



A·P·O *news*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ASIAN PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATION

Laos convenes national productivity roundtable

The Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, in its effort to give its industrial development program added momentum, convened a national productivity roundtable conference (RTC) in Vientiane, 12–13 January 2004. It was facilitated by the Ministry of Industry and Handicrafts with the support and assistance of the APO. Vice Minister for Industry and Handicrafts and APO Director for Laos Dr. Nam Viyaketh described the purpose of the RTC as endeavoring to forge "a national consensus on how to launch and promote productivity at the macro and micro levels." To give importance and prominence to the meeting, the Laos Prime Minister and several cabinet ministers (Industry and Handicrafts; Agriculture; Commerce; and Education) attended the inaugural session. The APO was represented by the Secretary-General. More than 100 prominent individuals from the national and provincial governments, employers' and business organizations, trade unions, academia, and civil society bodies took part in the two-day meeting.



(L-R) Vice Minister Dr. Nam Viyaketh, Secretary-General Takashi Tajima, Prime Minister Boun Nhang Vorachith, and Minister Onneua Phommachanh at the inaugural session of the RTC

In inaugurating the RTC, Prime Minister Boun Nhang Vorachith said that his government recognized the importance of productivity as a driving force in the efficient development, upgrading, and expansion of industrial activities and output. He added that increased productivity would benefit everyone and stressed that the success of the productivity movement was the responsibility not only of the government but also of all sectors of the economy. Minister for Industry and Handicrafts Onneua Phommachanh, in his keynote speech, said that the promotion of productivity was an important strategic measure in the government's industrialization and modernization programs. He pointed out that the productivity movement would contribute to the socio-economic development of Laos through increased competitiveness, job creation, improved living standards, and the country's successful integration into the global economy.

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"Teamwork is a make or break situation. Either you help make it or the lack of it will break you."

Kris A. Hiatt

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Protectionism and productivity

Well over two centuries ago, Adam Smith demonstrated that a nation's wealth grows if it manufactures the goods it can produce most efficiently, trading them in return for those where others have a comparative advantage. Since then "comparative advantage" has become the broadly, albeit haltingly, accepted linchpin of economic policy, boosting nations' productivity and hence prosperity.

"Without competition the drive to greater efficiency and innovation is dampened."

This philosophy stands in contrast to the one it superseded: protectionism. Not that protectionism has by any means been eclipsed. Indeed, in times of slow growth, it flourishes, for governments proclaim that jobs can be saved and industries more easily restructured if a nation's agriculture or manufacturing sectors, wholly or partially, can be shielded from the inflow of specific foreign products. To stymie foreign critics, they pronounce that protection will only be offered temporarily, knowing full well that law enforcement procedures, international or even of the EU, only kick in one or more years after protectionist measures have been introduced.

Protectionism takes two forms: imposing tariffs and other barriers to trade (including environmental and health standards) to make imports more expensive and subsidizing domestic producers. Both types undermine productivity increases since they curb competition, and without competition the drive to greater efficiency and innovation is dampened. True, jobs might be saved in the short term, at least in the industries directly concerned. But consumers pay more for their goods and services for which the

world price is lower; and citizens subsidize the higher prices through taxes—a "double whammy." Yet as Europe's blatant protectionism of agriculture shows, decisions are often less the outcome of economic rationality and the "voice of the people" than of the influence of vested interests.

Europe experienced the impact of and indulged in protectionism in 2003. On the one hand, US steel tariffs meant that the products of European (and Asian) exporters suddenly became 30% more expensive in the USA, thereby significantly reducing their competitiveness. On the other hand, and despite European law (in any case often flouted by large countries), governments continue to dole out state subsidies to maintain specific industries or companies in businesses which are not competitive. Such has recently been the case of German coal mining and some major French and Italian companies. And more insidiously still, Europe subsidizes farm exports, putting local producers in developing countries out of business.

