

Kerala PERSONNEL

National Institute of Personnel Management - Kerala Chapter

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Principle of
Natural **Justice**

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Message from CHAIRMAN



Dear HR Professionals,

Happy New Year Greetings from NIPM (Kerala Chapter). Welcome to the second edition of Kerala Personnel. During the period October - December 2023 we organized series of programmes at the chapter level, which was well attended by HR professionals. Special Kudos to the NIPM Groups for making the Groups vibrant with variety of activities.

We organized review of the book Anubhavam Guru written by former Chairman Mr. V N Sreedharan Nair. The book review was done by former Chairman Mr. P J Joy. The one-day session on Gen AI and Future of HR was well received by the participants. HR has to move from transactional role to strategic role. Armed with the right technology, an HR person can spend more time on high value adding activities. Research studies have shown that AI can reduce the performance management time by one third. It can automate task assignment and resource allocation. Gen AI tools like chatbots can handle routine HR enquiries. Further AI tools can eliminate data entry work in a big way and save HR professionals significant time and effort. The emphasis should be on using AI to compliment human roles not replaces them.

AI can analyse employee surveys and other data sources to gauge employee sentiment. This allows HR teams to identify areas for improvement and take proactive measures to enhance employee satisfaction. In future HR processes will be hyper personalised, catering to the unique needs and preferences of each employee.

Our upcoming programmes include DEI certification programme, Boot Camp for B school students, Young Managers Contest Powered by V Guard Industries Ltd, NIPM foundation day and National HR Conclave 2024. The Conclave is planned on 9 and 10 May 2024 in Cochin. The theme of the conclave is Crafting the people ecosystem for tomorrow. This Conclave will bring together HR thought leaders and professionals from diverse backgrounds to exchange ideas and insights. In order to make this conclave a resounding success, we seek your ideas, support and active participation. Let us come together to make HR Conclave a celebration of Knowledge, innovation and team work. Let us unite together and set the direction of Human Resources for future.

Let me thank all our members and well-wishers for the whole hearted support and involvement in NIPM activities. Looking forward to your active presence, innovative ideas and suggestions in future also.

With Professional regards,

Johnson Mathew
Chairman

Message from
SECRETARY



Message

Dear HR Family,

Wishing you all a Fabulous New year 2024.

New year is the time for resolutions and I hope many of you would have already set your HR goals for 2024. Thought of taking you through an ESG lens this new year.
USING AN ESG LENS...

- Protecting the environment,
- Promoting strong corporate governance,
- Encouraging high social standards, that's what ESG is all about.

Why investing in ESG is getting popular?

It is majorly due to the shift in Investor Demographics.

Younger generations, such as millennials and Gen Z, are becoming a significant force in the investment landscape. These investors often prioritize ESG values and sustainability in their investment choices. How HR can contribute in creating a sustainable workforce?

This can be achieved by keeping sustainability the top of the priority list. Influencing employees behaviour by ensuring workplaces are as environmentally sustainable as they can be.

Firstly, place eco-friendly policy at the forefront of employee's minds. Align HR policies with ESG goals.

Build a socially responsible corporate culture by promoting ESG related education. Creating a business plan that incentivises and encourages eco-friendly efforts will help reduce environmental impact, will please employees with a strong belief in environmentalism, which impacts the "E" (Environment) aspect of ESG.

Fostering a healthy working environment by focusing on the employee wellbeing, health & safety. Attracting, retaining and developing a diverse and inclusive workforce. Implementing fair and equitable practices for the promotion of DEI at the workplace. Thereby HR contributes to the "S" (Social) aspect of ESG.

HR can work with leaders to ensure that the company's governance structure fosters transparent decision-making and accountability. This ensures that the company operates responsibly and ethically, addressing the "G" (Governance) aspect of ESG.

We hope our upcoming Program conducted in Feb 2024, in collaboration with SHRM INDIA on "CULTIVATING INCLUSION", is going to be a big leap towards promoting a sustainable working environment. Let us continue to work together, support one another, and contribute to the growth & success of NIPM Kerala Chapter.

Thank you for your continued commitment.

Kind Regards,

Kshama Sandeep
Secretary
NIPM Kerala Chapter

Message from
EDITOR'S DESK



Message

Dear Readers,

Greetings and welcome to the second edition of Kerala Personnel. The realm of Human Resources is undergoing a remarkable transformation, driven by the integration of data and AI. Today's HR teams face the challenge of harmonizing the utilization of data and AI to contribute value to the organization, while ensuring a human-centric approach remains at the core of their processes. Striking this balance is crucial to delivering enhanced HR services that cater to the needs of both candidates and employees.

This edition covers a range of topics, such as Natural Justice Principles, and delves into HR Capital gains, with a specific emphasis on the PM Vishwakarma Government Scheme. Additionally, it explores the migration of people for work and the associated complexities, along with other insightful pieces on the Industry Front. These insights are bound to serve as a valuable learning resource for all readers.

As the landscape of work continues to evolve, our commitment is to keep you well-informed and inspired. We encourage you to delve into the content, actively engage, and share your thoughts with us. Your feedback is priceless as we strive to provide content that empowers HR professionals not only in Kerala but also beyond.

We extend our gratitude for your continued support and eagerly anticipate your active participation in the dynamic NIPM community.

Happy Reading!

Dr. Ranjana Mary Varghese
Editor

Knowledge Sharing Sessions

11-10-2023 – Thrissur Group Annual Meet at Hotel Ashoka Inn. Inaugurated by Mr. Krishna Teja IAS, District Collector, Thrissur and Key Note Speaker Mr. Ramakrishnan T.B., Managing Director & CEO, Sharewealth Securities Ltd. On the topic Current Global Economic Changes. Few Senior Members of NIPM Kerala Chapter attended the function.



14-10-2023 – De Paul College of Management arranged a Passing Out function for their MBA/MHRM Students in which Mr. K. Srijith, Hon. Treasurer was the Chief Guest. Mr. M.S. Sreekumar, Life Member also attended the function.

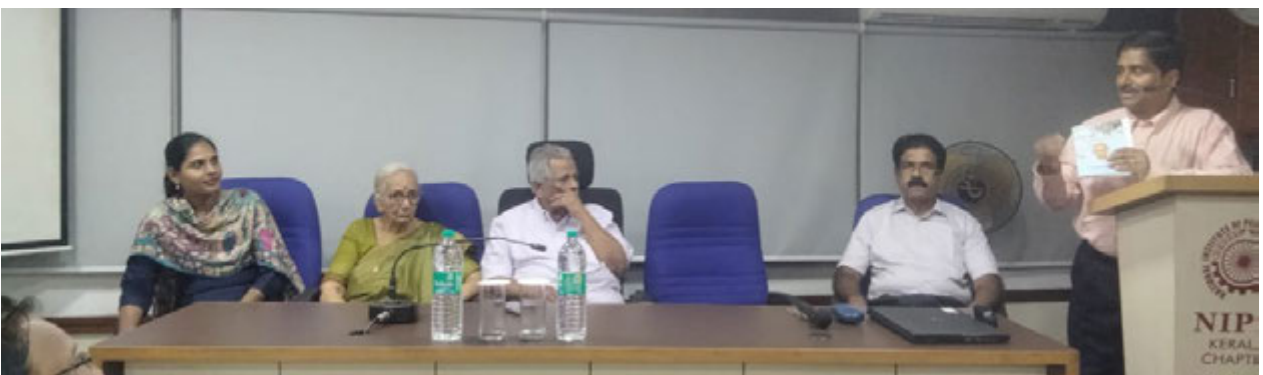


18-10-2023 – NIPM Alappuzha Group organized a Felicitation Ceremony to Mr. H. Rupesh, the first disabled L.R. Deputy Collector, Alappuzha at the District Head Quarters, Alappuzha.

