



INFOJAPAN

Embassy of Japan in Nepal

Vol. 50, August 2018

New Ambassador H.E. Mr. Masamichi Saigo, Presents Credentials

H.E. Mr. Masamichi Saigo, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Nepal, arrived in Nepal on 27th May, 2018. He presented his Letter of Credence to the Rt. Honorable President, Ms. Bidya Devi Bhandari at Shital Niwas on 27th June, 2018. Ambassador Saigo succeeds Mr. Masashi Ogawa, who had left Nepal on 22nd May, 2018.



Message from the Ambassador

Namaste!

As the new Ambassador of Japan, I arrived in Kathmandu on 27th May, 2018 and presented my Letter of Credence to the Rt. Honorable President, Ms. Bidya Devi Bhandari, on 27th June. I am honored to officially assume the ambassadorship in Kathmandu and represent Japan in Nepal.

Since I started my career by joining the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) in 1980, I worked on different aspects of agricultural development. While at MAFF, I was posted to the Embassy of Japan in India from 1988 to 1991. During my tenure in Delhi, I visited Kathmandu twice, and pleasant memories from those trips are still fresh in my mind. After retirement from MAFF in 2017, I served as an advisor to MAFF before taking on this responsibility to represent Japan in Nepal.

Japan and Nepal have traditionally maintained an excellent and friendly relationship based on old historical and spiritual ties. This cordial relationship has grown many-fold over years. Exchange of visits at various levels between the two countries signify the importance both countries place on each other. Our academic and cultural ties have been also grown considerably to date, which I believe they will continue and strengthen much more in the near future.

Japan started extending technical assistance to Nepal in 1952, the year when Nepal joined the Colombo Plan. Today, Japan as one of Nepal's major development partners, is supporting technical assistance, and loans in almost all essential sectors such as hydropower, education, health, agriculture, drinking water, highways, communication, human resources development, etc. I sincerely hope that Japanese assistance will contribute to reducing the difficulties that this beautiful country faces and will play an important part to uplift the quality of life of people.

The federal, provincial and local elections were successfully held in 2017 under the Constitution promulgated in September 2015. Rt. Honorable Mr. K.P. Sharma Oli, Prime Minister of Nepal, and his party emerged with the mandate to lead Nepal's development efforts. I believe the efforts made by the Government of Nepal towards the steady implementation of the new constitution and further consolidation of democracy will contribute to the socio-economic development of Nepal.

Masamichi Saigo

Ambassador of Japan to Nepal



Japan Extends Scholarships to Government Officers



The Government of Japan has decided to extend grant assistance up to 282 million Japanese Yen (¥282,000,000), the equivalent to NRs. 274.1 million, to the Government of Nepal for implementing the Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS) Scheme in Japan's Fiscal Year 2018.

Mr. Masamichi Saigo, Ambassador of Japan to Nepal, and Dr. Rajan Khanal, Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, signed and exchanged a set of notes to this effect on behalf of their

respective governments on 13th July 2018. Mr. Jun Sakuma, Chief Representative of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and Mr. Shree Krishna Nepal, Joint Secretary of the International Economic Cooperation and Coordination Division of the Ministry of Finance, also signed and exchanged a Grant Agreement for implementing this Scheme.

The JDS Grant is designed to support human resource development of friendly nations by accepting highly capable young government officials as JDS fellows in eight designated Japanese universities. These officials are expected to engage in formulation and implementation of socio-economic development plans and programs and to take leading roles for development in their respective countries. Another objective of the JDS Scheme is to strengthen partnerships between recipient countries and Japan with the trained human resources and their relationship chains to achieve global needs.

Following a rigorous evaluation process, twenty (20) Nepali government officers were selected for the third batch of Nepali JDS fellows. The Embassy wishes them success in obtaining their Masters Degrees from Japanese universities. A total of 40 Nepali government officers of the previous two batches had studied in the same eight universities in Japan.

