



APO news

A new India welcomes Heads of NPOs

The APO 45th Workshop Meeting of the Heads of NPOs (WSM) was held in New Delhi, 15–17 February 2005, after a hiatus of seven years since India hosted the same meeting in 1999. It was a different India this year that welcomed the 36 delegates from 19 APO member countries; nine advisers to seven delegates; nine observers representing eight national, regional, and international organizations; and 11 staff members from the APO Secretariat led by Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka.



WSM attendees

Mr. Ashok Jha, APO Director for India and Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, India, in his welcome address to the meeting, described some of the tremendous transformations in the economy which created a new India, including greater service-sector contributions to GDP (51%); an impressive GDP growth rate, which hit 8.5% in 2004; achieving the status of the fourth-largest economy in terms of purchasing power parity; sixth highest foreign exchange reserves; export growth of more than 20% in the last two years; and highest return on equity in foreign investment in Asia.

Jha cited estimates that more than 50% of the increase in global GDP has been due to technological upgrading, leading to higher productivity levels, and reported that India has been no exception. He called for closer networking among NPOs to help to boost productivity even further in all sectors, especially agriculture. Ending his address on a light note, Secretary Jha referred to the showers that greeted WSM delegates upon awakening that day and reminded them that “In India a bit of rain before an important event is considered to be auspicious.”

The guest of honor at the meeting was Indian Minister of State for Commerce and Industry E.V.K.S. Elangovan. Giving the inaugural address, he noted that Asia as a whole is in a resurgence. The region not only provides the developed countries with resources but markets for goods and services. In addition, manufacturing and service hubs are increasingly shifting to Asia. Recovery from the Asian financial crisis appears complete, he said, with positive total factor productivity growth recorded in most APO member countries in the past year.

While the previous 50 years were marked by economic, social, and technological progress in the Asia-Pacific region aided by the productivity movement, Minister Elangovan also pointed out that unfinished tasks remained, including the eradication of poverty and of social discrimination, especially against women; improving productivity in the agriculture sector, particularly by reducing postharvest losses and taking a scientific approach to organic farming; preventing environmental degradation;

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“There is not a road ahead. We make the road as we go. Maybe the journey is not so much a journey ahead but into presence.”

Nellie Morton

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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



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— The Secretary-General's Statement —

APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka's annual statement to the Workshop Meeting of the Heads of NPOs (WSM) was composed of two parts: one dealing with program activities and the other relating to policies and strategies in response to the directives of the 2004 Governing Body Meeting (GBM). After thanking the meeting organizers, he extended heartfelt sympathy to the countries and people that were severely affected by the recent tsunami and hoped that the APO could support, in one form or another, those suffering its aftereffects.

With regard to the latest achievements and future planning of program activities, his statement focused on the prevailing thrust areas of the APO. Under the SME thrust area, the Secretary-General pointed out that projects were being made more cost-effective through collaborative organization with regional partners such as the ASEAN Foundation, Osaka prefectural government, and business corporations. Furthermore, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the APO and UN Volunteers in 2004. Upcoming projects under the knowledge management thrust area will examine the relevance of the concept in the unique Asian setting, specifically in a non-IT environment. National experts and KM practitioners from member companies will be invited to devise a common KM framework to measure the extent of successful implementation.

Under the Green Productivity Program, greening supply chains and resource and waste management continued to be the two main focus areas. The most prominent event commemorating the Year of GP was the Eco-products International Fair held in Kuala Lumpur in September 2004. The APO published the *Eco-products Directory 2004* covering some 750 eco-products from Japan. Future projects in this area will help NPOs to design new services for their clients in the environmental field, Takenaka said.

Integrated community development (ICD) and agriculture-related projects in 2004 addressed issues involving small agro-industries, water resource management, use of ICT, and the sustainability of Asian rice-based society in recognition of the UN Year of Rice. The ICD Program in future will focus on the application of productivity and management tools and participatory problem-solving methods. Past achievements will be consolidated to ensure the sustainability of the program.