Knowledge Sharing Sessions

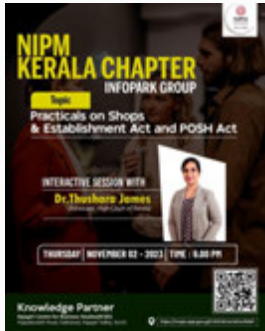


19-10-2023 – NIPM Alappuzha Group organized a function at Karunya Deepam Charitable Centre, Athirapally in which Food have been served to the inmates and also various cultural programs including musical event to entertain the inmates. Members from Alappuzha Group lead by Mr. Benny John & Mr. Sudheesh Dinakaran also attended the event.



27-10-2023 Felicitation to Mr. V.N. Sreedharan Nair, Former Chairman, Kerala Chapter (1991-93) on authoring of a Book titled Anubhavam Guru, by presenting Ponnada and Memento. Also the Book Review on the book Anubhavam Guru was also done by Mr. P.J. Joy, Former Chairman (2008-2010). Mr. Sreedharan Nair also addressed the audience about his experience and journey in the HR field.

Knowledge Sharing Sessions



01-11-2023 – NIPM Infopark Group organized a Knowledge Sharing/Interactive Session in association with Rajagiri Centre for Business Studies at their conference hall on the topic Practicals on Shops & Establishment Act and POSH Act by Dr. Thushara James, Advocate High Court of Kerala.

21-11-2023 – NIPM Kottayam Group organized a Knowledge Sharing Session on PF related matters at Malayala Manorama Conference Hall. The Resource Person was Mr. Sreejith P.R., Regional PF Commissioner, Kottayam.



30-11-2023 Kerala Chapter organized a Knowledge Sharing Session at NIPM House on the topic ESG-the Next Wave of Corporate Transformation by Mr. Rajesh Nair, Partner-Markets EY LLP



Knowledge Sharing Sessions



12-12-2023 – NIPM Kerala Chapter organized a One Day Workshop at Reccaa Club, Kakkanad, Kochi in association with ihits Technologies and Ellow Talent Marketing Solutions on the topic Gen AI in HR with Sub Themes. Various Sub Themes are as under:

- i) Demystifying Gen AI – Resource Person Mr. Kenny Jacob, Tech Entrepreneur
- ii) Gen AI Applications in Recruitment – Resource Person Mr. Debi Kar, CEO & Co-Founder, HYRGPT
- iii) NIPMKeral-X; a TED-Style Talk Series – Resource Persons Ms. Labby George (Tech Entrepreneur), Mr. Priyesh Gopalakrishnan (Director-Cognizant) & Mr. Shaju Raveendran Nair (Director at DCUBE AI Research & Development P. Ltd)

18-10-2023 – Released NIPM Kerala Chapter's Publication Kerala Personnel e-News Letter for the Quarter July – September 2023. The same has been circulated to all members through WhatsApp / e-Mail and also uploaded in NIPM Website www.nipmkerala.org

Knowledge Sharing Sessions



15-12-2023 – NIPM Kerala Chapter has opened TWO Student Chapters and a Panel discussion session was also held at following Colleges:

- i) MES College Marampally (Department of Human Resource Management) – 23 Student Members
- ii) MES Advanced Institute of Management & Technology (Department of Management Studies) (AIMAT) – 45 Students

The Inauguration of the Student Chapters were performed by Mr. Johnson Mathew, Chairman. The Panel Members were Dr. A. J. Augustine (Vice Chairman), Ms. Kshama Sandeep (Hon. Secretary) and Mr. Jayarajan V (EC Member)

15-12-2023 – NIPM Kottayam Group organized a Knowledge Sharing Session at Manorama Conference Hall on the topic Navigating through Challenging Journey of wage Settlements at MRF Kottayam. The Resource Session was Mr. Shibu Satyarajan, Chief Manager (HR), MRF, Kottayam.



Executive Committee Meeting

27-10-2023 – The Executive Committee Meeting of Kerala Chapter was held on 27th October 2023 at NIPM House, Kochi.

30-11-2023 – The Executive Committee Meeting of Kerala Chapter was held on 30th November 2023 at NIPM House, Kochi.

21-12-2023 – The Executive Committee Meeting of Kerala Chapter was held on 30th November 2023 at NIPM House, Kochi.

Achievements / Recognitions



Mr. K. Lal John, Fellow & Former Chairman, NIPM Kerala Chapter (2018-2021) has been nominated as Special Invitee to NIPM National Council for the Term 2023-2025



Mr. K. Rajasekharan Pillai, Life Member, NIPM has been elevated to the post of Corporate IR Head of the entire Units of MRF Limited.



Principle of Natural Justice

Varkiachan Pettah

(very easy to follow, but oft-neglected, yet critical aspect in administration of labour jurisprudence. Disciplinary proceedings in industry – Legal Protection of workman - Common mistakes by the Employer)

The history of disciplinary proceedings in industry can be broadly divided into two periods:

- The period from 1947 to 15th December 1971; and
- The period from 15th December 1971 to the present

The dividing point is the introduction of section 11A on 15th December 1971 in the ID Act. Before 15th December 1971, the disciplinary action was the realm of satisfaction of the employer. But after the insertion of Section 11 A in the ID Act and the subsequent ruling of the Supreme Court in the case of Firestone Limited (1973) the centre of gravity has shifted from the realm of satisfaction of the employer to the realm of satisfaction of the Labour Courts/Tribunals.

When the Industrial Disputes Act was enacted in 1947, there was no section 11A. it was largely guided the Supreme Court directions contained in its judgement in the case of Iron and Steel Company Limited (1957). In that judgement Supreme Court held that enforcing discipline is primarily the responsibility of the employer. The Labour Courts

and Tribunal need not act as appellate authorities to replace the decision of the employer by the decision of the court.

The Supreme Court in the guidelines issued in the Iron and Steel Company Limited case held that Labour Courts and Tribunal can intervene only if there is a malafide intention, the action was taken not in good faith, unfair labour practises or the punishment is 'shockingly disproportionate' to the misconduct. Otherwise, if the inquiry was conducted and the charges are proved, then leave it to the employer to decide the punishment.

The above was the guiding principles laid down by Supreme Court. Further in 1963, International Labour Organisation (ILO) passed a resolution that when the services of a workman is terminated, there should be an independent body to which he can make the representation and that independent body should be empowered enough to give appropriate relief to the workman. In order to circumvent the decision of the Supreme Court in the Iron and Steel Company Limited and also in line with the resolution of ILO in 1963 the ID Act was amended in 1971 and

section 11A was introduced. Section 11A is “Powers of labour courts , tribunal and National Tribunal to give appropriate relief to workman in case of dismissal and discharge”. Subsequently, the Firestone case has come before the Supreme Court in 1973 and Supreme Court clarified that based on the insertion of section 11A now the Labour Courts and Tribunals has full powers to go into details, like whether the inquiry was conducted ‘properly’, whether the ‘procedures’ were adhered to, whether the ‘principles’ of natural justice was ‘complied’ with, whether the findings are ‘correct’ etc.

