



APO news

Heads of NPOs attend APO annual planning meeting

The heads of the national productivity organizations (NPOs) of 19 APO member countries, together with their agriculture delegates and advisers numbering 52, met in the beautiful tropical city of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 14–16 February, to participate in the annual program and strategic planning meeting of the APO at the 46th Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs (WSM). In addition to the delegates and advisers, there were six observers from Botswana, Brunei, South Africa, Colombo Plan Secretariat, and Confederation of Asia-Pacific Employers. The mild temperature with occasional tropical showers during the gathering not only helped the delegates to enjoy their stay in Kuala Lumpur but also reminded them that they were there at one of the best times of year in Southeast Asia. The WSM was initially scheduled to be held in Pakistan. However, due to a devastating earthquake that struck the north of the country and parts of neighboring India in October last year, resulting in untold loss of lives and destruction of homes and property, the meeting was relocated to Kuala Lumpur.



Tan Sri Dato' Azman Hashim delivering the welcome address

Tan Sri Dato' Azman Hashim, APO Director for Malaysia and Chairman of the National Productivity Corporation of Malaysia (NPC), mentioned in his welcome address that Malaysia was honored to have the opportunity to host this important meeting because it is a platform for a meeting of minds and a critical path toward competitiveness. The 2006 WSM was especially significant as it marks the 40th anniversary of the NPC as a pioneer of the productivity and quality movement in Malaysia. He pointed out that Malaysia had come a long way since its foundation in 1966 and since joining the APO in 1983. In the 1980s and early 1990s, Malaysia, like many developing economies, was mainly a beneficiary of APO developmental programs, but today Tan Sri Dato' Azman was delighted to note that Malaysia has

now also assumed the role of contributor to APO initiatives and programs, in line with the country's aspiration to make the world a better place for all humanity and in particular for the APO fraternity.

Tan Sri Dato' Azman also commended the initiatives of APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka in the Secretariat's management and administration to make the organization more productive, efficient, and effective in its services to its members. He also suggested that in order to make the APO more dynamic, members need to review its mission constantly. Many activities, Tan Sri Dato' Azman commented, are beneficial to developing members because they are based on the premise of socioeconomic development. Members are in various stages of development, and the requirements of some go beyond socioeconomic development. They are concerned with new economic challenges such as global competition, environmental sustainability, renewable resources, new technology, geopolitical events, health and disease, transmigration of human capital, and many other issues that may not be covered in the current APO agenda and initiatives. These concerns are global in nature and affect every member country irrespective of economic status. Ending his address on a light tone, Tan Sri Dato' Azman expressed the hope that delegates would enjoy the dinner and cultural performance

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Volume 36 Number 3
March 2006

"When you ask people what is missing from their lives, it isn't a big-box store. People stop into our store for the social interaction as well as the products."

Michael Kanter

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Published monthly by
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Secretary-General's Statement

At the APO Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs (WSM) held in Kuala Lumpur, 14–16 February, Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka presented his statement after expressing his condolences to the people of Pakistan and India affected by the devastating earthquake last year and congratulating the National Productivity Council, Malaysia, which is marking its 40th anniversary this year, for its achievements.

Takenaka noted that the WSM this year had been restructured in response to the desire expressed by delegates at the previous meeting in New Delhi to allocate more time for substantive discussions and for country presentations, since the primary role of the WSM is to discuss future APO programs and assist the Secretariat in program planning, bringing it in line with the needs of member countries. Also in response to a request at the previous WSM, a survey was conducted and its results, and comments and suggestions given at the WSM and GBM, were reflected in the final 2006 Program. A similar survey exercise was conducted for the planning of the 2007 and 2008 Programs. The Secretary-General emphasized the need for careful consideration and prompt response, institutionalization of this exercise, and further improvement of its usefulness and effectiveness.

Referring to the “selection and concentration strategy” mentioned in his annual report to the GBM last year, Takenaka reiterated the need to be more focused in APO activities to achieve maximum impact. This should be a key principle in future program planning. The APO should continuously review the relevancy of thrust areas, target groups, and nature of programs. The selection and concentration strategy should be intensified to organize more projects meeting the specific needs of member countries, either individually or in groups with similar interests. This essentially means having more Category B and C projects compared with Category A. Takenaka also emphasized the need for longer training courses to impart knowledge and skills that participants can put to immediate use.

