest rate (%)</th>
<th>Repayment period/deferment period (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh Crop Diversification Promotion Project</td>
<td>5,001</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>30/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Conservation and Greening Project</td>
<td>8,829</td>
<td>0.65*</td>
<td>40/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yamuna Action Plan Project (III)</td>
<td>32,571</td>
<td>0.65*</td>
<td>40/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46,401</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*) To actively assist the approach to environmental issues in developing countries, preferential terms are applied to environmental projects (0.65% per year interest with a repayment period of 40 years and a grace period of 10 years).
Technical Cooperation Project

Promotion of soybean production in Madhya Pradesh

On December 7, 2010, the Record of Discussions was exchanged between JICA and GoMP, for “Maximization of Soybean Production in Madhya Pradesh”, a project under Japanese Technical Cooperation.

Despite leading role as soybean producer, Madhya Pradesh has been one of the poorest states in India with large population below poverty line. Since almost 90% of soybean cultivation in Madhya Pradesh is rain-fed and carried out mainly by marginal/small-scale farmers, production maximization of soybean is expected to increase the level of food security as well as to improve livelihood of the rural population.

The Project aims at benefitting these marginal/small-scale farmers in Madhya Pradesh through increasing soybean production with improved low cost cultivation technology.

Japan has more than two thousand years of history of soybean cultivation under large diversity of climatic zones, soil types, fertility etc. Japanese soybean scientists have developed high-yielding technology based on the advanced scientific knowledge and experience. Under this Project, such developed technology could be revised and improved for the adaptation to soybean production in Madhya Pradesh in collaboration with Indian soybean scientists.
Eco-Products International Fair

JICA India office participated as an exhibitor in the 7th Eco Products International Fair-2011 held at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi from 10th to 12th February, 2011.

JICA’s major activities and operations focus on environment conservation and are eco-friendly. During the three-day exhibition of the EPIF-2011, JICA showcased many eco-friendly activities from various sectors such as from public transportation, forestry, solid waste management and energy efficiency and conservation sector. This includes displaying of introduction photo panels, the model of a Delhi-Metro Rail and the eco-friendly products being made by the Self-Help Groups (SHGs) of the JICA-assisted forestry projects in India as well as the eco-friendly products made through waste materials by the school children as an integral part of Children Forest Programme (CFP). The products made by SHGs include areca leaf plates, jute-bags, jute-ropes, mat, pottery items, broom-stick, handicrafts and vermi-compost. In addition to that, a little cooler “Chotukool” was exhibited as a symbolic case of application of learning from VLFM (Visionary Leaders for Manufacturing) project. Chotukool is a little cooler which is targeting BOP segment produced by Godrej & Boyce Mfg Co Ltd. It runs on solid state cooling engine with advanced semiconductor technology instead of traditional compressors & refrigerants. It operates on 12V DC and can work on battery, inverter or even solar power.

Eco-Products International Fair (EPIF), 7th in the series, is the largest environmental fair in Asia and showcases the most advanced environmental friendly technologies, products and services that enhance sustainable productivity and competitiveness. EPIF-2011 is organized by Asian Productivity Organization (APO), Tokyo in collaboration with the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, National Productivity Council and Confederation of Indian Industries. The theme of EPIF-2011 is “Green Productivity for Sustainable Energy and Environment”.

The EPIF-2011 was inaugurated by Mr. Anand Sharma, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. Many distinguished Indian and Japanese officials and the organizers of the EPIF-2011 were present during the opening session.

EPIF - 2011 attracted over 25000 visitors and JICA’s exhibition booth also fascinated many visitors like government officials, NGOs, media, general public, college students and school children.
Voice of Japanese expert of Technical Cooperation Project
Interview with Mr. Masatoshi YAMADA

Mr. Masatoshi Yamada was deputed to India as a JICA expert in March 2010. Mr. Yamada has been engaged in technical cooperation project “Capacity Building for Operation and Maintenance of Sewerage Works in India” being implemented by JICA and Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), National River Conservation Directorate (NRCD). Mr. Yamada was interviewed about his experiences before completion of his assignment.

Q Could you introduce your background and elaborate activities under this project?

A I joined Japan Sewage Works Agency (JSWA) in 1976. JSWA is a special-public entity to promote sewerage works through supervision of construction works of Sewerage facilities, research & technology development, and trainings for sewerage engineers in Japan. I started my carrier as a civil engineer and worked for various construction projects in Japanese municipalities. Before coming to India, I was responsible for management of Training Center for sewerage engineers, where I taught Operation and Maintenance (O&M), Asset Management and Advanced Treatment Technology.

The goal of JICA’s technical cooperation project is to establish the sustainable training system for sewerage engineers in India. Under this project, the surveys were conducted on actual situation of Sewerage Treatment Plants (STPs), assessment of the capacity of engineers while exploring suitable institutional arrangement in organizing the trainings. The pilot trainings specializing in O&M of the sewerage facilities for junior and senior engineers were conducted under the project. The Human Resource Training Plan and Curriculum Textbooks for sewerage O&M trainings are under finalization.

Q Workshop on “Operation and Maintenance of Sewerage Works” held on February 4th, 2011 was successful with having more than 80 participants from various State agencies. Could you outline the event?

A The workshop consisted of two parts. At the first session, the activities taken up so far under the project were focused. While, the second session focused on sharing the experience of state utilities and suitable mechanism for continuous operation of trainings for the engineers relating to sewerage works. Through the intensive discussions amongst the participants, the great expectation for trainings in various state utilities was felt. It is hoped that the Indian side will continue the sewerage O&M trainings even after the completion of Japan assisted technical cooperation Project.

Q How do you see the challenges of Indian sewerage sector?

A The proper Operation and Maintenance of existing facilities is as important as construction of the new facilities. For proper O&M, comprehensive measures in terms of human resource development, financially and technically sound management from long term perspective need to be taken up.

Apart from human resource development, I would suggest the following for further improvement of STPs operation;

1) Introduction of fine screens at the inlet of STP. Too much solid waste in the influent causes malfunction of the treatment system.
2) Exclusion of corrosives from digestive gas. Gas Generators at STPs are not functioning well due to existence of corrosives such as hydrogen sulfide, siloxane in digestive gas.
3) Introduction of energy-efficient facilities for the reduced O&M cost.
4) Delegation of authority and responsibility to the officials working at STPs.
5) Strengthening and enforcement of laws and regulations with penalties. In Japan, for example, the violation in effluent standards results in punishment with penalty and police custody.
6) Careful examination of new technology by using evaluation chart prepared based on Japanese experience. New technology sometimes become a breakthrough, however, sometimes it ends up in failure.

Q Any memorable moments during your stay in India?

A Deeply impressed with rich history and cultural diversity of India, I enjoyed visiting various historic sites, communicating with local people. Every moment of my stay in India was very much enjoyable.