Sharing Experience between Banda Aceh and Higashi-Matsushima:

Higashi-Matsushima City and JICA Joint-Delegation Meets with Mr. Kuntoro

Higashi-Matsushima city (Miyagi Prefecture in Japan) is dispatching a joint official delegation with JICA led by the Vice Mayor, Mr. Yukichi ONUMA, to Banda Aceh city. The delegation is a realization of a recommendation made by Mr. Kuntoro Mangkusubroto, former Aceh-Nias Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Agency (BRR) head, who, now leads the Presidential Work Unit for Development Monitoring and Control (UKP4), when he visited Higashi-Matsushima on May 27, 2011. He suggested to the Mayor, Mr. Hideo ABE and Mr. ONUMA to visit Aceh as a means to find reference for their on-going reconstruction works after the massive earthquake and tsunami hit the Tohoku Region in March 2011.

The delegation is scheduled to meet with Mr. Kuntoro in Jakarta on November 12th (Mon) at 14:00 hours and intends to express their sincere appreciation regarding his support so far and ask further support from the Government of Indonesia (GOI) to sustainably develop the cooperation between Banda Aceh city and Higashi-Matsushima city.

The relationship between Banda Aceh and Higashi-Matsushima started from Mr. Kuntoro’s visit in 2011, which was then passed down to Mr. Eddy Purwanto, former Deputy of BRR who is now the Deputy for Governance of the Vice President’s Office, and Ms. Illiza Sa’aduddin Djamal, the Vice Mayor of Banda Aceh, during their visits and discussions in Higashi-Matsushima. These discussions inspired Higashi-Matsushima city’s personnel to realize a more effective and promising cooperation, thus JICA Tohoku Center in Sendai (Miyagi Prefecture) was requested to formulate a concrete cooperation project between the two cities. As the first step, JICA Tohoku is starting a new training program in Higashi-Matsushima with the acceptance of two (2) trainees from Banda Aceh city for at least one year that can enable them to engage in the reconstruction works there.

In this training program, the trainees from Banda Aceh will – apart from sharing their own experience to the Japanese side - acquire Japanese reconstruction skills and knowledge, including the new concepts for the “Future Environmentally Friendly City” in Higashi-Matsushima and provide feedback to the further reconstruction of Banda Aceh city. Furthermore, the training is hoped to deepen the relationship between the two cities thus create opportunities for Higashi-Matsushima to mobilize its
vibrant human resources, future market potential, and abundant natural resources such as renewable energy, agriculture, fishery, and forestry.

The delegation will also have a discussion with Mr. Mawardi Nurdin, the Mayor of Banda Aceh, on the program and expected outcomes of the training in Higashi-Matsushima, as well as interview the prospective candidates for the training. They will also study the reconstruction status of the housing and coastal natural environment, and recovery of tourism, agriculture and fishery in Banda Aceh. In addition, they will experience the traditional lifestyle in a village (Lubuk Sukon, Aceh Besar Regency) and survey the potential for renewable energy (geothermal, micro-hydro, and solar), and confirm the possibility for a mutual reconstruction program.

Banda Aceh and Higashi-Matsushima are seeking to establish a partnership in realizing the “mutually beneficial reconstruction.” The two trainees assigned in Higashi-Matsushima are expected to serve as the real active bridge between the two cities that could extend the human networks and create opportunities to realize further cooperation programs as the next step. The two cities, sharing the same understanding of the terrible but irresistible power of nature, are expected to create a new lifestyle and society harmonized with nature but also achieve the maximum benefit from nature at the same time. The focus of this cooperation is the real environmentally sustainable reconstruction model, and it is highly expected to involve the resources and actors from both sides to develop the model.

<Schedule of the delegation>

Nov. 11th (night) – Nov. 13th (morning) staying in Jakarta
Nov. 13th (afternoon) – Nov. 16th (afternoon) staying in Banda Aceh

END

【For further information and request for interview with the delegation】
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