President opens Panichankerny Bridge constructed through Japanese grant assistance

President Mahinda Rajapakse ceremonially opened Panichankerny bridge and causeway on 1st September 2013 together with representatives from the Embassy of Japan and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Dignitaries including Project Minister for Ports and Highways, Chief Minister and Ministers of Eastern Province, Deputy Ministers and Members of Parliament participated in the ceremony.

Under the 1.2 billion Japanese Yen (approx. 1.7 billion Rupees) grant from JICA, Panichankerny bridge and causeway on the A15 (Trincomalee-Batticaloa Road) and four bridges between Padiyathalawa and Eravur on the A5 in Maha Oya and Eravurpattu DS Divisions were constructed. Construction of all 5 bridges was completed on schedule in spite of difficulties caused by floods in Eastern Province last year.

The A5 is the primary road link from the Central and Uva Provinces to the Eastern Province, while the A15 interconnects the three districts of the Eastern Province – Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Ampara. The old bridges constructed some 60 years ago were in a dilapidated state and too narrow for 2-lane traffic, although the roads were widened to 2-lanes during the post-tsunami and post-conflict reconstruction drive in the Eastern Province. All 5 new bridges are with 2-lanes and enable smooth traffic flow on these key national roads linking the Eastern Province to the rest of the country.

The project was implemented by the Road Development Authority in cooperation with JICA. "We hope this assistance will contribute to reducing regional disparities, and promote better connectivity for socio-economic growth", says Mr. Harumi Ao, Chief Representative of JICA – Sri Lanka Office.

Another new bridge is currently under construction through JICA grant assistance in Mannunai across the Batticaloa lagoon and expected to be completed in 2014. The new Manampitiya Bridge across Mahaweli River in North Central Province, and the new Mannar Bridge connecting the mainland to Mannar Island in Northern Province were also JICA grant projects.

Attachments:
Photo 1 & 2: Old Panichankerny bridge and causeway
Photo 3: New Panichankerny bridge and causeway constructed through JICA grant
Photo 1 & 2: Old Panichankerny bridge and causeway

Photo 3: New Panichankerny bridge and causeway constructed through JICA grant

ENDS

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is the executing agency of Japan’s Bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA). JICA, the world’s biggest 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 biggest donors to the country. On behalf of the people and the Government of Japan, JICA contributes to improve lives of the people in Sri Lanka.