A major problem is that subsidies are at the very core of the EU's philosophy. Thus, to reach its goal of redistributing wealth from its rich to its poorer nations and regions—a laudable purpose *per se*—it proffers subsidies of €30 billion annually. They are a means both to smooth the processes of restructuring areas experiencing industrial decline and to help construct the requisite infrastructure, such as transport, communications, power, water, education, etc., to boost future growth in traditionally poor regions.

The results are, however, ambivalent. Of all the countries that have benefited from large subsidies in the last two decades only Ireland has significantly increased its productivity and prosperity; the others' relative position has hardly budged. Ireland's achievements, however, are attributable less to subsidies, even though they have been

efficiently used, than to foreign direct investment, education, and social partnership. Pouring money into improving the infrastructure by no means necessarily attracts sustainable employment. Thus, Germany has coughed up €1,000 billion (yes, billion) in transfers to its eastern provinces since reunification, yet their productivity remains only 70% of that of the country as a whole and their unemployment is double the national average.

"World Bank studies show that subsidies for both labor and capital are much less effective in raising growth and productivity than reducing taxation and enhancing labor mobility, despite all the dislocations that such mobility entails."

World Bank studies show that subsidies for both labor and capital are much less effective in raising growth and productivity than reducing taxation and enhancing labor mobility, despite all the dislocations that such mobility entails. For subsidies attract investment to areas for nonsustainable economic reasons, not least short-term financial windfalls. And being very footloose, corporate investment rapidly moves to still lower labor-cost areas, both the new EU member countries of Eastern Europe—where Slovakia has just introduced a novel, productivity-inducing single tax rate on persons and companies of 19%—and, increasingly, China. Finally, anyone offering subsidies opens up vast opportunities for fraud, as was also seen in Europe in 2003.

But all is not gloom and doom. Despite their decline in numbers, high-productivity manufacturing companies are still thriving in Western Europe. Europe's manufacturing output in 2003



was, like the USA's, 50% higher than in 1990, with a smaller workforce. This is partly attributable to the great number of jobs which has been shed and outsourced so that today labor accounts for 15% or less of industrial companies' total costs. But manufacturing overseas brings with it extra costs, not just for transportation and inventory, but also the (often hidden) social, political, and security risks—"offshoring" has its downsides.

There is more hope at the European level. The EU itself is moving, albeit slowly, in the "productivity direction." For it is emphasizing that to be more productive, European funds (subsidies) should go not to individual industries but rather to broader efforts to promote innovation. However, agreeing on common policies between 15 governments has proved difficult, and in May 2004 the number will rise to 25. Each of the 10 new members is eager to get its "fair share of the pie," while protecting its existing interests. That never was a good productivity policy. Rather, all should strive to increase the size of the pie. However forlorn such a hope might sometimes seem, there are at present more positive than negative signs. 🌀

Anthony C. Hubert is President of EuroJobs, an organization he established to promote efforts to raise the quality of working life and productivity in Europe. He was formerly Secretary-General of the European Associations of National Productivity Organizations. He writes regularly for this column.

From the SECRETARY-GENERAL'S schedule

January 2004

12-13 January

APO Secretary-General Takashi Tajima visited Vientiane, Laos, to attend the National Roundtable Conference on Productivity organized by the Ministry of Industry and Handicrafts and presented a speech at the inaugural session, which was also graced by Lao Prime Minister Boun Nhang Vorachith and Minister for Industry and Handicrafts Onneua Phommachanh (*see front page for full report*). During his stay in Laos, Mr. Tajima paid courtesy calls on Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Somsavat Lengsavad; Minister Onneua Phommachanh; Minister for Agriculture and Forestry Dr. Siene Saphangthong; Lao Federation of Trade Unions' Acting President Dr. Bosaykham Vongdara; and President Kissana Vongsay of the Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industries.

21 January

In the morning, attended the opening session of the study meeting on "Enhancing Food Certification Systems for Better Marketing," APO Secretariat. In the afternoon, attended the second meeting of the Green Productivity Advisory Committee (*see page 8 for full report*).

