



**JAPAN  
INTERNATIONAL  
COOPERATION  
AGENCY  
NEWSLETTER**

# CONTENTS

## Project Updates Basis Signing of Project Agreements

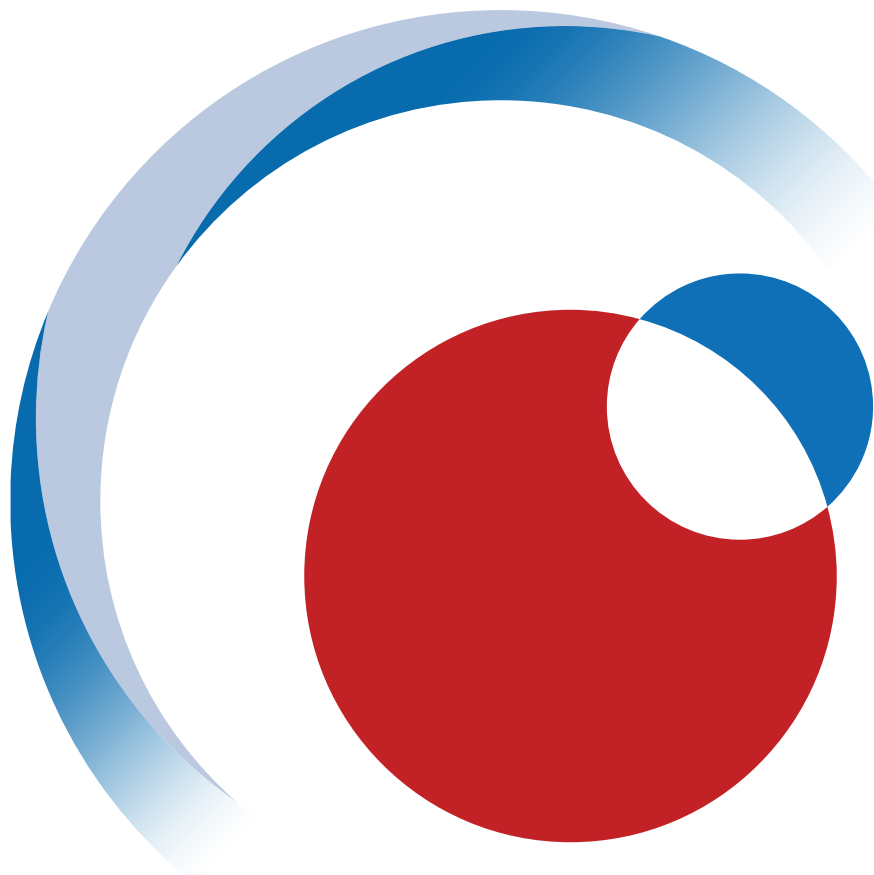
- Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to strengthen Bamboo Value Chain in the Northeast India
- JICA signs loan agreement for Mirsharai Steel Plant Development Project in Bangladesh co-financing with India Exim Bank
- JICA extends an ODA loan of INR 22,627 crores for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail Project (V)
- JICA extends an ODA loan of INR 932 crores with the Government of India for Sustainable Development Goals

## Events/Workshops

- JICA India celebrates Global Handwashing Day with an event to strongly emphasize the importance of proper handwashing

## Media Highlights

- Japan interested in partnering with India to build infra abroad: JICA India chief



# PROJECT UPDATES BASIS SIGNING OF PROJECT AGREEMENTS

## 1. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to strengthen Bamboo Value Chain in the Northeast India

**Guwahati, October 6, 2023:** Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in collaboration with National Bamboo Mission (NBM) and Northeast Cane and Bamboo Development Council (NECBDC) on October 6th, 2023, held the first Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) in Guwahati for the effective implementation of the Technical Cooperation Project for Bamboo Use Promotion in Northeast region. Chaired by NBM the JCC saw participation from Ministry of Development of Northeastern Region (MoDONER), NECBDC, Northeast Centre for Technology Application and Reach (NECTAR), the Embassy of Japan, JICA, as well as academia such as National Institute of Design (NID) Assam to be familiarized with JICA experts' activities so far and make sure of goals to be achieved till the project completion at the end of 2025.

The bamboo industry is becoming at the centre of attention both domestically and internationally, presenting North-eastern India with a practical opportunity to become a pivotal player and a hub of innovation. JICA dispatched its expert team from Japan who has started project preparation since January 2023, in collaboration with NECBDC. This collaboration extends to knowledge exchange, skill development, and business matching in the bamboo sector. Academic institutions from Japan and India are collaborating on bamboo design research, representing a harmonious synergy between academia and industry.

