

Remarks by the Ambassador of Japan to Nepal at the Completion Ceremony of the Nagdhunga Tunnel

July 27th, 2026

It is a great honour to be with you today as we celebrate the completion of the Nagdhunga Tunnel, which, I believe, is a true milestone in the country's infrastructure history. This inauguration is all the more meaningful as it falls in the year Japan and Nepal celebrate the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations.

This tunnel was constructed with Japanese Official Development Assistance in the form of a yen loan totalling approximately 22.3 billion Japanese yen, or around 21.2 billion Nepalese rupees, and stands as a testament to the close and enduring partnership between our two nations. On behalf of the Government and people of Japan, I extend my heartfelt congratulations on this historic day to everyone who has made an enormous contribution to this project, and to the people of Nepal who will soon be receiving economic and social benefits from this tunnel.

The Nagdhunga Tunnel, as Nepal's first mountain road tunnel, marks a new chapter in the nation's infrastructure history. By connecting Kathmandu with Pokhara, Nepal's second largest city, I believe that this tunnel will dramatically improve the movement of people and goods that were long hindered by difficult mountain terrain, making a significant contribution to improving the lives of local communities and stimulating economic activity across the region.

During construction, the project faced extraordinary challenges — including significant ground movement caused by the ever-active geology of the Himalayas, as well as severe slope failures near the western portal brought on by heavy rainfall. Time and again, these obstacles tested the limits of what was thought possible. Nevertheless, the challenges were overcome one by one, drawing on the expertise accumulated in Japan through constructing more than 15,000 tunnels across the country, and working hand in hand with Nepali engineers and workers. I would like to express my deepest respect and heartfelt gratitude to all those who devoted themselves to this project and made this achievement possible. I hope that the technical knowledge and safety standards cultivated through this project will take root among Nepali engineers.

Now we all are witnessing on site the completion of the Nagdhunga Tunnel construction. This is a successful end of a huge task for contractors, engineers and workers. But at the same time, another huge task begins for the Government of Nepal to ensure that this tunnel continues to deliver its full benefits to the people of Nepal well into the future. I hope and believe that the Ministry of Infrastructure Development of Nepal will develop its own operation and maintenance capabilities with the goal of managing this tunnel independently and sustainably for years and decades to come.

Earlier this year, in March, a new government was formed in Nepal through democratic election. Japan sincerely hopes that under the new administration, Nepal will accelerate its steps on a path of greater stability and prosperity based on the broad support from the people. We hope that the Nagdhunga Tunnel will serve as a strong foundation for the economic development, and play a significant role in shaping a bright and promising future for Nepal. As a long-standing development partner, Japan remains committed to working closely with the Government of Nepal in various sectors, and looks forward to deepening that collaboration in the years ahead.

Dhanyabad. Thank you very much.