

## JICA Friendship Projects

Dear Friends,

Greetings from IIT Hyderabad!

I am delighted to know that IIT Hyderabad is bringing a special issue focusing on the long-standing collaboration of IIT Hyderabad with Japan in the last decade or so. As a faculty and the Dean (International and Alumni Relations) at IIT Hyderabad, I feel fortunate to be a part of this journey.

On a personal front, my association with Japan started much before I joined IIT Hyderabad. I was awarded the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) postdoctoral fellowship way back in 2007-09 to work with Professor Nobuhiro Tsuji of Osaka University (presently, he is associated with Kyoto University). Upon my return to India, our collaboration continued and flourished, resulting in successful research proposal grants, student exchanges, and regular mutual visits. With so many wonderful friends around, I reserve some of the most cherished moments associated with the stays and interactions I had with my Japanese colleagues and friends.

In the context of IIT Hyderabad, collaboration with Japan has been one of the hallmarks of this institute's eventful journey since its inception in 2008. The importance of the collaboration with Japanese academia/R&D/industry through JICA under the FRIENDSHIP project can hardly be overstated.

The phase 1 implementation of the project helped IIT Hyderabad in infrastructure development, forging research collaboration in selected frontier areas of research, securing scholarships for IITH students for pursuing their studies in Japan, and regular student and faculty exchanges, and so on.

On a quantitative term, the collaboration yielded 56 MoUs, 272 faculty exchanges, over 200 student exchanges, two external and seven internal research grants, 71 joint publications, 51 patent filings, and 138 scholarships for studying in Japan!

A defining aspect of the IIT Hyderabad-Japan collaboration has been the scholarship opportunities for IIT Hyderabad students to study in leading Japanese universities. It is most encouraging to note that the students have found career opportunities in Japanese academia and industries upon completing their masters and doctoral studies in Japan. They are contributing meaningfully to the research and development, innovations, and economy of Japan. It is heartening to see that IIT Hyderabad enjoys a vibrant alumni network in Japan ready to propel the IIT Hyderabad-Japan relationship to the next level.

It is also a great pleasure to note that the Phase-2 of the FRIENDSHIP project has been approved for FY 2021-2027. The framework for implementation of the Phase-2 is now under discussion. The major focus of the Phase-2 implementation will be research collaboration in cutting-edge and emerging research areas, joint doctoral programs, and greater engagements with Japanese and Indian industries to strengthen the innovation and transformation ecosystem.

Once again, I consider it my proud privilege to be a part of this journey. I firmly believe that we will see this collaboration grow even stronger in the coming days as we continue this journey together.

*Continued...*

Last but not least, as our battle with the COVID-19 pandemic continues, I wish the well-being of you, your family, and everyone associated with you.

**See you, Namaskar and Mata-ne,**



**Prof. Pinaki Prasad Bhattacharjee**  
Dean (International and Alumni  
Relations)