During the meeting, participants discussed the roadmap and required inputs for expected achievements; development of the capacity, and exchange of experts for the promotion of bamboo business to help Northeast India develop as a hub of innovation and design for bamboo-based products. They explored opportunities within the North-eastern bamboo sector and collectively addressed the challenges in this sector. One prominent aspect discussed was the emergence of bamboo-based construction as an eco-friendly and cost-effective alternative to conventional concrete buildings. Collaborative efforts, particularly with the National Institute of Design (NID), will bear results in the form of innovative bamboo handicrafts.

**Mr. SAITO Mitsunori, Chief Representative of JICA India**, expressed his appreciation on this occasion, stating, "JICA has been engaged with NBM and NECBDC to collaborate for advancing the bamboo utilization in India. The collective efforts are underpinned by a steadfast dedication to unlocking the vast potential of the bamboo sector in India's North-eastern Region. We are dedicated to

*executing this project with a strong commitment to fostering India's social and economic development, promoting sustainability, and nurturing self-reliance in the region."*

As a pivotal component of this initiative, a comprehensive training program is going to be organized in Japan introducing Japanese ways of bamboo resource management. Its overarching objective is to empower Indian governmental officials and artisans with knowledges and skills, thereby contributing to the growth and development of the India's bamboo industry.

### Coverage:

BUSINESS

## JICA in Partners with NBM and NECBDC Held Joint Coordinating Committee In Guwahati

Business Bureau | October 13, 2023



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### North East Business Mirror

## JICA to strengthen Bamboo Value Chain in NE

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results in the form of innovative bamboo handicrafts. Mr. SAITO Mitsunori, Chief Representative of JICA India, expressed his appreciation on this occasion, stating, "JICA has been engaged with NBM and NECBDC to establish a collaborative agreement for advancing the bamboo utilization in India. The collaborative efforts are underpinned by a steadfast dedication to unlocking the vast potential of the bamboo sector in India's North-eastern Region. We are dedicated to executing this project with a strong commitment to fostering India's social and economic development, promoting sustainability, and nurturing self-reliance in the region." As a pivotal component of this initiative, a comprehensive training program is going to be organized in Japan introducing Japanese ways of bamboo resource management. Its overarching objective is to empower Indian governmental officials and artisans with knowledges and skills, thereby contributing to the growth and development of the India's bamboo industry.

### Assam Post

## 2. JICA signs loan agreement for Mirsharai Steel Plant Development Project in Bangladesh co-financing with India Exim Bank

**New Delhi, October 18, 2023:** Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) signed a loan agreement with BSRM Steels Limited (BSRMSL) of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for private sector investment finance of USD 50 million to fund the construction of an environmentally friendly steel plant, planned by BSRMSL in Mirsharai, Chattogram District. The project will be co-financed by the Export-Import Bank of India and Standard Chartered Bank, among other institutions.

In recent years, Bangladesh has been developing large-scale infrastructure such as metros, airports, and harbors with the help of Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) loans and other sources of assistance. In addition, the construction of housing, commercial facilities, and hotels has become more active as average incomes have risen in the commercial sector. Steel products like rebar are essential materials for the construction of such infrastructure, and going forward, the demand for steel in Bangladesh is expected to grow at an annual rate of 15-20%. On the other hand, Bangladesh relies on imports for some steel products, and there are concerns that the increase in imports associated with the above growth will have a negative impact on the country's trade balance. In addition, emissions of environmental pollutants and greenhouse gases from steel plants are a major challenge.

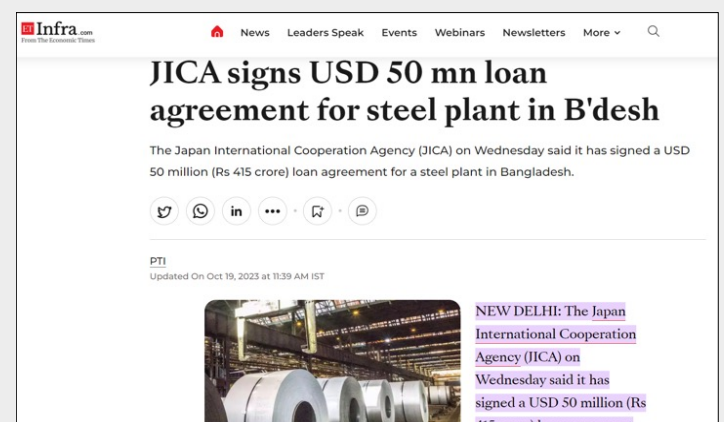
This loan will support the construction of a new, environmentally friendly steel plant by BSRMSL in Mirsharai, Chattogram District, thereby increasing the steelmaking capacity in Bangladesh. The loan will promote environmental friendliness and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the steel industry in Bangladesh through the introduction of solar power generation facilities, air pollutant management systems, and water treatment and reuse plants as ancillary facilities to the plant. In doing so, it will also contribute to the achievement of SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) Goals 8 (Decent work and economic growth), 9 (Industry, innovation, and infrastructure) and 17 (Partnerships for the goals), among others.

