



APO *news*


New Year Message

APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka

I take great pleasure in wishing all *APO News* readers a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year and in expressing my gratitude to all those who have extended their kind support for APO efforts to promote and enhance productivity for socioeconomic development in the Asia-Pacific region.

In spite of the challenges that APO members had to face during 2005, including natural disasters such as earthquakes that caused serious damage, injury, and loss of life and an avian influenza epizootic, most were able to maintain their economies in good shape. I hope that APO member countries will continue to record higher economic growth rates and make Asia and the Pacific the global center of economic gravity during the coming decades.

Raising productivity in all economic activities is a prerequisite for becoming more competitive, which is in turn essential in facing the emerging challenges posed by globalization, trade liberalization, and technological advances that are now occurring at an unprecedented pace. The APO is making all possible efforts to assist its members in their endeavors to enhance productivity in the industry, agriculture, and service sectors while protecting the environment and alleviating poverty.

As we welcome 2006, I would like to solicit your ongoing support for the activities of the APO, which will continue to aim toward the accomplishment of our common goal of socioeconomic development of Asia and the Pacific region. 



The *APO News* would like to wish all our readers a happy, healthy, and productive 2006. We always welcome suggestions and feedback from our audience and would appreciate hearing from you at any time during the year. Our goal in 2006 is to continue to publish information to make a difference in productivity by reporting on APO and NPO activities, presenting trends in other parts of the world, and spreading the productivity mindset among all in Asia and the Pacific.

Volume 36 Number 1
January 2006

"A brand for a company is like a reputation for a person. You earn reputation by trying to do hard things well."

Jeff Bezos

INSIDE

- 2... p-Guru
- 3... p-TIPS
- 4... Green Productivity and solid waste management
- 4... Common Sense Talk
- 5... Rehabilitation of forests degraded by disasters
- 5... Secretary-General visits Singapore
- 6... Strengthening IT capabilities of NPOs
- 6... Iranian Productivity Development Alumni formed
- 6... 46th WSM to convene
- 7... p-Experts
- 7... APO-NPO Update
- 7... Program calendar
- 8... JPC-SED commemorative symposium
- 8... First Iranian national seminar on kaizen

Published monthly by
Asian Productivity Organization
Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Bldg. 2F
1-2-10 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku
Tokyo 102-0093, Japan
Tel: (81-3) 5226-3920
Fax: (81-3) 5226-3950
e-Mail: apo@apo-tokyo.org
Web site: www.apo-tokyo.org



Printed on Recycled Paper



The imperatives for enhancing global competitiveness

Globalization and trade liberalization coupled with rapid advances in information and communications technology have resulted in an unprecedented intensification of market competition worldwide. The governments of many Asian countries have made competitiveness a high priority in their strategic planning and policy formulation for development plans. As Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi of Malaysia stated, "If ever there is an issue that we must be single-minded about, it must be about improving and continuously improving our national competitiveness; all our strategies, plans, programs, and policies must be directed toward raising our productivity." Prime Minister Badawi currently chairs the Cabinet Committee on Competitiveness, which is focusing on developing Malaysia's competitive advantage to complement its traditional comparative advantage.

What is the meaning of "global competitiveness"? The International Institute for Management Development defines competitiveness as "a field of economic knowledge which analyzes the facts and policies that shaped the ability of a nation to create and maintain an environment that sustains more value creation for its enterprises and more prosperity for its people." The World Economic Forum definition is: "the ability of a country to achieve sustained high rates of growth in gross domestic product (GDP) per capita." Therefore only nations with high levels of productivity will become domestically and globally competitive and have the capacity to exploit existing market opportunities to sustain and expand employment and real income growth in the long term. The imperatives for global competitiveness involve addressing the following issues: macroeconomic policies; government practices and regulations; the cost of doing business; education and skills upgrading; R&D and innovation; sustainable environmental management; conformity with international standards; and total factor productivity (TFP).