22 January

Received Dato' Mustafa Mansur, President of the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers, who paid a courtesy visit to the Secretariat. Mr. Mustafa was in Tokyo to attend the Green Productivity Advisory Committee meeting.

28 January

Received Lao Deputy Prime Minister Bouasone Boupphavanh, who paid a courtesy visit to the Secretariat. The Deputy Prime Minister was accompanied by Mr. Bounhap Shihapanya, Deputy Director-General of the Secretariat, Office of the Party Central Committee; Mr. Soukthavone Keola, Lao Ambassador to Japan, and Mr. Itsuo Hashimoto, the Japanese Ambassador to Laos.



At left is Mr. Takashi Tajima and at far right is Deputy Prime Minister Bouasone Boupphavanh. Ambassador Soukthavone Keola is seated next to the DPM



New APO publications

Following current developments in the publishing industry and as part of its plan to enhance its information dissemination program, the APO has introduced electronic books (e-books) on its Web site. They are of two types. One is also available in hardbound copies and the other is only in the e-edition. There are currently more than 10 titles on the Web site and this library will be gradually expanded. Introduced below are three agriculture titles available only in e-format.

INTEGRATION OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EXTENSION

APO 262 pp. October 2003 ISBN: 92-833-7017-1

Research and extension services in agriculture are important in enhancing its productivity. Research generates improved technologies and practices that help to raise crop yields and farmers' income. Extension, on the other hand, provides the mechanism by which those technologies and practices are disseminated for adoption by farmers. For successful technology transfer, these two services need to be interlinked. In view of the importance of this issue to member countries, the APO conducted a study meeting on "Integrated Agricultural Research and Extension" in March 2002 to review recent developments in agricultural research and extension in member countries and devise effective ways of integrating them. This publication contains five resource papers, 13 country papers, and a summary of findings of the study meeting.

DEVELOPMENT OF AGRIBUSINESS ENTERPRISES

APO 190 pp. October 2003 ISBN: 92-833-7018-X

Modern technology and better management have helped to improve agricultural productivity and broaden the value-adding activities of farmers, especially agribusiness, a complex undertaking involving the integration of agricultural production, value-added processing, packaging, distribution, and marketing activities. It requires special skills and experience to manage. To assess the current status of agribusiness in member countries and to discuss measures for its further development, the APO hosted a seminar on "Development of Agribusiness Enterprises" in November 2000. This publication is a report of the seminar proceedings.

AGRARIAN REFORMS AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY

APO 214 pp. October 2003 ISBN: 92-833-7015-5

Most Asian countries have a large agriculture sector. For this reason, agrarian reforms are constantly being undertaken to keep pace with changes in the socio-economic environment, including globalization, environmental protection, land redistribution, and productivity improvement. It is generally felt that the overall achievement of agrarian reforms is far from satisfactory in many member countries. To address this issue, particularly enhancing the impact of agrarian reforms, the APO conducted a study meeting on "Agrarian Reforms and Agricultural Productivity" in 2001. This publication provides a summary of the findings of the meeting and the text of the four resource papers and 13 country reports presented at the meeting.

For order and inquiry on APO publications and videos, please contact the Information and Public Relations Department, Asian Productivity Organization, Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Bldg. 2F, 1-2-10 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0093, Japan. Phone number: (81-3) 5226-3927, Fax: (81-3) 5226-3957, e-Mail: ipr@apo-tokyo.org

COMMON SENSE TALK



"You're headed in the right direction when you realize the customer viewpoint is more important than the company viewpoint. It's more productive to learn from your customers instead of about them."

John Romero

"Teamwork is a make or break situation. Either you help make it or the lack of it will break you."

Kris A. Hiatt

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act but a habit."

Aristotle

"If you don't ask, you don't get."

Mahatma Gandhi

"A man can do all things if he but wills them."

Leon Battista Alberti

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Don't forget that it (your product or service) is not differentiated until the customer understands the difference."