The productivity movements in member countries are operating in a socioeconomic milieu that is changing constantly, pointed out Takenaka. New



Takenaka presenting his statement

issues and challenges are emerging rapidly. But they are not always obvious at first glance and their implications are not always clear. To help member countries identify and deal with them effectively, the APO must intensify its think tank role by undertaking more survey and research activities.

Recalling the reference he made at the 2005 GBM on declining private-sector participation in APO projects, the Secretary-General underlined the need to achieve an increase because the private sector is the key to the success of any productivity drive in member countries. Among the main causes of declining private-sector participation, he noted: 1) limited involvement of the private sector in the selection, design, and implementation of APO projects; 2) external influence on NPOs in the nomination of candidates; and 3) financial constraints in paying airfares, particularly on the part of SMEs. The following are possible solutions: 1) offering projects for the exclusive participation of the private sector, which is being done; 2) empowering NPOs with more authority to select and approve candidates for APO projects, which would also help to speed up the selection process; 3) encouraging NPOs to interact closely with the private sector for more effective sourcing of candidates from that sector; and 4) providing airfares for private-sector participants, especially from SMEs.

In 2005, the APO organized 13 e-learning projects involving more than 1,000 participants from APO member countries. It also started the first on-demand e-learning course on total quality management. The APO is endeavoring to increase the e-learning element in projects. However, the survey

results on the 2007 and 2008 Programs appeared to indicate that NPOs have reservations about e-learning. If this is true, said Takenaka, then this matter should be reviewed at the strategic planning sessions and a consensus reached on how the APO should proceed with e-learning in the future.

In 2004, the APO co-sponsored the first Eco-products International Fair (EPIF) outside Japan in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The success of that EPIF prompted the APO to organize another in 2005 in Bangkok, Thailand. The 2005 EPIF was bigger in scale, and visitors surpassed the 20,000 mark, almost twice that in 2004. The EPIF is emerging as an annual landmark activity of the APO. Singapore has agreed to host the 2006 EPIF and other members have shown interest in hosting in 2007 and 2008, reported the Secretary-General.

Consumers today put a premium on product safety and reliability. Recognizing this shift in consumer preference, Takenaka stated that the APO has been advocating the importance of continuous quality improvement, with particular emphasis on food safety. The APO will endeavor to play a role in developing supply chains in the region to produce safer, greener products and assist farms, communities, and industries in acquiring the skills and knowledge to produce them.

A unique feature of the APO is the spirit of cooperation that characterizes relationships among member countries. The Secretary-General urged that each member country should host at least one APO project per year, expressed gratitude to those that are hosting more, and thanked the Japanese government for giving special cash grants and ASEAN Foundation for financial support for capacity building in the region.

In the coordination and implementation of APO projects in member countries, the key persons are the liaison officers, Takenaka noted. The APO is therefore planning a third meeting with liaison officers this year.

In 2005, the Technical Expert Service (TES) Program was consolidated and centralized within the Secretariat to ensure that requests from the

industry, service, and agriculture sectors are given equal consideration and importance. TES is a Category C program catering to country-specific needs, but it should be seen as having a direct linkage with multi-country programs as well. Takenaka hoped that, as far as possible, TES projects would be implemented within the framework of Category A and B projects.

Last year's GBM supported the Secretary-General's proposal to initiate a dialogue with Africa with a view to strengthening strategic partnerships at the global level. A fact-finding mission comprising staff from the Secretariat, JPC-SED, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan was deputed to South Africa, Botswana, and Kenya to study

the status of their productivity movements, the activities of their NPOs, and the Pan African Productivity Association. The mission reported that the countries visited recognize the importance of productivity in their economic development and have strong interest in establishing alliances with the APO. The APO could serve as a bridge linking Asia and Africa in a mutually beneficial partnership, depending on special contributions from member countries.

Takenaka finally thanked all the delegates, advisers, and observers who had traveled a long way to attend the WSM and NPC Director-General Dato' Nik Zainiah and NPC staff members for sparing no effort to ensure a smooth meeting. 🌀

Heads of NPOs attend (Continued from page 1)

arranged in their honor that evening. (According to delegates, the evening was memorable not only due to the delicious Malaysian fare and performance, but also due to a musical interlude sung by host Tan Sri Dato' Azman.)