**Mr. SAITO Mitsunori, Chief Representative of JICA India**, expressed his appreciation for this development, stating, *"The Mirsharai Steel Plant Development Project is promoting environmentally friendly steel plant in Bangladesh. I am also glad to announce this is the first co-financing project with India Exim*

*Bank. We look forward to exploring additional joint projects with India Exim Bank in third countries."*

This year marks the 50th anniversary of JICA's ODA to Bangladesh and based on the trust that has been built between JICA and Bangladesh, JICA will work to further strengthen relations between the two countries through this project. Moreover, JICA will continue to cooperate in the economic and social development of Bangladesh through various approaches such as technical cooperation, human resource development, and financial support.

### Coverage:



ETInfra



Press Trust of India



### 3. JICA extends an ODA loan of INR 22,627 crores for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail Project (V)

**New Delhi, December 21, 2023:** Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has signed a loan agreement with the Government of India to provide an Official Development Assistance (ODA) loan of 400 billion Japanese Yen (approx. INR 22,627 Crore) as tranche five for the 'Project for the Construction of Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR).' It is the largest commitment amount through a single project loan agreement in the history of JICA, across the globe.

JICA has been supporting the MAHSR project by providing ODA loans with the cumulative commitment amount of JPY 1 trillion and 50 billion (INR 59,396 crore) since 2017. Extending beyond financial aid, this assistance includes a range of technical contributions, such as feasibility studies, fundamental and intricate design work, training programmes in Japan, collaboration on station area development, and the deployment of Japanese Shinkansen experts to work alongside the executing agency, the National High-Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL).

The objective of the project is to develop a high-frequency mass transportation system by constructing the High-Speed Rail between Mumbai and Ahmedabad, using Japan's Shinkansen technology (also known as the «Bullet Train»), thereby enhancing mobility in India and contributing to regional economic development.

Speaking on this occasion, **Mr. SAITO Mitsunori, Chief Representative, JICA India** said, "I am happy to witness great progress in the MAHSR project. As we mark the signing of the latest loan agreement,

we are once again reminded to renew our commitment to support the NHSRCL and various stakeholders towards achieving the goal of the successful completion of the project. JICA continues to remain committed to bolstering mobility and supporting the regional economic development in India."

#### Coverage:

**BEYOND FINANCIAL AID**  
**Govt inks pact for ₹22,627 cr Japanese loan to finance bullet train project**  
PTI / New Delhi

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has signed a loan agreement with the Central government to provide an Official Development Assistance (ODA) loan of 400 billion Japanese Yen (approximately Rs 22,627 crore) as tranche five for the construction of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR) project.

"This is the largest commitment amount through a single project loan agreement in the history of JICA, across the globe," according to a JICA statement issued on Thursday. JICA has been supporting the MAHSR bullet train project by providing ODA loans with the cumulative commitment amount of JPY 1 trillion and 50 billion (Rs 59,396 crore) since 2017.

This assistance goes beyond the financial aid to include a range of technical contributions, such as feasibility studies, fundamental and intricate design work, training programmes in Japan, collaboration on station area development, and the deployment of Japanese Shinkansen experts to work alongside the executing agency, the National High-Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL), JICA said.

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#### The Free Press Journal

**Govt inks pact for ₹22,627cr Japanese loan to finance bullet train project**

**AGENCIES**  
NEW DELHI, 21 DECEMBER

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"JICA continues to remain committed to bolstering mobility and supporting the regional economic development in India."

#### The Statesman



## 4. JICA extends an ODA loan of INR 932 crores with the Government of India for Sustainable Development Goals

**New Delhi, December 21, 2023:** Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has formalized a loan agreement of 15,301 million Yen (approx. INR 932 Crore) with the Government of India, for the «Program for Japan-India Cooperative Actions towards Sustainable Development Goals in India (Phase 2)» which will be implemented by NITI Aayog. The project, building on the success of its predecessor (Phase 1), aims to contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in India by enhancing progress and promoting policy actions.