For further information, please visit <http://jds-scholarship.org/>



Japanese Assistance for the First National Economic Census 2018

The Government of Japan has extended support to Nepal's first Economic Census which was launched on 14th April, 2018, when an Economic Census Monument was also unveiled. The first National Economic Census was carried out from 14th April to 14th June, 2018. The survey, undertaken by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), aims to provide basic economic data for formulating plans and policies at the federal, provincial and local levels and consolidating the nation's accounts system. It also provides data for policy and plan formulation by industrialists, businessmen and investors, and for research and study by academics.

Since 2016, the Government of Japan and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) have been providing technical assistance to the Government of Nepal and its agencies to plan, program and implement the National Economic Census 2018. The project has placed JICA experts at CBS, and has also contributed towards training of CBS staff in Japan and for procuring necessary goods and equipment.





Japan Provides Equipment for Disaster Management



The Government of Japan has extended grant assistance of up to 700 million Japanese Yen (¥700,000,000), equivalent to about 683 million Nepali Rupees (NRs. 683,200,000) to the Government of Nepal for the implementation of the Economic and Social Development Program. The notes were signed and exchanged on 18th May 2018.

Mr. Masashi Ogawa, the former Ambassador of Japan to Nepal, and Dr. Rajan Khanal, Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, signed and exchanged a set of notes to this effect at the Ministry of Finance on behalf of their respective governments.

Through this program, the Government of Japan will provide equipment including an automatic meteorological observing station, and construction machinery for road maintenance. The equipment is same as those used in Japan to improve disaster prevention capability and for early restoration and reconstruction after natural disasters. In Nepal floods and landslides occur frequently during the monsoon season, causing both loss of life and damage of property. Japan hopes that the equipment can assist Nepal to increase its resilience to disasters.



Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP)

The Government of Japan has been implementing the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) through the Embassy of Japan since 1992. The GGP provides non-refundable financial assistance to NGOs, hospitals, primary schools, research institutions, and other non-profit organizations to support community level socio-economic development projects. The Embassy has continued to provide GGP support to different grassroots organizations for projects seeking to bring about changes at the community level. The following section provides an update on ongoing GGP activities:-

Care Home for Mentally Challenged Children, Kavrepalanchowk

A spacious care home in Kharelthok, Panchkhal Municipality, Kavrepalanchowk District was inaugurated jointly by the Hon. Minister, Shakti Basnet, Minister for Environment and Forestry, and Mr. Shinya Machida, Minister-Counselor at the Embassy of Japan in Nepal on 4th April 2018. The facility was formally



handed-over to the community and Samaj Sewa Samuha, a local NGO, after the inauguration.

The care home was built with a GGP grant of NRs. 8.9 million (USD 83,270) and has a capacity to accommodate 30 children in a hygienic and safe environment. The services provided at the care home, including professional caretakers' services, will also free-up parents to concentrate on economic activities.

Shelter-Community Center in Kalleri, Dhading



The former Ambassador Ogawa handed over the key of Kalleri Shelter-Community Center to the Consumer Committee at a ceremony on 12th April, 2018. The one-story community center can be used during emergencies as a shelter for people in the surrounding communities of Kalleri VDC, now a part of Galchi Gaunpalika. The center consists of a large hall, two storage rooms, a meeting room, an office, and toilets.

'Kalleri Shelter-Community Center' will be used as a multi-purpose community center and also by schools and local NGOs to conduct trainings and awareness programs. During the peak-harvesting season it will be used as a collection center for agricultural products and is expected to help local residents to increase their income. A GGP grant amount of NRs. 8.7 million (USD 79,761) was provided to Himalaya Conservation Group Nepal, a local NGO, for this project.

Training Center for Female Farmers, Udayapur

The former Ambassador Ogawa inaugurated a training center for women's cooperatives in Belaka Municipality, Udayapur District on 17th April 2018.



The center was built with GGP grant assistance of NRs.8.1 million (USD 80,532) for Nepal Social Development and People Empowerment Centre (NESPEC). NESPEC

will offer trainings on vegetable farming, animal husbandry, bee keeping, and handicraft making. These trainings are expected to assist female farmers to obtain additional skills in order to raise their incomes. The center also has accommodation facilities for trainees coming from remote areas.