Secretary-General Takenaka presented his annual statement to the delegates (see page 2 for fuller coverage). Among the key issues, he touched upon the need to improve the survey exercise, which the Secretariat had initiated the year before upon the recommendation of the 45th WSM as he felt that it was an important first step in the consultation process between the Secretariat and NPOs in the planning of APO programs and activities. He also mentioned that the "selection and concentration strategy" had been propounded to underline the need to be more focused in activities so that the APO could achieve the maximum impact, and therefore this strategy should be a key principle in program planning in the future. He then suggested that the relevancy of the thrust areas, target groups, and nature of programs should be constantly reviewed in this context.



(L-R) Dr. Ranani, Dato' Nik Zainiah, and Takenaka

Dato' Nik Zainiah Nik Abd. Rahman, Director General, NPC, Malaysia, and Dr. Ghassem Ansari Ranani, Managing Director, National Iranian Productivity Organization, served as the Chairperson and Vice-chairperson of the WSM, respectively. One unique feature of this year's WSM was the deletion of ceremonial aspects to allow the delegates to concentrate on strategic planning sessions in the limited time available. The workshop had

a three-part structure. The first featured presentations of the Heads of NPOs, who spoke on the impact of the productivity movement in their countries and major issues facing it in light of socioeconomic changes in each country. The second part, which comprised five concurrent strategic planning sessions, formed the core of the meeting. The concurrent sessions were broadly categorized into two groups: the industry and service sector, and agriculture sector. They covered the following four topics: 1) thorough review of the 2007 Program; 2) general review of the 2008 Program; 3) review and follow-up of evaluation of project implementation; and 4) revision of the survey exercise.

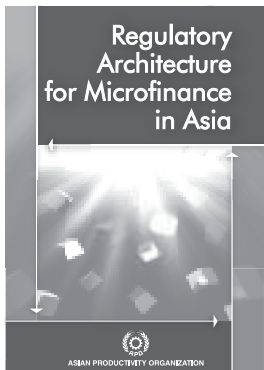
Among the recommendations made by the Strategic Planning Committees were :

- 1) The APO should learn from the past to develop success stories/models, identify bottlenecks, and change mindsets.
- 2) The duration of projects should be extended.
- 3) The Secretariat will collect human resources development plans and national manpower plans from NPOs to determine the types of competency they require.
- 4) Program planning should be more outcome based rather than output based.
- 5) A framework should be provided for NPOs to track former APO participants to determine the usefulness of training received.
- 6) The APO will undertake selected projects with training elements for impact evaluation.
- 7) NPOs should establish stronger institutional linkages with the private sector.
- 8) The APO will establish a pool of experts, including an advisory body on agriculture, to assist in its think tank role.
- 9) More needs to be done to help member countries set up or strengthen national food safety standards.
- 10) NPOs will set up agriculture consultative committees for input from the agriculture sector on the survey exercise and to the WSM meeting.

NPO delegate from Indonesia Afdaluddin announced that his country will host the 47th WSM in 2007. 🌀



New APO publication



REGULATORY ARCHITECTURE FOR MICROFINANCE IN ASIA

APO 348 pp. January 2006
ISBN 95-833-2362-9 (hard copy)
ISBN 92-833-7043-0 (e-edition)

In Asia, microfinance is recognized as a vital instrument to encourage microenterprise development through providing critical financing to meet the liquidity and investment requirements of millions of microentrepreneurs and poor households. Microfinancing contributes to economic growth, employment generation, and poverty reduction. The total amount of money mobilized from deposits of microentrepreneurs and the poor and the number of institutions involved in microfinancing in the Asia-Pacific region are significant.

Understanding the current status of microfinance and the emerging legal and regulatory frameworks is critical for various stakeholders in rural development and poverty alleviation. Against this background, in November 2003 the APO commissioned 10 experts to conduct a survey to study the legal and regulatory framework for microfinancing in nine selected member countries: Bangladesh; Japan; Lao PDR; Malaysia; Nepal; Pakistan; the Philippines; Sri Lanka; and Vietnam. The survey was conducted during 2004 and 2005. This volume reports the results of the survey with an analytical review of the findings by chief expert Gilberto M. Llanto, Vice-President, Philippine Institute for Development Studies.

The regulatory architecture for microfinance is expected to enhance the ability of microfinance institutions to become sustainable and to protect the huge volume of deposits from millions of people mobilized by these institutions. However, there are diverse views on the effectiveness and negative consequences of such regularization of the operations of microfinance institutions.