The labour laws extend enough protection to a worker in case of dismissal or discharge of a worker. Justice V. R. Krishna Iyer in his famous judgement in the case of Bank of India Vs N Sundaramony (1976) stated that when a worker completes 240 days, he swims towards the harbour of labour law protection. The ID Act was amended several times to ensure that adequate protection is provided to a workman in case of dismissal, discharge or retrenchment:

- Section 2A
- Section 17B
- Section 2A(2)

Section 2A: The first protection was introduced by way of introduction of section 2A in the ID Act that is “Dismissal etc of an individual workman to be deemed to be an industrial dispute”. When the ID Act was enacted, this provision was not there. Even in the case of dismissal and termination, a workman individually could not raise an Industrial dispute. It can be raised either by a group of workmen or by the union. The introduction of section 2A in the ID Act gave the worker the right to raise the industrial dispute alone without the help of any other worker or union. Section 17B: The second protection was introduction of section 17B in the ID Act. That is “full wage to workman pending proceedings in the higher courts”. The employers used to drag the case starting from conciliation, to Labour Courts, High

Courts and Supreme Court. By the time the case reach the Supreme Court most of the workmen will reach the age of retirement. In order to protect a workman who has obtained a favourable decision of reinstatement from the Labour court or Tribunal and in the event the Employer prefer an appeal before the High court and subsequently Supreme Court , he shall be paid the last drawn salary till the case is disposed of by the High court or by the Supreme Court. 2A (2): The third and final protection was the introduction of subsection 2 under section 2A in 2010. This provision has given him the “freedom to move to Labour Court or Tribunal after 45 days of raising the dispute”.

I will conclude this discussion, by highlighting one more point, that is regarding the issue of “second show cause notice”. This was a major violation committed by many employers which rendered dismissal or discharge invalid. The position before 1977 before the 42nd Amendment was that a workman should be given two opportunities; in the 42nd Amendment which come into effect on 1st January 1977, the opportunity to make a representation against the proposed punishment was taken away:

- (i) One to make a representation against the findings of the enquiry; and
- (ii) Second to make the representation against the proposed punishment

However, the opportunity to make the representation against the findings of the enquiry was not taken away. But the employers stopped giving opportunity in both the cases. Then in the Mohammed Ramsan Khan (1990) case before the Supreme Court, the Court observed that it is true that the representation against the punishment was taken away by the 42nd Amendment, but giving opportunity to make the representation against the finding of the inquiry is not dispensed with. However, Supreme Court ruled that so many termination cases already decided between

1977 to 1990 cannot be unsettled. It is difficult to reopen each and every case. But it was categorically stated, that henceforth if the second show cause is not given it will amount to procedure violation and infringement of natural justice and therefore the dismissal will be set aside. This was again reiterated by Supreme Court in the case of Managing Director, Electronic Corporation of India Versus Karunakar (1993).

As far as disciplinary proceedings are concerned the common mistakes from the part of the employers are (1) Decision regarding the particular employee whether he belongs to the category of workmen or non-workman.

This mistake is done largely because the employers go by the designation or go by the salary. But Supreme Court has clarified in many occasions that to decide a particular employee belongs to the category of workman or not can be done only on the basis of the nature of job. If the nature of job is unskilled, skilled, manual, operational, technical,

clerical or supervisory and If the nature of job falls in anyone of the above category then he is a worker, irrespective of salary and designation. This is a common mistake repeatedly done by many employers.

Second common mistake is procedure violation. How to conduct the disciplinary proceedings is nowhere stated in any statute book including Industrial Disputes Act. It is a common law developed by various judgments of High Courts and Supreme Court. If there is procedure violation then Courts will set aside the termination order.

The last and final mistake is with regard to compliance natural justice. This is a vast area. The recent trend of judiciary is more emphasis given to the civil rights and Individual freedom; all of which culminates into violation of natural justice. This is a common ground on which many of the termination cases were set aside by the Labour Courts , Tribunals and superior Courts.

Varkiachan Pettah

Principle Consultant (Labour Kerala State Productivity Council)
and Senior Faculty of Kerala Institute of Labour and Employment



HOW HR CAPITAL GAIN THROUGH PM Vishwakarma Scheme

Prasanth P
People Operations Manager, FFSC

A skill ecosystem has many components; only rarely can one part be changed in isolation. Recent interest in skill ecosystems and initiatives associated with their reform represent the latest manifestation of a long-standing tradition of skills analysis, which recognises the importance of the context in which skills are developed and used. Whilst the original academic literature on the topic was primarily concerned with understanding and promoting high-skill ecosystems, this article examines national approaches to policy and practice concerned with improving ecosystems associated with workers with low and middle-level skills.

Western countries developed through skill ecosystem

Skill ecosystems thinking has been badged in Scotland as 'skills utilization' and focuses on developing individuals and workplaces in order to increase productivity, improve job satisfaction and stimulate investment and innovation.

Historically, workforce planning has involved making projections about the likely changes in the industry and occupational nature of employment in

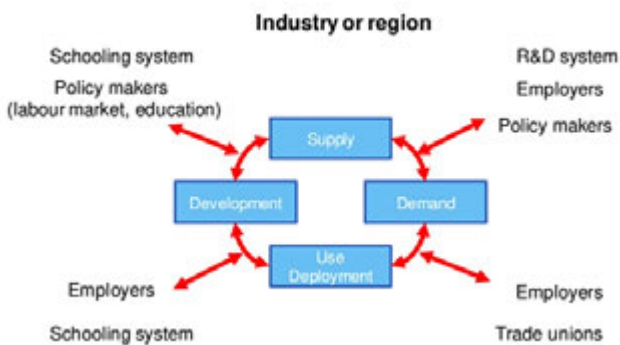
the future. Whilst modelling techniques vary in sophistication, their underlying assumption has been that past trends can help to predict the future. Education and training providers were then informed of the likely demands for their services. Implicit in this was the assumption that labour demand should be taken for granted, and those concerned with skills should gear up to meet projected demand. Recognition of the importance of understanding and managing skills in context had a major influence on skills planning at the national, sectoral, and regional levels in Australia in the period 2008 to 2014.

Engagement with employers has proven difficult, but a concern with skill ecosystem reform has remained an ongoing element of the changes in Scotland. A key area of reform has been developing intermediate-level skills for intermediate-level jobs.

Since the mid-1970s, Australia's labour market has been transformed. Well-defined occupational and internal labour markets for those workers with intermediate skills have steadily eroded after decades of 'restructuring' between 2008 and 2014, the national body responsible for advising on changing skill requirements (the Australian

Productivity and Workforce Authority (APWA)).

The Skill ecosystem thinking is not immediately discernible in US policy discourse - despite the fact that the term was coined by David Finegold of the United States. On closer inspection, however, an abundance of effective skill ecosystem reform in practice and interesting policy developments are evident; these developments are partly linked to the infrastructure provided in and a series of initiatives following, (the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998)



Skill Eco system in Indian scenario

In India, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship is formed in the year 2015. Since then, many flagship programs have been implemented for the Industrial growth of the country. The success story is continuing with India's Industrial indexes. Many projects are implemented with the partnership of Industrial Associations like CII, FICCI, SIAM, NASSCOM, ASSOCHAM and other Chambers of Commerce. Public Private Partnership models have been emphasised in almost all the projects.

The improvement of the Technical Education system also envisages a process change for quality improvements, generally, the technical schools and educational institutes of the country should be able to partner with the manufacturing industries and thus students also should be employable after their studies.

National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET), the regulatory body under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) is playing a major role in building relationship with the industry entrepreneurs and the learners, the industry required courses and trainings have been designed and now job roles are developed as per the NSQF level with the introduction of a new credit framework called the NCRF.

