

Press Release

Japan Provides Grant Assistance of Rs. 880 million (Japanese Yen 977 mn) for Improvements at the Department of Meteorology and the Sigiriya Museum

The Government of Japan has provided a grant of Japanese Yen (J¥) 977 mn (approximately Rs. 880 million) for two projects, under its Grant Aid Programmes.

The first grant of J¥ 807 mn (approximately Rs. 726 mn) is provided under General Grant Aid programme for Improvement of Meteorological & Disaster Information Network. The purpose of this grant is to develop a reliable communication network among the relevant institutions and to improve the meteorological observation system and thereby improvement of meteorological and disaster information network in Sri Lanka. The new project will strengthen the nationwide weather information network and automatic weather observation systems of the Department of Meteorology, by automating 38 meteorological stations. The automatic weather information system will be connected to the Head Office of the Department of Meteorology in Colombo through a real-time satellite communication network. The weather related information and forecasts as well as warnings of predicted disasters are to be conveyed to relevant organizations through the proposed intra-agency communication network. The required basic designs for the project have been carried out with the assistance of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

This project will be implemented by the Department of Meteorology under the supervision of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights in close collaboration with the Japanese consultants and contractors.

The second grant of J¥ 170 mn (approximately Rs. 153 mn) is provided under the Japanese Cultural Grant Aid Programme to supply essential Display Equipment for the new Archaeological Heritage Museum at the World Heritage Site - SIGIRIYA. The installation of modern presentation and display equipment, under the proposed project will facilitate the dissemination of information to visitors and interpretation of the unique archaeological and cultural significance of the 4th Century monument at SIGIRIYA. The grant assistance to improve the facilities at the Sigiriya Archaeological Museum will complement the on going construction work of the Museum with the assistance of the Government of Japan. The construction work of the museum buildings are expected to be completed by the end of March 2008 at a cost of about Rs. 220 mn.

In considering the significance of the Sigiriya heritage site, the Government of Japan has already provided financial assistance under the Tourism Resources Development Project to improve the access roads to the heritage site and improvement of the fresco gallery, observation platform and steel stairway leading to the rock summit, construction of visitor convenience & safety facilities and landscape improvements at the heritage site.

This project will be implemented through the Central Cultural Fund under the supervision of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs in close collaboration with Japanese counterpart consultants.

The signing of Exchange of Notes pertaining to the above two grants took place today, at the Ministry of Finance and Planning. His Excellency Kiyoshi Araki, Ambassador of Japan in Sri Lanka signed the Exchange of Notes on behalf of the Government of Japan while Dr. P B Jayasundera, Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Planning signed on behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka.

Ministry of Finance and Planning
Colombo - 01
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