Since businesses operate within the regulatory framework of the government, it assumes a very important role in enhancing competitiveness. Governments must be more business friendly by reengineering systems and procedures to be more responsive and reducing bureaucratic red tape that hinders business efficiency. Creating a more integrated, coordinated, and stronger network between government agencies, the private sector, and academia will contribute to the enhancement of business. Efforts should also focus on increasing the accountability and integrity of public service.



Improving the physical infrastructure will lead to the smoother movement of people, products, and services, facilitating faster delivery of goods and services. Developing a communications infrastructure with broadband transmission provides an effective platform for e-commerce and real-time business transactions.

The business environment should contribute to overall competitiveness by improving coordination among public-sector agencies, providing support and incentives for R&D activities, human resources development and education, encouraging and promoting innovation and creativity, facilitating the development of industrial clusters, and enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of SMEs.

High TFP, which is a measure of the synergy and efficiency of both capital and human resources utilization, enhances national competitiveness and is an important source of economic growth. The determinants of TFP growth are the quality of the workforce, intensity of demand, capital structure, economic restructuring, and technical progress. Improved efficiency results from a better-quality workforce in terms of education, skills, and expertise; application of efficient management techniques; improvements in organizational management; process specialization; the introduction of new technology and innovation; and a shift toward higher value-added processes and industries.

Productivity campaigns enhance public awareness and understanding of productivity and provide mechanisms to disseminate productivity tools and techniques. The national productivity organizations (NPOs) should be the lead agencies in promoting productivity. The productivity movement in a country will only be as effective as its NPO. Therefore, strong

support for NPOs is necessary so that they can play a more effective role in promoting productivity at the national as well as sectoral and firm levels.

The APO, with its mission of accelerating the socio-economic growth of the Asia-Pacific region, provides assistance and support in capability and capacity building of NPOs through its Development of NPOs Program. APO support includes strengthening institutional networking to facilitate the sharing of knowledge, benchmarks, and best practices among member countries. For example, the publication *APO Asia-Pacific Productivity Data and Analysis*, now biennial, provides useful data and information for benchmarking.

There must be policies and strategies for the development of a sustainable integrated system to protect the environment and reduce waste. The APO has been promoting Green Productivity (GP) among its member countries since 1994, with the dual objectives of productivity improvement and environmental protection. Numerous GP demonstration projects have been established in member countries to showcase the effectiveness of the concept in enhancing business competitiveness. Based on reports on demonstration projects in the manufacturing, agriculture, and service sectors, improvements uniformly occurred in product quality and waste management.

There is a need to intensify R&D activities that contribute to increasing competitiveness and enhancing productivity. The emphasis should be on creativity, innovation, and indigenous technological development. To ensure that R&D has the desired impact, measures must be taken to support the commercialization of results. These measures may be in the form of incentives, funding, and a framework for the protection of intellectual property rights. Most countries do not invest sufficiently in R&D activities. Finland, the USA, Japan, the Republic of China, and the Republic of Korea all spend more than 2% of their GDP on R&D. These are benchmark countries for others to emulate in planning for R&D activities.

Research has shown that the productivity of SMEs is usually very much lower, sometimes by as much as one-half, than the productivity of the industry they operate in as a whole. However, in terms of number of companies and employment, they account for more than 75% of the total in most countries. SMEs are an important source of economic growth and are a vital part of the business supply chain providing parts and services to larger companies. Therefore, it makes strategic sense to develop the capabilities and

capacities of SMEs to become more productive suppliers and exporters of products and services. Emphasis should be given to productivity and quality improvement and providing incentives to encourage SMEs to invest in human resources development through skills upgrading, training, and process and product improvement.

Human resources are no longer considered to be an expense but to be an asset in the form of human capital. Matsushita Electric uses the slogan: "We make people before we make products." Human resources development is an investment that must be planned carefully from the school stage. In the preemployment stage, focus should be on improving the quality of the educational system to enhance thinking, creativity, and communication skills and inculcate good moral and positive work values. The educational system must be relevant to the needs and demands of industry to respond to a rapidly changing economic situation. In the future, the stress will be on employability and not on employment, meaning that flexibility and adaptability will be required.

