

MANAGE India

CONFERENCE SPECIAL

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SUSTAINABLE SOCIOECONOMIC GROWTH OF THE REGION THROUGH PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Kolkata hosts the third Project Management Regional Conference that attracts practitioners from states across east India

In this Issue



June 2017

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Dear Practitioners,

PMI India held the third edition of the annual Project Management Regional Conference on 22 April. For the first time this conference was organized in east India. Hosted by PMI West Bengal Chapter in Kolkata, the conference provided practitioners in the region an opportunity to gain insights into project management from experts, share thoughts and ideas, and network with peers.

The conference theme, “Sustainable Socioeconomic Growth of the Region through Project Management,” was carefully crafted to reflect the challenges and opportunities of eastern India. The readiness of this region to embrace faster infrastructure creation and job growth depends largely on how well organizations focus on project management talent development and how projects are planned and executed. The full-day conference focussed on the capabilities that practitioners need to build to fuel sustainable socio-economic growth.

With five keynote addresses and two panel discussions with experts from industry, academia, and the social sector, delegates had a lot of knowledge and fresh perspectives to gain.

With PMI West Bengal Chapter being the youngest chapter of the PMI India family, it was highly encouraging to see a big turnout of delegates. There was a lot of passion and enthusiasm on display by the volunteers — factors that make PMI the organization that it is. I would like to congratulate each member of the chapter board and the volunteers for this tremendous achievement.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized initials 'R.K.' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Raj Kalady
Managing Director, PMI India

Dear Practitioners,

I'm immensely delighted to present to you this special issue of *Manage India* that covers the PMI India Regional Conference in Kolkata on 22 April. It was the first event of such scale being organized by the youngest chapter of PMI India, PMI West Bengal Chapter, and PMI India's debut conference in east India.

Preparations for the conference began almost a year ago, and the chapter board and volunteers left no stone unturned to make it a success. The hard work and commitment was on display on the day of the conference, with an exciting line-up of speakers from different sectors and a hall packed with practitioners from across east India, eager to gain knowledge and network with peers.

We had close to 300 paid delegates even before the closing date for registration. This is a significant number, considering that the chapter's membership is 325 and the number of PMI's Project Management Professional (PMP)® credential holders in Kolkata is less than 900. The number of delegates does not include those who volunteered for the conference. Though a large number of the delegates were from Kolkata, we also had project managers from Assam, Jharkhand, and Odisha.

The conference also provided an opportunity to corporate houses in the region to take part. Close to 50 companies, academic institutes, and social sector organizations took part.

I'm grateful for the great learning experience that organizing the conference provided us.

Warm regards,

Sumit Kumar Sinha

Conference Chair & President, PMI West Bengal Chapter

Dear Readers,

Six years ago we established PMI West Bengal Chapter to support and fuel the growth of the project management profession in east India. Steady growth in membership and programs over these years has helped us make our imprint on the region as the foremost professional development body for project professionals. And last month we topped it with a highly successful conference, PMI India Regional Conference 2017.

I take great pride in the fact that the youngest PMI chapter in India pulled off an event of such high caliber. Of the total member strength of 325, more than 30 volunteers drive chapter activities on a regular basis. Of these, 20 volunteers contributed to the regional conference by sacrificing their personal time for several months at a stretch. Our experience in conducting our local, annual conference, Aviskar, greatly helped us in hosting this conference.

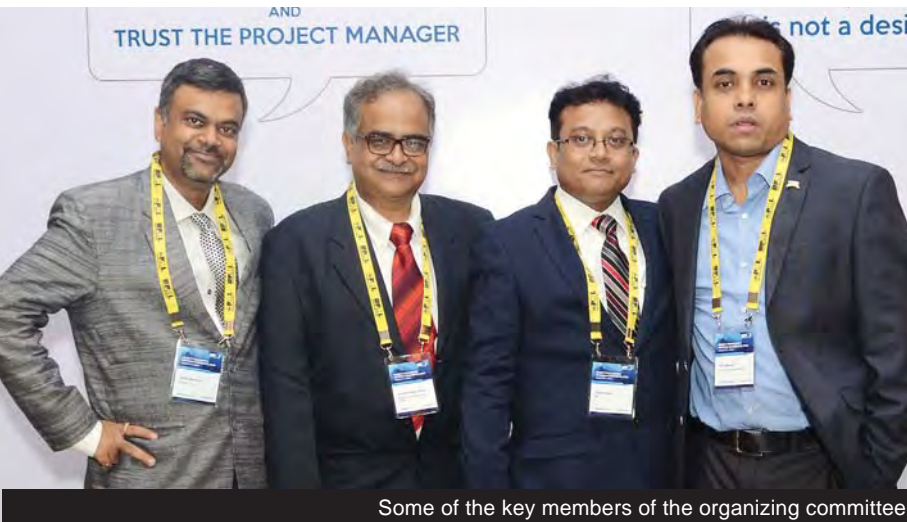
The conference started with a discussion on the project management profession in India and how mega troubled, complex projects should be handled. Speakers expertly linked the conference theme to digital transformations, driving innovation for a sustainable future, and fuelling social growth. Tata Steel presented a case study on its Kalinganagar plant in Odisha. The session ended with a keynote on leadership in this world of "distraction economy."

