



Asian Productivity Organization “The APO in the News”

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Sri Lanka to host APO’s 55th WSM tomorrow in Colombo

OCTOBER 20, 2014 Text and pix by Harsha Udayakantha Peiris

Asian Productivity Organization, headquartered in Tokyo, Japan, has selected Sri Lanka as the host country for the 55th Work Shop Meeting of Heads of National Productivity Organisations (NPOs) and National Productivity Secretariats (NPSs) of member countries to be held from 21 to 23 October.



Two-member Sri Lankan delegation that represented Sri Lanka – Editor-in-Chief of Sri Lanka The Treasure Island Harsha Udayakantha Peiris and Senior Producer of the Educational Programs Division of SLRC Seetha Sirimalee Alahakoon with Mari Amano, APO Secretary General at the APO head quarters at the Multicountry OSM on best practices in promoting innovation and productivity in agriculture for mass media practitioners organised by the APO held in Japan

Accordingly, around 60 foreign participants from member countries are expected to attend this mega MICE event of the year at the Hilton Hotel, Colombo.

The main objectives of this year's WSM organised by the APO in Colombo include discussion of overall strategies of the APO, extending assistance and strengthening NPOs and NPSS and designing and planning of dedicated programs and projects to improve productivity in the fields of production services and agriculture in member countries.



**APO Agriculture Department Director
Joselito Cruz Bernardo**

Nineteen Heads of NPOs and NPSS, 19 participants representing the sector of agriculture and 19 Consultants from member economies of the APO are expected to meet at this WSM in Colombo on Tuesday.

Deputy Minister of Finance and Planning Dr. Sarath Amunugama will be the Chief Guest of the event which will be held with the initiative of Minister of Productivity Promotion Basheer Segudawood and the APO Delegation headed by its Secretary General Mari Amano.

The opportunity to host this international MICE event is also a landmark event Sri Lanka has received in promoting the country as the next tourism hub of the region under the 'Mahinda Chinthana' visionary development program of President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

APO is an international institution that works with the mission to contribute to the sustainable socio-economic development of Asia and the Pacific through enhancing productivity with the vision to be the leading international organisation on productivity enhancement, enabling APO economies to be more productive and competitive by 2020.

APO membership is open to countries in Asia and the Pacific which are members of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission (UNESCO) for Asia and the Pacific. At present, 20 countries that include Bangladesh, Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Fiji, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam have been granted the APO membership.



APO Industry Department Director J.M. Tilaka Jayasundara, the first Sri Lankan and first ever non-Japanese citizen to be a Directress of the APO during its history of nearly 53 years of implementation

The APO comprises the Governing Body (GB), the National Productivity Organisations and the Secretariats (NPOs and NPSs) and the Secretariat which is headed by a Secretary General. At present, Mari Amano serves the Secretary General of the APO.

The Governing Body (GB) is the supreme organ of the APO and it is composed of one government-appointed Director from each member economy. The GB meets annually to receive the Secretary General's annual report and the auditor's financial report and decide on the budget size, strategic directions and policies.

Each member economy of the APO designates a national body to be its NPO or NPS and they act as the APO's planning and implementing agencies and coordinate productivity projects hosted by the governments. Each year, the APO organises a Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs and NPSs to evaluate the previous year's projects, confirm the program for the next year and deliberate on productivity issues and emerging needs of members.

The APO Secretariat is the Executive arm of the organisation and is headed by the Secretary-General. It carries out the decisions of the Governing Body (GB) and in close cooperation and consultation with NPOs undertakes planning, preparation, coordination and implementation of projects.

J.M. Tilaka Jayasundara who serves the Director of Industry Department of the APO is the first Sri Lankan and the first ever non-Japanese citizen to be a Directress of the APO during its history of nearly 53 years of implementation since the APO was established on 11 May 1961.

APO projects cover the industry, service and agriculture sectors. They provide practical training through a combination of lectures of experts, field visits for observation of actual applications and country reports by participants for the sharing of experiences. Participants represent diverse groups of productivity stakeholders who create multiplier effects by disseminating newly acquired knowledge to the others in member countries.

Two representatives from the international travel and tour magazine Sri Lanka The Treasure Island (SLTTI) and Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation (SLRC) represented Sri Lanka at the most recent seven day Multicountry Observational Study Mission (OSM) on best practices in promoting innovation and productivity in agriculture for mass media practitioners organised by the APO held in Japan last month.

The two-member delegation from Sri Lanka is now engaged in post publishing activities, at this stage, to accurately and timely acknowledge especially, the policy makers and authoritative implementers through press and electronic media, of how such innovative agro-systems and methodologies could be rightly

identified, implemented and utilised in Sri Lanka sustainably, with the facts of geographic arrays, topography, climate, food-life concepts of the people in different regions and socio-cultural aspect in mind and how such practices could be implemented and utilised despite the challenge of the land requirement especially, when it comes to metropolitan agricultural industry in Sri Lanka.

The delegation through its post publishing activities in the press and electronic media in sharing what was learned, shared and experienced in Japan, would also be publishing a series of featured stories, news releases, reports and pictorials in their respective media to continually encourage people in both domestic and industrial levels and especially the young generation engaged in education, about the Japanese innovations of agro-technology readily available to utilise in agriculture industry and related segments aiming future prosperity of the masses. Joselito Cruz Bernardo serves the Director Agriculture Department of the APO.