In many Asian countries, the percentages of people with tertiary, technical, and university educations are still low compared with those in more advanced nations. A critical mass of educated workers should be created to support a knowledge-based economy, leading to high-value products and services. There should be opportunities for continuous learning and access to knowledge and advanced skills.

In attempts to enhance R&D activities, efforts should focus on developing technological, scientific, and research capabilities. For workers in employment, training and skills upgrading must be carried out on a continuous basis so that they can learn, unlearn, and relearn in line with changing needs. Commitment to training is

reflected by investment in training budgets. On average, Malaysian firms spend about 1% of their payrolls on training and human resources development. Excellent companies, e.g., winners of the Malaysian Prime Minister's Quality Award, devote between 4% to 5% of their payrolls to human resources development and an average of 40–50 training hours per employee per year.

Conformance with internationally recognized standards, conformity assessment, and accreditation practices will improve product and service quality. Products certified to meet internationally recognized standards will more readily find access to and acceptance in the global market. There is a need to harmonize standards regionally as well as internationally to facilitate international trade, while differences will create technical barriers to trade. The move toward "one test, one certificate, recognized worldwide" will reduce costs and delays in meeting technical requirements. Standards will also address safety, health, and environmental issues, leading to a better quality of life. ☺

Mah Lok Abdullah is Principal Consultant, Railer Management Services; APO technical expert; Fellow of the APO and World Academy of Productivity Science; and Chairman of the Malaysian National Accreditation Committee. He has been involved in productivity promotion for 33 years and was the former Director-General of the National Productivity Corporation, Malaysia, and former APO Alternate Director for Malaysia.



p-TIPS

Perchance to dream? (Power napping for improved productivity)

Are you and everyone you know tired most of the time? The results of a US National Sleep Foundation survey released in March 2005 contained some frightening statistics: 60% of adults admitted driving while drowsy over the preceding year and almost one-third said that they had made mistakes at work due to sleepiness in the preceding three months. While on-the-job accidents, such as by hospital workers or airline pilots, are serious consequences of a lack of sleep, individual productivity slumps during the workday can cost employers too. Productivity consultants have recently decided that something old is new again: the siesta. Now referred to as "power napping," the Web site http://stress.about.com/od/sleep_disorders/a/powernap_2.htm summarizes how to go about it.

- 1) Explain your intentions to your supervisor and coworkers. Ensure that, if taken outside the lunch hour or scheduled breaks, the nap time is made up. (Somewhat surprisingly, the Japanese tend to accept naps more readily than other nationalities.)
- 2) Try to set aside approximately the same period for a daily power nap. Early birds may find the best time is an hour or so after lunch; night owls may

gain the most benefit from a nap around 4:00 PM.

- 3) Limit your nap to 20 to 30 minutes at most. Any longer may make you groggy and tired and/or upset your nighttime sleep cycle.
- 4) Always use an alarm clock or timer device to ensure that you wake on time. This may make it easier to fall asleep since there are no worries about oversleeping.
- 5) Find a congenial spot. Those with a private office can simply shut the door and unplug the phone. Others must exercise more ingenuity. Seek out quiet spots in a company lounge, library, public park, or even parking lot. Those who drive to work may resort to their cars; even low-traffic restrooms are a possibility.
- 6) If you can't fall asleep, don't worry. Relaxing with closed eyes while breathing deeply should be the goal of the first few power-napping sessions. This alone can ensure that personal productivity remains high.

Green Productivity and solid waste management

Urban environmental management has become an issue of concern owing to ever-increasing urbanization in APO member countries and worldwide. Due to progressive increases in urban populations and rapidly changing consumption patterns, solid waste management (SWM) has emerged as a main problem area. To address the key issues and challenges and discuss approaches to managing solid waste, the APO organized a multi-country workshop on Green Productivity and Solid Waste Management in Manila, the Philippines, 21–25 November 2005, with the local support of the Development Academy of the Philippines and the Colombo Plan Secretariat. The workshop was attended by 23 delegates from 17 member countries.