I'd like to thank the volunteers, chapter board members, presidents of PMI chapters across the country, and PMI India staff for their contributions. I'm grateful to our speakers and panelists who provided delegates immense value with their deep insights and perspectives. And a big thank you to the delegates who attended the conference.

Warm regards,

Amitava Banerjee, Conference Director

PMI INDIA REGIONAL CONFERENCE IN KOLKATA BRINGS EXPERTS, PRACTITIONERS FROM EAST INDIA TOGETHER



Some of the key members of the organizing committee

Kolkata played host to PMI India's Project Management Regional Conference on 22 April. The maiden event of the region brought together practitioners from diverse fields to discuss trends and opportunities, share insights, and highlight how project management could accelerate the socio-economic development of India's east and northeast.

Hosted by PMI West Bengal Chapter, the conference had close to 300 paid delegates from five states in the region. Delegates represented a wide range of industries such as IT, engineering, consulting, telecom, steel, healthcare, fashion, and the social sector. Registrations for this volunteer-organized event exceeded expectations and were closed in advance.

A highly relevant conference theme, "Sustainable Socioeconomic Growth of the Region through Project Management," senior industry leaders as keynote speakers, and opportunities to grow the professional network were key factors behind delegate

interest in the conference.

The conference was inaugurated by Subrata Mitra, joint managing director of M.N. Dastur & Company (P) Ltd., an engineering consultancy company, along with Raj Kalady, managing director, PMI India, and Sumit Kumar Sinha, president, PMI West Bengal Chapter. Besides Mr. Mitra, the other keynote speakers were Prithwis Mukerjee, program director - business analytics, Praxis Business School, Kolkata; Indrajit Sanyal, senior director - IT and cloud services, Ericsson Global Services Center; Rajesh Ranjan Jha, vice president - engineering, Tata Steel; Tejas Sura, managing director, Cubic Turnkey, and former mentor, PMI Region 11; Ashutosh Chatterji, director, Microsoft Corporation, and Reid Simon, consultant, Microsoft Corporation.

The speakers kept the delegates riveted throughout by peppering their talks with anecdotes, audio-visual displays, and interactive sessions. There was also music and poetry to enliven the mood – with Rabindranath Tagore's *Where the Mind is Without Fear* and Somali-Canadian singer K'naan's *Waving Flag*.

Mr. Kalady set the tone for the day with



Amitava Banerjee handing over the volunteer of the year award to Pryanka Roy Giri



his special address, where he emphasised the need for the government to recognize the importance of project management for successful project execution. “By 2022, we will require at least five lakh project managers to carry out the plans laid down by the government, including projects under Digital India,” he said.

Speakers discussed how big data analytics, artificial intelligence, and the internet of things are changing the way projects are being executed today. They also brought up some pressing concerns that projects face —such as land acquisition, sustainability, socio-economic welfare, handling and management of data,



Raj Kalady (extreme right) felicitating Tata Steel's Kalinganagar project team

and data security. There were also futuristic thoughts to tickle the mind: sci-fi concepts that seem close to reality thanks to the efforts of entrepreneur Elon Musk of Tesla and SpaceX, such as connecting human brains with computers and outer space habitation.

Besides the keynotes, there were panel discussions on: “Perspectives of Project Management in the Data-Only Generation,” and “Importance of Project Management in Social Change through Community Planning, Development, and Welfare.”

PMI India also used this opportunity to recognize a project in the region that achieved its project objectives in spite of steep challenges. The recognition for an outstanding project in east India went to Tata Steel's Kalinganagar plant in Odisha. [MI](#)



The one-day conference receives delegates from across east India



The force behind the conference: the organizing team from PMI West Bengal Chapter

SWIFT RESOLUTION OF LAND ISSUES CRITICAL FOR PROJECT



SUBRATA MAITRA
Joint Managing Director,
M. N. Dastur
& Company (P) Ltd

A shift towards scientific management of projects and attention to risk management could help in saving time and money in projects related to heavy industries, according to Subrata Maitra of M.N. Dastur & Company (P) Ltd.

