



SECRETARY LAGUESMA: "LET'S AIM FOR COLLECTIVE PRODUCTIVITY"



(Clockwise) DOLE Secretary and NWPC Chairperson Bienvenido E. Laguesma, Undersecretary and NWPC Chairperson Designate Benedicto Ernesto E. Bitonio Jr., and NWPC Executive Director Maria Criselda R. Sy deliver speeches during the awarding ceremony of the 2023 Productivity Olympics.

DOLE Secretary Bienvenido E. Laguesma called on micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the country to aim for "collective" progress rather than individual progress, emphasizing the importance of working together to improve productivity in the country.

He made this remark during the awarding ceremony of the 2023 Productivity Olympics, a biennial competition organized by the National Wages and Productivity Commission (NWPC) and the 16 Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards (RTWPBs) that aims to promote productivity improvement among MSMEs in the agribusiness, service, and industry sectors. The event was held on October 19, 2023, in Ortigas, Quezon City.

Secretary Laguesma, who also sits as NWPC Chairperson, congratulated Productivity Olympics winners and thanked them for participating in the department's advocacy.

Rather than aspiring for individual success, he urged winners to make productivity improvement a "collective mindset" that would benefit the nation.

"Improving productivity should be a collective mindset and a shared responsibility that we should set from the national level down to enterprises by instilling the belief that one can

do things better today than yesterday and tomorrow better than today. Such will bring to fruition our tagline in NWPC, "Kapag produktibo, aasenso," Secretary Laguesma said.

Secretary Laguesma expressed hope that the winners' success stories and best practices on productivity improvement and gainsharing will continue to inspire other enterprises so that the country's productivity advocacy will become "wider, more diverse and more vibrant."

Meanwhile, in his message, Undersecretary Benedicto Ernesto R. Bitonio, Jr., who serves as NWPC Chairperson-designate, encouraged MSMEs to be both role models for other MSMEs and shepherds in helping them improve.

"*Sana tuloy-tuloy kayo na hindi lang model among yourselves pero tuloy-tuloy kayo mag gabay ng kasamahan nating MSMEs as well as the workers that they employ para naman tuloy-tuloy tayong makapag improve ng ating productivity levels, hindi lang sa ating enterprise, pero sa ating regional as well as national economy,*" he said.

Undersecretary Bitonio also described as "heartfelt" the testimonies of the previous winners who highlighted the lessons of their journey throughout the competition.



(Clockwise) **THAT'S A WRAP!** NWPC wraps up the 2023 Productivity Olympics awarding ceremony by posing for photos with Secretary Laguesma, Undersecretary Bitonio, and Assistant Secretary Lennard Constantine Serrano.

Equally important function

Secretary Laguesma emphasized the need to heighten awareness of NWPC and RTWPB's "less publicized" but "equally important" function of helping raise enterprise and labor productivity.

He said that while the NWPC and RTWPBs are commonly known to the public for their regulatory function, its productivity improvement function is just as important because it is at the front and center of the Marcos administration's national development policy.

"Productivity improvement is one of our flagship advocacy programs because it creates a virtuous cycle that expands, so to speak, the size of the pie for everyone to share. Better productivity levels improve profit for businesses, which allows them to expand their portfolio, resulting in employment generation; translate to higher wages and better working conditions for workers, resulting in industrial peace; and can result in higher tax revenues for the government, contributing to a larger fiscal space for better social services and poverty alleviation programs," he said.

He said that while minimum wage adjustments are periodic actions that are meant to promote equity and social balance, productivity programs represent efforts to help enterprises and workers improve their day-to-day ability and capacity to produce goods and services, thereby positioning themselves to realize more profits, expand and grow, and raise incomes.

As part of efforts to enhance DOLE and NWPC's existing programs, Secretary Laguesma said the department plans to organize national and regional networks that will serve as platforms for sharing expertise and knowledge, continuous capacity building, mentoring, and adaptation. He said the DOLE is also planning to mobilize resources, including pub-

licly funded programs to help MSMEs have access to and use digitalization to improve their productivity and overall operations.

"Our goal is to help MSMEs transform and develop their capacities to use technology-based solutions, mainly digital and AI-powered tools for accounting, inventory management, human capital, customer service, marketing, and supply chain management," he said.

NWPC Executive Director Maria Criselda R. Sy, for her part, echoed Secretary Laguesma and vowed to strengthen support for MSMEs by providing practical and effective training that will enable them to optimize their operations and achieve sustainable growth.

"We will continue, even intensify, our commitment to MSMEs to provide assistance through our various productivity training programs to enhance their and their workers' productivity-which would lead to greater profitability and improved income opportunities for the enterprise and its workers," she said.

