



THE INDIAN SOCIETY OF LABOUR ECONOMICS

56th Annual Conference
18-20 December 2014



Organised by:



Department of Management,
Birla Institute of Technology (BIT)
Mesra, Ranchi, India



INSTITUTE FOR
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
Eastern Regional Centre
IHD-ERC, Ranchi

THE INDIAN SOCIETY OF LABOUR ECONOMICS

www.isleijle.org

56th Annual Conference

18-20 December, 2014

Venue

**Birla Institute of Technology [BIT]
Mesra, Ranchi, India**

THE 56th Annual Conference of the Indian Society of Labour Economics (ISLE) will be held during 18-20 December, 2014 at Birla Institute of Technology (BIT), Mesra, Ranchi. The Conference is being organised by the Department of Management, Birla Institute of Technology (BIT), Ranchi, in collaboration with the Eastern Regional Centre of the Institute for Human Development (IHD-ERC), Ranchi. Dr. Indira Hirway, Professor and Director, Centre for Development Alternatives, Ahmedabad will be the Conference President. Dr. Manju Bhagat, Professor, Department of Management, BIT, Mesra and Dr. Harishwar Dayal, Professor and Director, IHD Eastern Regional Centre, Ranchi will be the Organising Secretary and the Co-organising Secretary of the Conference respectively.

CONFERENCE THEMES

The themes for the 56th Annual Conference of the Indian Society of Labour Economics (ISLE) are:

1. Inter-linkages between Formal and Informal Labour Processes;
2. The Demographic Dividend: Challenges of Employment and Employability;
and
3. Industrial Relations in India: Sectoral and Regional Patterns.

CRITICAL INFORMATION

Dates to Remember

- Dates of the Conference: **18-20 December 2014**
- Last Date for Submission of Papers: **30 September 2014**
- Communication from ISLE about Acceptance of Papers: **15 October 2014**

Those who want an early communication on the acceptance of their papers should request for early information in this regard while sending their papers.

- Last date of registration: **15 November 2014**

Timings of the Conference

The Conference will start at 9.30 am on 18 December 2014 and will be over by 4 p.m. on 20 December 2014. The delegates are advised to reach Ranchi a day prior to the Conference and depart in the evening of 20 December 2014 or in the morning of 21 December 2014. A pre-Conference event is also being planned in the afternoon of 17 December 2014, and those who want to participate in it should reach the Conference venue by noon on 17 December 2014.

Guidelines regarding Submission of Papers

Researchers and other professionals, including those from outside India, are invited to contribute papers on the Conference themes. Scholars from outside India may contribute either conceptual or empirical papers relating to their own regions/countries. Those who wish to contribute papers may send the full papers to: **The Hon. Secretary, Indian Society of Labour Economics, NIDM Building (3rd Floor), IIPA Campus, I.P. Estate, Mahatma Gandhi Marg, New Delhi-110002, India.** The soft copies of the papers may be emailed to: **conference.isle@gmail.com** with a copy to: **56isleconference.bit@gmail.com**

The selected paper writers would be invited by the Conference President / ISLE Secretariat to present their papers during either the Thematic Technical Sessions or the Poster Sessions.

The submitted paper should not exceed 8000 words (including tables and appendices) and should adhere to the style of writing being followed in the current issues of The Indian Journal of Labour Economics (IJLE). (For further details, visit www.islejle.org). All papers should also carry a summary of about 1000 words. The summaries of all the accepted papers will be brought out separately in the form of a publication to be distributed among the Conference participants, along with a CD of the complete papers. Selected and revised papers based on peer reviews will be published in the subsequent issues of IJLE during 2015. Those who desire to publish their papers in IJLE should send their revised papers to the Editor, IJLE, after the Conference.

In line with the editorial philosophy of ISLE, paper writers are requested to ensure that their contributions are original and have not been published prior to this Conference.

Panel Proposals

A few panel discussions on special themes will also be organised during the Conference. For this purpose, proposals for panels are invited from scholars and institutions. The final proposals will be selected by a team of experts and reviewers for presentation at the Conference. A panel session would comprise 4–5 presentations of papers.

Each proposal should contain the following:

1. Title and description of the theme of the panel;
2. Title, authors and abstracts of the papers;
3. Name, affiliations and short biography of the proposed speakers; and
4. Name and contact information of the panel organiser.

The proposals should be submitted to the ISLE Secretary latest by 15 October, 2014.