Tom Peters

"The worm lures the fish, not the fisherman and his tackle."

Angler's maxim

"There is no security on this earth; there is only opportunity."

Douglas MacArthur

"The important thing is not to stop questioning."

Albert Einstein

Showcase on e-governance in Hawaii

Just as information technology (IT) has revolutionized business and management practices through the introduction of e-commerce and intranets, it is also rapidly changing traditional forms of government administration and services. e-Governance has emerged as a new reality. It enables: 1) governments to use IT-based tools and strategies to improve public service efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness; and 2) constituents to provide direct feedback on how they perceive and evaluate government performance. Hawaii is leading the development and application of e-governance in the USA. As this IT application is relatively new in most APO member countries, the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) of Hawaii hosted a workshop on “e-Governance” for the APO in Honolulu, 8–12 December 2003. Sixteen participants from 14 countries took part.



Participants at the Honolulu Traffic Center

DBEDT administrator Dennis Ling, in welcoming participants on behalf of the government of Hawaii, said that the workshop was to showcase Hawaii’s expertise in IT and e-governance, with the hope that it would contribute to economic development in the Asia-Pacific region and to building cooperative relationships between Hawaii corporations and organizations represented by the APO delegates. Hawaii has hosted 11 projects for the APO since 1996, including the e-governance workshop. Other subjects covered were: Ecology and tourism planning and development; Coastal resource management; Telemedicine; Health care management; and e-Commerce.

The e-governance workshop featured presentations on: e-Learning in the Department of Education; eHawaii.gov; e-Government in the city and county of Honolulu; Community television and government; Open source tools in government; State of Hawaii next-generation network; Cyber crime; e-Application in traffic management; and State of Hawaii intranet portal. A special presentation on APO e-services was given by APO Senior IT Officer Mukesh Bhattarai. Participants were also taken on business tours to observe best practice models on e-governance at Olelo Studios, Equinix, Honolulu Traffic Center, and ICSD Computer Center. 🌀

Laos convenes productivity roundtable Continued from page 1

APO Secretary-General Takashi Tajima, in his address, outlined the significant role of the government in a national productivity movement, which includes educating the people on its importance, gaining their support for it, and integrating productivity into the national economic development plan. Among other key contributing factors for a successful productivity movement that the Secretary-General mentioned were: 1) the establishment of an effective national productivity organization (NPO) with the requisite capacity and capability to provide the necessary drive and leadership; 2) the commitment and support of all stakeholders; and 3) the development of the country’s human resources.

The RTC was structured in three parts. One featured resource speakers deputed by the APO from Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam who spoke on their respective countries’ experiences and strategies in promoting and enhancing productivity. Another aspect of the RTC was presentations by four interest groups in Laos on their views and concerns about productivity: the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry; Lao Federation

of Trade Unions; Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industries; and National University of Lao PDR. The third part was the proposal of a set of guiding principles and strategic measures for the formulation of policies and action plans to launch a successful national productivity movement.

The development of an environment conducive for productivity improvements, labor-management cooperation, the willingness on the part of the people to accept changes necessary for productivity increase, and equitable sharing of the gains of higher productivity among stakeholders were the guiding principles the RTC enunciated. It also spelled out the fundamental requisites needed to establish an effective NPO, its basic role, and the importance of governmental subvention to support its work. The strategic measures recommended reflect the successful programs implemented by NPOs in other APO member countries, particularly in manpower development, employee participation in building excellent organizations, entrepreneurship development, Green Productivity promotion, and strengthening stakeholders’ competencies in quality and productivity. 🌀

— Introducing the APO Secretariat (V) —

The APO Secretariat has six functional departments. Over the last eight months, we have introduced four: Administration and Finance, Research and Planning, Industry, and Agriculture. Our focus in this issue is on the Environment Department.