Waste collection center in Marikina City

During the workshop, participants pointed out that despite having the required legal frameworks in place, there are problems in carrying out appropriate SWM. In all APO member countries, there is great stress on recycling, reusing, and reducing waste rather than on disposal. However, less than 5–10% of waste is recycled in most countries. Realizing the need for better SWM measures, the APO deputed Professor Tay Joo Hwa of Nanyang Technological University, Singapore; Professor Det Wattanachai Yingcharoen of Naresuan University, Thailand; Lisa Antonio of Philippines Business for the Environment, Manila; and Alan S. Cajés, Center for Sustainable Human Development, Manila, to discuss specific approaches to successful community and private-sector participation in SWM and explore potential business opportunities created by the recycling of solid waste. Several actual examples were discussed by the three experts, who pointed out how systematic and innovative approaches to the recycling of waste had resulted in the creation of business entities in Thailand and elsewhere. Various business models were explored during the workshop. The experts also threw light on various technological aspects suitable to developing countries involved in the processing and disposal of solid waste. The discussion at the workshop enabled participants to perform a case study of Tagaytay City, the Philippines, for developing an integrated SWM system, including assessing resource requirements, following a Green Productivity approach.

Workshop participants visited Marikina City, which has developed a model SWM system by ensuring 100% waste collection, setting up a material recovery facility, and putting a penalty system for littering in place under the leadership of the mayor. The participants noted that this was an example of commitment from top management. They were also encouraged to witness students delivering waste to recycling centers and earning points entered in passbooks, which can be redeemed for school supplies.

Overall, the workshop highlighted the need to improve the productivity of local government units and at the same time ensure environmental protection. The participants were able to develop a fresh perspective, examining options other than landfills or incinerators for SWM, such as the processing of organic waste or creating value from items that had previously had little or none. The participants' understanding of SWM was reinforced by the view that waste can be a resource. 🌀

COMMON SENSE TALK



“The object of golf is not just to win. It is to play like a gentleman and win.”

Phil Mickelson

“You get curious about something and you mess around. That’s what science is in the beginning.”

Robert Wyman

“People want a version of McDonald’s for their own class.”

Eric Garcetti

“Man can’t help hoping even if he is a scientist. He can only hope more accurately.”

Karl A. Menninger

“Any work of architecture that does not express serenity is a mistake.”

Luis Barragán

“A cardinal principle of total quality escapes too many managers: you cannot continuously improve interdependent systems and processes until you progressively perfect interdependent interpersonal relationships.”

Stephen Covey

“Without translators, we are left adrift on our various linguistic ice floes, only faintly hearing rumors of masterpieces elsewhere at sea.”

David Remnick

“Are books becoming obsolete? I say they shouldn’t become obsolete.... A good provocative book well written and well read still provides that wonderful idyll to recline, ponder, and perhaps dream.”

Robert Redford

“I learned to make my mind large, as the universe is large, so that there is room for paradoxes.”

Maxine Hong Kingston

“A brand for a company is like a reputation for a person. You earn reputation by trying to do hard things well.”

Jeff Bezos

Rehabilitation of forests degraded by disasters

Although forests provide multiple benefits to human society, deforestation and forest degradation have been progressing at an alarming rate. Human-created and natural disasters have depleted major swathes of tropical forests, resulting in large and expanding areas of degraded forest ecosystems. The 2004 tsunami off the coast of Sumatra worsened the situation. There is thus a growing need for forest rehabilitation in the Asia-Pacific region. Japan has rehabilitated its forests successfully, and to examine how it has done so the APO, in cooperation with the Japan Association for International Collaboration of Agriculture and Forestry and Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, organized a multi-country study mission on “Rehabilitation of Forests Degraded by Disasters” in Japan, 4–11 October. Nineteen individuals from 12 APO member countries participated in the mission.

Three resource speakers, one from the Food and Agriculture Organization in Bangkok and two from Japan, spoke on: 1) Rehabilitation of forests degraded by disasters in the Asia-Pacific: issues and challenges; 2) Policies and systems for restoration of disaster-devastated forests in Japan; and 3) Modern technologies and approaches to the rehabilitation of forests degraded by natural disasters. Participants visited rehabilitated forest sites in Tochigi and Akita prefectures. In Ashio and Kosaka, they observed forests previously damaged by smoke from copper-mining and -processing operations, while in Noshiro and Obiraki they examined forests recovered from 1983 tsunami damage.