Best Paper Awards

The best paper writers, who are below the age of 40 years, would be honoured with the Ruddar Datt Memorial Award and the Sanjay Thakur Young Labour Economist Award (each of which carries an award of Rs.10,000). Contributors who wish to be considered for the awards are requested to furnish their age proof along with their full papers.

LOGISTICAL AND OTHER INFORMATION FOR THE DELEGATES

Conference Registration

The registration fee for the Conference is Rs. 1500. Registration will entitle the participants to avail of modest boarding and lodging as well as the conference kit. The completed registration form along with a demand draft (DD) drawn in favour of "**ISLE Conference 2014**", payable at **Ranchi**, should be sent by 15 November 2014 to the Local Organising Secretary, Professor Manju Bhagat, Department of Management, Birla Institute of Technology (BIT), Mesra, Ranchi- 835215 or the Co-organising Secretary, Professor Harishwar Dayal, Director, IHD Eastern Regional Centre, C-1, Harmu Housing Colony, Ranchi-834012 with soft copy to **56isleconference.bit@gmail.com**.

Participants who have not renewed their membership of the ISLE for the year 2014 or are not members of the society need to pay their membership fee to be able to attend the Conference. The annual membership fee is Rs. 400 for those from India, US\$ 75 for those from developing countries, and US\$ 125 for those from other countries. Payment may be made through DD/local cheque in favour of "The Indian Society of Labour Economics", payable at New Delhi, along with the application form to the Secretary, The Indian Society of Labour Economics, NIDM Building (3rd Floor), IIPA Campus, I.P. Estate, Mahatma Gandhi Marg, New Delhi-110002. Alternatively, the membership fee along with the registration form may be sent to the Organising Secretary.

Conference Registration and ISLE Membership Fee Structure

Category	Conference Registration Fee		
	ISLE Member	Non- ISLE Member*	Spouse/ Accompanying Person
India (Rs.)	1500	1900	1000
Developing Countries(US \$)	100	175	75
Other Countries (US \$)	150	275	125

* Includes Membership fee (Rs.400-annual; US\$ 75- for those from developing countries and US\$125- for those from other countries).

The registration fee for the Conference includes payment towards a conference kit (comprising the summaries of all the papers presented at the Conference, a CD of the full papers, Conference bag, and stationery, etc.), and modest boarding and lodging. Those who want to arrange their own accommodation need to take care of the relevant logistics themselves.

Delegates are requested to send complete information along with the registration fee at the earliest so that proper arrangements can be made for their accommodation. Kindly note, for those who register on the spot, it may be difficult for us to arrange for accommodation.

CONTACT DETAILS

Conference President

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ISLE SECRETARIAT

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Email: isle.ijle@gmail.com; Website: www.isleijle.org

All queries/submissions relating to the Conference may please be addressed to
56isleconference.bit@gmail.com / conference.isle@gmail.com

PRE CONFERENCE EVENT

A pre-Conference event is also being planned in the afternoon of 17 December 2014 and those who want to participate in it should reach Mesra by noon on 17 December 2014.

For an update on the Conference, please visit the ISLE website: <http://www.isleijle.org>, or call at + 91 - 11- 23358166/ 23321610 Extn: 50; Fax: +91 – 11- 23765410, or email at conference.isle@gmail.com.

Delegates are requested to send complete information along with the registration fee, at the earliest and in any case, before 15 November 2014 so that proper arrangements can be made for their accommodation. Those interested in staying beyond the Conference dates, will have to make their own arrangements.

ABOUT BIRLA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Birla Institute of Technology (BIT), Mesra, Ranchi a deemed University, is an autonomous engineering and technology-oriented institute of higher education located in Ranchi, India. Established in 1955, it is today one of the most renowned engineering destinations in India. The Institute has been catering to the manpower needs of almost all the major sectors of the economy for the last five decades. The alumni of BIT are amongst the leaders of the industry, both in India and abroad. With more than 10,000 registered students enrolled at the Institute and spread across the main campus at Mesra, seven other centres within India, and three overseas centres, BIT is today a global name. Along with Undergraduate and Postgraduate Programmes, the Institute has a rich Doctoral Programme.

