

Press Tours Projects Funded With Japan's ODA



Visiting journalists pose for a group photo at Nam Ngum Dam 1 in Vientiane Province on Mar 1, 2018

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(KPL) More than 20 journalists representing print and broadcast media have joined a tour to visit development projects funded with Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) in Vientiane and Vientiane Province.

The journalists began their trip co-organized by the embassy of Japan and JICA Laos with visiting Toulakhom district hospital in Vientiane Province where a young Japanese Haruka Miyabayashi is volunteering her services as a midwife under the Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteers programme.

Haruka has been volunteering at the hospital for more than 16 months using her creative ideas and apply what she has learned in Japan to improve the midwifery service of the hospital for local people, mostly pregnant women and newborns in the district.

“When I searched for information related to my volunteerism in Laos on the internet I found that Laos is a poor country in Asia and has the highest mortality rate among children in the region and midwifery in this country is much needed. This made me want to volunteer in Laos and I am very happy to come here,” said Haruka.

Haruka has helped improve the mother and child healthcare services of the hospital. She encourages local medical workers to work as a professional paying attention to the details of their medical services.

“Lao doctors tend to explain to their patients orally, as a result the patients don’t understand completely. This has been changed. I have encouraged local medical workers to help me invent pictorial tools which they can use to explain the message to their patients to help them better understand what they are saying,” said Haruka.



Haruka Miyabayashi, centre, has just finished prenatal check for a pregnant woman at the Toulakhom District Hospital, Vientiane Province on Mar 1, 2018

“Since Haruka began to work at our hospital, we have made changes to the service of our hospital according to the lessons she has learned in Japan and now we realize that many things are getting better,” said Dr Souksavanh Southammavong, Deputy Director of the Thoulakhom District Hospital.

The media delegation finished their first day of the two-day trip with visiting Nam Ngum hydropower plant, the first power dam to have been built in Laos. It was constructed in three stages, beginning with stage I in 1968 and ending with the completion of stage III in 1984.

Its development was financed with assistance from 10 countries including Japan, under the auspices of the United Nations.

The current capacity of Nam Ngum Dam is 155MW. Around 80% of the electricity generated by the gravity dam is exported to Thailand. The rest is supplied to Vientiane and the host province Vientiane.

Today, an expansion project, funded with a low interest loan of more than JPY 5.5 billion (around US\$ 50 million) from Japanese government, is being conducted to ease power shortage during peak time, especially in April, in Vientiane.

Once the expansion project, which involves the installation of new 40 MW generator, is completed, hopefully in 2019, the total generation capacity of Nam Ngum Dam will reach 195 MW.

The two day press tour will end up with two stops, one at the Vientiane International Airport Terminal Expansion Project, also implemented under low-interest loan from Japanese Government, and another one at the Vientiane Bus Station in Vientiane on Mar 2.

The Vientiane International Airport Terminal Expansion Project has shown significant progress with some parts already completed and started utilization for international passenger terminal; while domestic terminal is also being rebuilt with larger space and will be more convenient to use, according to JICA Laos.

The construction which needs to secure the current operation of the airport and safety of the passengers is expected to be completed in June 2018.



Nam Ngum Dam



Nam Ngum Dam expansion is going on

U.S. Provides New Hospitals In Saravan And New Clinic In Xekong

(KPL) The United States Embassy and United States Pacific Command (USPACOM) formally presented three new district hospitals and one village clinic to Toumlan and Samouey districts of Saravan Province and Thateng district in Xekong Province.

The handover ceremonies were held on Feb 27, 2018 in Toumlan and Thateng, and on Feb 28, 2018 in Samouay.

Each project built and handed over a new district medical building on the sites of existing functional hospitals or clinic facilities.

These new medical buildings will greatly enhance the provincial public health departments' ability to provide health services to the people of both provinces.

The combined cost of the projects was more than two million U.S. dollars.