

A report on Academic Visit to Kobe Gakuin University, Kobe, Japan

Submitted by:

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Executive Summary

The visit to Kobe Gakuin University (KGU) by the Visiting Professor consists of following two objectives, such as 1. To project current scenarios of disaster management both in Bangladesh, 2. To analyze contemporary social engagement of students through active learning and technical simulation/solution as part of research-case study on problem solving for disaster prevention both in Bangladesh and Japan. Since KGU with its Faculty of Contemporary Social Studies (FCSS) focuses on problem-solving type of active learning on disaster management, my visit to this university will be a fruitful initiative for implementation of respective objectives. Joint research on analysis of data for prediction and Disaster prevention will widen up opportunities for research outcomes and patents where potential researchers from both Japan and Bangladesh may play role in an inclusive and diversified environment.

Introduction

The academic visit to KGU by the Visiting Professor in light with following two objectives are significant.

1. Project current scenarios of disaster management both in Bangladesh
2. Analyze on contemporary social engagement of students through active learning and technical simulation/solution as part of research-case study on problem solving for disaster prevention both in Bangladesh and Japan

Significance:

Disaster Management (DM) in Bangladesh with significant experiences of casualties, deaths and economic losses for last 5 (five) decades is now a crucial demand. Since, Bangladesh is ranked as one of the most disaster-prone countries, People in Bangladesh are often affected by water-related natural disasters, including floods, riverbank erosion and cyclones. In addition, recent rapid urbanization increases the risks for earthquake as well as man-made disasters.

On the other hand, Japan because of its climate and topography experienced natural disasters such as countless earthquakes, typhoons, and other types. A number of factors including extreme climatic variations, such as seasonal rain fronts and typhoons, heavy snowfall on the Sea of Japan side of the archipelago, rugged topography as well as locating of Japan in the Pacific earthquake belt and circum-Pacific zone with volcanoes and frequent struck by coastline tsunamis contribute to the high incidence of frequent natural disasters.

It prompted the establishment of a planned and comprehensive disaster prevention and management system in both the countries since 1961 (under the Disaster Countermeasures Basic Act) in Japan and 1985 in Bangladesh. Both the countries were cooperating each other through JICA, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) of Japan and the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) of Bangladesh.

National Plan for Disaster Management (NPDM) 2021-2025 exemplified the strategic plan of the Government of Bangladesh in its Vision and the Mission of the Ministry of Disaster

Management and Relief (MoDMR) between 2021 and 2025 with strategic goals for actions to save life, reduce economic losses in every disaster cycle stages which includes Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Humanitarian Response and Emergency Recovery Management.

Visit plan and actions

The physical visit plan started from 12th May 2024 to 11th June 2024. There were 12 class lectures, each of 90 minutes span which were conducted for 1st to 4th year of undergrad students under the FCSS of KGU. The mode of lectures was one to one interactive having discussion with scenarios, history data, background, ongoing researches, problems and technical solutions which were projected using Powerpoint slides.

The lecture was followed by the current and proposed measures for prevention, emergency relief, and recovery which were linked interactively under some ongoing research by the Visiting Professor and his team for problem solving that ensured a planned and comprehensive approach to disaster countermeasures. Each session ended with Q/A and respective feedback by the audiences.

Conclusion

With this limited time span visit to KGU, the primary goal was to provide students current scenarios of disasters both in Bangladesh and Japan with history of their casualties. Additionally, another goal was to pave students of KGU on solutions to contemporary issues for Disaster prevention (DP) as part of Disaster Management (DM) in both the countries.

Besides, Bangladesh yet to develop disaster management strategic plan and mapping of cities accordingly to reduce major damage of resources and casualties. Therefore, the visiting professor opines for a joint effort by KGU and any private entity in Bangladesh which may be a branch of KGU or an affiliated institution of KGU or an entity in Bangladesh with which KGU may jointly operate on DM, DP by offering Diploma, Bachelor or Masters Degree. In future, any joint research on contemporary issues may also be taken under joint action plan of research.