2023 Productivity Olympics Winners

Launched in 2008, the Productivity Olympics is a biennial competition that aims to intensify national awareness and commitment to quality and productivity and showcase best productivity improvement and gainsharing programs of MSMEs across the country.

Winning MSMEs went through a multi-step selection process, from regional screening to national screening. The 30 national finalists were officially chosen by the National Judging Panel (NJP) on September 14, 2023. The awarding ceremony signifies the grand finale of the Productivity Olympics.

RTWPB-II is Best Regional Board in 2023 Productivity Olympics



Secretary Laguesma and other officials present a giant novelty cheque to RTWPB-II for winning "Best Regional Board."

RTWPB-II won the Best Regional Board award during the 2023 Productivity Olympics Awarding Ceremony on October 19, 2023 in Ortigas, Quezon City.

DOLE Regional Director and Chairperson Jesus Elpidio B. Atal Jr., Board Secretary Heidelwina M. Tarrosa, NEDA Regional Director Dionisio C. Ledres, DTI Regional Director Romleah P. Juliet Ocampo, Employers' Representatives Gerald C. Tactay and Gary Ka Hong U. Chong, and Workers' Representatives Jesus B. Villamor and Johnny M. Alvaro accepted the award and a cash prize of Php30,000.

The Best Regional Board Award is given based on three criteria: Quality of documents submitted, number of national finalists, number of national winners (65%);

Quantity or qualified number of nominees (20%); and Timeliness or compliance to deadline and completeness of documents submitted (15%). It is also necessary for the recipient to excel in numerous areas.

According to Board Secretary Tarrosa, the teamwork between the nominees and the RTWPB-II Secretariat was a significant factor in winning the award.

"Nominees should thoroughly present their productivity programs while the RTWPB will give advice on ways they can further improve their programs and presentations," she said, adding that selecting the right enterprises to join the competition was crucial for their victory.

"It's important to pick the right enterprises to join and for RTWPBs to assist them in documentation. If we didn't properly assist them in the documentation, we wouldn't have won the award," Tarrosa said.

DOLE Regional Director Atal said convincing MSMEs to join the competition was not easy, but the assurance of the RTWPB to guide them boosted their confidence.

"Winners don't just happen; they need a lot of preparation, and we took care of the winners this year, so they succeeded this time and we're very happy for them," he said.

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National and regional Productivity Olympics finalists also exhibited innovative homegrown products in a trade fair organized by the NWPC in partnership with the Department of Trade and Industry.

This year's Productivity Olympics theme, "From Striving to Thriving," honors resilient MSMEs that achieved growth, innovation, job retention, and employee commitment.

The "Gawad Inklusibo" award was introduced for the first time to acknowledge enterprises that have shown notable leadership and innovation in promoting gender equality and social inclusion.

The "Gawad Luntian" Special Citation recognizes enterprises with contributions to environmental sustainability and efforts in generating green job opportunities in accord with the Republic Act No. 10771 or the Philippine Green Jobs Act.

The Best RTWPB was also recognized for pursuing excellence in producing the most number of winners in the competition.



(L-R) Secretary Laguesma, Executive Director Sy, and Rizal 4th District Rep. Fidel Nograles share a light moment at the sidelines of the Productivity Olympics. Nograles is one of the authors of House Bill No. 6683 or the "Enterprise Productivity Act."

2023 Productivity

AGRIBUSINESS SECTOR

National Winner



Micro enterprise category
• Citrus Hill Plantation (Region XIII – Caraga)

Agribusiness - Small National Winner



Small enterprise category
• Umani Cabal Farm, Inc. (Region XII – Soccsksargen)

Agribusiness - Medium National Winner



Medium enterprise category
• Amparitas Integrated Farm (Region XIII- Caraga)

INDUSTRY SECTOR

Industry - Micro National Winner



Micro enterprise category
• Manjous Homemade Delicacies (Region II – Cagayan Valley)

Industry- Small National Winner



Small enterprise category
• Eva Marie Arts and Crafts (Region VIII – Eastern Visayas)

Industry - Medium National Winner



Medium enterprise category
• Lighthouse Cooperative (Region II – Cagayan Valley)

GAWAD LUNTIAN



Gawad Luntian
• Energy Development Corporation – Mt. Apo Geothermal Project (Region XII – Soccsksargen)

Olympics Winners

SERVICE SECTOR



Micro enterprise category
 • Dubby's Ultimate Burgers Food House (Region VII – Central Visayas)



Small enterprise category
 • Prime Seller Marketing (Region V – Bicol Region)