Environment Department

This is the department most recently established, in 1994. In 1996, it launched the Green Productivity (GP) Program with a GP world conference in Manila, the Philippines, as a response to the 1992 United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development, popularly referred to as the Rio Earth Summit. GP integrates productivity improvement with environmental protection and is applicable to industries, farms, and communities. It has five core areas: GP Promotion Mission; GP Demonstration Program; GP Dissemination Assistance; Technical Information and Advisory Service; and International Cooperation. GP has had a substantial impact on member countries. Most have set up their own GP programs.

Some key current activities of the department are: 1) working with major private-sector corporations in member countries, starting with Japan, to promote the establishment of green supply chains and green procurement as a means for sustainable development as well as enhancing their competitive advantage in the global market; 2) promoting energy, water, and solid waste management; and 3) undertaking follow-up work on the Johannesburg WSSD partnership initiatives by joining with other organizations to promote programs



(L-R) Goto, Ohtome, Koh, Parasnis, and Watanabe. In the inset is Miyakawa

like GP-Integrated Community Development and SIGN³-Asia, a sustainable investment initiative.

The Head of the Environment Department is Director Augustine Koh. His team members include two officers—Setsuko Miyakawa and Mandar Parasnis—and three general staff—Takiko Ohtome, Noriko Goto, and Sayuri Watanabe. 🌀



p-TIPS

Leadership for entrepreneurs (The antiheroic stance)

In the June 2003 issue of the business journal *INC.*, Michael S. Hopkins asserts that “If you’re an entrepreneur, almost everything about ‘leadership’ as we know it is bad for you.” The style of leadership generally referred to as “charismatic” or “heroic” depends on the personal energy and vision of an individual and focuses on the good of the business. According to Hopkins, however, an entrepreneur should focus on his or her own good. Unlike elected leaders with term limits, entrepreneurs can stay with their companies and enjoy their success. If you start a company to be happy, however “happy” is defined, then determining a method to run it that makes you happy is important. “Antiheroic” leadership has slowly been developing among entrepreneurs, and leaders practicing it follow four general rules.

1. Ask why you’re here. Know what you want. Don’t apologize. When the company doesn’t fulfill the needs of the entrepreneur, it can’t fulfill those of employees, customers, or suppliers. Antiheroic leaders understand their dreams, imagine companies to realize them, and are unapologetically honest about personal needs and abilities.

- 2. Don’t ask “How?” Ask “Who?” Assume you’re not the answer.** Antiheroic leaders don’t have to do everything or even know how to do everything. Instead, getting capable people involved with their companies will attract other capable people, freeing entrepreneurs to explore more possibilities.
- 3. Embrace the difference between “I am my company” and “I have a company.”** Antiheroic leaders allow others to help form the company vision and take turns leading. They never act as if they were the embodiment of the company. Parent-child relations are prevalent under charismatic leadership, but organizations led by antiheroic leaders are full of capable adults.
- 4. Forget Superman. Be part of something.** Under antiheroic leadership, entrepreneurs know that they don’t have to supply all the energy and oversee every detail. Being a superhero is not only hard work, it’s lonely. Antiheroes get to be part of the companies they create.



p-Experts deputed by the APO

BANGLADESH

Dr. G.K. Suri, Hon. Professor, International Management Institute, India, and **Mr. Yue-Shan Chang**, Director, Department of Finance, National Sun Yat-Sen University, Republic of China, were deputed to serve as resource persons in the workshop on Productivity Strategy for Public-sector Enterprises, 11–15 January 2004.

FIJI

Dr. Chiuhsiang Joe Lin, Professor & Chair, Department of Industrial Engineering, Chung Yuan Christian University, Republic of China, was deputed to serve as resource person on Industrial Engineer Training, 2–6 February 2004.

Mr. Shinichi Shimose, Director, Proceeding Technology, Uosui Co., Ltd., Japan, and **Mr. Katsuhiko Hayashi**, Consultant, Japan, were deputed to serve as resource persons in the Green Productivity Demonstration Project at Labasa Sugar Mill, 27–30 January 2004.

