

# MANAGE India



**COVER STORY**

## Perfect Mix of Planning, Teamwork, and Commitment

Ensuring the safety and comfort of 82.8 million pilgrims at Kumbh Mela needed much more than divine intervention. It put the project management skills of the state government to the test.

**Pg 12: Over 2000 attend Gyan Lahari in Hyderabad**



Bridges constructed during the Kumbh Mela helped improve road connectivity to Haridwar

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Announcement: Free Delegate Pass to PMI India National Conference 2011

Manage India is two years old! We invite your feedback to improve your favorite e-newsletter. PMI India is giving away free delegate passes to PMI India Project Management National Conference 2011 to the top three best feedback/suggestions entries!\*

Submit your feedback

\*Conditions apply

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# Letter from the Managing Director, PMI India



Raj Kalady  
Managing Director, PMI India

Dear Practitioners,

High caliber events, strategic partnerships, and increased reach of PMI chapters marked the past two months. These significant developments in the beginning of 2011 have set the tone for the rest of the year. I'm confident PMI India will bring more value to the practitioners' community in the months ahead.

On 18 February, Dr. Devesh Das, minister in charge, Department of IT, West Bengal, launched PMI India's eighth chapter, PMI West Bengal Chapter, and its logo in Kolkata at INFOCOM 2011. INFOCOM is India's largest gathering of ICT professionals, buyers-sellers, corporate leaders, academicians, visionaries, and policymakers. The timing of the launch is crucial as it coincides with renewed focus on infrastructure development in the state.

Our chapters have been organizing some exciting events that have attracted a lot of practitioners. We are pursuing our student outreach initiatives as well. Recently, in association with Mumbai Chapter and Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies' Mukesh Patel School of Technology Management & Engineering, we conducted the first ever on-field project management competition for students.

On 3 February 2011, PMI Pearl City (PMIPCC) Chapter celebrated 'International Student Leadership Day' with a mammoth gathering of India's future stakeholders in Hyderabad. The 2,000 participants comprised over 1,700 students, teachers, academicians, parents, corporate leaders, and PMIPCC volunteers. Among the other chapter activities was a workshop on soft skills for project managers organized by Chennai Chapter. Also, we had the second edition of Project Management in Cloud computing event which was held in Chennai and co-organized by Trivandrum Chapter and Chennai Chapter. Both these events were well attended.

We entered into a strategic understanding with the University of Petroleum and Energy Studies, Delhi, to advance project management skills within petroleum, energy, and infrastructure sectors in India. The memorandum of understanding provides us scope to share knowledge, set benchmarks within the industry, develop global standards, and support research initiatives.

PMI India is today a partner with industry for knowledge on mega and troubled projects. I was part of a conference in Mumbai on a related subject—Executing Mega and Troubled Projects; leaders from industry and government deliberated on ways to manage large projects in India at the conference. Such forums show the growing interest in India to plan and execute projects efficiently.

In partnership with the Confederation of Indian Industry, we have so far successfully executed nine project management workshops in tier 2 cities in south India and have received an overwhelming response.

In this issue of *Manage India*, we are featuring a unique project—the Kumbh Mela that took place in Haridwar last year. We have all grown up hearing about the Kumbh, but not many of us have wondered what it takes to organize the largest congregation of Hindus in the world. I encourage you to go through our cover feature and understand the project management that goes behind the Kumbh Mela.

I am delighted to announce that we have the first winner of our Article of the Month contest. The contest has received a tremendous response and I hope practitioners continue to take part in it in the months ahead.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Raj Kalady'.

Raj Kalady  
Managing Director, PMI India

*Please write to [editor.manageindia@pmi-india.org](mailto:editor.manageindia@pmi-india.org) with your feedback and article submissions for the Article of the Month contest. Refer to Page 14 for the contest details.*



JESSE FEWELL

Jesse Fewell, PMP, CST, Enterprise Agile Coach, RippleRock India delves into the current process-related debates

For decades, management experts have been fussing over which methodology is best. Champions from the various camps decry others as lazy and undisciplined, and explain their own methodology to be a silver bullet for every project. Why do we see such heated discussions around the virtues and vices of a given set of policies and procedures?

The wars are rooted in ‘professional pain.’