(L-R) Secretary Jha, Minister Elangovan, Takenaka, and NPC Director-General Basant

Finally, in summarizing the achievements and future direction of the Development of NPOs (DON) thrust area, the Secretary-General pointed out that stepped-up efforts had been made to narrow the productivity divide, and that the DON Program would be allowed more flexibility in the use of its budget to encourage advanced member countries to accept requests from the less advanced.

In IT-related activities, Takenaka referred to a variety of Web-based projects, including e-conferences, distance-learning courses, e-forums, etc., which have gained momentum since 2003.

In speaking on the APO's policies and strategies, he highlighted, among others, the diminishing financial resources that have made downward adjustment of the APO program and financial estimates imperative for 2005 onward. The Secretariat must pay strict attention to increasing the cost-effectiveness of project and administrative operations. As a short-term measure, Secretary-General Takenaka referred to the Secretariat's efforts to save administrative costs, including a voluntary three percent staff salary reduction. From a longer-term perspective, he emphasized the adoption of a "selection and concentration" strategy to concentrate the APO's limited resources on its major core competence. He hoped that the Secretariat could devise specific proposals for administrative efficiency, including Secretariat restructuring, in close consultation with member countries at the coming GBM.

Takenaka reported that future APO programs will

show a clear trend of increasing the ratio of Category B and C projects in proportion to a relative decline in Category A projects. While the previous GBM set the target ratio at approximately 40-40-20, the ratio of 2006 and 2007 projects under the APO Two-Year Plan will be 44-29-27 and 37-33-30, respectively. He also referred to external evaluation conducted in the field of agricultural activities. The report of the ongoing evaluation will be presented to the next GBM. He emphasized the need to set up an evaluation system in a more organized manner so that APO activities can be continuously improved in all stages of the project cycle.

The Secretary-General explained the background of the designation of a biennial theme as well as that of the APO organizational excellence award and the Secretariat's position. The previous GBM chose GP as the special theme for 2004 and 2005, but he thought it crucial to gain the strong support and commitment of member countries to make the designated biennial themes successful, and suggested that the decision on whether the focused activities on a special theme should be continued could be deferred pending the evaluation of GP-related special activities conducted during 2004 and 2005. Takenaka noted that many member countries had suggested a cautious approach to institutionalizing a new APO award that could overlap with national quality or productivity awards in place in a majority of member countries. He therefore requested the WSM to deliberate on these two issues and present its recommendations to the next GBM. 🌐

and more rapid sharing of scientific data to prevent or mediate the effects of natural disasters such as the recent Indian Ocean tsunami.

Minister Elangovan said that the APO, as the spearhead of the productivity movement in Asia since 1961, has continuously exposed its member countries to emerging technological and social trends and encouraged them to seek their own situation-specific strategies to increase productivity. He also believed that it was time to involve wider segments of society in the productivity movement, since “productivity growth is a social process.” As a conclusion, Minister Elangovan expressed the hope that: “...working in tandem with similar organizations, the APO and NPOs will be able to find solutions to long-standing problems.”

Another speaker at the inaugural session was Secretary-General Takenaka, who presented his statement (*see page 2 for full report*). Among the key issues he touched upon was declining revenues from special cash grants. In light of this, he said that increasing the cost-effectiveness of APO project and administrative operations was uppermost in his mind. He also announced that the Secretariat staff members will voluntarily return 3% of their salary as their contribution to curbing administrative expenses.

Mrs. Sunila Basant, Director-General of the National Productivity Council of India, was elected Chair of the meeting. The Vice Chairman was Mr. Noor A. Nizamani, President, Sindh Agriculture Forum, Pakistan. One highlight of the meeting was special presentations by two prominent Indian speakers: Mr. Kiran Karnik, President, National Association of Software and Service Companies, and Dr. Bhalchandra Mungekar, Member of the Planning Commission, India, who spoke on “IT as a Productivity Enhancer” and “Poverty, Employment, and Productivity: An Asian Perspective,” respectively.