The project will cover all of India, targeting 112 Aspirational Districts (AD) and 500 Aspirational Blocks (AB). It focuses on promoting policy actions, implementing best practices, and strengthening the Japan-India partnership through human resource exchanges. Based on consultations with NITI Aayog, policy actions in five fields, such as “health and nutrition”, “education”, “agriculture and water resources”, “financial inclusion and skill development”, and “basic infrastructure” are prioritized and identified as policy matrix pillars are set in those fields. In the sector of health and nutrition, the focus is to strengthen the regional healthcare system and promote maternal and child nutrition. Educational efforts include improving learning outcomes, creating inclusive school environments, and maintaining hygienic facilities. Agriculture and water resources initiatives aim to boost farmers’ profits and enhance the functions of agricultural producer associations by cultivating multiple varieties and high value crops. Financial inclusion and skills development focuses on expanding opportunities of skill training for youth and improving financial inclusion and social security coverage. Basic infrastructure improvements target internet penetration and universal water supply access.

Speaking on this occasion, **Mr. SAITO Mitsunori, Chief Representative of JICA India** said, “At JICA, we are proud to continue our collaborative journey with the Government of India in advancing sustainable development. This initiative underscores our commitment to fostering impactful change in critical areas and promoting a stronger Japan-India partnership. Together, we aim to contribute to a more sustainable and inclusive future for all.”

India, on its path towards achieving SDGs, continues to advance, navigating complexities. The loan agreement of initial phase, «Program for Japan-India Cooperative Actions towards Sustainable Development Goals in India (Phase 1)» was signed in January 2019 (with an approval amount of 15 billion yen). It yielded positive outcomes, improving the SDG Achievement Score from 59.1 in 2018 to 60.1

in 2021. Under Phase 2 project, the quantitative and qualitative outcomes of policy actions will be monitored and evaluated in three tranches from April 2021 to March 2026. The project aligns with Japan’s Country Assistance Policy for India (March 2016) and various JICA Global Agendas.

### Coverage:

#### India gets ₹932 cr JICA loan for SDGs

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has finalized a loan of approximately ₹932 crore to support Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) initiatives in India.

Japan International Cooperation Agency, in a statement on Thursday, said that this loan will fund projects overseen by NITI Aayog. These projects are set to impact 112 aspirational districts and 500 aspirational blocks nationwide.

The initiatives will concentrate on promoting policy actions, implementing effective practices, and enhancing the Japan-India partnership through the exchange of human resources, as per the statement.

“Based on consultations with NITI Aayog, policy actions in five fields, such as health and nutrition, education, agriculture and water resources, financial inclusion and skill development, and basic infrastructure are prioritized and identified as policy matrix pillars are set in those fields,” it added. **RHIK KUNDU**

#### JICA extends ₹932 crore loan to India to implement Sustainable Development Goals

1 min read • 21 Dec 2023, 07:31 PM IST

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Rhik Kundu

The initiatives will concentrate on promoting policy actions, implementing effective practices, and enhancing the Japan-India partnership through the exchange of human resources



Saito Mitsunori, chief representative in India of JICA

New Delhi: Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has finalized a loan of approximately ₹932 Crore to support Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) initiatives in India.

Mint



# EVENTS/WORKSHOPS

## 1. JICA India celebrates Global Handwashing Day with an event to strongly emphasize the importance of proper handwashing

**New Delhi, October 17, 2023:** Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) India, in a spirited celebration of Global Handwashing Day, continued its mission to promote hygiene and cleanliness in Delhi as part of its "Achhi Aadat (Good Habit)" campaign. Building on the success of last year's initiatives, an event was held at the EDMC Pratibha Vidyalaya in Trilokpuri, Block – 22, focused on students from 2nd and 3rd standard. The aim was to educate them on the importance of proper handwashing, which demonstrates JICA's commitment to improving public health through handwashing awareness. The event was organized in collaboration with Hakuhoodo. Sync Pvt Ltd.



The highlight of the event was a 20 to 30-second dance performance to the tune of «Hello Kitty IEC material.» Students were encouraged to follow this engaging routine, ensuring that they wash their hands effectively. Moderators demonstrated the correct handwashing technique, and teachers were encouraged to participate actively. The activities included a «Jumbled Handwashing Steps» game, where students had to arrange the steps correctly in 30 seconds. Those who answered the first 10 answers correctly, received gifts that emphasise the importance of handwashing.

