

A Brief Report on The EROPA Conference – 2014

Backdrop

The Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration (EROPA) - an organization consisted of states, institutions and individual members involved in the field of Public Administration mainly from the Asia – Pacific Region, convenes its Conference every year inviting representatives from member countries to deliberate up on different thematic issues among the scholars and practitioners relating to the Public Administration and Governance. Many governments in the Asia- Pacific Region, particularly within the EROPA network strive to initiate and implement different forms of public sector reform in response to the complex, dynamic and often pervasive development problems. The EROPA Conference, in this context, has remained important platform to devise approaches how governments in the region could implement reforms and how they could deal with the challenges. In its series, five-day long this year's EROPA Conference was held from October 20 to 24 at Hanoi in Vietnam.

On 19 October, EROPA's 60th Executive Council Meeting was also held at National Convention Center in Hanoi. More than 20 dignitaries and staff of representative institutions were present on the occasion. Acting Chair Dr, Akira Nakamura Professor of Meiji University, Japan presided over the Council meeting

Three – member Nepalese delegation, led by MoGA Secretary Naindra Prasad Upadhaya, accompanied by Bishnu Prasad Lamsal, Secretary PSC and Krishna Prasad Sharma, Under Secretary, MoGA, attended both the events.

The EROPA's 60th Executive Council Meeting

Day before the formal opening of the Conference, EROPA's 60th Executive Council Meeting held at National Convention Center on October 19. Head of the 2014 EROPA Conference organizing committee and leader in-charge of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), Vietnam Mr. Tran Anh Tuan briefly explained the progress of their preparations for the conference during the meeting.

EROPA Secretary General Dr. Orlando S. Mercado highlighted the main activities of the organization. They include: The formal Launch of the EROPA E-Government Research Center in Beijing, China, online EROPA Members' Corner page and the e-mail survey for EROPA members as feedback mechanism to help improve the services of the organization to its members.

Heads of various EROPA Centers: the Development Management Center, E-Government Research Center and Local Government Center presented their respective reports to the Executive Council. Activities such as the conduct of training programs, publications, research and collaborative activities were mainly highlighted on the occasion. Similarly, a brief summary of the progress of ARPA (Asian Review of Public Administration) and efforts of the editorial Board to improve the quality of the publication were also presented during the meeting. Dr. Akira Nakamura, chair of the Council meeting, summarized the financial position of the EROPA.

Guidelines for the implementation of the Raul P. de Guzman Award were presented to Executive Council for their review. Professor Roger Wettenhall one of the leading personalities of the organization and former Associate Editor of ARPA was recognized by the Executive Council as the first recipient of the said award.

On behalf of the host of EROPA Conference- 2015, which is scheduled to be held next year in Shanghai, China; Professor Hu Wei of Shanghai Jiatong University presented the brief report with short video clip highlighting the major theme and sub-themes for the 2015 EROPA Conference.

Representatives of EROPA member states: China, Japan, Korea, Nepal, Phillipines, Vietnam and other group and individual members were present during the Executive Council Meeting. They discussed a number of significant issues concerning the organization. Expressing their satisfaction over the activities carried out by the Secretariat, members of Executive Council underlined the importance of membership expansion.

Mr. Naindra Prasad Upadhaya, leader of Nepalese delegation, on the occasion, emphasized the need to explore the possibilities of the expansion of state membership along with the group and individual members so as to strengthen further the organization underpinning more collaborative effort to overcome common challenges in the Region.



(EROPA's 60th Executive Council Meeting in Progress)



(Members of Nepalese delegation attending the 60th Executive Council Meeting)

Snapshots of the Main Event of EROPA-2014

Opening Ceremony was held in the afternoon of 20 October 2014 at the National Convention Center, Hanoi, Vietnam. H. E. Nguyen Tan Dung, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam delivered the key note speech during the Opening Ceremony of the Conference. Speaking at the opening session, Prime Minister of Vietnam H.E. Nguyen Tan Dung urged participants to propose solutions that would improve the efficiency and efficacy of public administration.

Highlighting the importance of the quality of Public Administration and good governance, he said that public administration system can only be effective when it is comprehensive, progressive and convenient for the people. He emphasized the need of competent civil service and further stated that safeguarding good governance requires a reformed public administration which essentially calls for a need to introduce innovations to strengthen government institution and civil service. He added that the Conference would be a great opportunity for the participants to share important insights, experiences and practices in public administration reform towards socio-economic development.

From both their personal and professional lenses, speakers from representing countries also delivered their remarks on the occasion. H.E. Minister Nguyen Thai Binh and Vice-Minister Tran Anh Tuan of the Ministry of Home Affairs government of Vietnam, Acting Chair of 60th executive Council Dr. Akira Nakamura, EROPA Secretary General Orlando S. Mercado, heads of state delegation from participating countries were among the speakers who delivered their remarks at the opening session of the Conference encouraging the participants to maximize their active participation in the EROPA 2014 Conference through meaningful discussion and deliberations and exploration of ideas that would improve governance and public management in the EROPA region.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Conference, Mr. Naindra Prasad Upadhaya, leader of Nepalese delegation highlighted the importance of EROPA Conference which provides significant platform to share experiences and views on emerging issues of public administration and governance in the context of regional and global integration. He shared the challenges and efforts being made in the areas of public administration and governance reforms specifically paying attention to these reforms in some new perspectives in Nepal. Recognizing the interdependence and interconnectivity of countries, he stated that ensuing globalization process has also created new needs for the people of Nepal and other member states. It also bound countries to common problems and concerns in public administration, such as strengthening civil service

towards governance, ensuring performance based human resource management and civil service reform in line with federalization and state building, he added.



