



Tripartism Is Critical To Raising Productivity

“As we move towards higher productivity in the economy, management will have to take the lead and in so doing all the tripartite partners will come together and provide the necessary support to management to initiate these changes.”

Manpower Minister Gan Kim Yong

“Leading the productivity movement rests squarely on the shoulders of management and the CEOs must take the lead. We have very supportive tripartite partners... But how to do it, where do you want to lead the companies lies very squarely on the shoulders of top management.”

SNEF President Stephen Lee



Speaking at the 30th anniversary celebrations of the Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF) on 28-29 July 2010, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said tripartism is one of the fundamental policies in Singapore's rapid economic and social development.

“We have to institutionalise our working arrangements and our tripartite relationships. And we can never afford to take the present harmonious state of affairs for granted. We have got to continue to nourish and strengthen the habits of trust and cooperation, especially amongst newer business leaders and union leaders and, I might say, newer ministers and office holders and MPs too.”

PM Lee added: “Now we should direct our energies and our tripartite efforts on a new challenge, namely, improving our productivity. It's essential for Singapore to remain competitive in a new environment,” adding that “a huge part of the responsibility for raising productivity falls on employers and business leaders. You set the strategic direction for your companies, you identify new markets and business opportunities.”

“You make the critical decisions, and you keep the operations running efficiently and smoothly. You provide the corporate framework within which your employees can work hard, learn new skills and be individually productive. You set the tone for how open your workplace culture is, and how closely your firms engage with unions and with employees. Your leadership is vital to upgrading the productivity in your firms.”



Tripartite Leaders at the dialogue with participants.

“We need the management to take the lead so that the unions and workers can respond together with the management towards being Cheaper Better and Faster all at the same time.”

NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say

\$40 Million Help For Low-Wage Workers

THE \$40 MILLION Inclusive Growth Programme (IGP) endorsed by The National Productivity and Continuing Education Council to improve the lives of low-wage workers was launched on 3 August 2010 by NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say at NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute).

The IGP aims to reach out to at least 25,000 workers in the next two years and to at least 100,000 workers in next five years and transform their jobs, skills and wages.

SG Lim said: “We must work together

to aim to slow down the widening of wage gaps in Singapore and strive for productivity for all. It is important that we improve the productivity of the top 70 per cent of the workers in every sector as they will make the greatest impact in strengthening our competitiveness. At yet at the same time, we must never neglect the bottom 30 per cent and we ensure that they are upgraded to achieve productivity for inclusiveness.”

The Inclusive Growth Programme is a horizontal programme that will uplift productivity of all low-wage workers,

earning less than \$1,700, in all sectors of the economy.

Out of the \$40 million set aside for IGP, \$30 million will be funded through the National Productivity Fund announced by the Government earlier this year to help companies redesign jobs, intensify use of equipment and technology as well as promote Best-Sourcing Initiative. Another \$10 million will be funded by Singapore Workforce Development Agency to incentivise company-specific training programmes for workers. IGP will be administered by e2i, which will work in partnership with unions, industry bodies and agencies to impact more low-wage workers through IGP.

Work-Life Strategies Bring Win-Win Outcomes

FOR THE FIFTH year, the Tripartite Committee on Work-Life Strategy organised the Work-Life Conference 2010 that this time was themed "Work-Life Strategy For Higher Productivity And Better Quality Of Life". Held on 26-27 August 2010 at Resorts World Convention Centre, Sentosa, Senior Parliamentary Secretary (Manpower & Health) Hawazi Daipi said that the economic recovery poses different challenges to employers:

"Pay raises alone are unlikely to be an effective long-term solution as employees who stay because of higher pay would leave when the next better offer comes along. Increasingly, employees are looking at the overall package that an employer can offer rather than remuneration alone."

Stressing that there is a win-win outcome for work-life strategies to be implemented, he added: "An effectively implemented work-life strategy helps employees better meet their work demands and personal needs, which will in turn, benefit the employer as well. From the employee's perspective,

better work-life harmony means less tension between work and personal lives, and a better quality of life overall, resulting in improved ability to perform at their best at work.

"Employers with employees who

can better integrate their work and personal lives will also benefit from more committed and engaged employees, who are able to better contribute to their organisations. This is also one way to approach the issue of productivity."



Work-Life Champions Recognised

MORE THAN 70 individuals and organisations were recognised as Work-Life champions at the biennial Work-Life Excellence Awards on 27 August 2010.

The Work-Life Leadership Award was conferred to Mrs Joanna Koh-Hoe, President of Focus on the Family Singapore Ltd and Mr Francis Tan, HR Director at Sheraton Towers Singapore.

A total of 25 organisations and companies received the Work-Life Excellence Award. 45 organisations and companies were conferred the Work-Life Achiever Award.



Mr Gan Kim Yong, Minister for Manpower, (Centre) with Work-Life Leadership Award Winners: Mrs Joanna Koh-Hoe and Mr Francis Tan.

Among award-winners are 13 SMEs, reflecting a growing interest and commitment among SMEs to reap the benefits of Work-Life practices. 70 per cent of this year's applicants are first-timers. The TriCom received some 50 per cent more applications this year compared to 2008.

PMEs To Get New Dispute Resolution Mechanism

THE MINISTRY OF Manpower (MOM) will be introducing an employment dispute resolution mechanism to help Professionals, Managers and Executives (PMEs) and their employers to resolve employment disputes.

Currently, PME's who have employment disputes with their employers would mostly resort to civil litigation to settle their disputes. This may be costly and protracted for both parties. It would benefit both employers and PME's if their employment disputes are settled speedily and at low-cost. This will also help to bring about more harmonious workplace relations.

MOM proposes to set up a dispute resolution mechanism (involving adjudication and tripartite mediation) to help PME's and their employers to resolve their employment disputes.