



For a better tomorrow for all

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in the Kyrgyz Republic

Newsletter № 51 (October - November, 2010)

1. Our events

We are now 10!

On November 5, 2010, a state reception dedicated to the 10th anniversary of the JICA representative office in the KR was held at the National Opera House. Also, there was conducted the 2nd annual meeting of the JICA Alumni Association. We were highly honored that our event was attended by the President of the KR Mrs Otunbaeva and other dignitaries from the Kyrgyz Government, international and diplomatic organizations.



Asem Toktobekova

In honor of the commemoration of JICA's 10 years in the KR, we asked Asem Toktobekova, a Kyrgyz actress, singer, and the heroine of the "Boz Salkyn", to become JICA's Good Will Ambassador in the KR. At the reception she made a presentation on the activities of our organization.



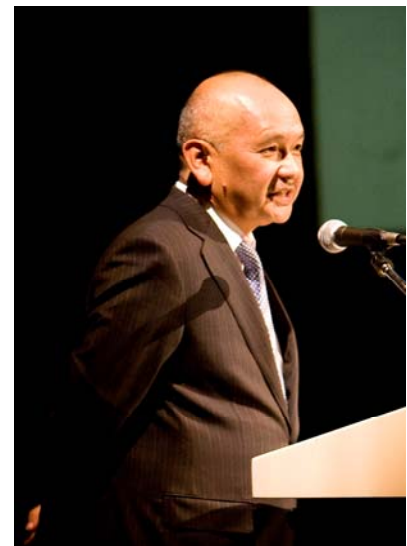
The speech of the President deeply touched our hearts

JICA is the implementation agency of the Official Development Assistance (ODA) of the Government of Japan and it began its activities immediately after Kyrgyzstan had gained its independence. One of the first cooperation schemes was acceptance of trainees to undergo training in Japan. Trainees are public servants, business community and NGO representatives who have undergone training in Japan to upgrade their qualifications, acquire additional knowledge, information, and technologies. At the

moment more than 1,200 have trained in Japan. In September of 2009 former fellows of the JICA courses formed the JICA Alumni Association. Within a year of activities there were conducted quite a few of events of both charitable and educational character. Also, proposals as for how to move the country out of the crisis were submitted for consideration at the highest possible level. This year the 2nd general meeting of the Association's members took place whereby new plans and ideas were identified.

During the first years of independence, JICA, jointly with the Embassy of Japan, also implemented the most significant projects in the medical sector: provision to hospitals medical equipment, ambulance cars, etc. Projects on rehabilitation of the Bishkek-Osh highway and the "Manas" Airport were implemented.

After an establishment of an office in Kyrgyzstan in 2000, cooperation acquired a more specific character. It became possible to



Mr T.D. Koichumanov is the Head of the JICA Alumni Association in the KR



implement additional cooperation schemes, such as dispatch of volunteers, and to increase the amount of provided assistance. Great changes occurred in JICA in 2008: The Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) was adjoined to our organization, and JICA became the second largest donor organization in the world after the World Bank in terms of its assistance volumes and the first in terms of bilateral cooperation provided.

Currently, there exist six main directions of JICA's activities in the KR: (1) transport infrastructure development, (2) agricultural development and rural community development, (3) transition to market economy through human resources development, (4) inclusion of persons with disabilities into society, (5) improvement of medical services, (6) assistance to regional cooperation among Central Asian countries.

The total volume of cooperation with Kyrgyzstan channeled through JICA comprises about 90 million US dollars.

JICA will continue cooperation with the KR in the future. We emphasize – cooperation, not assistance since we believe that in difficult times close ones should help to each other. And there will be a time when Kyrgyzstan will lend its shoulder to support its Japanese friend. By the way, do you know that the Kyrgyz and the Japanese used to be relatives? (Alelekova Svetlana)

Opening of the first Kyrgyz-Japanese Bridge of friendship

In February of 2009, a document was signed on the Project for reconstruction of three bridges in the Chui Oblast and since August of 2009 to the present time construction work has been underway at the three bridges in the Chui Oblast: the Alamedin bridge (42 m.), the Ala-Archa bridge (30 m.), and the Kenbulun (25 m.).

On November 1, 2010, an official ceremony was held on the account of completion and opening of one of the three bridges across the Alamedin river.

The opening ceremony was attended by Mr Maruo Sin, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan in the KR, Mr Maruyama Hideaki, Resident Representative of JICA in the KR, Mr Erkin Isakov, Minister of Transport and Communication of the KR, Mr Chorobek Imashev, Minister of Finance of the KR, as well as a number of other top officials. All of the present at the event pointed out the importance of the construction of the bridge not only to the local community, but to the economy of Kyrgyzstan in general, since the bridge is positioned at Asian Highway № 5 that connects the cities of Bishkek and Almaty (transport turnaround over the bridge amounts to about 8 thousand vehicles per day).