PM Vishwakarma

PM Vishwakarma is a new scheme which envisages to provide end to end historic support to the traditional artisans and craftspeople in scaling up their conventional products and services. The objectives of the scheme are:

1. Recognition of craft people and artisans as Vishwakarma
2. Skill upgradation of horn their skill with suitable training.
3. Support for modern tools to enhance their capability, productivity and quality.
4. Easy access to collateral free credit
5. Incentives for digital transactions
6. Brand promotion and market linkage platforms

PM Vishwakarma is a holistic Scheme that envisages to provide end-to-end support to the artisans and craftspeople through the following components:

- a. Recognition: PM Vishwakarma Certificate and ID Card
- b. Skill Upgradation
- c. Toolkit Incentive
- d. Credit Support
- e. Incentive for Digital Transactions
- f. Marketing Support

The scheme aims at providing several benefits to the Vishwakarmas, who are either self-employed or

intend to setup their own small-scale ventures. The support provided through this Scheme to such beneficiaries will not only contribute to the preservation of cultural practices, generational skills and guru-shishya Parampara, but will also provide an identity and recognition to them.

The Scheme envisages to provide end-to-end holistic support to artisans and craftspeople for their respective trades. Through the implementation of the Scheme, it is expected that beneficiaries who are currently working as entrepreneurs in the unorganised sector will be able to scale-up their operations, modernize/upgrade their tools and business, and enter the formal economy as entrepreneur and contribute towards the larger goal of nation building.

Creating market linkages for the Vishwakarmas is a critical step in improving their livelihood and quality of life. The National Committee for Marketing (NCM) will provide marketing and branding support for the products of the artisans and craftspeople registered under the Scheme. Marketing support in the form of quality certification, branding, advertising, publicity and other marketing activities would be extended to the beneficiaries to improve their linkage to the value chain of MSMEs and established companies.

How is this scheme going to benefit the entrepreneurs if the basic skilled workers are getting trained through a Government-funded training system? Will our primary manufacturing industries benefit indirectly through this mass training and empowering scheme? The answer is Yes, because in a fast-growing nation like India, our workforce, especially the younger generation, needs to be empowered through skill education.

Many traditional trades are facing many challenges in their quality, productivity and profitability. There are challenges; many small industries face manpower shortages and a lack of skilled workforce. Many of our traditional manufacturing entities may become extinct in years if they do not modernise and attract new generations to the

industry.

We know our HR fraternity members try hard to fill the vacancies on time with the right skills of people. We had to recruit candidates from the available applications only, and the process was also costly, and there is not a databank available for a particular skill set. Many times, we need to compromise on the quality of manpower as this leads to total productivity loss.

Another factor here in helping the HR professionals is that many new production centres and factories will come up in due course, as many products we do only import or we do not know how to produce them and we do not know from where we get right people for managing production, even though investors are available.

PM Vishwakarma plans to give training to 18 trades, and all those artisans must be brought to the mainstream workforce as a unique ID card, and certificate will be issued to them. Through this process of training the artisans of the country, the industry will benefit by way of increased production through advanced tools and technologies. The financial support and very low-interest financial support with no collaterals will encourage the artisans to upskill and commence their startup or self-employment units. Thus, no doubt, economic activities will be faster than ever. Ultimately, the quality of Human Resources in our country will be robust both financially and with technical skills. So, this also will be a paradigm shift in the manufacturing sector of our country, where 'Make in Kerala' and 'Make in India' are going to be a reality in many products through such empowerment training programs.

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2. Autor, D. (2011) 'The Polarization of Job Opportunities in the U.S. Labour Market: Implications for Employment and Earnings', *Community Investments*, 23:2, pp.11-41
3. John Buchanan, Pauline Anderson and Gail Power, Chapter 21, *Skill Eco Systems*.
4. <https://pmvishwakarma.gov.in/>



Leadership Odyssey: Navigating Challenges, Pioneering Transformations, and Fostering Trust in the Public Sector Chemical Industry

An Exclusive Interview with Mr. Harikumar

In the bustling world of public sector enterprises, Mr. Harikumar stands as a beacon of leadership and success. In a candid interview with the Managing Director of renowned public sector companies TCC (Travancore Cochin Chemicals) and Malabar Cements Ltd. we delved into the remarkable journey of a man whose career path exemplifies determination, resilience, and outstanding leadership.

As we began our conversation, Mr. Harikumar reflected on his educational background, providing insights into the pivotal decision-making process that set the stage for his illustrious career. "After completing my graduation, the landscape of opportunities lay wide open before me. Cochin University, in its early years, offered an MBA program, and being among its fifth batch, I saw it as an unparalleled chance," he recalled.

Mr. Harikumar went on to recount his initial years, starting with a campus placement as a Management Trainee and later at Hindustan Organic Chemicals in Mumbai. His journey then took him to Baroda. Later on he played a crucial role in establishing a marketing department for the company at Kochi. "Being an MBA in Marketing, the challenge was to set up a marketing facility in Kochi. That's how HOCL commenced marketing its products manufactured in Kochi, marking the beginning of a two decade-long association," he explained. The turning point arrived when an enticing board-

level opportunity presented itself at Hindustan Insecticides, a government appointment that led him back to Delhi. "By the age of 47, I became the Chairman and Director of the company, making me one of the youngest CMDs in the public sector by 2005," he proudly stated.

Mr. Harikumar's tenure at Hindustan Insecticides garnered recognition from none other than the Prime Minister of India, acknowledging his outstanding contribution to public sector management. He further highlighted his achievements in turning around a financially ailing company, earning him accolades and setting the stage for subsequent leadership roles.

"Recognized for the turnaround at Hindustan Insecticides, I was tasked with revitalizing Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd., an iconic player in the pharmaceutical sector. Despite the challenges, we provided restructuring plans and started the journey of revival," he shared.

The narrative took a twist as he described his pivotal role in multiple public sector enterprises. From resurrecting TCC (Travancore Cochin Chemicals), to overseeing Malabar Cements, and even temporarily managing Kerala State Drug and Pharmaceutical Alleppey, Mr. Harikumar found himself at the helm of three companies simultaneously. Reflecting on the challenges, he remarked, "It was a demanding period, managing multiple entities

simultaneously. But the goal was clear - revive, restructure, and rejuvenate these enterprises. TCC, in particular, became my base position, and it was heartening to witness its transformation into a thriving entity."

Navigating Roadblocks and Pioneering Diversity in Agrochemicals

Continuing our engaging conversation with the esteemed Managing Director, we explore the dynamic landscape of his nearly two-decade-long journey at the board level, which has been nothing short of a saga in the chemical sector.

With a wealth of experience in bulk chemicals, Mr. Harikumar emphasizes that his expertise extends beyond the realm of commodity chemical manufacturing. "My core strength lies in bulk chemicals, but my journey has ventured into diverse territories, including the specialty sector," he explains.

During his tenure at Hindustan Insecticides Ltd. (HIL), Mr. Harikumar delved into specialty chemicals such as agrochemicals. Reflecting on the challenges faced, he narrates, "HIL, like many in our industry, had to confront a significant hurdle. One of our key products, Endosulfan, faced a sudden ban, disrupting our substantial exports. To adapt, we strategically diversified our portfolio."

Navigating the complexities of the agrochemical industry, Mr. Harikumar led HIL into the realm of seed production and marketing. "It was a daunting task, considering we had no manufacturing facility for seeds. Instead, we had to collaborate directly with farmers, providing breeder seeds, overseeing cultivation, certification, and government supply. It was an intricate process," he details.

Acknowledging the pivotal role of seed production in enhancing agricultural productivity, Mr. Harikumar reveals, "The seed replacement ratio is crucial for increasing crop yield. We invested significantly in this area, and by the time I left, seed business had burgeoned into a 70-80 crore enterprise."