The participants drew useful lessons from Japan’s experience in forest rehabilitation, including effective policy and institutional arrangements; modern technologies and techniques; need for awareness of the importance of reforestation and rehabilitation and private- and public-sector partnerships; and commitment of resources to forest rehabilitation. Such lessons can be applied in efforts for forest rehabilitation in other countries in the region. Another lasting lesson was that preparation for disasters is 10 times more important than cleaning up after them. The former is also usually less costly. The Japanese proverb “disasters occur as soon as we forget them” was aptly quoted.

Some of the future directions of disaster preparedness and rehabilitation of forests damaged by man-made disasters and natural calamities could be:

1. A nationwide review of disaster assessment and mapping of forests (and woodlands) in member countries is strongly recommended.
2. Information collection, analysis, and dissemination systems (including disaster-related statistics) should be enhanced under national forest management systems.
3. The use of remote sensing (RS) and geographic information system (GIS) technologies is known to be cost-effective in monitoring, assessment, and planning. It was recommended that RS/GIS facilities be made available at provincial or district level.
4. National and provincial government agencies should be prepared for disasters under integrated programs.
5. Participatory approaches, public awareness raising, and training including evacuation drills are useful measures to prepare local people for disasters.
6. Learning from experiences in other countries is encouraged, but with some caution. Any changes in socioeconomic systems need careful screening and adaptation to local conditions. It is easier to transfer technical know-how but this still requires screening and adaptation.



Participants visiting a rehabilitated forest site in Akita prefecture

7. There are two technical options in forest rehabilitation work: natural regeneration and planting. Both have advantages and disadvantages, although overall rehabilitation costs for the first five years of natural regeneration is about one-tenth of those in plantations.

Developing countries may experience shortages of information, technology, funding, manpower, etc., although constraints and limitations are often the mother of creative approaches. A forest rehabilitation plan must have a place in the national policy framework with legal, institutional, and budgetary provisions. 🌱

Secretary-General visits Singapore



Takenaka (L) with Foo

Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka made an official visit to Singapore, 28–30 November, where he met participants in the annual Forum on Development of NPOs, including many NPO heads; became acquainted with the activities of SPRING Singapore; and paid a courtesy call on APO Director for Singapore and SPRING Singapore Chairman Cedric Foo.

— Strengthening IT capabilities of NPOs —

With the increasing pace of globalization, all markets are becoming extremely competitive and this is expected to intensify further. At the same time, the advent of information technology (IT) is dramatically transforming work and business practices. IT has already emerged as an indispensable tool for organizations wishing to become and remain competitive. Globalization and IT are two present-day phenomena that everyone, from individuals to organizations, will have to come to terms with. In the promotion and development of a national IT program, it is generally felt that NPOs can play a pivotal role because they have extensive experience in human resources development and a vast network of productivity partners in government, industry, and other sectors. For this to be possible, the NPOs must first strengthen their own IT capabilities. Many have already made remarkable progress in this direction; however, for many others there is a lot of room for improvement.

This issue was foremost in mind when 18 participants from the NPOs of 14 APO member countries met in Kathmandu, Nepal, 29 November to 2 December, to review: 1) IT applications by NPOs in their day-to-day operations; 2) the in-house IT capabilities of NPOs; 3) current program to serve as IT advisers/consultants to government agencies and the private sector, especially SMEs; and 4) future roles and development needs.

The workshop participants were aware that the NPOs are at different stages of development and that a digital divide exists among them. Despite this, most share certain common concerns, with financial constraints that undermine in-house IT capability development and IT applications being the major one. The opportunity to learn from each other how various NPOs are utilizing IT as a productivity and promotional tool was greatly appreciated by the participants.