The construction of the bridge was implemented on the grant basis, and the overall budget for the construction of the three bridges comprised about 7 million US dollars. Iwata Chizaki Inc. acted as the primary contractor, while Kyrgyz companies were subcontractors. The peculiarity of the project was that, for the first time, construction was held through joint efforts of both countries' experts, under the supervision of the Ministry of transport and Communication of the KR, its principle goal being transfer of Japan's bridge construction technologies to its Kyrgyz counterparts. At the same time it was repeatedly noted at the ceremony that these bridges were a symbol of friendship of the two nations, receiving the name "bridges of the Kyrgyz-Japanese friendship". (Suyunalieva Guljan)



The bridge construction process



The Alamedin bridge opening ceremony

The first symposium on economy development and attraction of investments

On October 28, 2010, the first Kyrgyz-Japanese symposium on economy development and attraction of investments took place at the residence of Mr Maruo Sin, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan in the KR. The event was organized by the Embassy of Japan in the KR, its goal being assistance in development of bilateral relations and attraction of investments. Participants in the symposium were representatives of government agencies of Kyrgyzstan, private companies and international organizations. Japan's side was represented by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), with Mr Hideaki Maruyama, its Resident Representative, in the lead, Mr Tadao Iguchi, Director of the Kyrgyz Republic Japan Center, as well as representatives of Japan's leading companies, such as Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, Toyota Motor Corporation, and Tokyo Rope MFG that planned to provide their goods and services in the markets of Kyrgyzstan in the near future.



A presentation by Mr A.Abakirov

Mr Sultan Ahmatov, Deputy Minister for Economic Regulation of the KR, presented a report on the subject "Trade and Economic Cooperation between Japan and Kyrgyzstan" whereby he dwelled in detail on bilateral cooperation, implemented projects, and expressed his hope for further cooperation.

Mr Talaibek Koichumanov, Head of the Secretariat of the Council for Business Development and Investments under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, made a presentation on the subject "Investments in Kyrgyzstan and Perspective Objectives".

Mr Hideaki Maruyama, Resident Representative of JICA in the Kyrgyz Republic, spoke on the subject "JICA's Assistance Directed to Business Development". Mr Maruyama noted JICA's contribution to the development of partner relationship between state and private sectors as exemplified by projects under implementation in various countries.

Mr Azis Abakirov, Director of the Unique Technologies company, in his speech on the subject "Unique People, Unique Country, Unique Technologies" told of his company's history, of cooperation with Japanese companies, and shared his ideas on possible projects between Kyrgyzstan and Japan.



The reception after the symposium was equally effective

Mr Kairat Itibaev, Executive Director of the "KyrgyzInvest" investment promotion center, in his speech on the subject "Investment Opportunities of the Kyrgyz Republic" placed emphasis on the most attractive and perspective sectors in Kyrgyzstan.

Presentations by participants of the symposium were followed by a free discussion on the subject "Possible Ways of Economy Development and Investments Attraction in Kyrgyzstan". In the course of the discussion, participants

of the symposium expressed their vision of the problems related to economic development and investments attraction in the KR and offered alternative ways for addressing these problems.

Summing up, it could be noted that the event was held in a friendly, creative, and positive atmosphere. (Serbina Regina)

Training on seedlings production and nursery management

One of the important measures to restore and increase the forest area is to plant healthy saplings or seedlings produced in nurseries. In order to enhance skills and improve operation of nurseries Mr. Ueta Mamoru was invited, expert at nursery management, by the JICA Joint Forest Management Project in the Kyrgyz Republic. There were organized training course on production of seedlings and nursery management jointly with the Unit of Forest Ecosystems Development of the State Agency for Environment Protection and Forestry under the Kyrgyz Republic.

Mr. Mamoru Ueta examined the actual conditions of nurseries in Chui, Issylkul, and Naryn oblasts and provided lectures and practical advice when necessary. The classes were held at the nurser-

ies of Frunze, Karakol, Naryn, Balykchy and Chuy Leskhozoes. Total number of participants accounted for more than 109 foresters from three regions of the Kyrgyz Republic and 15 students from the vocational school № 20 in Bishkek, where they study "forest technology".

In class the lecturer provided practical techniques that trainees enjoyed very much. He demonstrated the technique of subsoil root trimming, different ways of plants grafting, methods of preparation and selection of seedlings, preparing seedbeds, watering equipment, and film-coated seedlings bed.

