



APO *news*

A new India welcomes Heads of NPOs

The APO 45th Workshop Meeting of the Heads of NPOs (WSM) was held in New Delhi, 15–17 February 2005, after a hiatus of seven years since India hosted the same meeting in 1999. It was a different India this year that welcomed the 36 delegates from 19 APO member countries; nine advisers to seven delegates; nine observers representing eight national, regional, and international organizations; and 11 staff members from the APO Secretariat led by Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka.



WSM attendees

Mr. Ashok Jha, APO Director for India and Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, India, in his welcome address to the meeting, described some of the tremendous transformations in the economy which created a new India, including greater service-sector contributions to GDP (51%); an impressive GDP growth rate, which hit 8.5% in 2004; achieving the status of the fourth-largest economy in terms of purchasing power parity; sixth highest foreign exchange reserves; export growth of more than 20% in the last two years; and highest return on equity in foreign investment in Asia.

Jha cited estimates that more than 50% of the increase in global GDP has been due to technological upgrading, leading to higher productivity levels, and reported that India has been no exception. He called for closer networking among NPOs to help to boost productivity even further in all sectors, especially agriculture. Ending his address on a light note, Secretary Jha referred to the showers that greeted WSM delegates upon awakening that day and reminded them that “In India a bit of rain before an important event is considered to be auspicious.”

The guest of honor at the meeting was Indian Minister of State for Commerce and Industry E.V.K.S. Elangovan. Giving the inaugural address, he noted that Asia as a whole is in a resurgence. The region not only provides the developed countries with resources but markets for goods and services. In addition, manufacturing and service hubs are increasingly shifting to Asia. Recovery from the Asian financial crisis appears complete, he said, with positive total factor productivity growth recorded in most APO member countries in the past year.

While the previous 50 years were marked by economic, social, and technological progress in the Asia-Pacific region aided by the productivity movement, Minister Elangovan also pointed out that unfinished tasks remained, including the eradication of poverty and of social discrimination, especially against women; improving productivity in the agriculture sector, particularly by reducing postharvest losses and taking a scientific approach to organic farming; preventing environmental degradation;

(Continued on page 3)

Volume 35 Number 3
March 2005

“There is not a road ahead. We make the road as we go. Maybe the journey is not so much a journey ahead but into presence.”

Nellie Morton

INSIDE

- 2.... The Secretary-General's Statement
- 3.... p-TIPS
- 4.... New APO publication
- 4.... Common Sense Talk
- 5.... Improving agricultural marketing systems
- 6.... Students visit the Secretariat
- 6.... Cartoon contest winners
- 7.... p-Experts
- 7.... Program calendar
- 8.... JPC-SED celebrates its 50th anniversary
- 8.... Declaration of the 50th Anniversary of the Productivity Movement in Japan

Published monthly by
Asian Productivity Organization
Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Bldg. 2F
1-2-10 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku
Tokyo 102-0093, Japan
Tel: (81-3) 5226-3920
Fax: (81-3) 5226-3950
e-Mail: apo@apo-tokyo.org
Web site: www.apo-tokyo.org



Printed on Recycled Paper

A new India welcomes Heads of NPOs (Continued from page 1)

and more rapid sharing of scientific data to prevent or mediate the effects of natural disasters such as the recent Indian Ocean tsunami.

Minister Elangovan said that the APO, as the spearhead of the productivity movement in Asia since 1961, has continuously exposed its member countries to emerging technological and social trends and encouraged them to seek their own situation-specific strategies to increase productivity. He also believed that it was time to involve wider segments of society in the productivity movement, since “productivity growth is a social process.” As a conclusion, Minister Elangovan expressed the hope that: “...working in tandem with similar organizations, the APO and NPOs will be able to find solutions to long-standing problems.”

Another speaker at the inaugural session was Secretary-General Takenaka, who presented his statement (*see page 2 for full report*). Among the key issues he touched upon was declining revenues from special cash grants. In light of this, he said that increasing the cost-effectiveness of APO project and administrative operations was uppermost in his mind. He also announced that the Secretariat staff members will voluntarily return 3% of their salary as their contribution to curbing administrative expenses.

Mrs. Sunila Basant, Director-General of the National Productivity Council of India, was elected Chair of the meeting. The Vice Chairman was Mr. Noor A. Nizamani, President, Sindh Agriculture Forum, Pakistan. One highlight of the meeting was special presentations by two prominent Indian speakers: Mr. Kiran Karnik, President, National Association of Software and Service Companies, and Dr. Bhalchandra Munekar, Member of the Planning Commission, India, who spoke on “IT as a Productivity Enhancer” and “Poverty, Employment, and Productivity: An Asian Perspective,” respectively.

The main core of the meeting was the deliberations of the two Strategic Planning Committees that were constituted to develop strategic plans for the industry and service sectors and the agriculture sector. More specifically, they reviewed the following: linkages of the APO mission, vision, thrust areas, subject classification, and program coverage in light of diminishing resources and the need to exercise selection and concentration in project planning; measures to improve operational cost-effectiveness; proposed two-year plan; designation of special themes; and proposed APO award for organizational excellence.

Among the recommendations made by the delegates were to:

- 1) Expand the scope of evaluation of APO projects to include the long-term impact;
- 2) Organize more projects for top management personnel;
- 3) Design APO projects to make them more attractive to private-sector companies;
- 4) Revise the APO thrust areas by modifying one and adding another: Sustainable Development in Agriculture (modified from Integrated Community Development) and Quality Governance in the Public Sector;
- 5) Reclassify APO projects in accordance with the revised thrust areas;
- 6) Conduct a survey among NPOs on projects in the Two-Year Plan (2006–2007) to determine those they are eager to participate in and to categorize the projects based on demand;
- 7) Reflect the importance of the agriculture sector more explicitly in APO programs; and
- 8) Continue to pursue cost-effectiveness measures in organizing and implementing APO projects.

Vice Chairman Nizamani announced that Pakistan will host the 46th WSM in 2006. 