Department of Management

The Department of Management at BIT Mesra was established in 1979 with a focus on the creation of exceptional manpower to meet the dynamic needs of the corporate world in the ever-changing economic environment. The department offers various programmes and courses Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) programme (through its extension centres), spread over 3 years; a two-year full-time programme in Master of Business Administration; and a Doctoral programme in management. The department has maintained its academic leadership in Eastern India through its commitment to meet the qualitative requirements of the professional world.

IHD Eastern Regional Centre [IHD-ERC]

In order to provide a thrust to its activities in the backward eastern States, particularly Jharkhand, Bihar and Odisha, the Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi had set up its Eastern Regional Centre at Ranchi (IHD-ERC) in 2007. The mandate of IHD-ERC is to undertake studies and research focused on tackling the backwardness of the eastern region and, in particular, livelihoods, employment and deprivations of vulnerable groups such as tribals, dalits, minorities and other such sections of the society of the region. There is a project office at Patna to coordinate the activities of the Centre in Bihar.

IHD and the Eastern Regional Centre have been engaged in a large number of analytical and policy-related studies, based on both primary and secondary sources of data. Around 50 research projects have been conducted and several publications have been brought out in the form of books/monographs on the eastern region. Further, many high-level debates and discussions, including the seminars, workshops, consultations and conferences have been organized on important academic and policy issues which have been attended by a cross-section of scholars, experts, social activists, development practitioners and policy-makers.

A Few Words about Ranchi

Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand, the 28th state of India, is an important industrial city today. Located at an altitude of about 600 meters, Ranchi was once the summer capital of Bihar and a hill resort. The city is home to the regional administrative headquarters and research/planning centres of the steel and coal sectors.

Within a radius of about 200 kilometers of Ranchi lie the industrial towns of Jamshedpur, Dhanbad, Muri, Asansol and Sindri. The Chotanagpur Plateau in the region is a major source of minerals such as iron ore, coal, bauxite, uranium and mica, among others.

Ranchi is also an important educational centre for this region. It has several professional institutions, such as the Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences, the Central University of Jharkhand, the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), the Central Institute for Psychiatry, the Birsa Agricultural University, the Ranchi University, the National Institute of Foundry and Forge Technology etc.

How to Reach Ranchi

By Air: Ranchi is well linked to important airports in India, including Patna, Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata. Ranchi airport is located at Hinoo, nearly 7 km away from the city centre. The nearest international airport is Kolkata.

By Train: The railhead to Ranchi is well connected to important cities all over the country and falls under the South Eastern Railway network. All the trains to Ranchi halt at either the Ranchi Junction or the Hatia Railway Station.

By Bus: The roadways leading to Ranchi have made the city easily accessible from different parts of the country. Ranchi is situated on the National Highway 23 and 33. While the Jharkhand State Road Transport Corporation buses connect the cities within the state, private and tourist buses also ply on the route. Ranchi is well connected to prominent cities of the region like Patna, Jamshedpur, Daltonganj, Dhanbad, Gaya, Bokaro, Durgapur, Asansol, Rourkela, Cuttack, Siliguri and Kolkata.

How to Reach BIT, Mesra

The Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra, is situated about 15 km from Ranchi on NH 33, on the way to Ramgarh and Hazaribagh.

Ranchi is connected by air and rail to the cities of Bhubaneswar, Kolkata, Patna, New Delhi and Mumbai.

Taxi services are easily available at the airport and railway station, which are located at distances of about 23 and 18 kms from the Institute, respectively.

Alternative routes to reach Ranchi are by road, via Dhanbad (180 km), via Gaya (200 km) or via Jamshedpur (130 km).