Additionally, JICA India introduced the «Achhi Aadat Pledge Tree» activity, encouraging students to make pledges to promote hygiene and health. These pledges were displayed on trees, serving as a constant reminder for students to uphold their commitment to a healthy and hygienic lifestyle. To further reinforce the message of daily hygiene, a moderator shared seven essential tips with the students, such as bathing daily, using soap, and brushing teeth, ensuring that young minds were well-informed about maintaining good health.

**Mr. SAITO Mitsunori, Chief Representative of JICA India**, expressed his appreciation on this occasion, stating, "Global Handwashing Day serves as a vital reminder of the fundamental

*role handwashing plays in maintaining public health. This year's event built upon the achievements of previous initiatives, reaffirms JICA India's commitment to improving public health through handwashing education, underscores our commitment to the promotion of hygiene and cleanliness, especially among young students. Our 'Achhi Aadat' campaign continues to make a tangible impact on society by educating children on the importance of proper handwashing. Engaging students, the 'Achhi Aadat Pledge Tree' activity, and the distribution of hygiene kits all contribute to fostering good hygiene practices. We remain steadfast in our dedication to improving public health through handwashing education, striving for a healthier and cleaner future."*



Keeping with the yearly tradition, JICA India distributed hygiene kits to participants. These kits included hand sanitizers, liquid sanitizers, tissue papers, and small soaps, promoting practical hygiene practices among the students. As the world recognizes the significance of hand hygiene, JICA India continues to play a vital role in creating awareness and fostering good hygiene practices among young minds.

### Coverage:

**Workshop on handwashing:** Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in collaboration with Hakuhoodo. Sync Pvt Ltd organised a workshop for 200 students at EDMC Pratibha Vidyalaya in Trilokpuri, Delhi. The workshop was a part of JICA's 'Achhi Aadat (good habit) campaign', an endeavour aimed at raising awareness about the importance of hygiene practices and other infectious diseases. The campaign, in collaboration with various NGOs, government authorities and Japanese companies has already reached out to more than 10 crore people and aspires to reach out to many more.

# 'Japan interested in partnering with India for infra building abroad'

Shashank Mattoo  
shashank.mattoo@livemint.com  
NEW DELHI

Japan's premier international cooperation and development agency, JICA, is interested in partnering with India in infrastructure projects in Southeast Asia, Africa and the Pacific, said JICA India chief Saito Mitsunori.

He also pointed to JICA's plans with the newly announced Bay of Bengal Northeast Corridor, which aims to build infrastructure in

India and Bangladesh and construct a new industrial value chain.

In an interview Saito also stated that JICA intends to continue funding to Indian private sector enterprises looking to deliver development solutions. He also stated that JICA is interested in finding ways to meet the long

term financing needs of the Indian infrastructure sector.

**JICA mentioned that it was interested in pursuing joint projects in third countries with India. Has there**



**been any progress on this front?**

We are still interested in the idea. JICA is open to any proposals from Indian side for joint projects/programs in India's neighbouring coun-

tries or in other regions such as Southeast Asia, Africa and the Pacific.

**In March, Prime Minister Kishida announced a new 'Bay of Bengal Northeast Industrial Value Chain Concept' to bring infrastructure and manufacturing to the Northeast. Will JICA have a significant role to play here?**

JICA has mega-scale development projects which will contribute to realizing 'Bay of Bengal-Northeast Industrial Value Chain Concept' on both sides of the India-Bangladesh border. On the Bangladesh side, JICA is financing the

development of Matabari's deep seaport in Cox's Bazar district in Bangladesh, and the cumulative loan amount to

the project has reached 146.8 billion yen. On the Indian side, JICA is financing road connectivity improvement projects in the Northeast region, totaling more than 750km in length and the cumulative loan amount reaching 184.6 billion yen.

From the socio-economic development perspective, the region is often described as "lagging far behind the rest

of the country in most important parameters of growth" as is described in the "North Eastern Region Vision 2020 Vision Statement" of Government of India. It can

also be recognized as located at a strategically and economically critical juncture between

India and Southeast Asia, as well as within the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) countries, which makes India's Northeast described as a place of convergence of India's Act East Policy and Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific Policy.

In terms of the development of Northeast region, the remoteness is one of the major challenges they are facing. The improvement of road connectivity and access to the international deep seaport would provide huge opportunity to the region.

## INTERVIEW



### Japan interested in partnering with India to build infra abroad: JICA India chief

4 min read • 11 Oct 2023, 11:21 PM IST

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Shashank Mattoo

On the Indian side, JICA is financing road connectivity improvement projects in the Northeast region



Saito Mitsunori, JICA India chief.

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