Speaking about his experience in the sector, Mr. Maitra pointed out that swift resolution of land-related issues determines the trajectory of a project.

“In the growth of heavy industries, we have a problem with land. When we take up land issues for conceptualizing a project, the historical knowledge of acquisition and rehabilitation must be utilized. It is good to see proper implementation of projects globally and in neighboring countries that is benefiting society,” Mr. Maitra said.

He noted that in heavy metal industry, hundreds of stakeholders are involved and raw materials are fed from India and abroad.

In that context, he lauded industry leaders for consulting PMI for completion of tasks just in time.

Project management instils discipline and accords a distinct structure to the project, he added. He called for highlighting the efforts that go into building heavy industries and not just focusing on the announcement of a project. “China gives importance to infrastructure and heavy industry. They highlight the efforts that go into building heavy industries. While the Western world is moving away from heavy industries, we are dependent on them,” he said.

On risk management, he cited the example of Médecins Sans Frontières, the international, independent, medical humanitarian organization that is stressing on project management to ensure its workers do not get killed while carrying out their services. [MI](#)

OPEN YOUR EYES TO THE UNKNOWNNS IN THE FUTURE



PRITHWIS MUKERJEE
Program Director,
Business Analytics
Praxis Business
School

Digital transformation is not only disruptive but is also taking us into the domain of the “unknown of unknowns” said business analytics expert Prithwis Mukherjee in his keynote on “The Future Society in an Automated World.”

Mr. Mukherjee, who has a PhD in management science from the University of Texas, USA, took participants through the world of the internet of things, augmented reality, artificial intelligence, and do-it-yourself biology. What was once envisioned in sci-fi books and films is fast becoming a reality, he noted, while delving into topics of biohackers, transcranial simulation, cyborgs, and chimera.

“New biological species are getting created, which leads to the concept of immortality. It’s not just carbon immortality but silicon immortality. So even if you are dead, your computer keeps posting updates on your behalf. That is digital immortality,” he said.

Dr. Mukherjee, who has spent nearly two decades in the Indian IT, software, and

management consultancy business, believes machines will take over humans by 2045.

In this context, he spoke about the pioneering work being done by South African-born engineer and inventor, and founder of Tesla Motors and SpaceX, Elon Musk. His companies are pushing the boundaries of automation and redefining transportation on earth and in space. He said such mammoth endeavors would increase the ambit of project management. He urged delegates to think of new possibilities in this future, automated world. He asked, “Can you upload your brain onto your computer and make it work on your behalf? As we think of building colonies on Mars or other space habitats, how do we use project management in those unknown areas?” He said project management should not be seen as a solution, but as a “conflict resolving” mechanism. The open house at the end of the session threw up several questions. To one delegate’s question on the future of humankind and whether we are losing our jobs to China, Dr. Mukherjee replied, “China is not stealing our jobs; robots are.” [MI](#)

WAR ROOM TO DEAL WITH CONFLICT SITUATIONS



**RAJESH
RANJAN JHA**
Vice President,
Engineering
Tata Steel

Rajesh Ranjan Jha used an audio-visual presentation to shed light on the challenges that Tata Steel's greenfield project at Kalinganagar in Odisha faced before its commercial operations began in 2016.

Tata Steel conceived the Kalinganagar plant in 2005-2006, but work was delayed owing to land acquisition problems and anti-displacement protests. Work started only in 2010.

The company faced the anger of tribals who claimed they owned the piece of land that was handed over to the company by the state government. It was only after a generous relief and rehabilitation package that included higher compensation for the land, job guarantees, money for building houses, and a monthly maintenance allowance that the project took

off. As many as 12 people were killed in police firing during a protest against the construction of a compound wall at the project site.

Mr. Jha recalled the 'war room' that was set up at the plant site as a project management device. "Project management is about monitoring as much as it is about resolving conflicts. We had to ensure the safety of our workers. So a war room was set up where everything was monitored in real time," Mr. Jha explained.