The divergence into agriculture, however, brought a unique set of challenges. "Agriculture is an entirely different business. Unlike manufacturing, we had to engage directly with farmers, understand their needs, and guide them through the entire cultivation

process," he articulates. Mr. Harikumar's innovative approach led HIL to establish farmer groups and actively participate in various steps of seed production.

Intrigued by Mr. Harikumar's extensive involvement in the agricultural sector, our conversation touched upon his association with the Crop Care Federation. "That's an association of agrochemical manufacturers, primarily dealing with pesticides. Crop Care Federation generally doesn't delve into seed production. However, during my tenure, I served as a Director, contributing to the larger discourse within the agrochemical industry," he reveals.

Mr. Harikumar reflected on the significant setback caused by the ban on Endosulfan, a key product in the company's portfolio. "It was a roadblock, no doubt. A government enterprise facing such a ban could have easily surrendered to the circumstances. However, we took it as an opportunity to diversify," he stated resolutely.

Describing the immediate action taken, Mr. Harikumar revealed, "The ban not only impacted our top-line but also the bottom line. We swiftly re-evaluated our manufacturing facility, changed the product line, and adapted to the new circumstances. It was a challenging transition, but a necessary one."

Highlighting the intricacies of the agrochemical industry, Mr. Harikumar delved into the complexities of marketing such products. "Agrochemicals are unique; they are more of a B2C business even though B2B exist. We had to come up with a diverse range of products in different packet sizes. For a shopkeeper to stock our products, we needed a comprehensive product line. Farmers use a variety of pesticides, and our basket of products had to cater to their diverse needs," he explained.

Mr. Harikumar stressed the importance of meticulous planning in the agrochemical sector, from packaging materials to distribution strategies. "Every detail, from the bottle to the sticker, must be meticulously planned in advance. Moreover, predicting crop attacks, a challenge in itself, requires a well-thought-out strategy to manufacture and supply products promptly. The unpredictability of crop pests adds another layer of complexity, necessitating nationwide distribution," he expounded.

Discussing the seasonal nature of agriculture, Mr. Harikumar articulated the importance of timing in product sales. "Products used during Kharif differ from those used during Rabi, demanding precise planning to ensure products are available when needed," he added.

Pioneering Transformations and Navigating Challenges: Mr. Harikumar's Insights on Industry Dynamics

Mr. Harikumar shed light on the innovative initiatives that propelled the company beyond its origins as a DDT manufacturer, navigating challenges and diversifying its product line.

"When I joined HIL, it was primarily focused on DDT manufacturing, used for public health purposes. It was a product slated for phasing out by the government. However, we saw an opportunity to repurpose DDT for mosquito control in Africa, particularly South Africa and Mozambique," Mr. Harikumar disclosed, highlighting the need for cabinet approval due to DDT's classification as a persistent organic

The move into international markets proved fruitful, providing a significant boost to HIL's revenue. Building on this success, Mr. Harikumar outlined the strategic decision to diversify the product line. "We realized that we didn't have to manufacture every product; instead, we started buying technicals and formulating them. This expansion allowed us to offer a broader range of products to farmers," he explained.

A pivotal aspect of HIL's evolution was the expansion of its technical manufacturing facility. "When I assumed leadership, we had a capacity of 7-8 technical products. By the time I left, we had expanded to a facility capable of manufacturing 25 different technical products. The goal was to create facilities that could produce multiple products, aligning with the seasonal nature of agricultural demand," he detailed.

Recognizing the synergy between agricultural inputs, HIL strategically entered the fertilizers segment during the latter part of Mr. Harikumar's tenure. "We understood that when a farmer goes to a shop, he needs seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides. By becoming a one-stop-shop for the farmer, HIL gained a

competitive edge. Now, our sales officers could offer a comprehensive range of products to retailers, creating a mutually beneficial leverage," Mr. Harikumar asserted.

Discussing his impactful stint at Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals, Mr. Harikumar shared insights into the challenges faced and the transformative journey he undertook. "The company was virtually closed with aging manufacturing facilities and a significant decrease in the workforce. The question looming was whether to revive the company or consider closure. Assets were spread across states, joint ventures were in progress, and the complexity of deciding the fate of the company was immense," he explained, emphasizing the critical decisions that needed to be made during the restructuring plan.

With over 40 years of experience in the chemical industry, Mr. Harikumar offered profound observations on the industry's significant changes and its future trajectory. Drawing a distinction between specialty and commodity chemicals, he stated, "Commodity chemicals are about price and volume, and unless you are a large volume player, it becomes difficult to compete. On the other hand, specialty chemicals offer a competitive edge, allowing for unique products either through technology acquisition or development. India is emerging as a global hub for chemical production, with a significant uptick in chemical exports, albeit active ingredients being imported from China."

Turning to the challenges faced by Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) amidst the emergence of new private players, Mr. Harikumar discussed the regulatory constraints. "PSUs operate under strict government guidelines, necessitating adherence to procedures for procurement and decision-making. However, there's a positive shift as the government recognizes the need for expedited decision-making. Boards are being empowered to act in line with market requirements, striking a balance between adherence to guidelines and the agility needed to navigate the competitive landscape," he elucidated.

A Leadership Odyssey: Leading from the Front and Fostering Organizational Growth

When asked to describe his leadership style, Mr. Harikumar emphasized the importance of leading from the front. "A leader is someone whom everyone

looks up to in an organization. The CEO is the one who can bring about change, and it has to start with leading by example," he asserted. Mr. Harikumar believes that commitment from the leader is paramount, setting the tone for the entire organization. "If the leader doesn't show commitment, you cannot expect commitment from those below. My strategy is simple – lead by example. Once the team builds confidence in you, trust is established, and they begin to follow you," he explained.

Integrity, honesty, and leading by example emerged as the principal guidelines that define Mr. Harikumar's leadership approach. "Your commitment to the organization, your integrity, honesty, and focus on organizational progress – these factors build trust and confidence within the team," he stated.

When asked about advice for aspiring leaders, Mr. Harikumar reiterated the importance of knowing one's job thoroughly. "If a leader knows the job, nobody can take them for granted. Beyond that, it's about instilling confidence in the team, allowing them to work, and supporting them in case of genuine mistakes. However, if intentions are not genuine, strict action must be taken," he asserted.

In fostering a positive work culture, Mr. Harikumar highlighted the significance of taking the team along on the organizational growth journey. "Everyone should know where they fit into the organizational growth plan. This involves taking the team along, ensuring they understand they are part of the growth story," he shared. His advice to aspiring leaders emphasizes the importance of involving the team in the organizational vision.

Nurturing Vision and Trust: A Leader's Approach to Long-Term Success

Discussing the intricacies of balancing long-term goals with short-term objectives, Mr. Harikumar shared insights into the organizational roadmap developed over a decade. "We have a clear roadmap that delineates short-term, medium-term, and long-term activities. Planning is crucial for investments, requiring detailed studies, market research, and approvals. Prioritization and financial planning are key components of our strategic approach," he explained.

When quizzed about convincing the board amidst substantial changes, Mr. Harikumar emphasized the role of trust. "The board, like anyone else, knows whom to trust. Trust plays a vital role in gaining board confidence. Preparation is key for any meeting; anticipate questions, be ready with answers, and build trust through thorough preparation," he advised.

Mr. Harikumar underscored the impact of trust not only within the organization but also on its broader image. "An organization's image depends on the leader. If the leader is perceived as genuine and doing a good job, society at large begins to trust. Trust becomes a shield against negative publicity," he elaborated.

Addressing the dynamics of unionized activities in a government setup, Mr. Harikumar acknowledged the need for a different strategy. "Unions hold significant power, and a nuanced approach is essential. Long-term settlements are common, and ongoing negotiations between management and workers are part of the norm," he disclosed.

