



Asian Productivity Organization “The APO in the News”

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Exceptional performance of HNB feted at National Productivity Awards

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WRITTEN BY NEWS EDITOR

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Dec 30, 2015 (LBT) - Hatton National Bank (HNB), the premier private sector commercial bank in Sri Lanka, received the highest honour at the 'National Productivity Awards 2014' held recently as the only award winner in the 'Service Sector – Large' category.

New evaluation criteria was introduced to the competition this year to elevate it to the standards of productivity awards in Japan, China, South Korea and other member states of the Asian Productivity Organization. HNB emerged as the only applicant in its category which was deemed eligible for an award under these new internationally accepted standards.

The awards ceremony was held at the BMICH, with Mr Ranil Wickremasinghe, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka as chief guest, with the participation of over 100 reputed companies and organisations. The National Productivity Awards was organized by the National Productivity Secretariat (NPS) of the Ministry of Public Administration and Management under the direction of the Ministry of Public Administration, Local Government and Democratic Governance.

The journey for transformational improvements in productivity at HNB commenced in 2012 during the banks Strategic Planning Sessions where it was recognized that real efficiencies were hidden within the traditional banking channels, systems and processes. Consequently it was decided to challenge the business model and processes to realize quantum improvements in productivity and efficiency. The initiative commenced by establishing an Operational Excellence committee in 2012, followed by forming a Process Improvement and Change Management (PICM) unit in 2013. A decision was made to approach this transformation with internal resourcing without the services of external consultants initially, stated Dilshan Rodrigo-Chief Operating Officer at HNB.

He further said, we realized the importance of developing a unique strategy in line with our reading of the future. The need to be ahead of the competition instead of following the competition was to be the key imperative for building competitive advantage. We identified 3 strategy pillars as the cornerstones – developing a Sales Culture, driving Operational Excellence and aggressively deploying Digital Banking Solutions. The strategy was backed by freezing entry level recruitments in the last 3 years, curtailing branch expansions whilst doubling our investments in Technology.

The essence of the strategy was to reorient branches as customer sales and service centres whilst creating centres of excellence for Credit and General Operations, to significantly improve the Direct to Indirect Staff ratio with quantum improvements in productivity. The Centres of Excellence to benefit from standardization, specialization and faster turnaround times. The introduction of relevant technology across all areas was considered a key priority.

On winning the award, the Chief Operating Officer of HNB said "I am delighted by the recognition afforded to HNB in the sphere of productivity improvements and have no doubt will spur the team to reach greater heights in the future. I am thankful to Management Teams across all functions and staff for supporting bold changes to their business models, proactively engaging with the PICM team to make quantum improvements in service and efficiencies. We are at the beginning of an exciting journey ahead.'