Message

It is a great honor for me to assume my assignment as the Chief Representative of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), India Office. Since India is one of the most rapidly developing countries in the world, which has achieved good economic growth over the past two decades, I am looking forward to an exciting life in this country, as it would provide me with an opportunity to re-experience a high-growth period which Japan witnessed over forty years ago.

For India to achieve a long lasting and sustainable overall economic development, it is imperative that improvement of crucial infrastructures such as railways, highways, ports and power are taken up on priority. Further, manufacturing sector requires a greater impetus to create an enabling environment for facilitating steady flow of foreign direct investments into the country. However, in the process of development, social considerations and environment conservation have to be given careful and due importance.

JICA has been supporting economic growth, poverty reduction and environment conservation in India over the last five decades through a diversified portfolio covering sectors such as transportation, water supply and sewerage, forestry, power, agriculture, health, education etc.

Japan and India have been long time friends. 2012 marks completion of 60 years of establishment of Japan–India diplomatic relations, which is testimony to the strong bonds of friendship between the two democratic countries. I believe, India has been exemplary in showcasing to the world the path of ‘development through a strong democratic system’. As a Japanese national, who has been a witness to a similar experience back in Japan, I sincerely expect that India would continue to move on the path of development to emerge as a strong economic power in the world and JICA would continue to work with the people of India in their quest for sustainable development.

Shinya Ejima,
Chief Representative,
JICA India Office

Upcoming Events:

Exhibition at Hyderabad

JICA India Office is participating as an exhibitor in CBD/COP11 to be held at HICC in Hyderabad from 8th to 19th October, 2012. JICA has been contributing to biodiversity conservation activities in the world by providing Technical Cooperation and ODA Loans. Experiences in “Participatory Management of Barra del Colorado National Wildlife Refuge Project” in Costa Rica, which is one of the best practices of JICA’s cooperation to the sector, will be shared in a side event of the conference. JICA will also showcase the initiatives undertaken for the conservation of biodiversity and livelihood improvements through its various forestry projects in India.
Health, Hygiene and Gender Improvement Project for Adolescent Girls (Chamoli, Uttarakhand)

Background of the Target Group

Life in the hills of Uttarakhand is not easy for women who traditionally bear the larger burden of earning livelihoods than their men. Home to low income tribes, most villages have few health facilities. Adolescent girls are largely anemic, and often walk miles on foot to reach the nearest school. Women are fundamentally unaware of their rights.

Bridging the Gap

The JICA Partnership Programme (JPP) run by Japanese NGO Terra People ACT Kanagawa (TPAK) and local NGO Mamta Samajik Sanstha has completed its two years project period in February 2012. It had targeted 800 poor tribal adolescent and young married women between the age of 10-19 in 40 villages in the remote Ghat block, Chamoli district, Uttarakhand.

The focus was on educating them on health and nutrition, thereby creating a thirst for knowledge for better lives. It was premised on the belief that women who are educated and in good health, would ensure the same for their families by improving their nutritional status and producing healthier children. Enhanced knowledge would also lead to self-confidence and greater awareness about gender equality.

Community Engagement for Sustainability

The feature of the initiative was its approach of engaging local stakeholders in the activities. The programme gathered support from the local government officials including school and administration officials, aanganwadi workers [Aanganwadis are Government sponsored non-formal schooling centres for children...]

Practice of first aid
in the 0-6 age group. They also act as child-care and mother-care centres. ANMs [Auxiliary Nurse Midwife – they provide basic nursing and midwifery care to women and children under the health system] and ASHAs [Accredited Social Health Activist] to take the programme ahead.

Efforts were also being made to integrate the project with one of the government schemes. This way, the initiative can be continued even beyond the project period, February 2012.

By making the girls aware of their rights to good health, hygiene, and life-enhancing skills, the project has paved the way for a better community as the girls grow to be women of strength and character, and fully integrated into society.

Painting Competition at Bangalore

Written by Yuichiro Sano, Representative

Kids paint to celebrate India-Japan friendship

JICA has been supporting the construction of Bangalore Metro (also known as Namma Metro). In June 2012, to mark the 60th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Japan and India, Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI), Bangalore, and Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation organized a metro painting competition at Byappannahalli station. Around 30 Japanese and 30 Indian children and their families totaling more than 200 people participated in the event and celebrated the anniversary.

Testimony

Tanuja, from Saiti village, counts on her fingers. Thanks to the project, she is now aware of her rights as a girl child.

“Right to equality with boys, right to education, right to health, food and nutrition and above all, the right to be born and to live a normal life”

Tanuja, from Saiti village, counts on her fingers. Thanks to the project, she is now aware of her rights as a girl child.
Could you introduce your background and elaborate activities under this project?

I have been engaged with the Expressways sector since last 40 years. I joined NEXCO-East (erstwhile Japan Highway Public Corporation) in 1972 and was in charge of developing and building nation-wide expressways in Japan. My profile included planning, designing, building and operating expressways mostly in the central part of Japan. I feel that I am very lucky to get the opportunity of being the Project Manager of one of the huge and ambitious project of Trans-Tokyo Bay Expressway. I handled the project for 8 years and later on became the Head of Operation Office of the same project.

As a Technical Cooperation expert, the activities under this project involves building capacity, providing technical expertise based on my experiences in Japan and other overseas countries.

How is your experience of working with National Highways Authority of India?

There are many similarities between my experiences during the past 40 years in Japan and now in India. Based on my experiences, I have been providing technical assistance and variety of information such as land acquisition problems, financing, environmental preservation, viability, PPP and Bidding process. I have written more than 15 reports for this organization. At present, I am writing a report on “How to Rectify the Aggressive Bidding”.

How do you see the opportunities and challenges of Expressway sector?

Expressways are going very slow in India. Many countries including Japan started building expressways together with the improvement of other highways and roads such as National Highways, State Highways and rural roads. This gives a very healthy structure of the road networks of a nation for the economic activities. In India, however, the development of expressways tends to be overlooked due to some difficulties like land acquisition, viability and lack of innovation. It is a big challenge for me as well as for my counterparts.

Can you share any memorable moments during your stay in India?

I have visited many states in India so far. I have been to Nagaland, Mizoram, Sikkim, Bihar, Gujarat, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu etc. to deliver lectures about the Highways and Road sector. The most memorable moments were when people liked my lecture, praised my lecture, asked me for autographs and clicked photographs after the lecture sessions. It makes me feel very happy as an engineer having delivered a good lecture and at that time feeling as if I am a famous star.