FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL’S DESK

Maternity Protection at Workplace: Recent Initiatives

The need for family and social policies aimed at reconciling work and family obligations becomes imperative in a context where both men and women are engaged in paid employment. Women in particular, find themselves under increasing pressure to manage responsibilities of both paid work and unpaid domestic and care work. Many working women make compromises necessary to fit paid work around the family and experience the anxiety and stress of combining these roles. Maternity protection has long been a priority for the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the first Maternity Protection Convention dating back to 1919. In June 2000, the ILO formally adopted a new Maternity Protection Convention (No. 183), along with a detailed Recommendation on Maternity Protection (No. 191). As in all previous Conventions, maternity protection is seen as being the shared responsibility of government and society.

In India, maternity protection is ensured through the Maternity Benefit Act 1961 which is an important legislation to protect the well-being of a mother during pregnancy and after childbirth. The Act regulates the employment of women in certain establishments for certain period before and after childbirth and provides for maternity and certain other benefits. Based on the recommendations of the International Labour Conference (ILC) and requests from various quarters and deliberations during Tripartite Consultations it was decided to amend the Maternity Benefit Act. The recent amendment of the Maternity Benefit Act in 2016 is an important initiative that would contribute to addressing the issue of inequality and protecting ‘care rights’ from a broader human development perspective.

The new amendment increases the maternity leave from existing 12 to 26 weeks and applies to all establishments employing 10 or more persons. The amendment also provides an enabling provision of work-from home for nursing mothers. In addition, it has also made it mandatory for establishments having fifty or more employees to have the facility of crèche either individually or as a shared common facility within a prescribed limit and allows women to have four visits to the crèche daily, including interval for rest allowed to her. Further, the amendment also has a provision for extension of twelve weeks of maternity benefit to the “commissioning mother” and the “adopting mother” from the date the child is handed over.

With the new amendment, India has joined 40 nations of the world where women are allowed maternity leave for more than 18 weeks. India has emerged as one of the countries with the highest number of weeks for maternity leave in the Asia Pacific Region and is ahead of China (15 weeks), Japan (14 weeks), Sri Lanka (12 weeks), Bangladesh (12 weeks) and Republic of Korea (10 weeks). India is also ahead of most of the European Countries such as Germany (14 weeks), Spain (16 weeks), France (16 weeks), Netherlands (16 weeks), UK (20 weeks) and Italy (22 weeks).

As India has been witnessing a decline in the female labour force participation, the extension of maternity benefit and the recent amendment is an important initiative that would contribute not only to enabling women’s greater participation and sustenance in the labour market but would also ensure their overall well-being and better quality of life. It is indeed a positive step in the direction of effective family-friendly policies.
SPECIAL EVENTS

Signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between V.V. Giri National Labour Institute and Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta (CSSSC)

July 20, 2017

As a part of its initiative to collaborate with regional level academic Institutions, V.V. Giri National Labour Institute (VVGNLI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta (CSSSC) on July 20, 2017. CSSSC is an academic Institution funded by ICSSR and the Government of West Bengal. The MoU was signed to facilitate collaborative research, training and academic activities related to labour and employment issues in the eastern region of the country. The MoU was signed by Shri Manish Kumar Gupta, Director General, VVGNLI and the Registrar of CSSSC. Dr. Ruma Ghosh, Fellow, VVGNLI coordinated the signing of the MoU between both the Institutes.