If you’ve worked on a project where you hated going to work in the morning, where the best of your efforts somehow always led to clunky deliverables, where customers and executives demanded that you squeeze juice from a dead rock...then you’ve experienced ‘professional pain.’ I know; I’ve been there. It’s what motivated me to become a project manager in the first place. After spending three years on a death march government contract, I vowed never to stand by and let my future projects end up in that kind of misery again. When project management experts label each

# In Search of the Elusive Right Balance between Process Compliance and Process Tailoring

other as self-serving or ignorant, they miss the emotional source of issue. This is not metaphor or simile; this is about creating the humane working conditions that deliver real business results.

The wars are between compliance and customization.

If the passion in today’s project management debates comes from professional pain, then the substance of the debate boils down to whether it is better to run projects with more focus on process compliance or process customization. It goes something like this:

“If only we had more compliant processes...we’d have fewer mistakes...we’d have the predictability needed for planning our risks and resources...we’d know what is expected of us...we’d be more successful.”

Or

“If only we had more custom processes...we’d be able to deliver real value instead of wasting time on administrative overhead...we’d be able to own more of our work...we’d be able to adapt to new information...we’d be more successful.”

Don’t pay attention to the arguments of which methodology is better; that is not what people are usually fighting for. The real passion comes from how much compliance is best versus how much customization is best. This is the debate.

The war rages across all camps.

Today’s project management thought leaders have generalized the compliance advocates as ‘traditionalists’ and the

customization advocates as ‘modernists.’ However, the methodology wars are not limited to whether you consider yourself a traditionalist or a modernist. Some of the most heated discussions arise in the midst of those camps.

Within the PMI community, *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge* (PMBOK® Guide) is strongly characterized as the ‘Guide to Project Management,’ allowing for whatever customized approach is needed to deliver a project. However, other project managers remind us that the same Guide contains an official standard for exactly what goes into risk management or quality assurance. Depending on who you talk to, you’ll get a different story on whether more compliance or more customization is the way to implement the *PMBOK® Guide* practices.

Within Agile circles, Kanban practitioners decry several practices of the Scrum method as wasteful ceremony, driven by compliance rather than by value. Meanwhile, Scrum is also considered too loose and easy by the eXtreme Programming community, who advocate compliance to specific engineering practices.

But who’s right? Which of the two is the better focus? Of course, there is no general answer to that; it is always specific to a situation. However, it is certainly helpful to know what’s really happening the next time you come upon a project management flame war on some discussion board: Having suffered professional pain, managers believe strongly that either more compliance or more customization is the path to success, and will defend that belief even against those in their own camp.



*A large gathering of beneficiaries at a program organized by International Centre for Entrepreneurship and Career Development (ICECD)*

# Structured Approach to Social Change

Gujarat-based NGO helps improve the lives of 45,000 widows, wins PMI India Community Award

India, the country on the fast track of growth, has a dubious record of not doing enough to improve the lot of the socially disadvantaged. In many regions in India, widows fall in this socially disadvantaged sector. In the past couple of decades, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have done their bit to bring some positive changes into the lives of people who have been left behind in the country's economic progress. Yet, not many NGOs have taken up widow rehabilitation as a focus area.

Gujarat-based International Centre for Entrepreneurship and Career Development (ICECD) is an organization

that has been working with women and youth in villages, tribal areas, and urban slums. ICECD runs a program for widows. The focus of ICECD activities has been to empower these communities through small and microenterprise development. Having started its operations in 1986, ICECD has steadily spread its area of operation. It now offers its services to communities across several states in India and in 52 other developing countries. In India, it has so far reached out to over a million people.

"India has over 33 million widows. In 2006, ICECD took up the challenge to socio-economically

rehabilitate disadvantaged widows who live the most austere and deprived life. The mortality rate among these widows is shockingly high and they live without any hope or means to support themselves and their families,” says Ms. Hina Shah, director, ICECD. In recognition of the work that the organization has done, PMI India awarded ICECD with the PMI India Community Award during the PMI India Project Management Conference in Mumbai in November 2010.