The main core of the meeting was the deliberations of the two Strategic Planning Committees that were constituted to develop strategic plans for the industry and service sectors and the agriculture sector. More specifically, they reviewed the following: linkages of the APO mission, vision, thrust areas, subject classification, and program coverage in light of diminishing resources and the need to exercise selection and concentration in project planning; measures to improve operational cost-effectiveness; proposed two-year plan; designation of special themes; and proposed APO award for organizational excellence.

Among the recommendations made by the delegates were to:

- 1) Expand the scope of evaluation of APO projects to include the long-term impact;
- 2) Organize more projects for top management personnel;
- 3) Design APO projects to make them more attractive to private-sector companies;
- 4) Revise the APO thrust areas by modifying one and adding another: Sustainable Development in Agriculture (modified from Integrated Community Development) and Quality Governance in the Public Sector;
- 5) Reclassify APO projects in accordance with the revised thrust areas;
- 6) Conduct a survey among NPOs on projects in the Two-Year Plan (2006–2007) to determine those they are eager to participate in and to categorize the projects based on demand;
- 7) Reflect the importance of the agriculture sector more explicitly in APO programs; and
- 8) Continue to pursue cost-effectiveness measures in organizing and implementing APO projects.

Vice Chairman Nizamani announced that Pakistan will host the 46th WSM in 2006. 🇵🇰



p-TIPS

The February 2004 *Harvard Business Review* presented a list of 20 “breakthrough ideas for 2005,” developed in collaboration with the World Economic Forum. While acknowledging that “great ideas need time to develop,” those ideas could affect enterprise productivity and survival in APO member countries today and into the future. Here are the 10 that seem the most relevant in the Asia-Pacific context.

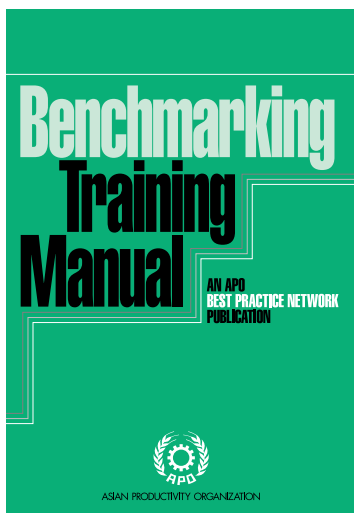
- 1) Flipping without flopping. “Flip-flop” became a dirty word in the recent US elections. However, effective leaders must change. Prepare in advance and call corrections courageous.
- 2) You heard it here first. Recent breakthroughs in audio technology are astounding. Music influencing consumer choices, billboards carrying on conversations? Why not?
- 3) “When” is the new “what.” Marketing identifies who to sell to, but rarely when. Know when needs change and when customers need help.
- 4) Wanted: a new continuity champion. Yes, change is good, necessary, etc. But continuity deserves champions too. Be faithful to core values and culture.
- 5) Let them all be power users. Enterprises may provide employees with

Through a crystal ball (Will these affect your productivity?)

- the latest ICT but little or no guidance on using it. The result? Knowledge workers are not as productive as they could be.
- 6) Biometrics meets services. Think beyond security purposes. Singapore Airlines uses biometric devices to personalize customer services. Other companies could do the same to customize and streamline purchases of clothing, financial services—or a bowl of noodles.
- 7) The coming crisis over intellectual property rights. Respect for intellectual property rights is declining worldwide. Firms of all sizes must take action.
- 8) No risk is an island. Huge man-made (famine sparked by war) or natural (the recent Indian Ocean tsunami) disasters nullify traditional risk management approaches. Think of the world as a community when conducting risk planning exercises.
- 9) Toward a new science of services. Service contributes more to economies than products. It’s time the science of service was a recognized field of study.
- 10) Demand-side innovation. With product life cycles shortening, make innovation efforts on the demand side. It’s how customer interactions are managed, not simply products/services offered, which determines success or failure.



New APO publication



BENCHMARKING TRAINING MANUAL (WITH CD-ROM)

APO 107 pp. March 2005 ISBN 92-833-2356-4

Knowledge on best practices provides a competitive advantage for organizations in the knowledge-based economy. Enterprises must benchmark themselves against the best standards or practices worldwide to achieve a competitive advantage and business excellence. Such best practice benchmarking, however, is not easy for an organization to carry out on its own, because enterprises may not be familiar with sources of best practices, especially those in other countries, and organizations may be reluctant to share knowledge on their own best practices. In addition, the cost of gaining best practice knowledge could be prohibitive.

