



Press Release

India-Japan seminar on enhancement of living environment in Varanasi

The seminar was organized by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in partnership with Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Urban Development, Uttar Pradesh (UP) Jal Nigam and Varanasi Nagar Nigam

Varanasi, Nov 17 2015: JICA today organized a seminar on enhancement of living environment in Varanasi through improved sanitation system. The seminar included sessions on Ganga river conservation program with JICA, Japanese river purification technologies, and waste management policies and activities by Kyoto City. The seminar brought together various stakeholders including Ministry of Urban Development, Uttar Pradesh (UP) Jal Nigam, Varanasi Nagar Nigam, Kyoto city, Embassy of Japan and Japanese private companies and etc.

The seminar was organized as part of a preparatory survey by JICA for possible further cooperation between India and Japan in the endeavor to improve the living environment in Varanasi and other neighboring cities along Ganga river. During Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's visit to Japan in September 2014, Varanasi City and Kyoto City signed a letter of intent for cooperation as partner cities and confirmed the intents of enhanced collaboration and promotion of interactions between the two cities. Taking this initiative, Kyoto city officials have been invited to the seminar to share their expertise and technology for environment improvement in Varanasi. Taking the importance of the seminar, high-ranking officials from Government of India attended it, including H.E. Mr. Babul Supriya (Supriyo) Baral, Minister of State for Urban Development.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Takema Sakamoto, Chief Representative, JICA India said, "The knowledge exchange at the seminar will contribute to more sustainable sewerage system, solid waste management and other urban development issues at Varanasi. Japan's experiences such as river purification and community based solid waste management will not only improve the living environment in Varanasi, will contribute to achieving the objectives of Ganga Rejuvenation.

JICA has extended JPY 11,184 million (approx. Rs 580 crore) in ODA (Official Development Assistance) loan with very concessional terms for the Ganga Action Plan (GAP) Project for improvement of water quality of Ganga river at Varanasi and living environment for city residents, pilgrims and tourists. Under the GAP Project sewerage system is being developed in Varanasi, through improvement and new construction of sewers, pumping stations and sewage treatment plants; and community toilets for underprivileged households which do not have



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individual toilets. The GAP Project supported by JICA is being implemented by Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, Government of India in collaboration with relevant authorities, such as Government of UP, UP Jal Nigam and Varanasi Nagar Nigam.

In India, the over increased urban population due to exodus of the rural population to urban areas in search of the employment and other economic activities has outpaced development of a commensurate sewerage system, leading to pollution of local water resources. JICA has extended JPY 124,332 million (approx. Rs 6,500 crore) for improvement of sanitation facilities in various parts of India. Projects supported by JICA include Yamuna Action Plan for abatement of pollution in river Yamuna through sewerage system development across Delhi, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh; abatement of pollution in Hussain Sagar Lake at Hyderabad through sewerage system development; and sewerage system development at Amritsar, Bhubaneswar, Cuttack & Guwahati. Over 1.5 crore people will benefit through improved habitat enabled by these projects.

About JICA

Established, by a specific law, as an independent administrative institution under the Government of Japan, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) aims to contribute to the promotion of international cooperation, as a sole Japanese governmental agency in charge of ODA implementation. JICA works as a bridge between Japan and emerging countries, and provides assistance in forms of loan, grant and technical cooperation so that the emerging countries can strengthen their capabilities.

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