Location of the Venue



**Brief Suggestions for
Paper Contributors on
The Conference Themes**

Theme I: Inter-linkages between Formal and Informal Labour Processes

- Since the concept of the 'informal sector' was first used by Keith Hart in his study of Accra (Ghana) in 1971, a plethora of studies have been undertaken, attempting its definition, interpretation and empirical identification, and assessing its role in the structure and development of an economy. Starting from a primarily urban perspective, the concept is now being used in relation to an entire economy. Most studies are still related to urban areas but, in recent years, the focus has shifted to the 'informal economy', especially in the non-agricultural part of the national economies. This shift in the conception of the scope of the informal sector has also been accompanied by a change in the prism, entailing efforts to examine the informal sector, ranging from an independent subject of study to its being an integral part of the economy with linkages and interdependence with the formal sector. Another dimension that has been added to the discussion on the informal sector is that of 'informal employment', especially in the formal sector. Thus, the linkages in labour processes now relate to the movement of workers not only between the informal and formal sectors, but also between formal and informal employment. It is worthwhile to review the trends in research and literature on the subject to identify the nature and possible factors in the evolution of the concept, scope and role of the informal sector and its labour processes, in this perspective.
- Some early writings depicted the informal sector and its relationship with the formal sector in urban areas as a chain of steps following rural–urban migration (for example, Todaro). According to this line of analysis, workers migrate from the rural to urban areas in search of jobs, preferably in the formal sector, but when they fail to find work in the formal sector, they end up taking up some job or the other in the informal sector, wherein the earnings may not be up to their expectations (and could even be lower than in the rural areas from where they migrate), but even while knowing this, they still migrate because their "life-time-expected earnings", once they succeed in getting a job, sooner or later, in the formal sector, are likely to be much higher than what they can ever expect to earn in rural areas. Thus, the informal sector acts like a 'vestibule' through which rural migrants move to the formal sector; and employment in the informal sector as an 'apprenticeship' to procure work in the formal sector. There are several interesting questions following this line of reasoning that can be fruitfully examined empirically. Do people migrate from rural to urban areas for higher life-time expected earnings in the formal sector and not for higher current earnings either in the formal or the informal sector? Are most informal sector workers migrants? What proportion of workers actually, and after how long, are able to move up from the informal to the formal sector?

- It is observed that in most developing countries, an overwhelming majority of workers—they could be both migrants and locals—are in the informal sector, which is characterised by instability of employment, low earnings, poor working conditions, and no social security for workers. These workers are often described as constituting a 'reserve army of labour' for the organised/formal sector. The informal sector is not only a ready source of labour supply but, because it has a large pool of workers ready to take up jobs in the formal sector, it also helps in keeping the wages of the formal sector low. Some interesting questions that need to be examined following the above line of reasoning are: Are the labour markets of the two sectors—formal and informal—separate? Does it mean that there is no independent supply side of the labour market for the formal sector except the pool of labour in the informal sector, and that the labour market in the informal sector has only a supply and no demand side? What is the extent of interaction of demand and supply between the two sectors, and what proportions of workers actually move from one to another? If the reserve army of labour in the informal sector leads to a depression in wages in the formal sector, why do large wage differentials persist between the two sectors?
- In the context of the above questions, it would also be analytically interesting to attempt wage functions separately for the formal and informal sectors, with and without the wages of the other sector as one of the explanatory variables. It would particularly be interesting to develop a wage function for the informal sector by including the rural wages of the region, and trends in employment (demand for labour) in the formal sector as well.
- The traditional hypothesis that the informal sector is a transient phenomenon and would disappear by getting absorbed in the formal sector over the years, has come in for serious questioning as the share of the informal sector in employment has not declined over the decades. Is this true for all sectors of economic activity? Are there different trends across sectors and sub-sectors? Are these trends the result of independent developments in the formal and informal segments of different economic sectors or of the linked development of the two segments?
- Linkages between formal and informal labour processes most often operate through linkages between formal and informal enterprises. It would, therefore, be interesting to study the differences in labour processes and movement of labour from the informal to the formal sector/employment between the linked and independent informal enterprises. The linkages could lie in production (the supply of parts/components by informal enterprises/products), technology (the supply of inputs, knowhow and equipment by formal enterprises) and human capital formation (the training of informal enterprise workers by formal enterprises). Do these linkages lead to a change in labour processes and conditions of works in

informal enterprises? Do they also improve the chances of their workers to move into formal enterprises and formal employment?