The APO established its Best Practice Network to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of enterprises in its member countries by generating, sharing, and transferring knowledge on best practices. The aim of the Best Practice Network is to help organizations overcome the difficulties and undertake international benchmarking. The network is designed to solve accessibility problems and to adapt and innovate on the best practices in other countries, while using its linkages with national productivity organizations (NPOs) located throughout Asia and with other productivity and quality organizations worldwide.

This publication is a training manual to assist NPOs and their client organizations to participate in the Best Practice Network. The manual is also a practical "how-to" guide that will help national productivity organizations in dealing with the basic concepts of benchmarking, and a hands-on benchmarking guide explaining how to conduct benchmarking to improve processes and practices within the client organizations of NPOs. Its workbook-style format permits use and reuse for enterprises of every type and size.

This manual, which comes with a CD-ROM, is also intended to be a reference for enterprise participation in the Best Practice Network. Copies of the manual will be distributed to NPOs participating in the APO Best Practice Network for use in locally established networks. NPO representatives will use the manual to brief interested client organizations on the methodology, assuring standardization in benchmarking exercises during the planning, integration, and action phases. Follow-up activities and the code of conduct are also described in the publication.

A companion volume, *Compendium of Best Practice Case Studies in Asia*, is also available in both print edition and e-edition. The latter is available on the APO Web site at 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



"There is not a road ahead. We make the road as we go. Maybe the journey is not so much a journey ahead but into presence."

Nellie Morton

"The thing that makes me a good filmmaker is the same thing that makes me open restaurants in San Francisco and resorts in Belize and make wines in Napa Valley: you must be open to what presents itself."

Francis Ford Coppola

"Success is often the result of taking a misstep in the right direction."

Al Bernstein

"What is work and what is not work are questions that perplex the wisest of men."

Bhagavad Gita

"I never let schooling interfere with my education."

Mark Twain

"Practice is the best of all instructors."

Publilius Syrus

"Assumptions allow the best in life to pass you by."

John Sales

"The best way to escape from a problem is to solve it."

Alan Saporta

"Experience is one thing you can't get for nothing."

Oscar Wilde

Improving agricultural marketing systems

Recent trends in globalization and trade liberalization are forcing countries in the Asia-Pacific region to become more productive and competitive in every field. Agricultural commodities are no exception. In the Asia-Pacific region, the competition is particularly severe in the area of horticultural products such as fruit and vegetables, which have at the same time been making increasing contributions to export figures. It is indispensable for developing member countries to review their strategies and develop more efficient marketing systems for horticultural products, with particular attention to small and medium-sized farmers and traders, since world markets for these products are becoming more sophisticated and are affected by rapidly changing consumer demand. Consumers are also becoming more concerned about the use of agricultural chemicals and genetically modified organisms in particular and food safety in general.

To review the recent developments in fruit and vegetable marketing systems, the APO held a seminar on the “Improvement of Agricultural Marketing Systems for Enhancing International Competitiveness” in Islamabad, Pakistan, 7–12 February 2005. The program was implemented by the National Productivity Organisation in collaboration with the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council. Eighteen participants from nine member countries were in attendance.

Lead presentations were made by six resource speakers from Thailand (one), Pakistan (three), Malaysia (one), and Bhutan (one), who spoke on the: 1) Recent trends and future prospects in fruit and vegetable marketing in Asia and the Pacific; 2) Major lessons learned to enhance the competitive edge of SMEs in the international marketing of fruit and vegetables; 3) Exploring new foreign markets for fruit and vegetables; 4) Challenges and possible options for small producers to cope with increasing market competition; 5) Issues and challenges in improving fruit and vegetable marketing systems in Pakistan for better international competitiveness; and 6) Productivity management tools for enhanced export competitiveness.

