

# PRESS RELEASE

## Embassy of Japan

P.O. Box 264, Kathmandu

JEINF No. 28-2018

April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018

### Japan Inaugurates a Care Home for Mentally Challenged Children in Kavrepalanchok District

(Kavrepalanchowk: 4<sup>th</sup> April): Today, a spacious new care home in Kharelthok, Panchkhal Municipality, Kavrepalanchowk district was inaugurated jointly by Hon. Minister Shakti Basnet, Minister for Environment and Forestry and a representative of the Embassy of Japan in Nepal, Mr. Shinya Machida, Minister-Counsellor. The inauguration ceremony with which to formally hand over the new care home to the community and Samaj Sewa Samuha, a local NGO, was attended by other dignitaries representing various stakeholders. Dr. Ram Thapaliya, Chair of the Institute of Crisis Management Studies, who initiated this project by briefing the Embassy on the difficulties facing the mentally challenged children, was also present.

Until now, twenty mentally challenged children and their caretakers have lived in a temporary care home, which does not have enough space and sufficient facilities to offer a comfortable living environment. These youths have been vulnerable to climate conditions and animal attacks. In addition, the local community has been repeatedly expressing their desire that more mentally challenged children be accommodated in a better care home. Alarmed by this situation, Samaj Sewa Samuha approached the Embassy for assistance.

To help improve the situation, the Government of Japan decided to extend financial assistance of US Dollars 83,270 (approximately NPR 8.9 million) to Samaj Sewa Samuha under the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP). This grant assistance supports the construction of the care home for mentally challenged children living in Kharelthok. The newly constructed care home will now accommodate thirty children with a hygienic and safe environment. The services provided at the care home, including professional caretakers' services, will also enable the children's parents and relatives to relieve them of their duties as caretakers and to concentrate on their work.

Two orphans, Rojina Sigdel, aged 20, and Santosh Dhital, aged 22, made short speeches to thank the attendees by stating, "we love you". Showing their gratitude for the new care home, Rojina said "We are very happy. We want to thank you all," as they can now sleep without fear of being bitten by mosquitos.

At the close of the event the Chief Guest, Shakti Basnet, Minister for Environment and Forestry highlighted that the cooperation between both countries comes from the desire to improve the livelihoods of vulnerable children. The partnership between Nepal and Japan is "based on the grounds of humanitarian assistance for those who are in need"; Minister Basnet stated that the countries want to do the best for all citizens, but especially for those who have been special disabled. According to Minister Basnet, "we will continue to cooperate with the Japanese for many years longer to tackle the pressing issues in our country".

"I hope this care home and its activities will enhance understanding towards mentally challenged people and raise awareness for mutual assistance among people in the community. Our decision to cooperate in building of this care home is an embodiment of the sense of solidarity among the people of Japan towards the people of Nepal", said Mr. Machida of the Embassy of Japan. "As a true friend of Nepal, the Government of Japan is trying to sow several seeds in Nepal's fertile land. We hope the local community will grow the seed donated today into a set of beautiful flowers, or big smiles of the handicapped children who gained hope for their future".

Dr. Ram Thapaliya highlighted on intellectual disability protection and prevention. He drew attention to the seriousness of the fetal alcohol syndrome resulting from misbehaviors "such as pregnant women drinking alcohol". "Getting proper prenatal care, taking a prenatal vitamin, and getting vaccinated against certain infectious diseases can also lower the risk that child will be born with intellectual disabilities", he said.

The Embassy of Japan in Nepal expects that the inaugurated care home will benefit mentally challenged children and promote their educational and social participation. The Embassy also hopes to further enhance the cordial friendship between the peoples of Japan and Nepal through the implementation of this project.

**Embassy of Japan in Nepal**

Tel: 4426680 Fax: 4006725

E-mail: [cultura.l-emb@km.mofa.go.jp](mailto:cultura.l-emb@km.mofa.go.jp)

<http://www.np.emb-japan.go.jp>