The approach that the organization has adopted is much beyond welfare. The focus has been to develop the entrepreneurial capabilities of widows to help them successfully run their own small businesses. “The project management model that we devised was such that it effectively dealt with people, tools, and systems. It has led to regular income, increase in purchasing capacity, and independence. These widows now have better decision-making power, better communication, and control and are able to plan and monitor their business. This is an irreversible developmental change that has taken place,” remarks Ms. Shah.

The program initially started with a pilot project in 2006, which led to the economic rehabilitation of more than 3,500 rural widows in Gujarat. ICECD launched the project along with the Women and Child Development Department and Social Security Department, Government of Gujarat. As many as 90 percent of the widows rehabilitated started their own small businesses or got linked with skilled employment. They started earning anywhere between Rs. 1,500 to Rs. 25,000 (US\$ 30–500) a month.



*A widow receiving financial assistance at ICECD*

Today, the ICECD program has reached out to over 13,000 widows from 21 districts of Gujarat. The NGO adopted a structured approach to disseminate information about the program to the rest of the state. ICECD identified and trained 23 NGOs, which in turn, took the program to other states. The program, together with the work done by the 23 NGOs, has so far touched the lives of around 45,000 widows all over India. The model has provided social security to widows in terms of regular income, purchasing capacity, and independence. Today, ICECD and the partnering NGOs form a network with various government and business organizations. This successful and sustainable model has caught the attention of governments, policy makers, other NGOs, social leaders, and the society at large.

These women have achieved self-sufficiency and sustainability under the Widows Federation that the ICECD project team formulated. The idea was to help them access loans, insurance, children’s education, and other financial schemes.

The program has created an investment of Rs. 45 crore (US\$ 9 million). Considering that more than 65 percent of these widows are illiterate, this is no small achievement.



*ICECD honors outstanding performers in self-sufficiency programs*



# Perfect Mix of Planning, Team Work, and Commitment

*Devotees performing Ganga arati as part of the Kumbh Mela celebrations in Haridwar*

Ensuring the safety and comfort of 82.8 million pilgrims at Kumbh Mela needed much more than divine intervention. It put the project management skills of the state government to the test.

BY PRERNA DAR

The Kumbh Mela, world's largest Hindu spiritual festival, occurs once every 12 years, rotating among four locations in India. In 2010, the Kumbh Mela was held in Haridwar, Uttarakhand, from 1 January to 30 April. Hindus from all over the world came for a holy dip in the divine Ganga. In the span of four months, about 82.8 million pilgrims visited Haridwar. Out of this, more than 16 million came in for a dip on the holiest day of the Kumbh Parv, that is, 14 April.

Tucked in the foothills of the Himalayas, Haridwar was a challenging place for the authorities to host tens of millions of people, particularly because Uttarakhand is a newly formed state in India. The organizing committee had to surmount innumerable challenges such as manpower shortage, lack of technically equipped personnel, a small police force, weak financial strength, and many more. But with

certain basic project management principles in place, dedication, and commitment, the 2010 Kumbh Mela turned out to be one of the most successful ones since the mela tradition began.

Mr. Anand Bardhan, chief mela officer, Government of Uttarakhand says, "Not a single infrastructure resource, human resource, financial resource, or administrative work like maintenance of law and order or crowd management or security coverage was in place. The first project management task before us was to identify people who would form the managing committee. Once the team was selected, they had to sit down to identify and enumerate the different challenges that would arise in the execution of the project."

## **Project Management Challenges**

To begin with, the committee had to get all government approvals and sanctions. Initially, the government

had outlaid a sum of Rs. 100 crore for infrastructure development which was to be paid in three installments starting from the financial year 2007–08. But this amount was found to be grossly inadequate to create the infrastructure and services required for the Kumbh. The committee had to approach the Planning Commission of India (PCI) for additional resources. The central government granted Rs. 350 crore. By the end, about Rs. 550 crore was spent on the Kumbh.

Once the budget was released, the team started its work. The first challenge was to create permanent infrastructure and services/facilities in a cost-effective and time-bound manner. Services such as bathing ghats (river banks), parking lots, bus stands, roads, bridges, medical facilities, sanitation, drinking water, and electricity had to be put in place. Huge coordination efforts were needed as the number of agencies involved was large and multifarious. In addition to state government agencies, police forces from the neighboring states, the Indian army, Intelligence Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, and the Central Paramilitary Force were involved.