The participants generally agreed that the international importance of horticultural products from the Asia and Pacific region was increasing. The region can reap the maximum benefit from this opportunity by putting in place efficient and effective agricultural marketing systems to ensure better returns for the producers and safe, high-quality food for the consumers, as well as to promote the development of sustainable agriculture and enhance international competitiveness.



Participants on a field visit

Some of the problems faced by the majority of fruit and vegetable producers in the Asia-Pacific region are small landholding size, lack of technological know-how in fruit and vegetable production and harvesting, high costs and inadequate supply of quality inputs, inadequate credit facilities, and absence of/insufficient crop insurance coverage. Postharvest problems include: inappropriate handling, too few modern processing facilities, high cost of packaging materials, absence of efficient postharvest chains, lack of/insufficient national food grading systems and standards, inadequate food safety measures, inadequate marketing infrastructure, lengthy marketing channels, inadequate entrepreneurial skills, and limited market information.

Some of the strategies identified to deal with the above problems and to enhance the international competitiveness of fruit and vegetable producers in the Asia-Pacific region were: adoption of good agricultural practices, good manufacturing practices, and other food safety and quality assurance systems (HACCP, ISO9001, etc.); strengthening of marketing research and its linkage with agricultural extension services; enhancing farmers' access to credit facilities; making adequate supplies of quality inputs available at affordable prices; promotion of viable fruit and vegetable producer groups/associations/cooperatives; enhancing capacity in production, appropriate harvesting, and postharvest handling (including value addition); development of effective and efficient market infrastructure; establishment of national fruit and vegetable grading systems and standards; creating awareness of the importance of hygiene and food safety/quality measures, and provision of accurate and timely market information. The participants felt that strong partnerships among the public sector, private sector, and NGOs would be necessary to execute these strategies. Governments also have a role to play in making the horticultural sector more competitive. Public investment in rural infrastructure would reduce production and marketing costs of fruit and vegetables, while research and extension services for better quality standards and market information would allow more value addition and increase access to export markets. 🌀

Students visit the Secretariat



Students listening to the APO Secretary-General

A group of students from Gakushuin Women's College visited the APO Secretariat in Tokyo on 2 February. The students, who were taking a course on international technical cooperation, were led by Mr. Hajime Suzuki, the lecturer of the course and an APO expert with extensive experience as a consultant. In addition to hearing a presentation on the APO and international cooperation, the students also had a chance to converse with Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka and APO Secretariat staff.

The APO has received a Gakushuin Women's College group every year since 2003. The APO always welcomes such visits as they provide an opportunity to acquaint the Japanese public, especially young people, with the mission of the APO in general and the importance of productivity to the region's development in particular.

Declaration (Continued from page 8)

* Private-sector vitality

Higher productivity is the source for individual prosperity at a time of a declining population. To achieve this, productivity in low-productivity industries and the public sector must be bettered. We aim to promote structural reforms in politics, administration, the economy, and society to make the most out of private-sector vitality under a small government.

* Nurture human capital

We will nurture human capital so as to develop independent individuals who are fearless in taking on the challenges of the new era and are creative in forging a new Japan. The productivity movement embraces the development of human capital. To this end, we will endeavor to set the right conditions, starting with educational reform, where each individual can exert his or her maximum potential.

* The four types of productivity

The four powers that are linked to intellectual, civil, and environmental capabilities, as well as organizational trust, are keys to realizing the above goals. We define these as intellectual productivity, social productivity, environmental and resource productivity, and overall productivity. The pursuit of activities for their advancement is indeed the productivity movement of the 21st century.

(Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development, 1 March 2005)

Cartoon contest winners

It was difficult to choose winning entries in the APO's cartoon contest, but the seven finally selected combined unique drawing skills with an understanding of the productivity message. Hearteningly, many of the 29 cartoons received were from students, which bodes well for the productivity movement in the future. The winning cartoonists (and their countries and themes), who will all receive US\$100 prizes, were:

Amit Singh

(Fiji: avoid waste of material resources and time);

Anal Gosai

(Fiji: sharing and partnerships);

Nirajani Ravi

(India: introduce productivity, increase profitability);

S. Dharmalingam

(India: focused usage, higher productivity);

S. Tamilarasi

(India: implement 5S);

Premalal Ranawila

(Sri Lanka: good housekeeping, *shown right*); and

Cao Thi Minh Phuong

(Vietnam: increased productivity).





p-Experts deputed by the APO

FIJI

Mr. Ian Gaunt, CEO, Australian Portfolios, Australia, was deputed to conduct a training course on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point, 7–11 March 2005.

