

JAPAN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY



# News FROM Philippines

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## NEW TRAINS FOR LRT-1 PROJECT ARRIVE IN PH

The first train set from the 120 Light Rail Vehicles (LRVs) supplied by Mitsubishi Corporation in partnership with Construcciones Y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles of Spain for the Light Rail Transit Line 1, arrived in Manila recently.

The first train set is part of the 120 new rolling stocks funded under the Official Development Assistance (ODA) of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) with the Department of Transportation (DOTr) for the Capacity Enhancement for Mass Transit Systems in Metro Manila (Line 1 South Extension).

Each 4-car train set can accommodate about 1,388 passengers, and the newest addition to the existing fleet to serve the growing number of passengers that are expected at approximately 300 million annually by year 2025. JICA also emphasized that aside from easing traffic congestion, enhancing the capacity of LRT-1 will also help mitigate air pollution in Metro Manila brought by rapid urbanization and increase in registered vehicles plying business district routes.

Aside from new trains, the project also includes expansion of the existing depot in Baclaran, and construction of new satellite depot in Zapote, Cavite.

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## PHILIPPINES RECEIVES 10 BILLION YEN UNDER JICA POST DISASTER STANDBY LOAN PHASE 2

JICA disbursed 10 billion yen (roughly PHP 4.7 billion) under its Post Disaster Standby Loan 2 (PDSL 2) assistance to the Philippines in support of families devastated by recent typhoons in the last quarter of 2020.

The disbursement followed the declaration of the Philippine government of a State of Calamity in the entire island of Luzon due to Typhoons Quinta, Rolly, and Ulysses in 2020.

The JICA disbursement forms part of the 50 billion yen loan extended on September 15, 2020 to the Philippines ensuring contingency funds are available for the Philippines' response to the financial demands of post-disaster recovery in case of natural disasters and public health threats. Earlier, a 10 billion yen was disbursed to the Philippines to support response and recovery efforts from the pandemic following the extension of the State of Calamity throughout the Philippines due to COVID-19.



Damages caused by Typhoon Rolly

*“As a friend and trusted partner of the Philippines, JICA stands by Filipinos whose lives were disrupted because of the recent natural disasters. Through the JICA post-disaster assistance, we hope that vulnerable sectors affected will find relief and support to recover their livelihood and income through the spirit of ‘bayanihan’ in these difficult times,”*

- AZUKIZAWA Eigo  
JICA Philippines Chief Representative



CLLEX



CLLEX

## PORTIONS OF CENTRAL LUZON LINK EXPRESSWAY PROJECT COMPLETED DESPITE PANDEMIC

Portions of the 30-kilometer Central Luzon Expressway (CLLEX) were completed recently, expanding road network options for travelers in nearby municipalities.

The CLLEX Phase I is one of the key infrastructure projects that JICA is supporting under the Build, Build, Build program in partnership with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH). The project's segments in the Tarlac Section and Rio Chico River Bridge section were completed recently, further boosting the economic prospects in the regions.

Every day, around 11,200 motorists and commuters travel between Tarlac City and Cabanatuan City. Aside from weighing heavily on people's quality of life, traffic congestion in the Philippines' major highways and expressways slow economic growth and pose hazards in the environment.

According to DPWH Project Manager Engineer Ben Bautista, CLLEX will help decongest the Pan-Philippine Highway by 48% and reduce travel time between Tarlac City and Cabanatuan City to 20 minutes when completed. Travel time from Metro Manila to Cabanatuan City will also be reduced from three hours and six minutes via the Pan-Philippine Highway or two hours and fourteen minutes via SCTEX - Tarlac Sta. Rosa Road to just one hour and 53 minutes.





TBM Arrival Ceremony



Tunnel Boring Machine

## EQUIPMENT FOR UNDERGROUND EXCAVATION FOR METRO MANILA SUBWAY ARRIVES

The Metro Manila Subway Project (MMSP) is set to start underground excavation work as the first Earth Pressure Balance Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) with a diameter of 6.99 meters arrived in the Philippines recently.

The MMSP is one of the interventions identified to decongest Metro Manila traffic and promote economic growth in the Philippines. A partnership between JICA and DOTr, the subway project will help expand the Philippines' existing railway lines and ensure seamless mobility of people.

A Joint Venture of Japanese and Filipino contractors had ordered the TBM a Japanese company in consideration of Japan's expertise in railway building. The subway project will apply Japan's railway and seismic design technology to help the subway withstand earthquakes and prevent flooding.

When completed, the subway will connect the city's business districts and is projected to serve an initial 365,000 passengers daily upon opening with 40 minutes travel time from north to south and vice versa in Metro Manila. The subway will likewise be connected to the city's existing railway lines such as the Metro Rail Transit (MRT), Light Rail Transit (LRT), North-South Commuter Railway (NSCR), and Philippine National Railway (PNR).



TBM Arrival Ceremony

“ We welcome the move of the Philippine government to speed up construction of the subway despite COVID-19. We recognize the safety protocols they are putting in place to make sure that this project moves forward. Once completed, the first phase of the Metro Manila subway can help create economic opportunities and ease traffic congestion in the Philippines. ”

- AZUKIZAWA Eigo  
JICA Philippines Chief Representative

## JICA, DENR TEAM UP WITH FARMERS TO MANAGE FORESTLANDS, MITIGATE FLOOD HAZARDS

JICA and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) are working with farmers in Quirino Province in Cagayan Valley to boost cooperation in caring for forestlands and mitigating flood hazards in vulnerable areas.

The Forestland Management Project (FMP) is an ongoing 10-year development cooperation that seeks to protect some 71,300 hectares of forest resources in the country's watershed areas such as Jalaur Watershed in Iloilo; Upper Magat and Cagayan River Basin in Ifugao, Nueva Vizcaya, and Quirino; and Pampanga River Basin in Nueva Ecija.

