

JICA Commemorates World Tourism Day by Investing in Infrastructure to Strengthen Tourism Experience in India

~Promoting developments in the infrastructure to strengthen Tourism sector in India~

New Delhi, September 27, 2021: The Travel and Tourism sector holds about 3.6% share of India's total GDP as per The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019 published by the World Economic Forum. The report also suggests that while India excels in terms of cultural resources, it lags with tourist service infrastructure and environment sustainability. However, as India is facing an unprecedented health, social and economic emergency with the COVID-19 pandemic for last one and a half year, travel and tourism is one of the most affected sectors. Improvements in these sectors will not only ensure social but also economic recovery in the country. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) recognizes the potential that the Indian tourism industry holds and aspires to improve the whole tourist experience and services in the country.

One of the successfully completed projects driven towards the advancement and enrichment of better tourism services was the International Cooperation and Convention Centre named 'Rudraksha', in Varanasi. JICA assisted the construction of the same by providing a Grant Aid of 3,042 million Japanese yen (approximately INR 200 crore) under the Japanese ODA scheme.

The state-of-the-art convention center has positioned a platform for knowledge exchange and for exhibitions, international conventions, and even concerts. The center also meets all environment standards and qualifies for Level 3 status under the Centre's Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment (GRIHA).

Speaking on the occasion of World Tourism Day, Mr. SAITO Mitsunori, Chief Representative, JICA India, said, *"JICA have worked rigorously to tourism development in India. Our efforts aim to improve the country's tourist infrastructure and environmental sustainability by incorporating excellent tourism practices from Japan. Enhancing developments in the two areas would effectively contribute towards an improved regional economy as well as social and cultural interaction between the two countries when COVID-19 situation settles down. "*

JICA is also committed to protect art and heritage through conserving and restoring monuments. The agency had assisted projects called Ajanta – Ellora Conservation and Tourism Development Project(I), (II) with Total ODA loan of 11,076 million Japanese yen (about INR 743 crore).

Under the Project, Tourism and Transport infrastructure and basic services infrastructure like water, electricity were implemented by Ministry of Tourism and Culture (MOT) under cooperation with the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC), Airport Authority of India (AAI), Department of Archaeology and Museums of Maharashtra State (DAM) , Public Works Department of Maharashtra State(PWD) Maharashtra Jeevan Pradhikaran, Maharashtra State (MJP).

As it is critical to involve both domestic and international markets in order to restore the tourism sector, JICA India seeks to improve infrastructure and tourism services.



About JICA

Established, by a specific law, as an incorporated administrative institution under the Government of Japan, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) aims to contribute to the promotion of international cooperation, as a sole Japanese governmental agency in charge of ODA implementation. JICA is the world's largest bilateral donor agency. JICA works as a bridge between Japan and emerging countries, and provides assistance in forms of loan, grant and technical cooperation so that the emerging countries can strengthen their capabilities.

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