On the front of employee welfare, Mr. Harikumar outlined a comprehensive array of measures. "We offer educational advances, sponsor books for children, and provide medical facilities, including a 5-year post-retirement insurance scheme. Additionally, employees enjoy access to a free canteen and various other welfare measures," he detailed.

As the interview unfolds, Mr. Harikumar not only shares strategic insights but also provides a holistic perspective on leadership – emphasizing trust, preparedness, and comprehensive employee welfare measures as pillars of long-term success and organizational well-being.

Leadership in Negotiation, Performance, and Change Management: A Holistic Approach

As our conversation with the adept Managing Director unfolds, we explore key facets of leadership, including negotiation skills, performance management, and navigating organizational change.

Discussing the significance of negotiation skills, Mr. Harikumar highlighted its ubiquity in leadership. "Negotiation is inherent in various aspects, be it marketing, technology discussions, or engagements with unions. It's about the exchange of ideas, convincing others, and finding common ground. A

good leader is, in essence, a proficient negotiator," he emphasized.

Moving to the realm of performance management, Mr. Harikumar outlined the organization's approach, encompassing traditional methods such as the bell curve for appraisals and a comprehensive written appraisal process. "We identify training needs based on appraisals, design training programs, and communicate improvement areas to employees. Promotions are merit-based with a combination of seniority and performance, fostering motivation," he elaborated.

Reflecting on a pivotal juncture when the organization had to adapt to the ban on a key product, Mr. Harikumar shed light on the employee response. "The banning came from the Supreme Court, and being a public sector company, termination was not necessary. Employees continued their work, and the reduction in numbers occurred naturally over time. While there were initial apprehensions, the employees understood that the company was taking necessary actions to safeguard their interests," he explained.

In times of change, Mr. Harikumar emphasized the cooperative spirit of the employees. "They are paid to do their work, and the ban did not impact their employment. They understood the company's commitment to managing the situation and cooperated in ensuring their interests were protected," he noted.

The discussion deep dived into the multifaceted role of leadership – from negotiation skills that permeate every interaction to performance management strategies that motivate employees, and finally, the adaptive capacity of both the organization and its workforce during transformative periods. Mr. Harikumar's insights offer a comprehensive understanding of effective leadership in dynamic organizational environments.

Technological Resilience: A Pillar in Adapting to Change

In the ongoing dialogue with Mr. Harikumar, our focus shifts to the pivotal role technology plays in the organization's resilience and adaptability to ever-evolving challenges.

Highlighting the critical role of technology, Mr.

Harikumar underscored its impact on various facets of the manufacturing process. "In any manufacturing company, technology plays a major role. It influences employee costs, optimizing manpower, enhancing efficiency, ensuring product purity, and positioning the company as a low-cost producer," he stated.

Detailing the technological strides made during his tenure, Mr. Harikumar delved into the power-intensive nature of the organization. "TCC consumes a significant 6.5 lakh units of electricity daily, constituting almost 40% of our production costs. To optimize power usage, we explored various strategies, including importing power from other states through open access and engaging in different trading methods," he explained. The strategic implementation of technology not only reduced dependency on the local power supply but also contributed to a substantial reduction in production costs.

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr. Harikumar shared a challenging yet successful scenario where the organization invested in Chinese technology before the outbreak. With restrictions preventing Chinese engineers from commissioning the plant, the organization took a bold step, starting the facility independently and recovering the investment within a year.

Emphasizing the indispensable role of technology in ensuring compliance with changing environmental norms, Mr. Harikumar spoke of the fast pace of obsolescence in the industry. "Continuous technological upgrades are essential to staying ahead and addressing environmental challenges," he remarked.

Shifting focus to the export scenario, Mr. Harikumar explained the organization's strategy, taking into account the fluctuating global market conditions. "While we used to export, market dynamics and pricing now favor domestic sales. With Europe facing a recession, export prices are lower, and the organization has strategically chosen to prioritize the domestic market," he disclosed.

Navigating the Unique HR Landscape in Manufacturing: A Balancing Act

When queried about expectations from HR, Mr. Harikumar candidly expressed, "What does a boss

want? He wants fewer headaches. HR plays a crucial role in industrial relations, and its focus here is more on educating the workforce about changing requirements." He emphasized the importance of communication, especially during critical periods such as wage settlements. "HR is the bridge between management and employees, continuously training, appraising, and maintaining relationships," he added.

Addressing the intricate dynamics of industrial relations in a manufacturing setting, Mr. Harikumar highlighted the role HR plays in communicating management decisions, particularly those with potential resistance. "Unlike the private sector, we cannot simply terminate employment. Operational freedom is limited, and every decision needs to be communicated through HR to maintain a delicate balance," he explained.

Mr. Harikumar acknowledged the political sensitivities inherent in the public sector and the challenges HR faces in navigating these intricacies. "We have to take everybody into confidence, and HR has to play a major role in managing these politically sensitive areas. Our operational leverage is limited, and decisions must align with a system rather than individual choices," he remarked.

Mr. Harikumar emphasized the importance of continuous interactions with stakeholders, including government officials, to keep them informed and educated about the organization's dynamics. Acknowledging the government's involvement, he mentioned, "The chairman of the board is the principal secretary of Industries, and the local MLA serves as the Minister. They understand the issues, and it's essential to go to meetings prepared, developing trust with those who matter."

He highlighted the significance of trust in leadership, stating, "In a public sector or even a large private sector setup, that makes a lot of difference. If the owner himself is running, people will have to adjust. Here I have to convince that I am a good leader for you. If that confidence is instilled in people, automatically things will run smoothly."

Mr. Harikumar emphasized that trust is critical in various aspects, whether in a public sector, a large private company, or even for shareholders in a listed company. "Trust plays a role everywhere.

Confidence-building exercises always play a vital role in leadership," he stated.

Reflecting on his experience, Mr. Harikumar shared a personal anecdote about moving back from Delhi to TCC. Despite being unfamiliar with the team, the trust he had built over the years preceded him, facilitating a smoother transition. "In a public sector, it plays an important role. That saves you a lot of time because people already have trust in you," he explained.

When queried about managing work-life balance, Mr. Harikumar acknowledged the challenges, recognizing that life now manages work. Reflecting on the support from his wife, who was working earlier, he shared a profound perspective, stating, 'Work is life, as I don't feel like I am working. As long as one enjoys what he is doing, it doesn't feel like work. The moment I sense it becoming work, I will stop and move on.' This philosophy underscores his commitment to finding joy and purpose in his professional endeavors, making each task an integral part of a fulfilling life journey."

He sheds light on the paramount role of trust in leadership, emphasizing its impact on stakeholder relationships and the intricate dynamics of public sector interactions. Mr. Harikumar's candid insights provide valuable perspectives for leaders navigating similar challenges in the corporate landscape.

In conclusion, the interview unfolded a compelling narrative of leadership in the chemical manufacturing sector, marked by resilience, strategic acumen, and a commitment to integrity. Through a career spanning over 40 years, Mr. Harikumar navigated challenges, adapted to industry shifts, and spearheaded transformations in various public sector enterprises. The emphasis on trust, effective communication, and a proactive approach to change emerged as cornerstones of his leadership philosophy. It stands as a testament to the MD's seasoned leadership and provides a comprehensive view of the intricate challenges and successes inherent in steering a public sector company.

P.K. Kurien and team, Corporate Connect Committee, NIPM Kerala Chapter





Migration Within India

A Burden or a Boon?

Dr Rajen Mehrotra*

Introduction

In India, the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) defines internal migration as:

- (a) a person whose residency is in a place other than the original place of birth, or
- (b) who has changed the Usual Place of Residence (UPR).

