



Embassy of Japan in Afghanistan

Press Release

(ترجمه غیر رسمی دری و پشتو ضمیمه است/ (Unofficial translation of Dari and Pashto is attached herewith)

JAPAN \$3 MILLION GRANT TO SUPPORT AFGHANISTAN ROAD CORRIDOR UPGRADE (JOINT PRESS RELEASE WITH ADB)

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN (26 February 2015) – The Government of Japan has approved a \$3 million grant to Afghanistan for a project which will improve the country's main north-south road corridor transport route.

The agreement for the preparatory facility for the Salang Tunnel Project was signed today between Hiroshi Takahashi, Ambassador of Japan to Afghanistan and Thomas Panella, Asian Development Bank's (ADB's) Country Director for Afghanistan.

The funds will be used to carry out a geotechnical survey, feasibility study, and detailed design for a new alignment, including a tunnel, along the Salang road corridor. The 70-kilometer section of the corridor to be developed connects Jabul Seraj to Khinjan, north of Kabul, and is part of a key north-south road route.

The condition of the existing corridor and tunnel has caused serious transportation delays and safety concerns and an additional alignment is needed to facilitate traffic movements, regional connectivity, and economic development.

"Japan is very proud to be associated with this project, which is in a key corridor and is a priority project for the people of Afghanistan and the region," said Ambassador Takahashi. "It is also an important part of Japan's continued support to the ADB-managed Afghanistan Infrastructure Trust Fund (AIF)." (Note: The original text says AITF, but the acronym used in the text is AIF.)

ADB will carry out the project preparation work in close cooperation with the Government of Afghanistan.

"ADB appreciates the continued support of the Government of Japan for the people of Afghanistan through the AIF to develop critical projects which are part of the Afghan government's strategic infrastructure plans," Mr. Panella said. "The Salang pass is a key link in Corridor 5 of the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program's transport master plan."

Japan has been providing development support to Afghanistan in many areas including security, health, culture, humanitarian assistance, education, agriculture, infrastructure and capacity development. Cumulative Japanese assistance to Afghanistan since 2001 totals \$5.78 billion.

To date, ADB has allocated more than \$1.2 billion in Afghanistan for roads, railways, and airport projects.

ADB, based in Manila, is dedicated to reducing poverty in Asia and the Pacific through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration. Established in 1966, it is owned by 67 members – 48 from the region.

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