Inauguration of Campus wide Wi-Fi and Surveillance System

August 2, 2017

In sync with the commitment of the Government of India to promote the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) and Digital India, the Institute during the financial year 2016-17, took steps to upgrade its e-Governance and Digital infrastructure to the next level. One of the major project completed in this regard is the provision of Campus wide Wi-Fi and surveillance system at a cost of INR 1.39 Crore. This matter was taken up and completed in a time bound manner as per the instruction of the Executive Council (EC) of the Institute in its meeting on September 5, 2016, wherein it had directed the Institute to install Wi-Fi and Surveillance system being a national level reputed Institute. The project was implemented by the NICSI with the technical advice from the NIC. Under the project, Local Area Networks (LAN), wireless LANs, adapters, network hubs, surveillance cameras were installed in various strategic locations of the Institute. Further, high speed NICNET services (the national satellite-based computer network) through BSNL were taken to provide round the clock internet connectivity. The Wi-Fi services will provide round the clock campus wide wireless internet connectivity to the national and international training participants, research scholars, officials of the Institute, visiting dignitaries and will also facilitate operationalization of e-Campus, thereby improving overall efficiency and productivity of the Institute. The surveillance system will further improve and modernize the security apparatus inside the campus. Dr. Anoop Satpathy, Fellow, VVGNLI coordinated this activity under the guidance of Shri Manish K. Gupta, Former Director General, VVGNLI. The Wi-Fi and Surveillance system was inaugurated on August 2, 2017 by Dr. H. Srinivas, Director General of the Institute and Shri Manish K. Gupta, Former Director General and Joint Secretary, MoLE.

Joining of the new Director General

(August 2, 2017)

Dr. H. Srinivas, IRPS took over as Director General of the V.V.Giri National Labour Institute on August 2, 2017. He belongs to the 1991 batch of ‘Civil Services Examination’ and joined the ‘Indian Railway Personnel Service’ (IRPS). He has held various key positions in the Indian Railways. Prior to taking over as Director General of the Institute, he was Chief Personnel Officer/Industrial Relations, Southern Railway Zone, Chennai. He has been Visiting Faculty to many reputed Management and Training Institutes.

During this ceremony, the Institute gave a formal farewell to the outgoing Director General Shri Manish Kumar Gupta, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment.
The research study is part of the project on Study to Evaluate the Plan Schemes of Office of the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) commissioned by the Office of the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) to the Institute. The objective of the study is to evaluate the two Plan Schemes of the Office of Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) i.e., Scheme 1: Machinery for better conciliation and preventive mediation and more effective enforcement of labour laws and improving efficiency and effectiveness by providing better infrastructure facilities and construction of office complex for CLC (C) and RLC (C)s; and Scheme 2: Improvement and strengthening of training wing of Central Labour Service (CLS) Officers. The study has shown that the targets related to disposal of disputes and settlement brought about between the employers and workmen/unions under the Industrial Disputes Act are well achieved. There are significant settlements signed by the Conciliation Officers that have benefitted many workers. Based on the field visits to four regional offices of the Office of the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) i.e., Bangalore, Mumbai, Bhubaneswar and New Delhi, it was observed that: the industrial disputes that are handled by the officers are on the increase from year to year; there is high disposal rate of disputes; settlement of industrial disputes is low; there is delay in completing conciliation proceedings and submission of Failure of Conciliation (FOC) reports to the Ministry; and huge requirement for modern office aids facilities and infrastructure. Moreover, considering the large number of establishments in the central sphere, the number of inspections that could be conducted in a year is very low. It is, therefore, recommended that with the increasing workload and higher number of pending cases, the requirement of the posts of the officers and the support staff and the need for better infrastructure facilities is of perennial nature.

Regarding training of the CLS and Enforcement Officers, the study has highlighted that it has enhanced their skills and upgraded their knowledge in various areas for effective discharge of their duties; given them wider information on the subject; made them know the practical implications of theory in a better manner; clarified their doubts through interaction and experience sharing; developed competency and knowledge in carrying out their professional duties; led to better understanding of cases like giving knowledge to conduct court cases and other inspections and helped them to update the recent developments and amendments related to different labour laws. Therefore, it is recommended that the duration of training for the CLS and Enforcement Officers should be extended and enhanced. For this purpose, V.V. Giri National Labour Institute should be considered as the Staff College for training CLS and Enforcement Officers as it is the only premier labour institute in the country under the Ministry of Labour & Employment with huge potential, adequate facilities and expertise for research and training in all labour related areas. The present study will benefit the policy makers, researchers and institutions/organisations working in the area of industrial relations.