The project also aims to address deforestation through participatory planning, site development, capacity building of people's organizations, and agroforestry support facilities. Already, some 149 people's organizations mostly composed of farmers benefited from FMP. In Quirino, the Ifugao Village Upland Farmers Association (IVUFA) composed of 138 farmers and members partnered with DENR in the management of 138 hectares of agroforestry land. FMP also provided them with an irrigation facility to improve crop production and PHP 100,000 seed money for enterprise development.



Screenshot from IVUFA video

“*The project aims to encourage people's participation in forest conservation, while enhancing access to social services and connectivity of upland communities.*  
- EBISAWA Yo  
JICA Philippines Senior Representative

## JAPAN'S YOMIURI GIANTS, JICA HOLD VIRTUAL TRAINING OF YOUTH ATHLETES IN MINDANAO AMID COVID-19

As schools and organized sports are largely at a standstill because of global efforts to contain COVID-19, Japan's professional baseball team Yomiuri Giants and JICA launched recently a virtual training for youth athletes in Mindanao.

The activity was held with the Department of Education Davao City, Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education – Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), Bangsamoro Sports Commission, Mindanao Kokusai Daigaku, and Philippine Nikkei Jin Kai International School.

Yomiuri Giants is one of the oldest professional baseball teams based in Tokyo and has won in about 22 Japan series championships. This is the second year that Japan's Yomiuri Giants and JICA co-organized a baseball training, although training this year was conducted via Zoom. Around 10 schools and about 250 students joined the virtual training along with their coaches and parents. While most of the participants came from the Davao region, there were also participants from BARMM and Region 12.

As part of the activity, JICA Philippine Office also held an online program on good personal hygiene habits such as washing of hands to prevent community spread of the disease.

“*The activity complements our peace building efforts in Mindanao, assuring our counterparts of JICA's support in their COVID-19 recovery. Further, the pandemic has forced students to study through remote learning. This is also particularly hard for student athletes so hopefully, the virtual training with Yomiuri Giants will help them remain connected with other people while extending their ability to learn skills from a professional baseball team.*  
- AZUKIZAWA Eigo  
JICA Chief Representative



## BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) is the Philippines' central bank established in 3 January 1949. It is the government's agency in charge of supporting Philippine monetary policy, lending and borrowing against Philippine assets as collateral, and promoting financial stability. JICA partnered with BSP for a project Establishment of Credit Risk Database (CRD) for better financial access for small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

BSP Governor Diokno shared that "Prior to the onset of COVID-19, MSME loans from Philippine banks were only at 8.8% of total business loans and 6.1% of total loans. The two factors according to him are the reluctance of MSMEs to approach banks due to lack of credit history and acceptable collateral and perception on MSMEs as high-risk. The project is a tangible step in building a sustainable financing ecosystem for SMEs. Banks, on the other hand, will benefit from the robust credit scoring models built on the database to supplement or to validate their internal scoring models. This will particularly be useful to those without a credit scoring model. The CRD will enhance the credit risk management system of banks."

“The project is a tangible step in building a sustainable financing ecosystem for SMEs.”

Benjamin E. Diokno  
Governor, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas



BSP Gov. Diokno

## IN FOCUS

## JICA SCHOLARS IN GROUP TRAINING COURSE

Meet some of the Filipino scholars under the Knowledge Co-Creation Program (KCCP). The program, which is usually held in Japan, has currently shifted online due to the pandemic and has been sharing Japan's knowledge and models on systems and structures in different development areas.



KCCP Scholar Lawangen

“The course inspired me to revisit our local COVID-19 crisis management plan and integrate lessons on institutionalizing the integration of new normal measures such as wearing masks, washing hands, disinfecting, and physical distancing. The training also provided ideas on economic activities that do not need face-to-face interaction such as home-based product development and processing.”

**ABNER LAWANGEN**  
Local Government Unit of Tublay, Benguet  
Disaster Reconstruction Assistance

“The course on disaster management improved my knowledge on Philippine tectonics and how we can curb future disasters by enhancing our earthquake monitoring and warning through Japan's knowledge-sharing and expertise.”

**JOEL OESTAR**  
Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHILVOCS)  
Seismology Earthquake Engineering and Tsunami Disaster Mitigation



KCCP Scholar Oestar

To learn more about the JICA Group Training courses, please visit this link  
<[https://www.jica.go.jp/philippine/english/activities/activity\\_01\\_05.html](https://www.jica.go.jp/philippine/english/activities/activity_01_05.html)>.

Do you know that from 2010 to 2015, JICA worked with Japanese and Filipino scientists to study how Boracay, one of the Philippines' famous tourist destinations, can preserve its coral reef system? The project Coastal Ecosystem Conservation and Adaptive Management (CECAM) studied Boracay's water quality and helped install closed circuit television cameras along the beach for real-time monitoring of wave conditions and observations on algal blooms.

The project is under the JICA and Japan and Science Technology (JST) initiative called SATREPS or Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development that undertakes international research to help address global issues.

# RETROSPECT



## About JICA

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is the executing agency of Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA), which handles technical cooperation, ODA loans and investment, and grant aid, as well as cooperation volunteers and disaster relief programs. JICA is the world's largest bilateral aid agency with its volume of cooperation amounting to about USD 16.37 billion for JFY 2019 and a worldwide network of about 10 overseas offices including the Philippines

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## FEEDBACK

We would like to hear from you about JICA's activities in the Philippines. Do drop us a line in this email: [pp\\_oso\\_rep@jica.go.jp](mailto:pp_oso_rep@jica.go.jp) for any feedback. Thank you!