

**Japan-India Act East Forum (JIAEF)**  
**Outcomes at the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2018**

Act East Forum has served as a driving force to advance Japan-India cooperation in North East.

**1. Enhancing Connectivity**

(1) In view of the significance of enhanced connectivity in the region, Japan has been attaching special importance by implementing multiple phases of certain projects. The 2<sup>nd</sup> JIAEF reaffirmed the commitment of all the stakeholders towards the realization of the region's connectivity to expedite the implementation of the on-going projects.

✧ **Meghalaya North East Connectivity**

Phase 1: Tura-Dalu (NH-51)

Phase 2: Shillong-Dawki (NH-40)

✧ **Mizoram North East Connectivity**

Phase 1 & 2: Aizawl-Tuipang (NH-54)

(2) The 2<sup>nd</sup> JIAEF meeting decided to pursue the realization of Gelephu-Dalu Corridor in collaboration with the ADB. This corridor is expected to enhance connectivity in North East as well as with neighboring countries.

✧ Japan is prepared to proceed with **Dhubri/Phulbari bridge** project, which will be the longest river bridge in India if realized, as Phase 3 of North East Road Network Connectivity Improvement Project.

(3) The two sides affirmed their intentions to consider further projects based on actual demand. The importance of Main District Roads (MDRs) in the NER in improving the livelihood of people in North East as economic lifelines was highlighted. MDRs were mutually identified as relative gap areas for road infrastructure (MORTH takes care of NH and SH in coordination with States while MORD looks after village road infrastructures). MDRs and ODRs (other district roads) do not get the necessary attention for want of resources. However, augmenting this infrastructure after due prioritization can impact NER states on the socio-economic front. In view of their importance, it was decided to consider

possible projects on MDRs and ODRs as future cooperation based on their priorities in terms of social and economic benefits.

- (4) Power connectivity has significant potential in enhancing regional connectivity. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> JIAEF meeting, Japan reconfirmed its intention to provide ODA loan to the “Project for Renovation and Modernization of Umiam-Umtru Stage-III Hydroelectric Power Station” (maximum amount: JPY 5,497 million) to enhance the region’s power development, which in turn is essential for power connectivity. It was confirmed that the JIAEF was instrumental for the realization of this project.

## **2. Forest Management**

- (1) Japan has long been providing assistance for forest management in North East in order to protect its biodiversity and provide better disaster management. The 2<sup>nd</sup> JIAEF made a call that the on-going projects’ implementation need to be expedited by the respective stakeholders.
  - ✧ **Sikkim**: Biodiversity Conservation & Forest Management
  - ✧ **Nagaland**: Forest Conservation Livelihood Improvement
- (2) As a result of the 2<sup>nd</sup> JIAEF meeting, Japan reconfirmed its intention to implement a project on **Sustainable Forest Management in Tripura**, and expressed its willingness to pursue a similar project in Meghalaya based on Indian request.

## **3. Bamboo**

- (1) “**North East Bamboo Workshop**” was held with the support of the Japan Foundation on 1 and 2 August, 2018, in Tripura.
- (2) In view of the significance bamboo plays in the region, it was decided to launch “**Japan-India North East Bamboo Initiative**”. Industrial uses of bamboos and bamboo forest management will be pursued under this initiative. Collaboration on bamboo crafts and artifacts will be continued, which include holding the second workshop in North East and inviting bamboo artisans of North East to Japan. This is seen as a potentially significant facilitation of bamboo value chain development in NER complementing the value chain focus of the New National Bamboo Mission (NBM).

#### **4. Disaster management**

- (1) The 2<sup>nd</sup> JIAEF confirmed the importance of disaster risk reduction in North East. Japan pledged to continue its contribution to **resilient infrastructures in North East** through its projects on enhancing connectivity as well as the technical cooperation of "Capacity Development Project on Highways in Mountainous Regions".
- (2) The 2<sup>nd</sup> JIAEF welcomed the intention of Japan to share its knowledge and expertise on disaster risk reduction to relevant stakeholders in North East, including through technical cooperation and training programs. In view of this, they further welcomed the participation by officials of relevant authorities from North East in the second Japan-India Workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction and the National Conference for Promoting Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in October in Tokyo.
- (3) Better utilization of JICA Knowledge Co-Creation Program (Group & Region Focus) will be pursued to provide relevant training opportunities for the officials of North East.

#### **5. People-to-people exchanges**

- (1) The 2<sup>nd</sup> JIAEF pledged to promote **Japanese language education** in North East as part of the commitment by the two Prime Ministers to establish Japanese language certificate courses at 100 higher educational institutions in India. The 2<sup>nd</sup> JIAEF welcomed the interest for such courses expressed by Cotton University and Gauhati University in Assam state, EFLU in Meghalaya state as well as NIT-N in Nagaland state, to which Japan is prepared to provide appropriate support through Japanese Language Teachers Training Centre. More proposals from North East States are welcome.
- (2) The 2<sup>nd</sup> JIAEF welcomed Asia Health and Wellbeing Initiative and decided to promote **skill training including Japanese language for caregivers** from North East under TITP (Technical Intern Training Program) under this initiative.
- (3) In view of the roles travel advisory plays in enhancing people-to-people exchanges and tourism to North East, it was decided to share the information on this matter. It was welcomed that Japan scaled down the travel advisory for the city of Guwahati and the State of Tripura in January 2018 as well as for East

Khasi Hills, Ri Bhoi, West Jaintia Hills and East Jaintia Hills of the State of Meghalaya in August 2018 to the lowest level.

**6. Other Cooperation Reported by Japan**

- (1) Grant contract was signed for the “Project for Construction of Secondary School for Scheduled Tribe in Manipur“ (JPY 8.4 million) under the scheme of Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects (GGP) of Japan in March 2018.
- (2) Embassy of Japan and Japanese companies together with JICA and JETRO participated in “Advantage Assam” and held Japan Seminar in February 2018.
- (3) Japan expressed its intention to use the opportunity of Shillong Cherry Blossom Festival 2018 to showcase Japanese culture and hold an event “Dialogue with the State” organized by FICCI in partnership with the Embassy of Japan.
- (4) Japan expressed its intention to continue the **IRIS Program** to invite youths from North East to Japan.

END