One of the interesting features of the workshop was a live e-learning session connecting Tokyo and Kathmandu. In the mid-1990s, the World Bank established a satellite-based distance-learning network called the Global Development Learning Network (GDLN). The GDLN already has partners in more than 80 countries world-



Eiko Wataya (L), program coordinator, TDLC, addressing the participants in Kathmandu (on screen) while Kohga looks on

wide. In 2004, the World Bank set up a partner organization in Tokyo called the Tokyo Development Learning Center (TDLC) with financial assistance from the Government of Japan. There is as yet no GDLN partner in Kathmandu, although the World Bank office in Kathmandu allowed the use of its facilities for the APO e-learning element of the workshop. Kenji Kohga, a well-known IT consultant, made a presentation from Tokyo and participants listened to and interacted with him while sitting in Kathmandu using the GDLN distance-learning/videoconferencing capabilities. Participants indicated their appreciation of this blending of an e-learning session into a face-to-face workshop and recognized that this new opportunity to use the TDLC/GDLN facilities made the sharing of knowledge and information more cost-effective.

At the end of the workshop, participants made a number of recommendations for NPOs and the APO to follow up on. One measure that participants agreed to initiate was to conduct a quick online survey on the e-readiness of all NPOs. Participants felt that this step would lead to a concrete framework for IT collaboration and establishment of a network to benchmark and share best practices among NPOs. ☺

Iran Productivity Development Alumni formed

After receiving an official license to operate as a nongovernmental organization, the Iran Productivity Development Alumni (IPDA) started their activities formally on 27 November, when individuals who had previously participated in APO projects were invited to the Laleh International Hotel to determine the guidelines for the IPDA general assembly and elect the Board of Directors. About 70 senior officials and previous participants attended the meeting. Dr. Ghassem Ansari Rannani was elected chairman of the board, Dr. Mahmood Ghanizadeh as vice chairman, and Darioush Roshan as treasurer, with Dr. Hamid RezaNayebi and Keihan Mirfakhræe as board members. The IPDA will work to promote productivity improvement in Iran, and a local newspaper was selected to cover its activities.

46th WSM to convene in Kuala Lumpur

The 2006 APO Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs (WSM) is scheduled for 14–16 February, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Although Pakistan had originally planned to host the meeting, the devastating earthquake that struck the northern area of the country on 8 October necessitated a change in venue. The National Productivity Corporation, Malaysia, graciously stepped into the breach with an immediate offer to host the WSM. Approximately 70 delegates are expected to attend, including heads of NPOs and their advisers, agriculture representatives of APO member countries, international observers from both member and nonmember countries, and Secretariat staff.

Another change is in the structure of the WSM itself. The more ceremonial aspects have been eliminated to allow the delegates to concentrate on strategic planning sessions in the limited time available, where they will review the results of projects undertaken in 2005 and deliberate on the programs of the APO over the next two years. Discussions on how each NPO is faring in these challenging times and how they see their futures will form another important part of the meeting. The report of the WSM will be submitted for approval to the APO Governing Body, which will be held 13–15 June this year in the Republic of Korea.



p-Experts deputed by the APO

INDONESIA

Mr. Shinichi Shimose, Director, Processing Technology, Uosui Co., Ltd., Japan, and **Dr. Suporn Kootatep**, 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 Green and Productive Tourism, 27 November–1 December 2005.

Mr. Praba Nair, Director, KDiAsia, Singapore, **Dr. H. Michael Chung**, Director and Professor, Center for Information Strategies and Technologies, College of Business Administration, California State University, Long Beach, USA, and **Mr. Alwin S. Sta. Rosa**, Business Excellence Officer and Assistant Vice President—Comptrollership, First Philippine Holdings Corporation, were deputed as resource persons for the study meeting on Methodology and Framework for Measurement of Knowledge Management Applications, 6–9 December 2005.

JAPAN

Dr. Manuel S.J. de Leon, Philippines, was deputed as facilitator for the observational study mission on Agro-industry, 28 November–9 December 2005.

MALAYSIA

Mr. R.C. Monga, Productivity Management Consultant, India, **Mr. Ko Kasuga**, Special Adviser, International Department, Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development, and **Mr. Choo Tuck Low**, Director, Planning Division, SPRING Singapore, were deputed as resource persons for the Development of Productivity Specialists: Advanced Program, 21 November–3 December 2005.