INDIA

Ms. Lok Lee Lee, Manager, Best Practices Networking Division, National Productivity Corporation, Malaysia, and **Mr. Yoshiharu Ikeuchi**, Energy Saving Consultant, Japan, were deputed to serve as resource persons in the workshop on Green Productivity and Benchmarking, 12–16 January 2004.

Mrs. Hafsa Hashim, Director, Strategic Planning Division, Small and Medium Industries Development Corporation, Malaysia, was deputed to make a presentation at the Asia-Pacific Business-to-Business Networking Forum, 9–10 January 2004.

APO/NPO update

New APO Director for Vietnam

Dr. Ngo Quy Viet, who was appointed Director-General of the Directorate for Standards and Quality in July 2003, was designated as the new APO Director for Vietnam w.e.f. 1 January 2004, in place of **Dr. Nguyen Huu Thien**.

INDONESIA

Mr. Masahisa Mizumoto, Senior Management Consultant, Central Japan Industries Association, Japan, was deputed to provide technical expert services in the seminar on Quick Response Management, 19–29 January 2004.

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

Mr. Mah Soo, Consultant, Trademall Dotcom, Malaysia, was deputed to provide technical expert services in the seminar on Environmental Management in Thermal Power Plants, 12–15 January 2004.

JAPAN

Dr. Saipin Maneepun, Director, Institute of Food Research and Product Development, Kasetsart University, Thailand, and **Dr. Morton Satin**, Consultant, USA, were deputed to serve as resource persons in the study meeting on Enhancing Food Certification Systems for Better Marketing, 21–28 January 2004.

MALAYSIA

The following were deputed to serve as resource persons in the review meeting of Development of Productivity Specialists, 19–20 January 2004: **Mr. Joseph Prokopenko**, Consultant, France; **Mr. R.C. Monga**, Deputy Director-General, National Productivity Council, India; and **Mr. Carlos A. Sayco, Jr.**, Vice President/Managing Director, Productivity and Development Center, Development Academy of the Philippines, Philippines.

MONGOLIA

Mr. Ramachandran Arijjirajalo, Principal Consultant, Venk Management Consultants, Malaysia, was deputed to serve as resource person on Foundation of Productivity Consultancy Service, 2–6 February 2004.

PAKISTAN

Mr. Sio Wei Hurng, Associate Trainer, Civil Service College, Singapore, was deputed to serve as resource person in the seminar on Quality Management in the Public Sector for Good Governance, 26–28 January 2004.

Mr. Fujio Iguchi, Executive Partner, Innovation Associates Co., Ltd., Japan, was deputed to serve

Program calendar

Republic of China

Seminar on Modernized Distribution and Marketing of Agricultural Products, 26–31 May 2004.

Fiji

Symposium on Green Productivity and Sustainable Development Governance, 15–20 April 2004.

Kindly contact your NPO for details of the above activities, including eligibility for participation. If you need the address of your NPO, it is available from the APO Web site at www.apo-tokyo.org.

as resource person in the seminar on Quality Management in the Public Sector for Good Governance, 28–29 January 2004.

SINGAPORE

Dr. Shinichi Miyazawa, Consultant, Japan, was deputed to provide technical expert services in the seminar on Development of Desktop Ultra-precision Lathe, 27 January–7 February 2004.

SRI LANKA

Mr. Hiroshi Iwayama, President/CEO, RIIM Chu-San-Ren, Inc., Japan, was deputed to provide technical expert services in the seminar/workshop on Japanese Style Management, 19–30 January 2004.

The following were deputed to serve as resource persons in the symposium on Productivity Education, 20–22 January 2004: **Mr. Nelson H. Delailomaloma**, Former Minister of Education, Fiji; **Mr. S. Bhargavan**, Deputy Director-General, National Productivity Council, India; **Mr. Shuji Honjo**, Managing Director, Honjo International, Japan; and **Prof. Ahsan Iqbal**, Chairman, Better Pakistan Foundation, and former Minister for State Economic Planning, Pakistan.