(Secretary Naindra Prasad Upadhaya Delivering his remarks at the Opening Ceremony)

He, on the occasion, suggested that avenues be explored for greater cooperation and knowledge-sharing initiatives among EROPA member states, ways by which post-MDG goals could be achieved, and new research and education research agenda to address emerging concerns in governance. He expressed his confidence that the collective wisdom of the participants in the Conference would help member countries to find effective measures and way forwards in order to respond to the challenges of governance reforms for accelerated overall development and contribute for meaningful integration needed in the region.

Prior to the Opening Ceremony, **Fourth Asian Leadership Forum**, as one of the main events of the first day of the Conference, was also convened with highlighting critical success factors for competent and professional public sector in place to achieve good governance and showcasing leadership approaches in line with globalization and regional integration.



(Dignitaries with H. E. Nguyen Tan Dung, Prime Minister of Vietnam at the Center)

Thematic Sessions held during the Conference

Parallel sessions on different themes and sub themes were held during the Conference. Participants discussed general issues regarding regional and international integration, transparency, accountability, and participation of private sector into state administration.

The 2014 EROPA Conference, themed "Public Administration and Governance in the Context of Regional and Global Integration" was co-organized by the EROPA and the National Academy of Public Administration of Vietnam, drew participation of over 400 management officials and experts from various countries and regions.

Over 400 managers, practitioners and scholars discussed innovative approaches to transparency, integrity and accountability; the involvement of the private sector in State governance; public finance and services; and e-government model at all levels.

Contributors and experts remained enthusiastically engaged to make the technical sessions more interactive and fruitful.

Issues relating to administrative and governance reforms, The impact of Climate Change, e-Governance, innovation in local governance, quality enhancement of public

management were among the sub- themes deliberated up on during the Conference, where participants and experts shared and exchanged their views from their own professional lenses and countries' perspectives.

Meeting held between Nepal-Vietnam Government Officials

On 22nd October 2014, bilateral meeting was held between Vice-Minister of the Home Ministry of Vietnam and Nepalese delegation. Matters of bilateral relations and mutual concerns were discussed during the meeting. Vice- Minister Tran Anh Tuan of the Ministry of Home Affairs government of Vietnam welcomed the members of Nepalese delegation to his office and thanked them for their active participation and contribution made for the success of the EROPA-Conference 2014 being held in Vietnam. In response, Appreciating the excellent arrangement made for the successful organization of EROPA Conference-2014, Mr. Naindra Prasad Upadhaya leader of Nepalese delegation congratulated the people and government of Vietnam particularly the Vice-Minister, head of the Conference organizing Committee for their magnificent effort to make the Conference outstanding and thanked him for inviting Nepalese delegation for the meeting.



Mentioning about the existing cordial bilateral relations between Nepal and Vietnam, both sides expressed their willingness to bring the relations to a new height through extending mutual support and cooperation in many areas. Both sides discussed on the matters of administrative and governance reforms and underscored the importance of training for human resource development.

Vice Minister Mr. Tran Anh Tuan expressed willingness to build the relationship between training institutions of both sides and said that National Academy for Public Administration (NAPA) of Vietnam could collaborate with similar Nepalese institution. Secretary Mr. Naindra Prasad Upadhaya welcomed the idea and responded that such relationship could be built between Nepal Administrative Staff College (NASC) and National Academy for Public Administration (NAPA) and said that they can collaborate with each other in extending mutual support and cooperation in the areas of training and research through their respective institutions. They could also explore other areas of cooperation, he added.

Both sides expressed happiness over the outcome of the meeting. Vice Chairman of NAPA and other officials from Vietnam side were also present on the occasion. The meeting was held in very pleasant manner.

Closing of the Conference

The annual meeting and conference of the Eastern Region Organization for Public Administration (EROPA)-2014 finally concluded successfully in Hanoi on October 23 after five days of discussions on how to improve public administration and governance in the context of regional and global integration.

Delivering his remarks, standing Chairman of the EROPA Council Kazuo Miwa hailed the event as a success that would help facilitate the birth of the united, dynamic and prosperous community. Vice- Minister Tran Anh Tuan of the Ministry of Home Affairs government of Vietnam and Head of Conference Organizing Committee and EROPA Secretary General Dr. Orlando S. Mercado delivered closing remarks thanking all representatives and participants for their active participation to make the Conference-2014 exclusively successful.

Participants enjoyed the Conference - 2014 as a significant platform to exchange information and share approaches to effective and transparent governance.

The next EROPA conference is scheduled to be held in Shanghai, China in October 2015. The EROPA - 2015 is supposed to be under the theme of regional government

reforms in the market context, together with sub-themes relating to roles of government and market, experiences and lessons of emerging markets, reforms in management.

Submitted By:

Naindra Prasad Upadhyay

Secretary, MOGA

Bishnu Prasad Lamsal

Secretary, PSC

Krishna Prasad Sharma

Under Secretary, MOGA