In general, Mr. Mamoru Ueta stated that nursery system in Kyrgyzstan is good enough, and he suggested that during his next spring visit he will demonstrate grafting of conifers and fruit trees in greater detail. (Machida Ryohta, JFM Project Coordinator, Sultanov Nurlan JFM Project Assistant in Kyrgyzstan)



Sample micro-greenhouse demonstration



Selection of a graft



Subsoil root cutting



Thinning out seedlings



Root system development



Training participants at the Chui Forestry Farm

2. JICA Volunteers

The 10th anniversary of JICA volunteers' activity in the KR

The celebration of the 10th anniversary of JICA volunteers' activity in the Kyrgyz Republic was held on November 22 at the National Russian Drama Theater named after Chyngyz Aitmatov. More than 400 people attended the event, including employees of the partner organizations, families with whom volunteers stayed, representatives of government agencies, donor organizations, and students.

Apart from publicizing the 10th anniversary of JICA volunteers' activity, the goal of this event was to express sincere gratitude to those who had supported the activities of our volunteers all through the last decade and significantly promoted their activities among Kyrgyzstan's citizens.

The ceremony began from its official part. Several guests, including the Ambassador of Japan in the Kyrgyz Republic, the Director of Peace Corps, the State Secretary of the Ministry of Finance of the KR, and the Director of the National Maternity and Childhood Center, appeared in front of the audience with formal addresses and noted the importance of the volunteer's contribution. His Excellency Ambassador of Japan Mr Maruo referred in his speech to Japan's volunteers' being a firm bridge between Kyrgyzstan and Japan.



Upon completion of formal addresses, representatives of the volunteers made a presentation of their work and life in Kyrgyzstan in the Russian and Kyrgyz languages.

The official part was followed by a standing reception. During the reception, JICA volunteers performed 2 compositions on komuz, a recitative of the Manas epos, and played the Japanese musical instrument of Sou, while guests observed with much interest.

Peace Corps volunteers also appeared on stage to perform a song in Kyrgyz and a dance to Michael Jackson music.

Before the fall of the curtain, there was performed a Japanese fisherman dance of Yosakoi Soran. Guests were impressed with the drive and the decisive character of the dance which was performed by 23 young volunteers wearing red Japanese costumes.

We hope that this event was a success in terms of the goals it pursued, and that many people have become more aware of the JICA volunteers' activities. (Sakai Naoko – Coordinator of Volunteers Activities in KR, translation by Imanalieva Ainura)



Concrete roads in the KR

From August through November of this year, the Ministry of Transport and Communication of the KR (MT&C) implemented a pilot project for concrete surface pavement (CSP) at a section of the Koi-Tash – Issyk-Ata motorway with the technical support from Mr Masashi Kawakami, a cement concrete surfaces expert from Japan, and Mr Toshio Kimata, JICA Road Sector Administration Adviser.



Preparatory works at the pilot section of the road

The project envisaged replacement of a 1.0 km-long road section's existing asphalt surface with the concrete one. The main goal of this pilot project was to study and transfer the cement concrete road surfacing technology as well as to test materials used in installation of such surfaces, including filling and additive materials used in the concrete mix. Well before the commencement of the pilot project, MT&C experts, under Mr Kawakami's guidance, had selected the composition of the concrete mix and completed installation of an experimental length of the concrete surface in the territory of the Reinforced Concrete Manufacturing Plant in Bishkek. In

this way, based on the results of experimental work, the most suitable surface composition was identified, followed by commencement of construction operations to install the concrete surface over a section of the Koi-Tash – Issyk-Ata road.

Considering the uniqueness and national importance of this project, the President of the KR Mrs Roza Otunbaeva visited this given section of the road on October 18 to learn more about progress achieved in implementation of the pilot project. During the visit the President instructed the MT&C to thoroughly study the issue of economic feasibility of cement concrete motorway construction given the climatic conditions of the country.

The uniqueness of this project is its being the first pilot project on concrete surface installation, since, as a rule, asphalt surface technologies have been used in road construction in Kyrgyzstan. There are several advantages in using concrete surfaces. Firstly, the longevity of the road because with asphalt road surfaces capital repairs need to be done once in five years, whereas with a concrete surface the road is in need of no repairs for 30 to 50 years.



The visit by the President of the KR Mrs R.Otunbaeva



The road laying process

Japan's experts shall pave a new way to construction of similar roads in other regions of the Republic as well. (Suyunaliyeva Guljan)

“Festival in the village of Alysh” – great opportunities of a small village

The goal of the festival was to give the guests the opportunity to enjoy the Saori products, introduce them to the product range produced by the villagers, as well as to fully relish in the reach nature of the village of Alysh.