Pakistan to have national productivity policy and award

At the third governing body meeting of the National Productivity Organisation (NPO) of Pakistan held in Islamabad, 4 November 2003, Minister for Industries and Production Liaquat Ali Jatoi announced that Pakistan would have its own President Productivity Award (PPA) and national productivity policy. In his statement as the chairman of the meeting, he commented that for industries and businesses in Pakistan to be competitive in the global market, it is imperative that they improve quality, reduce wastage, and adopt international best practices. The establishment of the PPA was to reinforce this essential message and to show the way to achieve competitiveness. The Minister stressed that the productivity journey is long and arduous and the PPA is to serve as a road map.

The PPA will be conferred annually on enterprises with outstanding quality and productivity performances in five categories: manufacturing, service, small business, health care, and education. It provides an integrated, value-oriented framework for delivering ever-improving value to customers and maximizing the overall effectiveness and productivity of participating organizations. For this purpose, the award has incorporated 11 core values embodied in seven categories: Leadership; Information and analysis; Strategic planning; Human resources development and management; Process management; Business results; and Customer focus and satisfaction. The NPO Pakistan will serve as both the administrator and facilitator of the PPA.

APO News spoke to Hasan Haider, Head of the Training Division, NPO Pakistan, about the PPA when he was in Tokyo recently to attend an APO seminar. He said that the NPO Pakistan has drawn up the details of the PPA and they will be submitted to external experts for advice and comments before finalization. The scheme is expected to be launched in June this year with a series of training programs for companies and organizations interested in being considered for the award.

On the establishment of a national productivity policy, the Minister announced the formation of a taskforce under the NPO Pakistan to develop a platform that will set in motion a



Minister Jatoi (third from left) chairing the NPO meeting

stakeholder-driven national effort to achieve greater and faster socio-economic development through higher productivity and better quality. Since the establishment of the taskforce, said Haider, the NPO Pakistan has been in consultation with various stakeholders, including chambers of commerce and public-sector organizations, to solicit their input and support for the formulation of the productivity policy. In a concept paper prepared by the NPO Pakistan, the national productivity policy will evolve around the following pillars: Appropriate technology; Skill development; Better management; Knowledge-based practices; R&D activities; Mindset change; and Institutional support. The paper also enumerated a number of ways in which productivity can be improved, including: 1) a better mix of inputs; 2) improved technology; 3) upgraded skills; 4) better management; and 5) conducive working environment. ☺

GP Advisory Committee has private-sector leadership

The APO Green Productivity Advisory Committee (GPAC) held its second meeting in Tokyo, 21 January 2004. Representatives from 31 major Japanese corporations attended. In addition, there were observers from organizations like the Embassies of Indonesia and Iran, Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Japan Environment Management Association for Industry, Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development, United Nations Environment Programme, and the following Japanese governmental ministries: Foreign Affairs; Economy, Trade and Industry; Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; and Environment. The meeting was facilitated by the APO Secretariat.

The highlight of the meeting was the appointment of a prominent private-sector corporate executive to head the GPAC as its Chairman: Yoichi Morishita, Chairman of the Board, Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Ltd. Three vice chairmen were also appointed: Ebara Corporation President

Masatoshi Yoda, Nippon Steel Executive Vice President Toshio Yonezawa, and University of Tokyo Professor Ryoichi Yamamoto.

Dato' Mustafa Mansur, President, Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) was a special guest. He briefed the gathering on the eco-products exhibition that Malaysia will host in September this year. The organizers are the FMM and National Productivity Corporation of Malaysia. Dato' Mustafa called for the active support and participation of Japanese companies in the exhibition.

The GPAC commissioned the establishment of two subcommittees. Vice Chairman Yoda will head one to prepare for the participation of Japanese corporations in the eco-products exhibition in Malaysia. The second subcommittee, to be led by Vice Chairman Yamamoto, will undertake the establishment of a GP database on eco-materials. ☺