He spoke about the company's development initiatives in the vicinity of the plant following its construction, emphasising on meaningful engagement of locals in the factory. He said that to ensure zero harm, a safety management system must be deployed across the value chain. [MI](#)

SET UP PMO FOR COMPLEX INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS



TEJAS SURA
Managing Director
Cubic Turnkey Pvt.
Ltd. and Ex-Mentor,
PMI Region 11

Speaking on navigating complexity through project management, Tejas Sura stressed on land acquisition as a major reason behind time overruns in infrastructure projects.

Delay in forest clearance, supply of equipment, problems in equipment erection, shortage of labor, geological surprises, Maoist (terrorists inspired by extreme left ideologies) problems, and fund constraints are some of the other key reasons for time overruns.

Quoting figures from the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Mr. Sura said out of 1,186 infrastructure projects, 336 (28 percent) were running behind schedule.

"As many as 312 projects show time overruns of more than six months, while 215 show cost overruns of more than Rs. 100 crore. As many as 71 projects show both,"

he said. To counter these situations, Mr. Sura recommended optimizing the organizational structure by setting up a three-tier project/program management office (PMO) throughout the country to monitor infrastructure initiatives.

"Madhya Pradesh is setting up a PMO. We need similar set-ups in every state," he said.

He called for a balanced approach in public-private partnership for faster implementation of projects. He also stressed on the importance of effective governance. He recommended that projects be executed by optimizing procedures through a transparent bidding criteria, adopting a unified, unambiguous and transparent transport policy for the movement of project materials especially ODCs (oversized dimensioned consignments), and designing an efficient transport and logistics system throughout the country. [MI](#)

DWINDLING ATTENTION SPAN DISASTROUS FOR PROJECT MANAGERS



INDRAJIT SANYAL

Senior Director
IT and Cloud
Services, Ericsson

Indrajit Sanyal's presentation on how to lead and demonstrate leadership in this world of 'distraction economy and attention revenue' was one of the most interactive sessions of the conference. He gave practical tips to the budding project manager on how to handle distraction.

Mr. Sanyal began by playing the Waving Flag, a highly popular song on football by Somali-Canadian rapper, K'naan. At the end of the music video, he asked participants to guess the number of goals shown in the song. Many came up with the correct answer. He said that this showed how many in the audience focused on the goals rather than enjoying the melody.

"Human attention is dwindling. How do we

make sure the key message reaches the project manager? But if the information is not flowing, then the project will be doomed," remarked Mr. Sanyal.

He brought up the issue of distraction again during the question-and-answer session, saying the overuse of digital devices is leading to an addiction.

He also debunked popular beliefs around multi-tasking. "Multi-tasking is a myth. You cannot be on a conference call and write a mail at the same time. If you have only 30 minutes, then you should complete the call and then go on to your next task," he said.

He recommended mindfulness exercises and meditation to get around distractions. [MI](#)

PUSH BOUNDARIES, MOVE OUT OF COMFORT ZONES



ASHUTOSH CHATTERJI

Director, Microsoft
Corporation

Ashutosh Chatterji and Reid Simon presented a paper on "Lessons from the Past to Drive Innovation Today for a Sustainable Future."

Mr. Chatterji's talk revolved around how sustainable development, which is a relatively long-term commitment, can add value to projects, which are essentially short-term endeavors.

He said that projects that are better designed, better implemented, and better coordinated improve the lives of people in need. And to execute such projects smoothly, team creativity emerges as a core topic in project management.

"Sustainable development is about team creativity, not just team productivity; about equity not just equality. It results in people

doing their best," Mr. Chatterji remarked in his keynote.

Project managers need technical skills, competencies and knowledge to successfully implement projects that have economic, social and environmental impacts for the present and future generations.

However, he cautioned project managers against sticking to their comfort zones.

"Have the same environment, but push them out of their individual comfort zones," he said.

He and his co-speaker Reid Simon reinforced the importance of building lasting value in projects. "Aspire to reach the same level of outcomes for all users. Enable users to attain outcomes — not adjust outcomes to fit users' current abilities," said Mr. Simon. [MI](#)



REID SIMON

Consultant
Microsoft Corporation

PERSPECTIVES OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN THE DATA ONLY GENERATION



Panelists (from left) D.K. Mishra, Deb Kumar Majumder, Suman Bhowmik, K. Rangarajan, and Vikram Rai Medhi

Moderator: Suman Bhowmik, secretary, Sparsh Foundation

Panelists:

Dr. D. K. Mishra, director, Department of Laboratory Sciences, Tata Medical Centre

Deb Kumar Majumder, director, IBM India

Dr. K. Rangarajan, head, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, Kolkata
Vikram Rai Medhi, CEO, North East Institute of Fashion Technology, Assam

Mr. Bhowmik: How has IT revolutionized different sectors? What data do we need to use?