Additionally, the capacity of the main roads, for example, National Highway 58 that leads to Haridwar, had to be increased and connectivity improved by

constructing new bridges. The parking space all around the town had to be increased substantially to accommodate at least one lakh vehicles. Temporary camping areas for religious and social organizations had to be enlarged from about 100 hectares to at least 150 hectares. The capacity to run shuttle trains with towns like Motichur and Rishikesh had to be suitably enhanced.

The second challenge that the mela committee faced was to ensure the safety and security of such a large number of people. Terrorist threats made it mandatory to secure the railways, hospitals, buses, and the entire Kumbh area, which was a tough task. The mela authorities had to ensure security as much to the common pilgrim as to numerous VIPs and religious leaders who would visit Haridwar during this period. Also, it was important to ensure all religious activities performed by the various akharas (religious groups) during the period of the mela proceeded peacefully. Akharas have a history of rivalry among one another and a small incident could spark off an altercation.

The tasks before the mela committee were numerous: keeping the processions orderly, maintaining cleanliness, providing water, ambulances, security, ensuring regular communication with the control room and maintenance of sequence and timings of the simultaneous religious events. Moreover, it was crucial to ensure that the pilgrims and general public would not come in the way of the processions that the various religious groups organize. On a regular day, the main streets of Haridwar are crowded. Particularly, Haridwar being an old and congested town with age-old infrastructure, the execution of permanent infrastructure works was difficult and required a lot of coordination efforts. It involved cajoling the different departments while managing the public who faced a lot of inconveniences, especially during the laying of water and sewage pipelines.

Apart from all these challenges, the committee needed to manage the interests of all the mela stakeholders: the rival groups of sadhus (holy men) and akharas, local traders, the municipal authorities, volunteers, security forces, purohits (priests), government officials, etc. The mela being a deeply religious and sensitive event, the committee had to keep in mind each group's religious sentiments and keep their cool even during adverse conditions. It meant withstanding mental and physical stress and ensuring that every individual in the various teams worked towards the common goal of a peaceful and smooth Kumbh.

#### Major activities/attractions during the Kumbh Mela:

- Shahi Snans – On the most auspicious days, the 13

### Some key Kumbh Mela pilgrim statistics

No. of pilgrims during the entire Kumbh period	70-80 million
No. of pilgrims on the main Kumbh Parv	16 million
No. of pilgrims camping during the 4 months	1.5 million



*Pilgrims bathing in the holy Ganga on auspicious days*

akharas go in a procession with splendor and pomp to bathe at the bathing areas. In the 2010 mela, there were 4 shahi snans.

- Peshwais – Peshwais are the second most important activity at the mela. It is the royal procession of the sadhus and marks the arrival of the members of an akhara at the mela venue. Peshwais mark the actual beginning of the Kumbh.
- Dharmdhwaja – When the akharas establish their camps, they erect dharmdhwajas which remain there till the end of the Kumbh.
- Bathing on auspicious days and watching the shahi snans by all pilgrims.
- Religious discourses by saints and religious leaders.

### Strategies Adopted to Overcome Challenges

Led by Mr. Bardhan, the team adopted the following project management strategies:

- A PERT chart of all activities (big or small) related to the Kumbh was prepared and progress monitored accordingly.
- Initially, monthly staff meetings were held in which all departments were represented to monitor the progress of ongoing schemes and plans and resolved inter-departmental issues. As the time passed, such meetings became fortnightly, weekly, and then daily just before and during the mela.
- Meetings and interactions with various stakeholders were a regular feature during the entire period. Among these stakeholders were 13 akharas, traders, Ganga Sabha or the people's committee established in 1916 as the guardian of the river, and formal and informal committees.
- On an average, the mela committee members made at least three visits a week to Dehradun, the state capital. For each visit, a department-wise list of issues pending at the government level was prepared. For any issue that did not get resolved, committee members had access to the secretary of the department concerned, the highest-level executive for that department, during the visit.
- Regular communication through mobile phones and wireless sets was maintained among the control room, officers-in-charge of religious processions and senior officers.
- In each sector, there were three key officials: the sector magistrate, the sector police officer, and the sector health officer. Joint meetings of all these sectoral officials and nodal officers were held once a fortnight to resolve any issues.
- The mela control room had a duty officer 24x7 from each important department.