Eye Hospital, Bhojpur

On 19th April, 2018, the former Ambassador Ogawa inaugurated an eye hospital in Bhojpur Municipality, Bhojpur District, with Prof. Dr. Tirtha Prasad Mishra, Chairman of the Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh (NNJS).

NNJS is a Nepalese NGO established in 1978 to provide ophthalmological services across the country through a network of 17 eye hospitals, 59 eye care centers, and 28 district branches.

A GGP grant assistance of NRs.9.8 million (USD 90,909) was used to build the eye hospital which will offer ophthalmological services to people living in rural areas. Most ophthalmological health care centers in Nepal are located in Kathmandu or other major cities. The newly constructed eye hospital will provide eye care to the residents living in remote hilly areas of the country.

Rehabilitation Center for Visually Impaired People, Gorkha



Ambassador Saigo laid the foundation of a rehabilitation center for visually impaired people in Gorkha Municipality on 18th July, 2018. The Minister of Agriculture, Cooperatives and Land Management of Gandaki Province, Mr. Lekh Bahadur Thapa Magar also attended the ceremony.

The rehabilitation center will offer various types of income generation trainings, such as jam and soap making and will also carry out rehabilitation programs for visually impaired people in close coordination with Gandaki Province, Gorkha District, Gorkha Municipality, and local hospitals. The center will also provide accommodation to visually impaired people who do not have family members to care for them. The Embassy of Japan has provided Gorkha Association of the Blind (GAB) a GGP grant of NRs.8.8 million (USD 85,315) construction of the center.

Since 2002, GAB, a branch organization of the Nepal Association of the Blind, has been working for the empowerment of visually impaired people by providing counseling services and trainings to assist them to pursue independent lives by participating in economic activities. About 1,500 visually impaired people live in Gorkha District.

Ophthalmological Equipment, Gokarneshwor Municipality

On 20th August, Ambassador Saigo handed over ophthalmological equipment to the Rural Health Education and Service Center (RHESC) in Gokarneshwor Municipality. Along with Ambassador Saigo, H. E. Dr. Surendra Yadav, State-Minister of Health and Population, and a Japanese nurse and supporter of the Center, Ms. Masako Yamane, attended the ceremony.



The Project for the Installation of Ophthalmological Equipment such as an operating microscope, slit lamps, retinoscopes, and a phaco emulsification system for use in diagnosis and surgery for the Community Health Center. The project assists the center to widen its range of services to include accurate check-ups, surgeries, and eye camps for schools in the suburbs of Kathmandu. The total grant assistance for the Center is NRs.8.6 million (USD 84,138).

RHESC was established in 1986 with the support of Ms. Yamane, and a Japanese NGO, the Japan-Nepal Human Development Association. Since then it has been providing medical services to people at low cost.



Teacher Training in Japan

The Japan Foundation provides Japanese language training for teachers of the Japanese language at institutes around the world. The trainees typically have more than two years of teaching experience and are provided an opportunity to improve language skills, learn teaching methodologies and gain better understanding of Japanese culture and society. The Foundation organizes both short term (2 months) and long term (6 months) trainings.



The Embassy of Japan facilitates the invitation of Japanese language teachers for the Japan Foundation trainings. Mr. Medhankar Bajracharya, from the Standard Japanese Language School, took part in a long-term course in 2018, along with 40 Japanese language teachers from 27 countries.

“We learned teaching methods, and had classes on intensive Japanese language, Japanese culture, education, and history,” said Mr. Bajracharya. “We also had a home stay program, experienced culture programs, and participated in study tours.” He focused on teaching methodology as a special course, which helped him to improve his lesson plans.