Dr. Mishra: Tata Medical Centre in Kolkata is completely paperless and we are in the process of starting to record communication between doctors and patients through audio-visual technology. This will ensure informed consent, which is a pillar

of medical ethics. But the challenge is — how do you manage that volume of data? Then there are legal implications of digital data. We have to know where to draw the line with data online. We must remember data is complementary to human effort. Now we have apps to diagnose a condition, but you need a trained person to explain the implications.

Mr. Majumder: 80 percent of the data generated cannot be tracked; telecom companies are having problems in monetizing data. Although communication service providers have relied on large volumes of data for years now, they must know how to sieve through it smartly to develop a competitive edge. The key is to build cognition around that data.

Mr. Rangarajan: The important question to ask is, can human resources shape up to the challenges of the future presented by big data? We have to move beyond the hype

surrounding big data. In foreign trade, for example, big data ties in with the logistics sector. With real-time information (through big data), export and import cargo pick-up and deliveries can become smoother.

Mr. Bhowmik: How does recession affect the fashion industry and northeast India? Is there a role for data analytics in fashion? Can big data help the fashion industry overcome recession?

Mr. Medhi: In India, Bollywood and weddings drive demand in the fashion industry. The industry is not mature enough to play a global role yet. Developing databases for research and development can check misinterpretation of indigenous designs. Motifs and designs indigenous to northeast Indian tribes are often misinterpreted by fashion designers from other parts of the country. [MI](#)

IMPORTANCE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN SOCIAL CHANGE THROUGH COMMUNITY PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND WELFARE

Moderator:

Suman Bhowmik, Secretary, Sparsh Foundation

Panelists

Geeta Venkadakrishnan, director, Hope Foundation, Kolkata
Chittapriyo Sadhu, general manager, Save The Children, West Bengal & Assam
Sanjoy Majumder, sales head - east, SRL Diagnostics
Dr. Debasish Roy, Indian Police Service, additional director general and inspector general of police - enforcement branch, West Bengal
Dr. Aniruddha Dey, director, Professional Institute for Development & Socio Environmental Management

Mr. Bhowmik: I urge each of you to share your experiences in and insights into the use of project management in your sector.

Ms. Venkadakrishnan: We must involve all the stakeholders from the beginning of a project to bring about social change. The community has to be involved right from the planning stage. Communication is essential to gain the trust of the locals, who are direct project beneficiaries.

Mr. Sadhu: Project management in the social sector is about understanding constraints, and one of the hurdles to implementing projects for child protection and welfare is accessibility to remote areas of northeast India.

Mr. Majumder: SRL partnered with state governments to set up labs in states like Sikkim. The main challenges are bureaucratic delays in getting lab resources and reagents to remote pockets.

Mr. Roy: One of the major problems we face is sustaining a project once it has started, because of funding agencies withdrawing at a later stage. So it is an open challenge for participants here to help us continue the sports-based Kolkata Goalz project for underprivileged children. It has been operational since 2011, but is likely to stop next year, as 50 per cent of funds have been withdrawn.

Mr. Dey: Most of us have a product-oriented approach and not a process-oriented approach. The point is that in community development projects, when you are dealing with people, day in and day out, the first step is acceptance by them. Without that you cannot expect the project to be sustainable. We have to listen to people, not talk. [MI](#)



Panelists (from left) Geeta Venkadakrishnan, Chittapriyo Sadhu, Sanjoy Majumder, Suman Bhowmik, Debasish Roy, and Aniruddha Dey

CONFERENCE VOLUNTEERS



Sumit Kumar Sinha
Conference Chair



Amitava Banerjee
Conference Director



Abir Biswas
Administration Lead



Pratik Kumar Singh
Event Management Lead



Tamal Banerjee
Registration and Delegate
Volunteer



Sobhan SenSharma
Associate Conference
Director



Sudipa Mohanta
Logistics Lead



Jagadish Maity
Program and PMO Lead



Arundhiti Dasgupta
Program and PMO
Volunteer



Supratim Sen
Logistics Volunteer



Saon Sen Nandi
Registration and
Delegate Lead



Rekha Unni
Marketing and
Communication Lead



Pryanka Roy Giri
Associate Lead Marketing
and Communication



Arabinda Bhar
Conference Award Lead



Suman Das
Registration and Delegate
Volunteer



Prosenjit Roy
Corporate Outreach Lead



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