

Rusumo one-stop border launched

By: STEPHEN RWEMBEHO



L-R: Japanese Ambassador Ogawa Kazuya, JICA president Dr. Akihiko Tanaka and Infrastructure minister James Musoni at Rusumo. (Courtesy)

The One-Stop Border Post (OSBP) project that will eliminate tedious customs and immigration clearing procedures on the Rwanda Tanzania border has been completed.

It was launched yesterday by the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Tanzania National Roads Agency.

The project consists of a 80-metre-long and 13.5-metre wide bridge, an administration building, verification storage, control shed for vehicle, guard house, and a parking yard for trucks.

A two-kilometre road that links the two OSBP facilities in Rwanda and Tanzania has also been built.

The two-lane bridge with capacity to support 180 tons, replaced the old one that was built 40 years ago to handle only 53 tons.

The new bridge will also increase the speed limit from five to 30km per hour. It was constructed by the Japanese Contractor, DAIHO Corporation, under the supervision of a consortium of consultant companies comprising CHODAI and NIPPON KOEI, also from Japan.

The government of Japan, through Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) financed the project to the tune of Rwf22 billion as financial support to the Republic of Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Japanese Ambassador to Rwanda, Kazuya Ogawa, JICA President Akihiko Tanaka, the Minister of Infrastructure James Musoni and John Mongella, the Tanzania commissioner for Akagera region attended the launch.

Musoni said that the OSBP will eliminate traffic congestion, improve efficiency in cargo transportation, cut costs and generally facilitated faster movement of goods.

The Rusumo border is located on the Central Corridor, one of the leading trade routes in Africa.

“We are grateful for the good cooperation between Japan and Rwanda. The two nations [Rwanda and Tanzania] will benefit a lot from the project. The one stop border system is important...it is capable of simultaneously handling departure and entry procedures at border points to eliminate the snag of economic corridors,” said Musoni.

The Japanese delegation hailed the cooperation between Rwanda and Japan, noting that it quickened the completion of the project.

“It is critical to develop regional infrastructure that enhance connectivity among countries...cross-border infrastructure promotes regional integration,” said JICA President Akihiko Tanaka.

The project will be replicated at all the border posts in the region to ease intra regional trade and accelerate economic integration.