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

Prof. Noriyoshi Oguchi, Faculty of Commerce, Senshu University, Japan, was deputed to conduct a seminar on Total Factor Productivity Measurement, 22–27 January 2005.

Mr. R.C. Monga, Consultant, India, was deputed to conduct a training course for Productivity Promoters, 26 February–2 March 2005.

LAOS

Mr. Yasuhiko Iwaoka, Senior Consultant, Iwaoka R&C, Japan, was deputed to conduct training on New Model Company Building, 31 January–4 February 2005.

MALAYSIA

Dr. Jisoo Yu, Professor, Department of Business Administration, Kookmin University, Republic of Korea, and **Dr. Won-Kyu Kim**, Director, Industrial Competitiveness Division, Korea Institute for Industrial Economics and Trade, were deputed to conduct a program on Enhancing Economic Growth through Total Factor Productivity, 2–3 February 2005.

Dr. Suporn Koottatep, Associate Professor, Department of Environmental Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Chiang Mai University, Thailand, was deputed to serve as resource person for the On-site Assessment for Solid Waste Management and Greening of the Hotel Belt, 1–5 March 2005.

THAILAND

Mr. Katsushi Motoi, Section Manager, Sales Department, First Co., Ltd., Japan, was deputed to serve as expert to prepare an overall technical plan for the Eco-products International Fair 2005, 22–24 February 2005.

The following were deputed to serve as experts for the Expert Meeting on the Special Program for Agricultural Productivity Enhancement in Asian Least Developed Countries, 28 February–2 March 2005: **Dr. Md. Nazrul Islam**, Director, National Productivity Organisation, Ministry of Industries, Bangladesh; **Mr. Abdul Baqui Chowdhury**, Senior Research Officer, National Productivity Organisation, Ministry of Industries, Bangladesh; **Mr. Nimol Meng**, Assistant to Head, National Productivity Unit, Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy, Cambodia; **Mr. Pheach Kong**, Deputy Director of Agro-Industry Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Cambodia; **Ms. Tey Dany**, Vice Chief Officer, Office of Investment, Department of Industrial Affairs, Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy, Cambodia; **Mr. Vinod K. Soni**, Director and Head, Agribusiness Group, National Productivity Council, India; **Mr. Yasuhiko Tsutsumi**, Representative, Pete Consulting Engineering Associates, Japan; **Mr. Sayasith Khamphasith**, Head, External Relations Division, Ministry of Industry and Handicrafts, Laos; **Dr. Somnuck Thirasack**, Deputy Director-General, National Agriculture and Forestry Extension Service, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Laos; **Mr. Ramachadran Arijjirajalo**, Principal Consultant, Venk Management Consultants, Malaysia; **Mr. Hamdi Bin Othman**, Manager, International Relations Unit, National Productivity Corporation, Malaysia; **Mr. Krishna Chandra Sharma**, Program Director, Directorate of Agriculture Extension, Department of Agriculture, Nepal; **Mr. Ranajeet Amatya**, Division Chief, Productivity Promotion Division, National Productivity and Economic Development Centre, Nepal; **Mr. Naindra Prasad Upadhaya**, Joint Secretary and Chairman, National Productivity and Economic Development Centre, Ministry of Industry, Nepal; **Dr. Manuel de Leon**, Consultant, Philippines; **Mr. Carlos A. Sayco, Jr.**, Vice-President/Managing Director, Productivity and Development Center, Development Academy of the Philippines; **Ms. Nguyen Thi Bich Hang**, Managing Director, Vietnam Productivity Centre.

Program calendar

Australia

Study Meeting on Green and Productive Tourism, 25–29 July 2005.