- A reverse trend is also likely to be produced by the linkage between formal and informal enterprises, through sub-contracting and the outsourcing of production and services by the formal enterprises to the informal enterprises. Production activity that could be carried out in formal enterprises and by formally employed workers is shifted to informal enterprises through these processes. As a result, do workers get moved from formal enterprises and employment to informal enterprises and informal employment? Do these processes lead only to an increase in the share of the informal sector and informal employment, or also to an actual movement of workers from a formal to an informal situation? Do these processes improve or worsen the prospects of workers to get into the formal sector and formal employment?
- Employment in formal enterprises and formal employment are generally characterised by the use of formal processes of hiring, wage fixing, and determining conditions of work and separation, while informal enterprises mostly use informal methods for determining all these aspects for their workers. What are formal and informal processes? Is it always true that formal enterprises use the formal method while informal enterprises use the informal method? Can one perceive a trend towards the increasingly larger use of informal workers by formal enterprises? To what extent do they adopt formal procedures for their employment? Do informal enterprises also use formal channels and methods at some times? Is there a continuum or a dichotomy in formality and informality among enterprises?
- Most women workers are employed in activities with a large informal component wherein the prospect of movement towards the formality of employment, either within or without, is highly limited. Besides, there is evidence to show that labour processes, in both the formal and informal sectors, but more often in the latter than in the former, tend to discriminate against women with regard to hiring, wage payment and upward mobility. It would be interesting and useful to highlight the findings of field studies at the micro-local level in order to examine the nature, practice and outcomes of such labour processes. It would also be equally important to assess the extent to which women workers are able to get out of informality into the formal sector and formal employment, and how labour market processes and practices hinder such movements.
- Labour markets and labour processes acquire a segmented character in India, *inter alia*, because of the nature of labour regulation. There are many laws with varying jurisdiction among workers in terms of the type of tenure, location and size of the employer establishment. They make certain labour processes and practices necessary for some enterprises and workers,

and not for others. By and large, most of these laws apply to relatively larger enterprises, that is, those often described to be in the organised/formal sector. Thus, a dualism in labour processes legally exists. Yet, there seems to be a continuum of formality and informality of labour processes even here insofar as there is a range of labour regulations in which some regulation applies even to the smallest establishment (shops and commercial establishments) while a larger number of legislations and also more protective laws apply as we move up the size ladder. It would be interesting to examine the issue of labour market segmentation resulting from labour regulation and to relate it with a degree of formality and informality in labour processes._

Theme II: The Demographic Dividend: Challenges of Employment and Employability

The term 'demographic dividend' is now widely used in discussions concerning India's immediate development prospects. It is a way of looking at the likely impact of foreseen demographic changes on economic growth. Simply put, it refers to the stage wherein the age groups comprising the labour force (15-59 years or 15-64 years) are growing faster than the general population. This is the population composition effect resulting from declining mortality and fertility levels. There can also be demographically induced effects through changes in the workforce participation rate, which lead to an increase or decrease in the impact of the age structure effect. The most important effect is that of delayed marriage and early completion of child-bearing and rearing practices on female workforce participation. Again, longer life expectancy and better health outcomes may lead to changing attitudes to various factors such as education, family, retirement, women's roles and the work itself. This would result in greater investment in human capital, leading to higher productivity, better earnings and a better standard of living. [For a full discussion, read Bloom, *et al*, "The Demographic Dividend" Available at: http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/2007/MR1274.pdf]

The demographic dividend approach assumes a virtually closed population, growing labour shortages, limited technology options, a limited role for changes in the workforce participation rates, and an education and skills development system which ensures that the new entrants have the requisite skills. Each of these assumptions needs to be critically examined for India.

In much of the literature, the dominant view expressed is that appropriate macroeconomic policies, labour market flexibility, and policies relating to education and skill development would enable the country to reap the demographic dividend. However, there is also a contrary view that even without all the appropriate policies in place, the dividend would still be realised. [See S. Aiyer and A. Mody (2011), "The Demographic Dividend: Evidence for the Indian States", *IMF Working Paper 11/38*.]

The potential paper-writers may also do one or more of the following:

- Prepare fresh population and labour force projections for the period up to 2030, *inter alia*, while critically examining the Planning Commission's methodology and the results of the 2011 Census and NSS surveys. This would help in assessment of the implications of the new estimates for the potential demographic dividend.
- Use the existing or new population and labour force projections to identify the likely number of new entrants to the labour force between 2011 and 2030, and explore their employment prospects in terms of education levels and potential or actual skills. This could be done for India as a whole or for a selected state.
- Look at the implications of the demographic transition occurring at different points of time in different states in terms of its labour market impacts within a selected state and on other States.
- Examine the problems of special groups like women, illiterates, the poorly educated or other deprived sections and how they can gain from the demographic dividend via the acquisition of education, training and access through the labour market to productive full-time employment.
- Focus on the prevalent education and training systems, and analyse how they can be re-structured in order to be able to contribute effectively towards making the working age bulge into a demographic dividend.
- Develop a policy paper outlining the key measures needed to enable India to gain from the potential demographic dividend, including discussions of the required macroeconomic, labour market, and education and training policies.
- Critically examine one or more of the following issues in the context of reaping the demographic dividend: expanding wage employment rather than self-employment; urban rather than rural employment; manufacturing rather than services; promotion of exports rather than domestic markets; and greater dependence on public employment promotion measures than on the private sector.