Medium enterprise category
 • The Manor at Camp John Hay (Cordillera Administrative Region)

GAWAD INKLUSIBO



Gawad Inklusibo Award - Agribusiness sector
 • Umani Cabal Farm, Inc. (Region XII – Soccsksargen)



Gawad Inklusibo Award - Industry sector
 • JN Cacao Food and Beverage Store (Region VII – Central Visayas) Service



Gawad Inklusibo Award - Service sector
 • Dubby's Ultimate Burgers Food House (Region VII – Central Visayas)

SPECIAL CITATION



Gawad Luntian
 • SN Aboitiz-Magat Inc (Region II—Cagayan Valley)



Powering Infinite Possibilities

New minimum wage orders issued in Ilocos and Western Visayas Regions

A total of 287,683 minimum wage earners in private establishments in Ilocos and Western Visayas Regions are expected to directly benefit from the wage increases after NWPC affirmed the wage orders submitted by the RTWPBs I and VI on 19 October 2023.

About 677,626 full-time wage and salary workers earning above the minimum wage may also indirectly benefit as a result of upward adjustments at the enterprise level arising from wage distortion corrections.

RTWPBs I and VI have also issued wage orders for kasambahays. The wage increases are expected to benefit a total of 259,820 domestic workers – approximately 23% (58,517) of whom are on live-in arrangements, and 77% (201,303) are live-out.

RTWPB – I Wage Orders

RTWPB I (Ilocos Region) motu proprio issued Wage Order No. RB 1-22 on 10 October 2023, providing a P30-P35 increase in the daily minimum wage in the region. Upon effectivity, minimum wage rates will be set at P435 for non-agricultural establishments with 10 or more workers and P402 for non-agricultural establishments with less than 10 workers, and agricultural workers.

In a parallel effort to improve the wages of domestic workers, RTWPB I also issued Wage Order No. RB 1-DW-04 granting a monthly increase of P500 bringing the monthly wage rate of domestic workers in the region to P5,500.

RTWPB I's wage orders were published on 21 October 2023, and shall take effect after 15 days or on 06 November 2023.

RTWPB – VI Wage Orders

RTWPB VI (Western Visayas), by virtue of a petition, issued Wage Order No. RBVI-27 on 16 October 2023, granting a P30 minimum wage increase across all sectors. Upon effectivity, the daily minimum wage rates in the region will be P480 for non-agriculture establishments with more than 10 workers, P450 for non-agriculture establishments with 10 workers or less, and P440 for workers in agriculture.

The Regional Board also issued Wage Order No. RB VI-DW-05, granting a monthly increase of P500 and bringing the monthly wage rate of domestic workers (*kasambahays*) in the region to P5,000.

RTWPB VI's wage orders will be published on 31 October 2023, and shall take effect after 15 days or on 16 November 2023.

The increases, which considered the various wage determination criteria provided under Republic Act No. 6727 or the Wage Rationalization Act, either resulted from the motu proprio act of the Board or petitions filed by labor groups seeking an increase in the daily minimum wage. Each Board, comprised of representatives from the government, management, and labor sectors, conducted consultations, public hearings and/or wage deliberations prior to the issuance of a wage order.

MINIMUM WAGE RATES as of October 31, 2023

Region's Wage Order	Highest Rate	Effectivity of rates
Wage Order No. NCR-24	P610.00	July 16, 2023
Wage Order No. CAR-22	P430.00	December 5, 2023
Wage Order No. RBI-22	P435.00	November 6, 2023
Wage Order No. RB2-22	P435.00 (1st tranche)	October 16, 2023
	P450.00 (2nd tranche)	April 1, 2024
Wage Order No. RB3-24	P500.00	October 16, 2023
Wage Order No. RB4A-20	P520.00	September 24, 2023
Wage Order No. RB4B-10	P355.00	June 10, 2022
Wage Order No. RB5-21	P395.00	December 1, 2023
Wage Order No. RB6-27	P480.00	November 16, 2023
Wage Order No. RB7-24	P468.00	October 1, 2023
Wage Order No. RB8-23	P405.00	November 30, 2023
Wage Order No. RB9-22	P381.00	November 12, 2023
Wage Order No. RB10-21	P405.00	June 25, 2022
Wage Order No. RB11-21	P443.00	January 1, 2023
Wage Order No. RB12-23	P390.00 (1st tranche)	October 16, 2023
	P403.00 (2nd tranche)	January 1, 2024
Wage Order No. RB13-17	P350.00	June 6, 2022
Wage Order No. BARMM-02	P341.00	July 21, 2022



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