Indonesia

Seminar on Productivity Awareness for Public-sector Undertakings, 11–15 July 2005.

Islamic Republic of Iran

Training Course on Facilitation for Community Development for Trainers, 4–11 May 2005.

Japan

Symposium on Comparative Study of Basic Agricultural Policies, 11–15 July 2005.

Seminar on Management Quality Improvement through the Japan Quality Award, 11–15 July 2005.

Singapore

Multi-country Study Mission on Retail Store Management, 12–14 July 2005.

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.



JPC-SED celebrates its 50th anniversary

The Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development (JPC-SED) commemorated its 50th anniversary with a grand ceremony at the Hotel Okura, Tokyo, 1 March 2005, which was graced by such dignitaries as Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Shoichi Nakagawa, Japan Business Federation Chairman Hiroshi Okuda, and Japanese Trade Union Confederation Chairman Kiyoshi Sasamori. Also featured were a special video-taped message from Singapore Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew and a commemorative speech by renowned architect Tadao Ando. The ceremony concluded with JPC-SED President Yasuo Sawama presenting a commemorative declaration on "Towards a Society Based on Mutual Trust and Vitality" (see box for full text).


JPC-SED Chairman Jiro Ushio, in his opening address, said that over the last 50 years the JPC-SED had tried its best to help the Japanese economy remain competitive through productivity enhancement in a harmonious environment. However, the economy is now facing enormous challenges from increasing globalization, rapid emergence of information technology, and an aging society. To meet the challenges, productivity improvement in intellectual, social, resource, and environmental capital is necessary. This could only be achieved through the creation of trust in the nation. The JPC-SED is keen to play its part to help the nation meet the challenges.

Prime Minister Koizumi, in congratulating the JPC-SED on its 50th anniversary, said that enhancing productivity continues to be of vital importance and there is no end to productivity improvement just as there is no end to reform. He pointed out that the JPC-SED has been playing an important role in revitalizing the Japanese economy. He expressed the hope that it will continue to help the Japanese economy address the emerging challenges.

The Japan Productivity Center was established in 1955 to enhance the economic development of postwar Japan through the productivity movement. In April 1994, it merged with the Social and Economic Congress of Japan to become the JPC-SED, a nonprofit and nongovernmental organization. The JPC-SED formulates policy proposals based on concrete studies and through achieving national consensus. It also actively supports industries and public-sector organizations in such areas as management innovation, modernization of



Koizumi delivering his congratulatory remarks

labor-management relations, and human resources development. With the support of over 10,000 members that include corporations, labor unions, and various other organizations and with its strong collaboration with seven regional productivity centers, the JPC-SED has been able to form a powerful nationwide network for the productivity movement in Japan. The JPC-SED initiated the establishment of the APO in 1961. 

Declaration of the 50th Anniversary of the Productivity Movement in Japan Towards a Society Based on Mutual Trust and Vitality

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of Japan's productivity movement.

In the half century following the end of the Second World War, Japan rose from the ashes of poverty and destruction to become one of the world's strongest economies. Yet Japan today faces a host of new challenges. They include environmental constraints, advancements in globalization, and innovations in information technology. The significance of a declining population also cannot be overlooked.

To resolve these issues, we will endeavor to create a new Japan, a country prosperous in mind and matter, respected by the international community, and abundant in hope and appeal. For this to happen, trust and vitality are indispensable.

The productivity spirit is driven by the desire to progress, the essence of

humankind. Every reform is a manifestation of the productivity spirit. This spirit will guide us in our continued efforts to improve the quality of the Three Guiding Principles. These are the maintenance and expansion of employment, cooperation and consultation between labor and management, and fair distribution of the fruits of productivity. We pledge to foster a reform movement that will result in a new Japan. Towards this goal, we declare to:

* Establish trust

Trust is the bedrock of all things. A nation cannot exist without trust. Trust is born when individuals are able to exhibit their creativity to the fullest extent and connect with society through the organization to which they belong. We will promote reforms that will lead to new relationships based on mutual trust.

(Continued on page 6)