Theme III: Industrial Relations in India: Sectoral and Regional Patterns

The study of industrial relations system (IRS) in India is complex in that it encompasses studies using spatial (regional/industrial) and temporal (colonial/modern) contexts and different disciplines (Economics, History, Sociology, Law and so on). These frameworks and contexts impart richness and depth in the understanding the world of work. This Conference theme seeks to capture these intersectional ties and diversities.

Post-Independence, the Constitution of India architected a federal structure of governance in which Labour has been placed on the Concurrent List. The federal structure of governance and the state re-organization provided for a system of

regional governance co-existing with centre's governance. As the industrialization process continued depending on economic (locational), political (public sector development funds allocation in the planning period), labour market (workforce profile), institutional (law, trade unions and collective bargaining development or otherwise) and other factors, and different patterns of industrialization have emerged in the regions. The evolution of industrial relations obviously varied across space (regions) and the type of industries. The social organisation of work, technological factors and the social structuring of living in the residential places, the extent of competition, nature of the firm, organisation of employers and employees, and other factors determined the nature and evolution of industrial relations. Needless to mention is the significant role of state labour institutions and labour policies in the development of industrial relations.

Two sets of research inquiries are required to understand the complexities of IRS in India, viz. the macro and systemic perspectives, and the local narratives and analyses. While the macro systemic analyses adopt a broad brush methodology and are important in developing the "national" perspectives, they by their very structural logic could not reflect adequately the interesting diversities and complexities immanent at the disaggregated levels. For example, researchers could face difficulties in making generalizations with respect to labour institutions, say, collective bargaining. Collective bargaining structures vary across industries and regions. The economic reforms have further reinforced the regional and industrial specificities. For example, the state labour policies could vary in attracting capital into a region and in an industry. Thus, a "mosaic" of industrial relations emerge.

The main objectives of the structuring of the theme are to:

- Develop local stories, narratives and analyses concerning industrial/sectoral/regional levels—the scope of analysing these ideas could be as microscopic as the panchayat level or may be more expansive as the district level or the plant level, leading to a better understanding of the larger issues and developments;
- Encourage the researchers to study the disaggregate levels for enabling an understanding of industrial and employment relations as occurring at the entity level, be it the region or industry or even a firm;
- Build a body of disaggregate research evidence to be able to complement or even challenge the macro theorising and model building exercises;
- Enable policy-making as a coordinated exercise in lieu of a top-down approach; and
- Develop stand-alone literature at the disaggregate level.

The paper writers could draw from the foregoing narrative and the existing literature both in India and abroad to design their studies and write their papers. They could also explore some of the major issues mentioned below.

Industrial and employment relations encompass a host of issues such as the actors (comprising workers and their organisations; new forms of organisations; teams and groups; employers and their organisations; state agencies, including the police, district level administration, and judiciary; and global agencies dealing in industrial relations, among others), processes (including collective bargaining; grievance administration; and dispute resolution, among others), policies (devised by State and non-State agencies, including human resource management policies), outcomes (including overt and covert conflicts, collective agreements, situations of unrest, among other things), and ideology (that is, the beliefs and attitudes held by the actors and even the value system in a Human Resource [HR] context), all of which are impacted by economic issues, the labour market, and technological and power contexts both at the workplace and in the larger society. These issues are:

- Macro and systemic issues of IR/ER;
- Trade unions—their evolution, development, growth and even decay; their strategies, coalitional or divisive aspects as a movement in spatial or industrial or a firm set-up;
- New forms of workers' organisations and their stories, narratives and critical analyses—the sustainability or their local or global (that is, multi-regional or industrial) relevance; conflicts or coalitions between conventional and new forms of organisations; and even failed experiments that would be of interest;
- Important factors on the employers' side, the establishment of certain industries or Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and the controversies surrounding it (say the Nokia SEZ in Tamil Nadu); managerial strategies (IR/HR) concerning the firm, industrial actions including conventional ones like strikes and lockouts, as also non-conventional issues like idleness pay, forced labour via contract-pre-payment, registration of workers under some labour laws like the construction industry, workers' cooperatives and their dynamics including their re-corporatisation (which may even be controversial as in the case of Kamani Tubes Ltd.); Collective bargaining and other forms of determination of terms and conditions of employment; role of conventions and norms in shaping employment relations and any conflicts arising out of this or they forging cooperative relationship;
- Study of benchmarking and stand-alone awards and judgements concerning industrial relations in a firm or industry or a sector or a class of workers (say medical sales representatives);
- Working of tripartite and bi-partite bodies at the industry or regional levels;
- Interesting developments pertaining to conflict management, like police monitoring of the labour market in view of the operation of suspected Maoist elements in some parts of the country; the increasing role of the district

