Title: Ministry of Transport & JICA conduct Workshop on Colombo Urban Transport Master Plan Study

Ministry of Transport in cooperation with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) will conduct a workshop for awareness creation among key stakeholder agencies about the ongoing urban transport master plan study for the Colombo metropolitan region today. Hon. Kumara Welgama, Minister of Transport will be the Chief Guest at the event, together with Mr. K. D. Dhammika Perera, Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Mr. Hiroyuki Abe, Senior Representative of JICA Sri Lanka Office. Officials from relevant Government agencies, academics and key development partners have been invited to participate.

The study aims to identify the optimum methods of resolving traffic congestion and transport difficulties faced by the public in Colombo city and suburbs. It will review present conditions, on-going developments and future plans, to identify short and mid term measures to improve the existing transport system, and in the long term to establish a new mode of transport as the core system to fulfill the growing public and corporate mobility needs. The study methodology, expected outputs and timeline will be shared and discussed with the participants.

The study will consist of a number of surveys to obtain current data of travel requirements as well as traffic conditions. The largest of these is a person-trip survey in the Colombo metropolitan region. Around 45-50,000 households within the Western Province selected on a random selection method will be surveyed, and the data analyzed to determine the peak travel times, destinations, corridors as well as public preferences. This survey is expected to commence in Oct/Nov 2012, and the cooperation of public is requested in providing their information, to ensure that the master plan is formulated considering the public priorities and requirements.

The survey data will be used to formulate the urban transport master plan for Colombo metropolitan region which includes identification of a new core public transportation mode, transport corridors and connection with existing transport systems.

The study is conducted under JICA’s technical cooperation assistance and is provided on the basis of a grant. Feasibility analysis for the identified core transport mode would be also included in the study. JICA is planning to finance the implementation of the identified core transport system with a concessionary Official Development Assistance loan depending on the study outcome.

In addition to the urban transport master plan, JICA’s support to development of the transport sector in Sri Lanka includes financial and technical assistance for improvement of the road network, construction of Southern Expressway and Colombo Outer Circular Expressway, and most recently the expansion and development of Phase II of Bandaranaike International Airport.

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is the executing agency of Japan’s Bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA). JICA, the world’s largest bilateral aid agency, works in over 150 countries and regions. In accordance with its vision of “Inclusive and Dynamic Development,” JICA supports the resolution of development issues in developing countries. In Sri Lanka, Japan has been providing financial and technical assistance since 1954 and is one of the largest donors to the country. On behalf of the people and the Government of Japan, JICA contributes to improve the lives of people in Sri Lanka.

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