Learning Japanese Language - A Personal Experience

The Japan Foundation, in cooperation with the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, invites young foreign-service officers and public officials to Japan for an 8-month period to conduct training in Japanese language and society. This program is designed to meet the needs of participants who are expected to conduct activities related to Japan in foreign government institutions. It seeks to provide participants with language skills that will be useful in their work, and focuses on oral communication. The program also contains a variety of activities for deepening understanding of Japanese society and culture.



A young officer from Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Jimsom Rumdali Rai, participated in this program from September 2017 to May 2018. “The most impressive, and perhaps the most important learning, was the kind-heartedness and humility of the Japanese people,” he said. He added that he was also impressed by assistance provided by random people while he had sought directions or information in the street, train stations, and airports. “Preservation of culture in the midst of rapid urbanization is another impression I have brought back from Japan,” he added.

Mr. Rai and his training colleagues were exposed to many traditional festivals, shows, music, dance, etc. which he said, brilliantly demonstrated the tenderly preserved magnificence of the age-old Japanese culture.

Support for Pre-Olympic Training of Nepali Athletes



Ambassador Saigo attended an official signing ceremony at Satdobato on 3rd August, 2018 in support of the Nepal Olympic Committee (NOC).

Three organizations, the Tamura City Government of Fukushima, Japan, NOC, and the Athlete Society, a Japanese NGO working on strengthening the bond among Asian countries through sports, signed an agreement on pre-games training camps in Japan for Nepali athletes attending the 32nd Olympiad (Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games).

A five-member delegation from the Japanese organizations, headed by Mr. Naoyuki Kawagoishi, Deputy Mayor of Tamura City, arrived in Kathmandu on 2nd August. The team spent three days in Nepal meeting Nepali sport personalities and attending a sports workshop. Ms. Yurika Nakamura, a representative from the Athlete Society and a former marathon athlete who participated in the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, instructed the Nepali athletes at the NOC Building, Satdobato, and at the Nepal Army Ground, Lagankhel.

Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)



The first JLPT was held at St. Mary's School and D.A.V. School, where 2,133 students took the language proficiency exam in Levels N1 to N5. The Japan Foundation offers JLPT twice a year, in July and December, both in Japan and in more than 60 countries around the world. In Nepal the Japanese Language Teachers' Association, Nepal (JALTAN), together with the Embassy of Japan, conducts this examination.

On Japan



Summer Festivals in Japan

Japan is a land of festivals, or matsuri, as they are called. There are many festivals year round but July and August are special because this is a time when there are festivities across the country. The following are some representative summer festivals (natsu-matsuri) to see in Tokyo and other parts of Japan:-

Gion Festival (Kyoto Prefecture)

The Gion matsuri is a festival held at Yasaka Shrine in Kyoto in July. It began in the 9th century and the rituals are supposed to ward off natural disasters. At this time the dashi floats, decorated with ancient, imported and local artworks, wind through the streets of Kyoto.

Nebuta Festival (Aomori Prefecture)

The Nebuta Festival takes place in Aomori in August. In this festival the heavily decorated floats, designed and constructed with painted washi paper over a wire frame, are taken around in a grand procession.

Awa Odori Festival (Tokushima Prefecture)

This festival is held in Tokushima in August. This festival is part of Obon rites to welcome the spirits of the ancestors.

Tenjin Festival (Osaka Prefecture)

Tenjin literally means "Festival of the Gods". Held at the Tenman Shrine in Osaka in July, this festival is over 1,000 years old. Around 3,000 people dressed in 8th to 12th century imperial court costumes go around the city carrying portable shrines.

Yosakoi Festival (Kochi Prefecture)

The Yosakoi Festival is held in Kochi in August. This is a highly energetic festival where dancers carry wooden clappers and dance and create a highly festive mood in the city.

Sumidagawa Fireworks Festival (Tokyo)

Sumidagawa Fireworks Festival is considered one of the most popular and the oldest fireworks (hanabi) festival in the country. It is held on the banks of the Sumida River near the Asakusa District in Tokyo.

Embassy of Japan

Tel. 4426680, E-mail: cultural-emb@km.mofa.go.jp, URL : <http://www.np.emb-japan.go.jp>