- administration in industrial relations, especially in the unorganised sector;
- Narratives and analyses on the movements of unorganised sector workers, their organising efforts, struggles, and coalitions with others;
 - Governance aspects and issues including labour administrative aspects in a state or with respect to industry/sector (say construction or SEZs or information technology and IT-aided industries); role of the Labour Ministry, budgetary allocations for it and labour welfare aspects; working of tripartite statutory boards under the labour laws; and a broad purview of labour regulation;
 - Narratives, analyses of struggles, conflicts, and their qualitative case studies or quantitative analyses at the regional/industry level;
 - Study of labour reforms initiatives concerning an industry or sector (including an SEZ) in a region and the dynamics surrounding them; the dynamics involved in policy-making (such as collusion conflicts between the ministries and social actors);
 - Other forms of actions relating to workers like absenteeism, quitting of work, sabotage, violence, and suicides, and linking them to the larger prevalent questions and issues;
 - Loans provided by multilateral agencies for infrastructure development and other developmental initiatives and the concomitant issue pertaining to industrial relations such as those concerning contract workers, the risk of accidents, and other related issues like organising and judicial intervention;
 - Assessment of the question as to whether the issue of labour should continue to figure in the Concurrent List or whether there is a case for its centralisation because of the present colonial dyarchy system wherein the Centre makes the laws and the states implement them at a cost; these constitutional issues could be examined along with the issue of appropriate government for labour administration and judicial dispensation;
 - Construction of quantitative and qualitative indices to analyse and measure the various aspects discussed above such as labour regulation, and the quality of employment which can supplement the Human Development Index (HDI) across various states in India;
 - Discussion on and analyses of the terms and conditions of employment and the role of labour institutions in them and so on (based on various surveys and studies including those conducted by the NSSO/ASI/OWS/MW ACT, etc.);
 - Conduct of studies as delineated above for various historical periods like the colonial period or the pre-reforms period, which could throw light on the evolution of various relevant institutions and could even lead to benchmarking.

The foregoing merely attempts to put together an amalgam of arguments, ideas and research questions as a preliminary exercise to indicate that the paper writers could take them forward by expanding on the micro elements or identifying new elements and so on, to produce their papers.

Some Useful References:

1. Davala, Sarath (ed.), (1992), *Employment and Unionisation in Indian Industry*, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, New Delhi.
2. *Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, October–December 2001, Conference Issue
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Organising Secretary
56th ISLE Conference
Department of Management Centre
Birla Institute of Technology [BIT]
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Dr. Harishwar Dayal

Co-organising Secretary
56th ISLE Conference and
Professor and Director
IHD Eastern Regional Centre
C-1, Harmu Housing Colony
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E-mail: 56isleconference.bit@gmail.com

INDIAN SOCIETY OF LABOUR ECONOMICS

Application for Membership

To
The Hon. Secretary
Indian Society of Labour Economics
NIDM Building (3rd Floor), IIPA Campus, I.P. Estate,
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Sir,
I/We subscribe to the Aims and Objects of the Indian Society of Labour Economics. I/We agree to abide by the Constitution and Rules & Regulations of the Society as may be in force from time to time. I/We hereby apply for membership as per following particulars.

Individual Annual Membership for the calendar year.....
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A Bank Draft for Rs/US\$..... is being sent herewith for the Membership Fee.

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The Indian Society of Labour Economics (ISLE) is a broad-based professional association of researchers, scholars and other stakeholders interested in the areas of labour, employment and development issues. The Society promotes scientific studies of labour markets, employment, industrial relations and related issues and provides a forum for exchange of ideas and disseminates knowledge. The Indian Journal of Labour Economics, a quarterly journal of the Society, now in its 57th year of publication, is peer reviewed and widely-circulated, promoting and featuring scientific studies on labour and employment issues.



THE INDIAN SOCIETY OF LABOUR ECONOMICS

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