This volume contains an integrated report and the nine papers discussing the emerging and established regulatory structures for microfinance in the surveyed countries and presents the comprehensive analytical overview. The major findings of the survey can be summarized in two simple but powerful messages: determine an appropriate regulatory framework and build up the ability to apply that framework uniformly to all microfinance operations.

Policymakers involved in developing appropriate frameworks for microfinance and those attempting to facilitate socioeconomic development by addressing related issues should find this volume useful. The publication is available in both hard copy and e-edition on the APO's Web site (www.apo-tokyo.org).

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



"And while the law of competition may be sometimes hard for the individual, it is best for the race, because it ensures the survival of the fittest in every department."

Andrew Carnegie

"When you ask people what is missing from their lives, it isn't a big-box store. People stop into our store for the social interaction as well as the products."

Michael Kanter

"Good-quality work is appreciated by all people, no matter what their nationality."

Manjot Bedi

"It's a particular challenge to see your own home through the eyes of a traveler."

Richard Todd

"One new form of luxury which today is forcefully imposing itself doesn't concern goods and services directly, even if it does imply a number of these. It regards time, the scarcest resource of them all for men and women who live in advanced societies like ours."

Raffaello Napoleone

"I am somehow less interested in the weight and convolutions of Einstein's brain than in the near certainty that people of equal talent have lived and died in cotton fields and sweatshops."

Stephen Jay Gould

"Wherever there is a human being, there is a chance for kindness."

Seneca

"Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power."

Abraham Lincoln

"Formal education will make you a living. Self-education will make you a fortune."

Jim Rohn

"I'm not sure I want popular opinion on my side. I've noticed those with the most opinions often have the fewest facts."

Bethania McKenstry

New officers of the GPAC

At the fourth meeting of the Green Productivity Advisory Committee (GPAC) held on 23 January 2006 at the Capitol Tokyu Hotel, Tokyo, President Etsuhiko Shoyama, Chief Executive Officer and Director of Hitachi Ltd., was approved as the new chairperson. Corporate Adviser Masatoshi Yoda, Ebara Corporation; Professor Ryoichi Yamamoto, Institute of Industrial, Science and International Research Center for Sustainable Materials, University of Tokyo; and Representative Director and Executive Vice President Hideaki Sekizawa, Nippon Steel Corporation, were appointed as Vice Chairpersons. The outgoing Chairperson Yoichi Morishita, Chairman of the Board, Matsushita Electric Industrial, was appointed adviser. A framed gold-plated Stamariaara APO (the specially bred orchid named to honor the APO) was presented to him by APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka at the meeting.

Program Officer Setsuko Miyakawa, Environment Department, APO Secretariat, presented a report on the Eco-products International Fair (EPIF) 2005, followed by the comments of GPAC Vice Chairman Yoda on the fair. Director Takuki Murayama, Research and Planning Department, APO Secretariat, summarized the publication process of the *Eco-products Directory 2005*, and Prof. Yamamoto

spoke in appreciation of the publication.

Director Augustine Koh, Environment Department, APO Secretariat, gave an overview of activities for greening supply chains in 2006. Dr. Amy Khor Lean Suan, Chairman of Singapore's Government Parliamentary Committee for National Development and Environment, Member of Parliament, and Mayor of the South West District, along with Ms. Jan Tan, Director, Centre for Industry Enterprise Promotion Centres, gave a presentation on plans for the EPIF 2006 to be held in Singapore. ☺



(L-R) Dr. Khor and Shoyama

Developing an eco-city through Green Productivity

The APO commissioned a Green Productivity demonstration project (GPDP) on the development of an eco-city through GP in Namakkal, a small but economically dynamic city of some 100,000 in Tamil Nadu, India, overseen by the National Productivity Council (NPC), India. Started in May 2004, the project is being implemented by Namakkal municipality, the environmentally committed local authority in the southern state. The project has already achieved results that benefit residents in terms of improved quality of life. For example, solid waste management (SWM) has been improved through a doorstep collection service with 100% coverage and ensuring the recycling and reuse of waste by segregation at source. Namakkal is upgrading its existing waste dump site and will develop a sanitary landfill facility as called for in the GPDP plan prepared by the NPC. The Committee on Solid Waste Management under the Supreme Court of India has recently recognized the SWM compliance of Namakkal.