We have three streams of migration within India:

- 1) Within a district
- 2) To other districts within the State
- 3) Inter State

The 2001 Census Report indicates that we had 315 million internal migrants while according to the 2011 Census Report, the figures were 455.7 million. Of the total migrant population, as per 2011 Census Report, 146.1 million (32%) were males and 309.6 million (68%) were females. Internal migration figures for India show that migration is dominated by female migration, mainly due to the prevalent social custom of marriages. The 2011 Census Report indicates 44 % increase in migration compared to 18 % increase in population during the period 2001 - 2011.

Internal migration flows in India are mostly driven by regional economic inequalities. As per 2011 Census, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar States are responsible for

the greatest number of migrants, with 20.9 million people residing outside their

States. This is 37% of the total number of inter-state migrants as per the 2011 Census enumeration. Maharashtra State has the highest share of migrant population with around 57.4 million. Migrants from other states in Delhi and Mumbai cities numbered 9.9 million, or almost a third of the combined population of 29.2 million.

The migration figures for 2021 are not available, as Census 2021 did not take place, because of COVID 19. However, the figures will be positively higher compared to the figures of 2011, as we all witnessed the plight of the migrant labour walking on highways and railway tracks to travel back to their home town during lockdown in 2020, when railways and buses had been withdrawn temporarily.

Government's Approach to Reduce Migration

Employment Guarantee Scheme was first introduced in Maharashtra State in 1972-73. The scheme was the first of its kind which provided recognition to the 'right to work', enshrined in the constitution and promoted local work to prevent migration.

Our Former President Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam,

suggested in January 2003, Provision of Urban Amenities to Rural Areas (PURA) as a strategy and as a way of empowering and accelerating rural development. This was intended to reduce migration from rural to urban areas. Pilot projects were also launched. However, not much was achieved.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), 2005 resulted in the Scheme being launched in 2006. This is a demand driven wage employment programme. It is aimed at providing the enhancement of livelihood security to the households in rural areas of the country by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household, whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. It is a scheme to promote livelihood security, a fall-back option for livelihood for the rural households, when no better employment opportunity is available. Besides, it contributes to give benefits locally to some extent and also reduces migration.

The Union Minister of State for Rural Development, Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti, in a written reply in Lok Sabha on 26 July 2022 stated that the employment provided (in person days generated) under this scheme was:

- Financial Year (FY) 2019-20 = 2,653.2 million,
- FY 2020-21 = 3,890.8 million,
- FY 2021-22 = 3,634.6 million, and
- For part FY 2022- 23 (i.e., as on 21 July 2022) = 1,198.5 million.

We can see that the figures of beneficiaries substantially went up in FYs 2020-21 and 2021-22 as compared to the past, because of the reverse migration and the people continuing to reside in their home villages during the COVID-19 pandemic period (FYs 2020-21 & 2021-22).

Labour Laws Dealing with Migrants

We have two central labour laws in the country, The Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979 and The

Building and Other Construction Workers' Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service Act, 1996. The first one is for the benefit of migrant labourers while the second is meant to serve the construction workers. In quite many cases, the construction workers are also migrant labourers. However, the ground reality about the application of these Acts has been extremely poor, which became clearer when the country declared a lockdown on 25 March 2020, to prevent the spread of COVID – 19.

We have also a state legislation, called "The Kerala Migrant Workers Welfare Scheme, 2010". This provides a registered migrant four benefits:

- (a) accident/medical care up to Rs.25,000;
- (b) in case of death, Rs.1 lakh to the family;
- (c) children's education allowance; and
- (d) termination benefits of Rs.25,000 after five years of work.

When a migrant worker dies, the welfare fund provides for the embalming of the body and for air transportation. To avail of the benefit, a migrant worker in Kerala State needs to register himself / herself with the scheme. The membership has to be renewed by paying Rs.30 every year.

It is during the lockdown period, and immediately thereafter, that we realized that the labour departments of both the Central and the State Governments, had scanty information about the number of migrant workers. Besides, the actual transfer of envisioned benefits under both the Acts cited above had been extremely poor and dismal in implementation, showing little or no improvement whatsoever.

The Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India, realizing the ground reality, launched eShram portal (eshram.gov.in) on 26th August 2021 for creation of a comprehensive National Database of Unorganised Workers including migrant workers, construction workers, gig and platform workers, etc. This was also intended to know the actual numbers and to extend the benefits of social security schemes to them. As on 14th November 2023, over 291.8

million unorganised workers have registered on the eShram portal, which is a very good initiative by the Government of India.

Reasons for Migration

There can be numerous reasons for migration, but the broad ones are discussed herein.

1. Education – Children living with their parents normally join a school in the vicinity, unless they are sent to live elsewhere with a relation or to join a boarding school. This could possibly involve migration for a brief period.

In the present-day environment where admission to a professional course like engineering or medicine or management involves appearing for a prescribed competitive exam, many young boys and girls join coaching classes which may not be available in the village or town where they are residing. They are required to move temporarily to another city like Kota in Rajasthan State or some such town/city. There they undergo coaching and then compete, though in some cases this can also be done virtually. However, undergoing a skill development programme or a professional/ specialized course at the under-graduate, graduate, post-graduate or Ph.D. level could also involve migration.

2) Employment or Business– Either on completion of education or also as someone who dropped out of studies, the person enters the labour market to work and to make a living. This could involve employment in the formal sector or working in the informal sector or undertaking a business activity by being self-employed. Any of these initiatives for a substantial number of persons could involve migration, if the work to be done is not in the vicinity where one is presently residing.

Also, the present meagre land holding of many families, compels some members to migrate to a nearby town, work in the informal economy to earn a living, and then periodically return to the village for helping the family at the time of harvesting.

3) Change of Social Structure - The social structure of families has also undergone a change

due to improved socio-economic status of the local residents. Like in Kerala State, practically in every family at least one member works abroad. As a result, some of the traditional jobs like rubber tapping, climbing coconut trees, farm work, construction etc which at one time were mainly done by locals, are now considered "below the dignity" of the local people. Or, the locals charge exorbitantly high amount of money for this type of work. This change of social structure has necessitated migrant labour. Also, there are persons from certain states, interested in working in Kerala State to earn a living, because of lack of employment opportunities in their home states.

4) Migration induced by State Policies - In certain hilly states like Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, there have been state policy offers of 100% refund for certain time period of applicable State Goods and Services Tax (SGST). This SGST was earlier referred to as excise duty/sales tax, which led organizations to shift their existing manufacturing plants or setting up a new manufacturing site.

We have the example of Baddi town in Himachal Pradesh State which presently is a home for varied pharmaceutical companies. Setting up these manufacturing plants in hilly states leads to migration of the workforce from other states to work on various jobs to ensure the efficient running of the manufacturing organizations.

5) Marriage - When a man and a woman, not living in the same village or town or city, get married, then one of the two, sooner or later, has to geographically shift and this does involve migration. Invariably it is the woman who does the geographical movement, though nothing prevents the man from doing the shift.

6) Family related – Sometimes domestic compulsions like health issues, old age, taking care of very young grandchildren, and family related matters come up compelling migration.

7) Others – There could be several other reasons for migration. A recent reverse migration trend, by educated and salaried persons, is leaving cities to reside in rural areas, some taking up agriculture,

some getting involved in tourism away from cities, and some desiring to do social work. There are also persons who desire to have a better quality of life by living in a different geographical location, or the economics of life in a village or small town where cost of living including housing expenditure is lower compared to present place of residence. This is in addition to the retirees migrating away from the hustle-bustle of cities to a peaceful life.