Above and beyond all these strategies, the team had to make sure that all the plans were dynamic enough

to incorporate last-minute changes that kept cropping up due to immediate requirements on the ground. The team had to be on top of their plan, keep thinking and innovating on their feet along with coordinating between all the parties.

Following all the above strategies, the mela committee was triumphant in organizing a highly successful and safe event which saw several new initiatives: two national highways were connected for better traffic management and to reduce traffic jams; temporary bridges were made motorable; ghats were modified to make them accessible to the physically challenged; websites were developed in English, Hindi, and Sanskrit; sectoral plans and layouts were digitized and developed on AutoCAD and GIS; and temporary toilets were constructed.

Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, deputy chairman, Planning Commission of India appreciated the state's efforts and said, "I would like to congratulate you on the successful completion of the Maha Kumbha Mela. This historical event, which required major infrastructure development and organizational skills, has been conducted in a manner that has been widely appreciated."

In the end, all the elaborate planning eventually paid off. All major activities passed off peacefully and the 2010 mela saw a list of exceptional achievements that were never witnessed before such as better sanitation and hygiene for the pilgrims and visitors; smooth traffic; no shortage of power supply; no stampedes due to effective crowd management; and 70 percent expenditure on permanent works. The bathing areas were doubled from 7.5 to 15 km.

Beyond this, the new infrastructure has taken care of the long-term requirements of Haridwar. There will be sufficient water in the city till 2040 and the upgraded sewer pipeline will be able to handle sewage till 2050.

### Lessons Learnt

Managing a huge event like the Kumbh involves enormous effort. But the 2010 mela proved that executing an epic project could be done by following some basic project management principles. Mr. Bardhan says that the lesson he and his team learnt was that: "With teamwork, effective administration, managerial control on all the activities, adequate human resource support, monitoring and scheduling of all arrangement and coordination with all the stakeholders a gargantuan event can be executed smoothly."

Due date: 1 April 2011

## PMI Linn Stuckenbruck Person of the Year Award

PMI Professional Awards Add Distinction To Your Accomplishments

Each year, the Project Management Institute (PMI) honors those who do an outstanding job to advance the knowledge and practice of project management. Conferred for outstanding contribution(s) to the development and advancement of the project management profession and contribution(s) to the institute, the PMI Linn Stuckenbruck Person of the Year Award is among the most prestigious honors a project manager can attain.

Recognize a fellow PMI member for his/her outstanding contributions, or talk to your PMI colleagues about your interest in being nominated for the 2011 PMI Linn Stuckenbruck Person of the Year Award.

Act now - nominations for this and many other PMI Professional Awards must arrive at PMI via postal mail by Friday, 1 April 2011. The PMI Linn Stuckenbruck Person of the Year Award is presented at the annual PMI awards ceremony and reception during PMI®

Global Congress - North America. This year, the PMI awards ceremony and reception will be held on 22 October at the Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center in Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas, USA.

In addition to recognition during the awards ceremony, the winner of the 2011 PMI Linn Stuckenbruck Person of the Year Award will be featured on the cover of the December 2011 issue of PM Network® magazine, and in a special editorial feature also in the December issue.

Add distinction to your curriculum vitae, or recognize a fellow PMI member for their outstanding contributions. Come to [PMI.org/Awards](http://PMI.org/Awards) for information on how to nominate.

Visit us: [PMI.org/Awards](http://PMI.org/Awards)

Contact us: Ms. Donna Huber, PMI Awards Administrator, [awards@pmi.org](mailto:awards@pmi.org) | +1 610 356 4600

## NORTH INDIA CHAPTER

### Enhancement Initiatives

Since its inception, the PMI North India Chapter has been striving continuously to nurture the project management community in the North India region. Under the leadership of Mr. Manoj K Gupta, chapter president, the chapter has taken various initiatives to involve the community and spread the word about project management across industries. The chapter has received accolades from the project management community and PMI alike for its efforts.

Spearheaded by Mr. Pritam Dutt, vice president, technology, the chapter has completely re-vamped its website on the lines of PMI branding strategy and has become one of the first chapters to take such an initiative globally. The chapter has also made its presence on social networking sites to connect with members and to share the best project management practices.