Another important area in which improvements have been made is the conservation of groundwater resources by rainwater harvesting (RWH). Almost all wards of Namakkal have been equipped with RWH structures to collect rainwater from the rooftops and convey it to recharge wells after filtration. It is expected that the RWH structures will help resolve the chronic problem of water scarcity in the city. The NPC also carried out an energy audit of major municipal facilities like water-pumping stations, street lighting, municipal offices, etc. and made recommendations for energy conservation measures.

The NPC organized a training course on GP in Namakkal at the initiation of the GPDP which was attended by numerous community stakeholders, municipality officials, elected members of the city council, and NGO staff. Following the GP approach, various options for improving city environs were identified by the participants and implementation plans were devised for different activities. Based on the same plan, Namakkal is now set to receive certification for the ISO14001 Environmental Management System. It will be the first Indian municipality to receive such certification. Then, nearly two and one-half years after the start of the



Mr. M.J. Pervez, Director, Environment Group, NPC (L), speaking at the workshop

GPDP, the NPC held a workshop on 30 December 2005 attended by more than 70 government officials and others in the environmental field to disseminate the results Namakkal has achieved in health and sanitation, environmental conservation, and aesthetics.

With assistance from the NPC, Namakkal is in the process of developing a model eco-park using various waste materials produced in the city. The NPC has engaged a local expert to advise on park design and construction. To empower women in the city, approximately 30 self-help groups have been formed and received small amounts of credit to start up businesses in the areas of waste recycling, mushroom cultivation, toy making, etc. Such groups remain active and organize bazaars with the help of Namakkal municipality.

With a dedicated GPDP team in place under the leadership of Namakkal's Municipal Chairman S. Gandhiselvan and Commissioner P. Kanthaswamy, the city plans to continue the GPDP process for further improvements and achieve its goal of becoming an eco-city.

BCBN mission from Thailand



(L-R) Secretary-General Takenaka, Dr. Phanit, and Duangthip Chomprang, APO Liaison Officer

A five-person mission from the Thailand Productivity Institute, led by Executive Director Dr. Phanit Laosirirat, visited Japan under the APO's Bilateral Cooperation Between NPOs Program, 19 and 20 January. After receiving orientation briefings at the APO Secretariat on the morning of the 19th and attending a lunch hosted by the APO Secretary-General, the five went on to the Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic where they heard presentations from staff on productivity initiatives for the next 50 years, technical cooperation for the Mekong region, and the Japan Quality Award system. They also paid a courtesy call on Deputy Director-General Kazuhiko Bando, Trade and Economic Cooperation Bureau, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. On the second day, the mission observed kaizen practices at the Yokohama plant of Nissan Motor and then traveled to Fuji Xerox to hear a presentation on the company's knowledge design initiative.

Students visit Secretariat

Twenty-seven students from Gakushuin Women's College, Tokyo, visited the APO Secretariat on 6 February. The visit was arranged by Professor Hajime Suzuki, who accompanied the group. After viewing a video presentation on the APO, Director of Information and Public Relations N.G. Kularatne briefed the students on current activities. Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka explained Secretariat staffing, followed by a question and answer session. Professor Suzuki, who also serves as counselor to the Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development, then summarized the Technical Expert Service and training programs of the APO. To round off their visit, the students inspected the Secretariat library facilities.



Students listening to Kularatne's introduction of the APO

2005 quiz contest winners

Among the entries to the *APO News* quiz contest announced in the December 2005 issue, 21 had 100% correct answers. The prizewinners were decided through a lucky draw performed by APO Secretariat staff members. We congratulate all the winners, who will receive their prizes soon.

We also thank everyone who took part in the quiz and responded to our opinion survey with suggestions for improvement.

Cash (US\$50.00) prizewinners

S. Dharmalingam (India)
K.A. Krishnan (India)
Rajaumbang Saragih (Indonesia)
Chong Siow Yen (Malaysia)
Priya Darshan Sharma (Nepal)
Chanda R. Inocencio (Philippines)
Cherryl L. Ortega (Philippines)
Efren C. Sabularse (Philippines)
Ireneo P. Leuterio (Philippines)
Nina Maria B. Estudillo (Philippines)

Consolation (APO book) prizewinners

Mizanor Rahman Chowdhury (Bangladesh)
Debasish Bhattacharyya (India)
N.T.V. Ranga Rao (India)
S. Shanmugam (India)
S. Tamilarasi (India)
S. Vijayendiran (India)
Hamid Shabangiz (Iran)
Yap Yun Fung (Malaysia)
Imtiaz Ahmad (Pakistan)
Allan Jose T. Reyes (Philippines)
Lipayway T. Nangca (Philippines)



p-Experts deputed by the APO

CAMBODIA

Mr. Yasuhiko Inoue, Director, International Technical Cooperation, International Department, Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development, was deputed as expert for the special program for Agriculture Productivity Enhancement in Asian Least Developed Countries, 30 January–3 February 2006.

