

# Bangladesh RTC on Productivity Promotion

**T**he National Productivity Organization (NPO) of Bangladesh, with the support of the country's Ministry of Industries and the APO, convened a two-day, tripartite Round-table Conference (RTC) on Productivity Promotion in Dhaka on 17–18 October 2002. It was attended by almost 40 senior members of governmental ministries and agencies, employers' organizations and corporations, labor unions, and academia. They met to forge a national consensus on productivity promotion, to map out a strategy and action plan for enhancing productivity in the country, and to determine ways to strengthen and empower the role and capabilities of the NPO. The APO deputed four resource persons to provide expert input and facilitate the deliberations.

The RTC was inaugurated by Industries Minister M.K. Anwar. He told the meeting that the Government of Bangladesh has adopted the strategy of rapid industrialization, privatization, and productivity improvement to accelerate the economic growth of the country. This growth is to be led by the private sector, and the government is making special efforts to attract domestic and foreign investment. The Minister underlined the importance of productivity, profitability, infrastructure development, and political stability in encouraging investments in the country. To raise productivity, Minister Anwar said that human resources development, labor-management cooperation, and application of modern technology were the primary factors. Higher productivity, he added, would ultimately result in the overall economic growth of the country and a higher standard of living for the people.

The RTC wrapped up its deliberations with a list of recommendations to give the productivity movement in Bangladesh a new impetus. A sampling of those recommendations included:

- The productivity movement should be a national agenda with the Prime Minister providing the leadership.
- There should be a national productivity policy to give direction and momentum to the movement.
- The NPO of Bangladesh should launch a 10-year national productivity campaign that is intensive and massive in scale.
- The national productivity drive should be a tripartite effort involving the government, labor unions, and employers.



Minister Anwar inaugurating the RTC

- There should be close labor-management consultation on productivity and other matters at the enterprise level.
- Development of capabilities for improving productivity within enterprises should be given emphasis.
- National quality and productivity awards should be introduced to honor industries that have taken definitive steps to increase productivity and as an encouragement to others to follow in their footsteps.
- IT should be leveraged for improving productivity.
- The concept and practice of productivity should be incorporated into academic curricula of schools and universities.

The *APO News* spoke to APO Director for Bangladesh Al-Ameen Chaudhury, who is also the Secretary of the Ministry of Industries, on the follow-up plan to implement the RTC recommendations. The first priority, he said, is to reorganize and strengthen the NPO of Bangladesh as it must spearhead the productivity drive. Mr. Chaudhury would like to see more private-sector involvement in the productivity movement as well as in enabling the NPO to fulfill its role. "The more they contribute to building up the movement and the NPO, the more they will gain in return." As momentum builds, there will be a snowball effect, bringing benefits to all concerned and to the country as a whole, he added. 🌀