It was a clear and sunny day on October 24. Early in the morning 26 JICA volunteers arrived in the village of Alysh. Jointly, we set up the *yurt*, slaughtered and prepared the lamb, made the *boorsoks*, and did many other things that could be surely attributed as some genuine rural life sampling. Numb-cold hands or the language barrier did not prevent the volunteers or villagers from making joint preparations for the festival, with merry laughter of the people coming from everywhere.



JICA Volunteers and villagers



At the festival,

which began at noon, apart from the sale of the products, there were conducted courses in cosmetology and cooking that had been organized by the Japanese volunteers and turned out to be a huge success. Courses in facial care - through application of the soap made by the women of the Jamaat, oil massage, and manicure were of interest to the rural women who could but rarely afford spoiling themselves in such manner. The courses in preparation of the Japanese dish "Oden" and the Kyrgyz "Oromo" also got the

guests interested, so that the huge *kazans* promptly disappeared behind the numerous observers' backs.

The hearts of the participants were also excited by the dance of Yosakoi Soran which was performed in the field against the background of the snowy Tien-Shan and the Japanese song "Furusato" (Motherland) performed by the girls from the Saori Jamaat.

The Saori Jamaat was set up two years and a half ago by ten women from the village, and I can say in full confidence that the day came to be pivotal both for the Jamaat and the entire village. Since that day, one can notice that people's eyes have been shining brighter, filling my heart with deep joy. (Muramatsu Nagisa, JICA volunteer, translated by Abdrazakova Sabira)



Muramatsu Nagisa, a JICA volunteer, and the women of the Saori Jamaat

3. JICA Alumni Association Page

Ekiden-2010 – a Japanese Relay Race that has become a tradition in Kyrgyzstan

Here we are - autumn is over and winter has set in. There have been held quite a few of interesting events in Kyrgyzstan in these 3 autumn months. However, the month of November has become especially memorable to the city dwellers, because from the 20th through the 27th of November, for the first time in the history of Kyrgyzstan, a Japan Week was held in Bishkek.

On November 21, 2010, the 2nd charity relay race "Ekiden-2010" was conducted at the Old Square as one of the events of the Japan Week that was organized by the JICA representative office in the Kyrgyz Republic and the JICA Alumni Association. Organizational support was provided by the Bishkek Mayor's office, the Track-and-Field Athletics Federation, the Hiking Tourism Union of Kyrgyzstan, companies "Shoro", "Kyrgyz Concept", "SIDOK", "Unique Technologies", "Ala-Travel", Cafe "Chongiva", etc.



The goals of this athletic event were:

1. Public awareness about the importance of a healthy lifestyle through sports activities;
2. Strengthening close friendly relations between the peoples of Kyrgyzstan and Japan;
3. Holding a charity action.

Participants in the relay run included schoolchildren, persons with disabilities, technical and vocational college students, university's students, adults, sports veterans, and, of course, children. All of the participants also took part in the charity action in support of needy children, with the amount raised comprising 33,704 som.

The event was attended by the total of 1,000 people, about 750 of them directly engaging in the relay race. Among guests and participants of the dash were the Bishkek Mayor Mr I.Sh.Omurkulov, The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan in the KR Mr Sin Maruo, JICA Good Will Ambassador in the KR Asem Toktobekova, Resident Representative of JICA in the Kyrgyz Republic Mr Maruyama Hideaki with his family, and others.

Overall, the program was very interesting and full of the elements of Japanese culture: right before the beginning of the opening ceremony, the Ooedodaiko drummer group performed compositions



The Ambassador of Japan presents the prizes to the winners

Yosei Daiko and Usuzumi Daiko which are normally performed in Japan to raise the spirits and induce positive attitudes. Then, the participants were able to watch the performance of the cosplay group (cosplay – “costumed play”). There, at the square, anyone wishing to do so, could have had his or her face painted with Japanese hieroglyphs. Alongside with other companies, products were also presented by the Japanese company “Perry Red”.

Organizers state that, with each next year, the Ekiden gathers more and more people wishing to participate, so they plan to hold it on an annual basis.



Asema and JICA are one team!

(Ibraeva Burul)

The purpose of this Newsletter is to introduce all interested readers to JICA's activities, to extend an invitation for participation in its programs, to promote friendly information exchange among graduates of JICA courses. The Newsletter is circulated among individuals interested in JICA's activities in the Kyrgyz Republic. For posting of information in the Newsletter, as well as for any general enquiries about JICA's activities in the Kyrgyz Republic, please use the following email address: jicakg-info@jica.go.jp

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