Mr. Rajesh Bajaj, Deputy Director, Productivity Awareness and Productivity Awards, National Productivity Council, India, **Ir. Adriëne J.M. Frijters**, Senior Lecturer/Consultant, Horticulture and Arable Farming, Stoas Agricultural Teacher Training Institute, Netherlands, and **Mr. Masayuki Hirashima**, Expert of Marketing, Association for International Promotion of Agricultural Cooperatives, Japan, were deputed as resource persons for the seminar on Agricultural Niche Marketing for Enhancing Competitiveness, 5–9 December 2005.

Dr. Kazunari Masuda, Manager, Strategic Technology Planning Office, Technologies, Research and Development Division, Ebara Corporation, **Mr. Tadashi Adachi**, Manager,

Sustainable Solutions Promotion Office, Company Strategy and Administration Division, Environmental Engineering Company, Ebara Corporation, Japan, and **Prof. Tay Joo Hwa**, Director and CEO, Institute of Environmental Science and Engineering, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, were deputed as resource persons for the regional workshop on Capability Building for Creating an Eco-circulation Society through Biomass Utilization in the BIMP-EAGA Region, 5–9 December 2005.

Prof. Tan Wee Liang, Singapore Management University, **Prof. Ji-Ren Lee**, Department and Graduate Institute of International Business, College of Management, National Taiwan University, **Mr. R.C. Monga**, India, **Prof. Yoji Inaba**, College of Law, Nihon University, Japan, **Dr. Heon Deok Yoon**, Professor, Department of Entrepreneurship and Small Business, Soongsil University, Republic of Korea, and **Ms. Noeline Chanan Singh**, Senior Consultant, National Productivity Corporation, Malaysia, were deputed as national experts (Prof. Tan also as chief expert) for the Basic Research XIII on Social Capital and Its Impact on Productivity (Phase II), 13–15 December 2005.

PAKISTAN

Dr. Mohammad Ayub Miah, Joint Secretary to the Government, Ministry of Industries, Government of Bangladesh, **Dr. Chukka Kondaiah**, Principal Director, National Institute of Small Industry Extension Training, India, **Ms. Musnidar**, Division Head, Investment Promotion and Marketing, Directorate for Craft Small Industry and Trade, Directorate General of Small and Medium Industry MOI, Indonesia, **Dr. Za'Faran Hassan**, Associate Professor (Lecturer), Faculty of Business, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Malaysia, **Mr. Baburam Ranabhat**, Executive Director, Industrial Enterprise Development Institute, Nepal, **Ms. Ayesha Baig**, Manager, First Microfinance Bank Ltd., Pakistan, **Mr. Jerry T. Clavesillas**, Director III, Bureau of Small and Medium Enterprise Development, Development of Trade and Industry, Philippines, and **Mr. Nguyen Tri Thanh**, Manager, Enterprises Development Foundation, Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, International Trade Center, were deputed as national experts for the survey on Entrepreneur Development for Competitive SMEs, 28–29 November 2005.

Prof. Prema-chandra Athukorala, Professor of Economics, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, **Mr. Cornelis Sonneveld**, Managing Director, Alesun Food Technology, Canada, and **Dr. Saipin Maneepun**, Director, Institute of Food Research and Product Development, Thailand, were deputed as resource persons for the seminar on Food Safety Standards for Better Export of Fruit and Vegetable Products, 12–16 December 2005.

THE PHILIPPINES

Prof. Tay Joo Hwa, Director and CEO, Institute of Environmental Science and Engineering, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, was deputed as resource person for the capability building program on Green Productivity and Eco-business Development, 14–17 December 2005.

Program calendar

Cambodia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, and Vietnam

Distance-learning Seminar on the Toyota Production System, 6–8 March 2006 (Phase 1).

Japan

Top Management Forum: Corporate Brand Management, 6–9 March 2006.

Sri Lanka

Multi-country Study Mission on the Media and Productivity, 25–28 April 2006.

Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand

Distance-learning Seminar on the Toyota Production System, 8–10 May 2006 (Phase 2).

Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka

Distance-learning Seminar on the Toyota Production System, 7–9 August 2006 (Phase 3).

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.

THAILAND

Mr. Lin Jing Ching, President, Gallant Precision Machining Co., Ltd., Republic of China, **Mr. Udai Shankar Singh**, Deputy Director General, National Productivity Council, India, and **Dr. Park Sangchan**, Professor, Department of Industrial Engineering, Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, were deputed as resource persons for the study meeting on Strategic Industries in Member Countries: Machinery Industry, 15–18 November 2005.

VIETNAM

Dr. Randall S. Schuler, Professor, Human Resource Strategy, Rutgers University School of Management and Labor Relations, USA, **Dr. Yueshan Chang**, Professor/Director, Department of Finance, National Sun Yat-sen University, Republic of China, **Dr. Jisoo Yu**, Professor, College of Economics and Business Administration, Kookmin University, Republic of Korea, **Ms. Nor Hafizah Mohd. Arop**, Consultant, National Productivity Corporation, Malaysia, **Prof. Jorge V. Sibal**, Dean, University of the Philippines School of Labor and Industrial Relations, **Dr. Hing Ai Yun**, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore, and **Ms. Do Thi Dong**, Lecturer, National Economics University, Vietnam, were deputed as national experts (Dr. Schuler as chief expert) for the survey on Socially Sensitive Enterprise Restructuring—Asian Experiences, 19–21 December 2005.


APO/NPO update

New Managing Director in the Vietnam Productivity Centre (VPC)

Mr. Nguyen Anh Tuan, APO Liaison Officer for Vietnam, has been appointed Managing Director of the VPC.

JPC-SED commemorative symposium

The Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development (JPC-SED) organized a symposium in Tokyo, 1 and 2 December, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the productivity movement in Japan. About 2,000 people attended the two-day event. The symposium consisted of speeches, presentations, and panel discussions on a wide range of issues related to Japan's economy and its challenges. Those who addressed the symposium included Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, who said, "In any era, there would be no development of companies, people, or nations without productivity improvement." Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's former prime minister, also sent a videotaped message to the symposium.

The APO, one of the organizations and companies participating in the symposium, displayed panels explaining its activities and publications including the *Eco-products Directory 2005*. 



Prime Minister Koizumi addressing the symposium

(photo courtesy of the JPC-SED)

First Iranian national seminar on kaizen

The First National Seminar on Kaizen organized by the Industrial Development and Renovation Organization (IDRO) and National Iranian Productivity Organization (NIPO) with the sponsorship of 21 industrial companies was held on 2 October 2005 at Tehran University Management College. It was attended by more than 400 participants, including chief executive officers, senior experts, supervisors, workers, consultants, professors, and students. The study visit on the following day was to the factory of Takceram Company, a producer of tiles used in the construction industry, in Isafhan, where employees shared their experience and kaizen achievements with seminar participants.



Seminar participants at Takceram

Takceram is a model company selected to host a demonstration project on the recommendation of NIPO. The main objective of the demonstration project was to assist in the establishment of demonstration (model) companies to achieve improved productivity in factories or companies and disseminate the results for others to benchmark against. Takceram participated in the project from 2003, completed the planning and implementation stages, and is ready for dissemination of its accomplishments. The APO appointed kaizen consultant Shuichi Yoshida as the facilitator for this project on kaizen in Takceram Company.

IDRO representative Etemadi opened the national seminar. After welcoming the guests, he pointed out that Takceram had saved 10 billion rials (approximately US\$1.1 million) through its kaizen application. Yoshida summarized the project details at Takceram and its results, reiterating that kaizen can be used not only in manufacturing but also in other business areas because it is a universal improvement tool for almost all human activities. Representatives of kaizen teams from Takceram, Iran Khodro, Saipa, Iran Combine Factory, and Tabriz Machine Factory explained the kaizen activities and mechanisms in their companies. The seminar concluded with an award presentation to selected successful kaizen teams. 