Mr. Piyush Govil, vice president, communications, has played a key role in streamlining chapter communication with its members. Regular communication regarding chapter events, membership renewals and other information is sent to all the members. Mr. Govil has also designed a member survey which will give the chapter inputs for further improvement and help them to meet member expectations.

The chapter has been actively collaborating with corporates to organize knowledge-sharing events. Under the leadership



*Board members of the PMI North India chapter*

of Mr. Amit Aggarwal, vice president, programs, the chapter organized an event 'Project Management Best Practices and the Paradox of Risk Management,' in collaboration with NTPC. Attendees benefited from the rich experience from speakers like Prof. Claude Besner, PhD, PMP from Montreal University.

Headed by Ms. Sarita Talwar, vice president, membership, the chapter has built successful strategies to bring in more members and to retain the existing members. The current strength of the chapter has risen to above 700 members.

Mr. Amit Chauhan, vice president, finance, has assisted the chapter in utilizing its finances for providing growth and learning opportunities for the members.

## BANGALORE CHAPTER

## Leading Awareness Sessions



*Mr. Vijay Kulkarni sharing his experience with the audience.*

PMI Bangalore chapter has been active in organizing knowledge-enhancing forums as part of PM Footprints.

On 13 January, Mr. V.R. Murali Mohan, senior associate dean (operations), Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research, spoke on 'Project Formulation Based on Stakeholder Analysis and Social Network Analysis.' In his presentation, Mr. Mohan provided an overview on stakeholder and social network analysis and how they can be used to manage projects in a

better way. On 27 January, Ms. Chetana Koulagi, PMP, MCTS, principal, Infosys Technologies led a session on 'Good Things May Happen Too—Opportunity Management in Projects.' This session focused on specialized techniques that can be used in identifying opportunities and managing them.

On 3 February, in the session 'Acquire or Build Resources,' Ms. Ramanathan Latha, project manager, Infosys Technologies, discussed the critical topic of resource management. On 10

February, Ms. Reena Gujral, associate manager, Accenture Services, led a session on 'ABC of People Management.' Ms. Gujral discussed the current theories of people management and compared them to the theories used by our ancestors. On 17 February, Mr. Vijay R Kulkarni, freelance consultant, SAP, spoke on 'Multi Country Rollout—ERP Project Challenges.' Mr. Kulkarni shared with the audience the typical do's and don'ts and the key success factors in managing projects. On 24 February, Mr. Ravindra N, senior deputy general manager, Bharat Electronics delivered a session on 'Failure Effect Analysis used for Project Risk Management.'

On 3 March, Mr. V. G. Raman, founder director, Visharad Consultancy Services, gave an inspiring talk on 'Effective Governance Through Program Management.' In his session, Mr. Raman highlighted the finer points of program management that could be leveraged to ensure governance. On 10 March, in a session titled 'PM: Managerial and Leadership Challenges,' Ms. Vijayalakshmi V. Sekuboyina, database program manager, emphasized on leadership and gender biases in people and leaders, leading to the success or failure of a project.

## CHENNAI CHAPTER

## Keeping Stress Out of Your Life and Project

Since its inception, PMI Chennai chapter has been working towards providing its members a milieu of learning that will enhance their project management knowledge and expertise.

The chapter organized a full-day capacity building workshop to develop soft skills for project management. The aim of the workshop was to provide young professionals a clear understanding on the skill set required to overcome the ever increasing challenges and stress at work.

Several project management experts attended the workshop and shared their experiences and learning with the audience. The speakers presented a representation of the key success skills required by today's project managers

in order to tackle the day-to-day complexities. They also emphasized that excessive stress interferes with productivity and health, and project managers have to find ways to keep stress under control. The key speakers at the workshop were Mr. Raj Kalady, managing director, PMI India; Ms. Saras Bhaskar, corporate trainer, Professional Counselling Services; and Dr. Maaney V. Paul, eTOP self-management trainer.

At the workshop, Mr. C. S. Nanthakumar from the Art of Living Foundation delivered a talk on 'Techniques on Analyzing Body, Breath, Mind, Intellect, Memory, Ego, and the Soul.' The topics discussed were self-motivation, management and efficiency, and conflict management for project managers.