**Amendments in Labour Laws and other Labour Reform Initiatives undertaken by State Governments of Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana and U.P.**

Several changes have taken place in India in the working and employment conditions of the employees engaged in formal as well as informal sector over the last two and half decades or so, following globalization and liberalisation of economic activities in the early 1990s. Over these years, the government at the Central and State levels have frequently been approached by chambers of commerce and industry and trade unions with proposals for amendments in the labour laws as per the requirements in the present context. The Governments have been engaged over these years with serious efforts to study the merits of these proposals. Some of these proposals have even materialised in amendments of labour laws where found feasible and where necessary consensus could be evolved. However, in case of certain other matters, for want of necessary consensus, proposals are still at the consideration stage. Faced with this situation, various State Governments have taken several innovative measures by way of amendments under the central labour laws in the first place and secondly, other labour reform initiatives by and through Notifications/Government orders under the law where enabling provisions in the statute authorise the State Governments for the same.

Undertaken in this context, the present study identifies and methodically documents various innovative initiatives in the area of labour reforms by the States covered under the study and seeks to assess and analyse the actual impact resultant therefrom.
The Labour Acts covered under the study include: Industrial Disputes Act, 1947; Factories Act, 1948; Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 and few other State Acts reformed, modified or amended by the states in the recent past. The impact analysis under the study covers the impact of various reform initiatives on crucial aspects like, simplification of procedures, ease of doing business, job creation, quality of working and employment conditions and social security etc. The study would be useful for the rest of the states and for others as well for purposes of suitable follow up action.

**TRAINING PROGRAMMES**

**LABOUR ADMINISTRATION PROGRAMME (LAP)**

*Training Programme on Labour Laws for Social Security Officers of ESIC*

*July 17-21, 2017*

The above training programme was organised for ESIC officers in order to equip them with the context of labour legislation and recent labour jurisprudence. The objectives of the programme were: (i) to acquire the knowledge of substantive as well as procedural contents of industrial relations law; (ii) to have an understanding of the different social security legislations; (iii) to develop an insight into the Wage Law; (iv) to gather an understanding of the law relating to Contract Labour. The programme was attended by twenty two ESIC Officers. **Dr. Ruma Ghosh**, Fellow was the Course Director.

*Towards Generating Quality Employment: Challenges and Options*

*August 21-24, 2017*

The Institute organised a training programme on towards generating quality employment: challenges and options during August 21-24, 2017 at the Institute’s campus. The specific objectives of the programme were: (i) to examine the linkages between employment, economic growth and development; (ii) to analyse emerging trends in employment; (iii) to share good practices on quality employment generation; (iv) to discuss strategies to evolve quality employment as a catalyst for achieving the national goal sustainable and inclusive growth. The programme was attended by forty four practitioners and scholars from different parts of the country involved with employment and related issues. **Dr. S.K. Sasikumar**, Senior Fellow was the Course Director.

*Quasi-Judicial Authorities: Role and Functions*

*August 28-31, 2017*

The main objectives of the programme were: (i) to familiarize the participants with the conceptual framework for discharging quasi-judicial functions; (ii) to discuss the problems in discharging quasi-judicial functions; (iii) to discuss with them attitudinal requirements for discharging their role. The programme was attended by seventeen labour department officials from the Central Labour Service from various locations in the country. **Dr. Sanjay Upadhyaya**, Fellow was the Course Director of the programme.

**INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS PROGRAMME (IRP)**

*Fundamental of Labour Laws*

*July 17-21, 2017*

The programme aimed at equipping the representative of management and trade unions with the context of various labour legislations and the recent labour jurisprudence. The key objectives of the programme included: (i) helping the participants to acquire the knowledge of substantive as well as procedural contents of Industrial Relations Law; (ii) to familiarize them with Wage Law and Contract Labour Law etc. The programme was attended by twenty two participants from various government and public sector organisations. **Dr. Sanjay Upadhyaya**, Fellow was the Course Director of the programme.

**CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMMES (CBP)**

*Empowering Rural Women Organizers*

*July 10-14, 2017*

The programme aimed at empowering rural women organizers from Central Trade Unions. The main objectives of the programme were: (i) to develop understanding of rural society; (ii) to discuss the issue of empowerment: (iii) to develop skills for enhancing leadership potential; (iv) to acquaint the participants with various labour laws pertaining to women workers. The programme was attended by thirty two participants from different states. **Dr. Ellina Samantroy**, Fellow was the Course Director of the programme.
Labour, Productivity and Livelihood  
July 10-14, 2017

The programme aimed to discuss current challenges in the plantation sector with regard to labour, productivity and livelihood. The main objectives of the programme were: (i) to contextualize the ongoing situation in the plantation sector; (ii) to address concerns of labour and livelihood in the current global scenario; (iii) to engage in a dialogue between the small growers and trade unions of the organized sector. The programme was attended by twenty five participants from the plantation sector across the country. Dr. Kingshuk Sarkar, Fellow, was the Course Director.

Social Security for Workers in the Unorganized Sector  
July 24-28, 2017

The above programme aimed to sensitize the participants, about different aspects of social security. The main objectives of the programme were: (i) to acquaint participants with the concept of social security and the need for social security for informal sector workers; (ii) to develop understanding of the various social security and welfare programmes; (iii) to familiarize the participants with different micro level social security experiments. The programme was attended by forty one participants from different parts of the country. Dr. Poonam S. Chauhan, Senior Fellow was the Course Director.

Enhancing Leadership Skills  
July 31-August 04, 2017

The programme was organised for rural workers from different parts of the country. The objectives of the programme were: (i) to discuss key issues and concerns of workers in the unorganized sector; (ii) to discuss the issue of empowerment; (iii) to develop skills for enhancing leadership potential; (iv) to acquaint participants with labour laws for workers in the unorganized sector. The programme was attended by thirty nine participants from different parts of the country. Dr. Poonam S. Chauhan, Senior Fellow was the Course Director.

Developing Leadership Skills of Trade Union Leaders  
August 02-05, 2017

The programme was designed for the Trade Union Leaders from Telangana state. The main objectives of the programme were: (i) to develop leadership skills; (ii) to discuss issues related to social security; (iii) to provide an overview of various labour legislations and labour reforms. The programme was attended by fifty six participants from Telangana state. Dr. Ellina Samantroy, Fellow was the Course Director.

Enhancing Competence of Youth Employability Skills  
August 07-11, 2017

The major objectives of the programme were: (i) to develop employability skills; (ii) to enhance personality, leadership and communication skills; (iii) to understand the world of work. The programme was attended by twenty eight participants from various universities/research institutes. Dr. Dhanya M. B., Associate Fellow was the Course Director.

Training of Trainers Programme for Rural Educators  
August 14-18, 2017

The programme was organised for rural trade union activists from different parts of the country. The objectives of the programme were: (i) to develop understanding of empowerment; (ii) to develop skills for enhancing leadership potential; (iii) to acquaint with labour laws for unorganized sector; (iv) to sharpen the skills of communication, personal effectiveness and strengthening their trade unions. The programme was attended by sixteen participants from different parts of the country. Dr. Poonam S. Chauhan, Senior Fellow was the Course Director.

Leadership Development Programme for Rural Trade Union Leaders  
August 14-18, 2017

The above programme was organised for trade union leaders working for rural workers. The objectives of the programme were: (i) to provide an overview of the rural unorganised sector in India; (ii) to redevelop/sharpen the skills of rural trade union leaders; (iii) to create an awareness about legal rights and provisions; (iv) to discuss various issues and aspects related to organization building; (v) to make the rural workers aware about the progress of unionization process in the rural unorganised sector. The programme was attended by twenty four trade union representatives from different parts of the country. Shri P. Amitav Khuntia, Associate Fellow was the Course Director.
Gender, Work and Health in a Globalizing Economy  
**August 21-25, 2017**

The aim of the training programme was to understand challenges relating work in informal employment in a globalising economy and the occupational safety and health hazards of women workers. The objectives of the programme were: (i) to understand and analyse the major components of globalization that affect safety and health of workers; (ii) to examine the emerging issues and challenges in industrial relations and trade unionism in a globalizing economy and its effect on workers; (iii) to discuss the specific risks and health problems facing workers in the informal economy; (iv) to understand the need for occupational safety and health policies and programmes for workers, especially in informal employment. The programme was attended by twenty three participants. **Dr. Ruma Ghosh,** Fellow was the Course Director.

