



## Asian Productivity Organization “The APO in the News”

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# ‘Mass media is missing link to effect change’

BY JAIME PILAPIL, TMT ON FEBRUARY 20, 2017

TOKYO: A group based here, advocating productivity in Asia, has tapped mass media to disseminate information on technologies and best practices in private business and government services.

The Asian Productivity Organization has put together 17 journalists from Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Iran, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and the Philippines not just to lecture on concepts but to tour them to Japan’s small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

The main purpose of the study tour is to engage mass media practitioners in productivity promotion in their respective countries.

Joselito Cruz Bernardo, APO head of Research & Planning, said innovations and higher productivity in SMEs are crucial to improve their operations and enhance their competitiveness and overall contribution to national economies.

“While there have been substantial technological developments and innovations in the manufacturing service and agriculture sectors, many of these have not reached SMEs due to constraints in the flow of knowledge and information and the limited resources of SMEs to access them. Thus, many SMEs fail to scale up and sustain their operations in an increasingly competitive business environment dominated by big businesses,” he noted.

Dr. Santhi Kanoktanaporn, APO secretary-general, said even big businesses could fold up if they fail to adapt to rapid changes, particularly on advances in technologies.

According to him, many of the emerging big businesses are Internet-based like Uber, Amazon, Airbnb and Panasonic Robotic.

Businesses, despite their success in the past, that went bankrupt after failing to catch up with new technologies were Nokia and Kodak, among others.

Kanoktanaporn identified three global trends, namely globalization of quality, information technology and sustainable development.

Interestingly, APO aggressively pushes for agriculture modernization.

Japan, for one, is pouring all the needed government support to its SMEs not just in financing but in adopting new technologies.

Journalists, after a day of orientation, will be toured to various SMEs in Tokyo and Kyoto to show to them industry innovations.

APO wants to be the leading organization in providing capacity building and policy advice in agriculture, industry and services.

In the Philippines, it has partnered with the Development Academy of the Philippines to showcase new technologies and practices.