Most families, if they trace the family tree, will find that at certain time period, members of a certain generation would have migrated, for one reason or other, from their place of birth. They will also realize that the geographical distance covered in migration in the earlier time periods was much lower compared to the present time.

I can cite my own personal family example. In 1938, my father migrated from Allahabad (presently called Prayagraj) in Uttar Pradesh State to Bombay (presently called Mumbai) in Bombay State (presently called Maharashtra State) to take up employment in The Great Indian Peninsula Railway Company (presently called Central Railway). On marriage in 1943, my mother migrated from Calcutta (presently called Kolkata) in Bengal Province (presently called West Bengal State) to Bombay. On marriage in 1972, my wife migrated from Naini Tal in Uttar Pradesh State (presently called Uttarakhand State) to Bombay.

I was born in Bombay in 1945, where I completed my education, and spent most part of my work life. Bombay (presently called Mumbai) is the city where I am spending my retired life as well. As such, I am not a migrant as per the definition of Census, though the previous generation must have been.

Types of Work involving Migrants

We have four types of work involving Migrants:

1) Employment in the Formal Sector - This can involve moving from the present geographical location while commencing career or being transferred to different locations while working with the same organization. Moving from one organization to another for career advancement can

also involve geographical movement. There are cases where individuals on retirement from formal sector employment undertake migration to their home town or to a different city.

2) Employment in the Informal Sector - Practically in all cases this involves moving from the present geographical location to a different place. This is done for earning a living, which can be undertaken by an individual himself or herself or through the assistance of a relation, contact or agencies. They involve jobs, to a large extent, of the unskilled category or jobs with low skills, including domestic help.

Individuals working in this sector receive mostly the prescribed statutory minimum wage or even less in certain cases, because of the uneven demand-supply situation. The monthly earnings of the persons working in this sector are those prescribed under The Minimum Wages Act, 1948. In fact, the earnings can be either in line with what is stated in the case of the scheduled employment or in others, less than what the Act lays down. The persons working in this sector hardly receive any social benefits unless they are Contract workers covered under The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970.

3) Seasonal Employment in Agriculture - Employees working in this sector are migrants, to a very large extent. They migrate temporarily to offer their specialized service /skills during seasonal time period in Agriculture. Migration of such persons mostly involves middlemen and contractors.

4) Employment in Project – Requirement of persons for each project is high and also calls for varying skills. Projects are location specific and primarily involve migrant workforce. Persons with specific skills, like skilled masons, plumbers and similar trades are able to negotiate better wages as demand is higher than availability. Migration of such persons mostly involves middlemen and contractors.

Present Approach towards Migrants

Practically every State Government in India has been pledging a policy of “Employment for

Bumiputra's", Sons of the soil, though the law of the land allows Indian citizens to work in any part of the country.

Migrant population is, by and large, docile, productive and entrepreneurial. Migration brings the best out of human beings and, in turn, it enriches the society provided the phenomenon is managed well. Reality is that the first-generation migrants are by and large perceived as a burden by the residents of the host city or the host state. The residents overlook the developmental benefits that accrue to them because of the movement of the migrants from other states in the country.

Migrants to cities mostly work in the informal sector. Initially they begin doing odd jobs, and then move up in the hierarchy which gives them higher income. Some of them become street vendors later or undertake driving jobs of three & four-wheeler vehicles to the owners of the vehicle. Migrants working in the informal sector, are quite often forced to live in unauthorised slums, and hence try to receive support from certain local slum lords/political leaders. Clearly, these leaders offering support to migrants have an eye on their votes at the time of the elections.

What is the reality? A migrant is prepared to do any work, including the dirty and the dangerous. He/she has high motivation and is willing to work at any time of the day, on any day of the week. One of the greatest challenges we face in our country is to reverse this unwelcome attitude towards migrants and to build a narrative based on the positive contribution of migration and the benefits it gives to the economy and the citizens of the country.

In fact, the migrant after being a resident for more than a certain number of years, say about fifteen years, in the host city, is entitled to a domicile of the host state. Also, the migrants' children, if born in the host state, are eligible to a domicile of the host state.

Quite many migrants doing lower-level jobs, migrate alone and ensure that their spouse and children continue to live in their home town. The family is supported through a money transfer economy by

the migrant, as the rent for family residential accommodation in the host city is prohibitively high.

Challenges on Infrastructure

Each town or city or metropolitan area has a master plan to take care of the existing residents and the increase in their numbers over a certain time period. However, there are major problems about the infrastructure when there are high number of migrants. This does cause inconvenience to both the residents as well as the migrants. These refer to:

- 1) Adequate and safe water supply,
- 2) Sewage, drainage and treatment system,
- 3) Public toilets,
- 4) Household garbage waste collection, segregation, incineration, treating, composting and dumping system,
- 5) Gardens and Playgrounds
- 6) Local Government Schools
- 7) Public Transport System (Bus, Rail, Metro),
- 8) Adequate Road, Bridges, Flyovers to meet traffic intensity.
- 9) Adequate footpaths, zebra crossing and foot bridges for walking safely,
- 10) Adequate illumination on roads and pathways,
- 11) Public Health System,
- 12) Firefighting facilities.

Over a time period, we have also been seeing adjoining satellite towns emerging which helps in reducing the infrastructure pressure on the existing town or a metropolitan area.

Aspiration of Youth

The present-day youth of India, born in a rural or small-town, desires to move and live in an urban or a metropolitan city environment. This is pushing the youth, in search of a livelihood, to live on the outskirts of the metropolitan city. It involves hardships of long commuting hours and non-economical and, largely, unhygienic accommodation to live in initially, compared to their original place of residence.

To meet the aspirations of youth, we need to ensure

that they pick up skills based on their aptitude and demands in the market for being gainfully engaged or to be self-employed. For this, Employer Organizations like The All-India Organisation of Employers (AIOE) and similar employer organizations can play an effective role themselves, or in collaboration with academic institutes or/and along with NGO's in conducting short programmes on entrepreneurship. They can explore the possibility of running entrepreneurial development courses like the one International Labour Organization (ILO) has developed long time back, "Start & Improve Your Business (SIYB)".

Future of Work

The Future of Work will see two types of migration:

1) The traditional migration of workforce in the informal sector requiring low skills. Since supply of the workforce will be higher than demand, the workforce may continue to be exploited, unless the trade unions are strong and the Government machinery is vigilant in ensuring compliance of the laws governing wages, health care and social security. This category of persons, if trained as entrepreneurs, can be self-employed and run small businesses successfully.

2) Migration of knowledgeable and competent workforce having high skills. These will be the workforce that can work in organizations operating on latest developments like digitalization, automation, artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, connected devices, data analytics, cyber-physical systems and digital transformation. These will be specialized jobs where availability will be low, hence the jobs will command a premium and individuals themselves will negotiate wages, health care and social security benefits.

Conclusion

A question that is quite often raised on migration, "Is it a Burden or A Boon"?

In India there have been migrations at various time periods, depending upon the opportunities available in the host city and the risk-taking ability of the

concerned individuals to migrate.

Migration is inevitable and there are two sides to a coin. In most cases the migrant and his/her families including the next generation, do become beneficiaries of migration and consider it a boon. However, there are pressures on the infrastructure of the host city and also a perceived opportunity loss by the existing residents who consider it a burden.

The law of the land allows Indian citizens to undertake migration within the country, though the state Governments and certain political parties may pledge their support to the locals. In the present competitive environment, both the migrants and the residents have no other option but to compete for the scarce opportunities available in the market. Jo Jeeta Wohi Sikandar – The One Who Wins is the King.

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