Enhancing Leadership Skills  
**August 28-September 01, 2017**

This training programme aimed to enhance the capacity of the transport workers and instill leadership skills in them. The main objectives of the programme were: (i) to enhance leadership skills; (ii) to discuss the legal protections in various labour legislations, especially the Transport Workers Act; (iii) to familiarize on the various aspects of welfare funds. The programme was attended by nineteen participants from transport workers union. **Dr. Poonam S. Chauhan,** Senior Fellow was the Course Director.

Orientation Programme on Labour & Employment Issues  
**August 28-September 01, 2017**

The aim of the programme was to familiarize young students with various labour issues and their capacities to contribute in their academic and professional pursuits. The objective of the programme were: (i) to understand world of work and decent employment; (ii) to make the participants acquainted with various labour issues; (iii) to discuss important issues related to labour and employment; (iv) to enable participants to contribute in their academic and professional work. The programme was attended by twelve participants from various Universities across the country. **Dr. Otojit Kshetrimayum,** Associate Fellow was the Course Director.

**RESEARCH METHODS PROGRAMMES (RMP)**

Course on Quantitative Methods in Labour Research  
**August 07-18, 2017**

The programme provided an opportunity to the participants to go through a rigorous and interactive exercise on understanding various quantitative methods and tools in labour research. It aimed at capacity building of young researchers in the area of quantitative research, giving special focus on labour studies. The objectives of the programme were: (i) to equip participants with various quantitative research tools used in labour research; (ii) to appraise the major sources of data on labour; (iii) to familiarize with major statistical packages used in labour research. The programme was attended by thirty two participants comprising of young faculty members and research scholars pursuing M. Phil and Ph. D from various Universities all over the country. **Dr. Kingshuk Sarkar,** Fellow was the Course Director.

**CHILD LABOUR PROGRAMMES (CLP)**

Awareness Generation programme for Elimination of Child Labour  
**August 22-24, 2017**

The aim of the programme was to develop change agents to work towards elimination of child labour. The objective of the programme were: (i) to impart skills for contributing to combating child labour and to effective implementation of NCLP; (ii) to generate awareness on the amendments in child labour Act for providing support enforcement of child labour legislation; (iii) to protect children from labour exploitation and ensure quality education to children withdrawn from work. The programme was attended by thirty eight participants from various states in the country. **Dr. Helen R. Sekar,** Senior Fellow was the Course Director.
NORTH-EASTERN STATES PROGRAMMES (NEP)

Fundamental of Labour Laws
August 07-11, 2017

The programme mainly aimed at providing the basic understanding to the participants with regard to the constitutional framework of labour law and the key features of select labour legislation pertaining to industrial relations, social security and conditions of work. The main objectives of the programme were: (i) to acquire the knowledge of substantive as well as procedural content of Industrial Relations Law; (ii) to have an understanding of Social Security legislations; (iii) to develop an insight into the Wage Law; (iv) to gain an understanding of the law relating to contract labour. The programme was attended by forty participants representing trade unions and NGOs from North Eastern States. Dr. Sanjay Uphadayay, Fellow, was the Course Director.

COLLABORATIVE TRAINING PROGRAMMES (CTP)

Labour Market and Employment Policy in the Present Context (MGLI, Ahmedabad)
August 02-04, 2017

This programme was organized in collaboration with Mahatma Gandhi Labour Institute, Ahmedabad. The programme aimed at enhancing the capacities of the concerned stakeholders in conceptualizing, designing and operationalising effective labour market and employment policies and undertaking research studies related to it. The objectives of the programme were: (i) to provide an overview on labour and employment scenario of the world in general and India in particular; (ii) to acquire knowledge about different sources of data on labour; (iii) to develop capacities to undertake labour market surveys and employment impact and evaluation studies. The programme was attended by forty five participants representatives trade unions, employers’ organizations, NGOs working in Gujarat, labour department officials from Govt. of Gujarat and research scholars. Dr. Kingshuk Sarkar, Fellow was the Course Director.

