



APO NEWS

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Cambodia hosts 49th WSM

Siem Reap, the second-largest city in Cambodia, played host to the 49th Workshop Meeting (WSM) of Heads of National Productivity Organization (NPOs), 21–23 October 2008. The workshop meeting brought together 54 delegates and advisers from 19 member countries. Two observers, from the United Nation's International Labor Organization Subregional Office and Embassy of the Union of Myanmar in Cambodia, also attended.

The WSM is the forum to discuss APO program planning, and this year's had ample time to deliberate on emerging needs of member countries stemming from country reports by the NPO and agriculture delegates as well as other inputs at the meeting. One such input was presentations by the Secretariat. As part of efforts to keep member countries informed of program initiatives undertaken to maximize both the benefits and impact of APO projects, Secretariat officers made four presentations covering the self-e-learning Balanced Scorecard course, in-country projects under DON Strategy and DON Implementation, APO productivity data and database project, and the APO food safety program.

The Strategic Planning Session, a highlight of every WSM, was another important venue where national representatives exchanged views on the program plans. This was divided into two concurrent sessions, one for the industry and service sector and one for agriculture. The meeting benefited from ideas and suggestions given during these sessions, and the lineup of projects for 2009 and 2010 was confirmed.



Dr. Praing (R) welcoming delegates



Industry and Service Committee session in progress

Pakistan's Agriculture Delegate Dr. Munir Ahmad as rapporteur. Each session began with an overview of the background and direction of projects by Secretariat departmental directors.

The delegates were cordially received by the Cambodian hosts, beginning with a welcome address delivered by Director Yea Bunna of the National Productivity Center of Cambodia (NPCC). Bunna warmly welcomed the guests before describing how Cambodia had achieved steady economic growth thanks to the Royal Government's effective policies. These policies were expected to enhance national competitiveness by adopting the best practices of APO member countries. Explaining the NPCC's role in promoting the productivity movement, Bunna said, "With the support of the APO as well as other international organizations, critical knowledge and information have been disseminated, especially among SMEs and local businesses."

The Industry and Service Committee was chaired by APO Alternate Director for the Philippines Antonio D. Kalaw, Jr., with India's NPO Delegate U.S. Singh serving as the rapporteur. Thailand's Agriculture Delegate Dr. Apichart Pongsrihadulchai chaired the Agriculture Committee session, with

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APO Director for Cambodia and Secretary of State of the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy Dr. Ith Praing gave the Inaugural Address. He outlined the APO's role in the Asia-Pacific region, explaining that concerted efforts would facilitate sustainable productivity improvements in each member country. After expressing optimism for Cambodia's productivity development under the leadership of Prime Minister Hun Sen, Dr. Praing added that the NPCC would work hand in hand with the APO to steer the productivity and quality movement to achieve the common goals of poverty alleviation and improved quality of life. The meeting then elected Bunna and Kalaw as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, to lead the discussions at the plenary sessions.

In addition to the regular program, delegates had the opportunity to visit the Angkor National Museum, a cultural landmark in Siem Reap, and attend a presentation by Museum Executive Director Chhan Chamroeun. A visit to the famed Angkor Wat was also arranged on the morning of the third day.

In his closing statement, Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka applauded the NPCC's hospitality and expressed his heartfelt appreciation for its success-

ful hosting of the WSM. He stated that, "We had ample opportunity to promote cross-fertilization of ideas and discuss program-related issues." Chair Bunna agreed that the meeting had been efficient and fruitful, with a number of excellent suggestions and ideas pertaining to program planning, and attributed this to the active cooperation and contributions from delegates. 🌀



Secretariat officers presenting program initiatives