



A·P·O *news*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ASIAN PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATION

Laos: The APO's newest member

On 18 June 2002, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Laos) became the 19th and newest member of the APO. Laos' application to join the APO was approved by the APO Governing Body at its recent meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 18-20 June 2002. As a member of the APO, Laos joins the ranks of Bangladesh, Republic of China, Fiji, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam in proclaiming productivity enhancement as a key strategy in socio-economic development and in improving the quality of life of their people.




Map of Laos



Laos delegates at the GBM. (L-R) Mr. Chantala Phimphachanh (Adviser) and Dr. Somboune Manolom

The Laos representative at the Governing Body Meeting, Dr. Somboune Manolom, Director-General, Ministry of Industry and Handicraft, informed the meeting that the issue of productivity is very important to his country. He said that the APO is the organization that can assist Laos to foster and strengthen its capacity and capability to promote productivity and provide training to organizations in both the public and private sectors. In welcoming Laos as a member of the APO, Mr. Takashi Tajima, APO Secretary-General, said that the "new member will need the support, assistance, and encouragement of the other member countries as it endeavors to establish its own national productivity organization and launch its own productivity movement."

Laos is a mountainous, landlocked country situated in the heart of the Indochinese peninsula. It shares common borders with five countries: Cambodia, China, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. Vientiane is the capital. Laos has a land area of 236,800 sq. km. and a population of 5.6 million. About 85 percent of the people are rural dwellers. The main crop is rice, and the main exports are clothing, timber products, and coffee. Laos is well endowed with natural resources, including tin, iron, coal, zinc, and copper. However, mining is still in its infancy. The average annual income is US\$290. Life expectancy is 51 years for men and 54 years for women. 

(full report on the GBM on pages 5, 6 and 8)

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"The new source of power is not money in the hands of a few but information in the hands of many."

John Naisbitt

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