INDIA

Dr. Michael Green, Managing Director, UCG Engineering Ltd., Thailand, was deputed as technical expert for the seminar on Underground Coal Gasification and Coal Mining for a Bright and Secure Energy Future, 30–31 January 2006.

APO/NPO update

New address and telephone/fax number of NIPO

National Iranian Productivity Organization
P.O. Box 15815-3693
No. 170, Somayeh St.
Between Ostad Nejatollahi and Sepahbod Gharani Ave.
Tehran 15999
Islamic Republic of Iran
Phone/fax: 98-21-88809568

Publicizing the multiplier effects of APO projects

Many participants in APO projects subsequently organize national seminars, workshops, demonstration projects, etc., to share the knowledge and skills gained with a wide audience in their home countries, generating multiplier effects. The *APO News* would like to publicize those activities to recognize the organizers' efforts and encourage the replication of such activities in other member countries.

If you have utilized knowledge gained from an APO project to organize a similar activity at home, please send a brief account of approximately 300 words to your NPO, accompanied by two or three photographs for illustration of the activity, for possible publication after editing in the *APO News*, on a space-available basis. Please include the title of the original APO project you attended in the submission letter to your NPO.

JAPAN

Ms. Jan Tan, Director, Centre for Industry, Enterprise Promotion Centres Pte Ltd, Singapore, was deputed as resource person for the 4th Meeting of the Green Productivity Advisory Committee, 23 January 2006.

Mr. Chan Seng Kit, Managing Director, K-Farm Sdn Bhd, Malaysia, and **Ir. Jan van Roekel**, Consultant/Expert, Agri Chain Competence Center, the Netherlands, were deputed as resource persons for the multi-country study mission on Greening the Agri-food Supply Chain for Enhanced Food Safety, Competitiveness, and Sustainable Agriculture Development, 24–31 January 2006.

NEPAL

Mr. M.J. Pervez, Director, Environment Group, National Productivity Council, India, and **Dr. Suporn Koottatep**, Associate Professor, Department of Environmental Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Chiang Mai University, Thailand, were deputed as resource persons for the workshop on Green Productivity for SMEs, 23–27 January 2006.

SRI LANKA

Mr. Hiroshi Iwayama, President/CEO, RIIM Chu-San-Ren, Inc., Japan, was deputed as expert for the seminar/workshop on Japanese-style Management, 13–26 February 2006.

Program calendar

March

Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines

National Workshops on Capability Building for Creating an Eco-circulation Society through Biomass Utilization in the BIMP-EAGA Region, before 17 March 2006 for five days.

April

Fiji

Workshop on Biofuel, 24–28 April 2006.

Pakistan

Seminar on Intellectual Property Rights in Agriculture, 3–7 April 2006.

Thailand

Workshop on Green Productivity and the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle), 3–7 April 2006.

May

Cambodia

Training Course on Productivity Improvement in the Public Sector through Quality Awards, 29 May–2 June 2006.

Sri Lanka

Workshop on Green Productivity, 22–28 May 2006.

June

Republic of China

Multi-country Study Mission on Agro-tourism for Enhancing Business Opportunities in Rural Areas, 20–27 June 2006.

Japan

Seminar on Practical Management for Corporate Social Responsibility, 26–30 June 2006.

Malaysia

Training Course on Small Business Development for Women, 19–29 June 2006.

Throughout 2006

Member countries

Individual Country Observational Study Mission, one to two weeks per mission.

Participating member countries

Strengthening NPO Services — Category C, end of May 2006 in principle. Additional applications can be made at any time during the year with at least three months' lead time for preparation.

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.