Effective Enforcement of Labour Laws for the Unorganised Sector
August 25-27, 2017

This programme was organised in collaboration with Department of Rural Development, Tripura University. Agartala. The programme aimed at effective enforcement of labour laws for the unorganized sector. The objectives of the programme were: (i) to have an understanding of the context of labour legislations; (ii) to have knowledge of substantive as well as procedural contents of different labour laws; (iii) to develop understanding with regard to new directions in labour laws and judicial interpretations; (iv) to explore ways of optimum utilization of existing resources; (v) to identify difficulties in the way of effective enforcement of labour laws and exploring remedial measures. The programme was attended by fifty participants who were trade union representatives, representatives from NGOs, middle and senior level officials from Labour Department. Dr. Kingshuk Sarkar, Fellow was the Course Director.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

Professional Engagements of Faculty Members

Dr. S.K. Sasikumar, Senior Fellow

• Participated in the Round Table on ‘Universal Basic Income in India: Emerging Perspectives’ organised by the Institute for Human Development and International Labour Organisation, at India International Centre, New Delhi, July 10, 2017.

Dr. Helen R. Sekar, Senior Fellow
• Guest Speaker in the Stakeholder’s Consultation on July 19, 2017. The Consultation was organized by ‘My Community’ of HCL Foundation, New Delhi
• Made a presentation on “Amended Child Labour Law and its implications: Identifying Systematic and operational issues in implementation of the schemes”, on August 30, 2017 in the Consultation on Central Sector Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour and Children into Bondage and Forced Labour at the IIC, New Delhi.

Dr. Ruma Ghosh, Fellow
• Delivered two lectures on ‘Social Security and Protection’ and ‘Salient Features of the Existing Social Security Schemes’ in the Induction Programme for the newly promoted Assistant PF Commissioners at Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay National Academy of Social Security (PDUNASS) on July 04, 2017.

Dr. Shashi Bala, Fellow
• Attended a meeting of Editorial Board for the Journal Women’s Link at Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi.
• Coordinated the signing of the MoU between Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow – V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, NOIDA signed by Shri Manish Kumar Gupta, IAS, Director General, VVGNLI and Prof. Ajit Prasad, Director, IIML at Ministry of Labour & Employment.

Dr. Kingshuk Sarkar, Fellow
• Participated and made a presentation at the Conclave on Sustainable Development Goals held on August 05, 2017 at Administrative Staff College, Guwahati organized by Labour Department, Govt. of Assam along with Unicef, Assam.

Dr. Ellina Samantroy, Fellow
• Delivered two lectures titled ‘Theories and Methods in Gender Research’ and ‘Gender Statistics and Time Use Methodology’ in a Ten-Day ‘Orientation-cum-Training Course on Methodological Approach Towards Gender Studies’ for Ph.D. research scholars and faculty members in Social Sciences on July 11, 2017 at A. N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna.
• Discussant in a session on “Gendered Work” in an International Conference on ’Work, Identity and Livelihood in Nepal: Theoretical Challenges and Contemporary Practices for South Asia’ jointly organized by South Asian University (SAU), Martin Chautari, CSH and CSDS from July 22-23, 2017 at the FSI Hall in South Asian University, New Delhi.
• Expert in a Video Programme on Sociology from July 25-26, 2017 at National Institute of Open Schooling, Noida.
• Expert in a Video Programme on Sociology on August 17, 2017 at National Institute of Open Schooling, Noida
• Participated in a National Workshop on ‘Gender Budgeting in Rural Development’ from August 29-31, 2017 organized by National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRD&PR) at Hyderabad.

Dr. Otojit Kshetrimayum, Associate Fellow
• Participated as a discussant in the Roundtable Discussion on ‘Human Trafficking in the Context of Regional Connectivity in North East India’ on Tuesday, July 25, 2017 at The World Bank Office, New Delhi.