NEW BATCH OF JAPANESE VOLUNTEERS TO HELP PEOPLE OF SRI LANKA

The latest batch of Japanese Overseas Cooperation Agency (JICA) volunteers arrived in Sri Lanka on 3rd October 2013. These volunteers are here to provide services in specific fields of expertise, under JICA's ongoing Volunteer Dispatch Programme.

This new batch of ten volunteers will be engaged in the provision of services in a wide range of fields which include environmental education, physiotherapy, operation and maintenance of agricultural machinery, and physical education. Six out of the ten volunteers would serve in the field of physical education. Together with the Sports and Education Branch of the Ministry of Education, these volunteers would assist schools in areas such as Colombo, Jaffna, Galle and Kurunegala to enhance the quality of their physical education programmes, and thereby, improve the physical health of school children. The volunteers engaged in physiotherapy have been assigned under the Ministry of Social Services to work with social service officers of the Nagoda and Mulathiyana divisional secretariat offices, in support of the physically challenged. The volunteer specialized in environmental education will be assigned to the Kandy Municipal Council (KMC), through the Solid Waste Management Support Center of the Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils. This volunteer will complement solid waste management activities of the KMC by creating awareness on environment friendly practices amongst residents, school children and institutions. The other volunteer will work at the Farm Mechanization Training Center in Anuradhapura, where he would conduct training for farmers and those engaged in the agriculture sector on the operation and maintenance of farm machinery.

JICA volunteers have been equipped to live and work together with local communities whilst speaking their language, namely Sinhala or Tamil. The main objective of JICA's Volunteer Programme is to contribute towards the socio economic development of the country through the use of volunteers' professional skills and experience. The new batch of volunteers will join 40 other volunteers who are already engaged in conducting voluntary activities in a wide range of fields including education, social welfare, community development, vocational training, sports and such.

The strengths of JICA's volunteers are their practical approach to problem solving, and their grasp of local languages, which enables them to interactively communicate with the local people. These volunteers use extremely creative means of communication, which is essential for effective teaching and training. They are able to positively influence those whom they work with due to their attitudes, strong sense of discipline and high emphasis on team work. These volunteers not only transfer technical skills, but also share knowledge on cultural aspects, and most importantly, build strong and long lasting friendships with local people that outlast their stay in Sri Lanka. Since the inception of JICA's Volunteer Dispatch Programme to Sri Lanka in 1981, a total of 903 volunteers have worked in the country.
The new batch of JICA Volunteers

For more information; [http://www.jica.go.jp/english/operations/schemes/citizen/volunteers.html](http://www.jica.go.jp/english/operations/schemes/citizen/volunteers.html)

*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 the largest donor to the country. On behalf of the people and the Government of Japan, JICA contributes towards the improvement of the lives of people in Sri Lanka.

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