Sri Lanka's 12th National Productivity and Quality Awards

The National Productivity Secretariat (NPS), the NPO of Sri Lanka under the Ministry of Labour Relations and Foreign Employment, held the National Productivity Awards Ceremony on 12 January in Colombo. That marked the twelfth conferral since the awards were initiated in 1993. Two hundred and sixty-eight enterprises were in competition for the awards in 14 categories under the School Sector, Public Sector, and Manufacturing and Service Sector. Union Chemicals Lanka, Colombo, and K/St. Joseph's Balika Maha Vidyalaya, Gampola, received Gold Awards for the Manufacturing and Service Sector and School Sector, respectively. No Gold Award was given to an institution in the public sector this year.

Over 1,000 attended the ceremony, where the chief guest was Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickramanayake. Minister of Labour Relations and Foreign Employment Athauda Seneviratne, Minister of Science and Technology Tissa Witharana, Minister of Coconut Development and Deputy Minister of Science and Technology Salinda Dissanayake, Chief Minister of Sabaragamuwa Province Maheepala Herath, Governor of the Western Province Alavi Maulana, APO Director for Sri Lanka and Secretary, Ministry of Labour Relations and Foreign Employment, Mahinda Madihahewa, and APO Alternate Director, NPO Head, and Additional Secretary, Ministry of Labour Relations and Foreign Employment D.L. Kumaradasa were among the guests. In his speech at the award ceremony, the Prime Minister emphasized the importance of improving productivity in all sectors and particularly appreciated the participation of the education sector in productivity-related competitions. He further stressed the importance of enhancing productivity in private-sector institutions as a strategy to be competitive and to face emerging challenges. N.G. Kularatne, Director, Information and Public Relations Department, APO Secretariat, read a message from APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka, and APO Director Madihewa gave the welcome address. Minister Seneviratne and Minister Witharana also delivered remarks. Chairman Dr. A.R.L. Wijesekara, Sri Lanka Standard Institute, proposed a vote of thanks to the organizers and competitors.

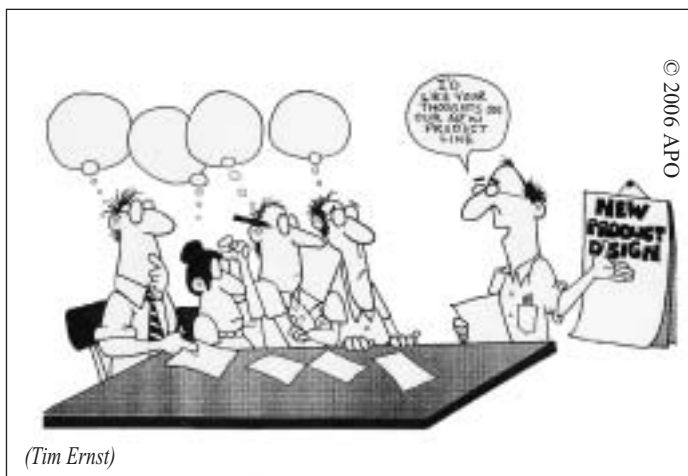
A special award was conferred on Sunil G. Wijesinghe, Chairman/Managing Director of Dankotuwa Procelain, for his outstanding contributions to the promotion of productivity in Sri Lanka, particularly as a pioneer. Wijesinghe also received the APO National Award in 2000 and APO Regional Award in 2005.



Prime Minister Wickramanayake (R) presenting a trophy to an awardee

The National Quality Awards were also presented at the same ceremony, which are under the auspices of the Sri Lanka Standards Institute, Ministry of Science and Technology. The award for large-scale manufacturing went to Royal Fernwood Porcelain, for education to Colombo International Nautical and Engineering College, and for small-scale service to TNT International Express.

A poster art competition was organized on the theme "Productivity in Artistic View" as a side event to the productivity and quality award ceremonies, open to individuals from the School Sector, University Sector, and Open Sector. The posters submitted by the winners of 12 awards and 284 merit certificates were exhibited on 11 and 12 January in close proximity to the venue of the National Productivity Award and Quality Award ceremonies. At the opening of the exhibit, Minister Seneviratne stressed the importance of enhancing productivity at home, in schools, and in all workplaces. Sri Lanka's APO Director Madihahewa, Kularatne of the APO Secretariat, and APO Liaison Officer and NPS Director Upali Marasinghe also addressed the spectators. 🌀



(Tim Ernst)



(L-R) Minister Seneviratne, Kularatne, and Madihahewa viewing poster art