## HYDERABAD CHAPTER

## Gyan Lahari: Facilitating Community Development Programs

Since its inception nine years ago, the PMI Pearl City Chapter (PMIPCC) has taken up several initiatives for community development. On 3 February, the chapter hosted an exciting mega event as part of its community development program. The Student Leadership Competency Building (SLCB) initiative, a movement unveiled in the year 2005, has progressively grown in outreach and momentum. SLCB was the brainchild of chapter thought leaders, Mr. V Srinivasa Rao, ex-president, PMIPCC and past-chairman of PMI Team India, and Mr. A Suresh Chandra, president, PMIPCC.

This year, the SLCB activities culminated into the Gyan Lahari Student Leadership Conference and International Student Leadership Day (ISLD). The event was held at Shilpakala Vedika, Hyderabad, and about 2,000 delegates, including 1700+ students, corporate, parents, teachers, academicians, and government representatives attended it. The main focus was on students, who had come from urban, rural, and tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh and around.

At the event, Mr. Suresh Chandra, outlined the plans for building an ecosystem to generate thousands of leaders from the student community. He described India as a 'happening country' and encouraged its young citizens in the audience to participate in this nation-building movement and prepare themselves for the future.

Mr. V Srinivasa Rao emphasized the four As: aspiration, attitude, ability, and



Panel discussion with Dr. Lakshminarayana, Mr. Velury Pardhasaradhy, Mr. Pratap Reddy and Mr. V Srinivasa Rao (l-r)

action that are necessary to improve our quality of life.

Professor V. H. Iyer, dean, Welingkar University of Management, was the keynote speaker at the event. Prof. Iyer spoke about the 'Role of Industry, Government and Academia to Build World-class Leaders.' In his address, he encouraged students to take charge of their future and build an India free of poverty and corruption, disaster, and disease.

This was followed by an enlightening panel discussion with eminent representatives from the government, academic, and corporate. Dr. Lakshminarayana, IAS, Department of Technical Education, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Mr. Velury Pardhasaradhy, executive vice president, human resources, Indu Projects, and Mr. Pratap Reddy, chairman, Dhruva

College of Management were the panelists. The topic for discussion was 'Building Industry Ready and Nation Ready Leaders from Academia—Challenges and Solutions.' Each of the panelists gave an insight on industry viewpoints on industry-academia partnership, the gaps that exist, and ways to bridge the same. They also encouraged students to work towards the common goal of making India a developed nation.

Subsequently, students from the SLCB participating institutions showcased the power of leadership through innovative skits and speeches. There were excellent speeches on leadership in Telugu and English and a skit showcasing the evils that plague society and which directly affect students—juvenile delinquency, child labor, and alcoholism.

In his valedictory address, Mr. Sathyavenkatesh, director, ISLD, mentioned that project management plays a vital role in an individual's life and any activity taken up without it results in chaos.

The event which was completely executed and supported by volunteers—national and international students, PMIPCC members, and non-members—also served as a learning exercise in project management for organizers.



PMIPCC Gyan Lahari 2011 volunteer team

# Software Roll-outs: Avoiding Repetitive Stress Disorders

Presenting the first winning entry for Article of the Month.

BY GOPI KRISHNAN, PMP

Imagine a bunch of dogs (say Dalmatians, in case you need something vivid) all neatly lined up, fairly untrained and unprepared, waiting, anticipating, without too much advance information on what's coming up. Now imagine a cookie deliverer, running in a tearing hurry, flinging one cookie each for every expectant dog, and moving onto the next. He has a job to finish and a fixed time allotted for the task; so he really cannot be bothered about niceties, like whether all dogs caught their cookies with their mouths, how many of them spilled their cookies and had to eat sandy ones, and how many of them totally lost the plot and ended up starving in the bargain.



In case you didn't link it up already, I am talking of software roll-outs which follow after the first flush of implementation success. Companies start drooling and salivating (sorry, no more dog metaphors) at the mere mention of 'global templates,' the manna from heaven that would give the exact amount of food to each waiting recipient, never mind his or her personal needs. In the end, the organization would be one large happy family doing the exact same thing, in the same system, in the same way, or so the story goes. Well, not quite. There are still plenty of slips between the cup and the lip when it comes to rolling out applications across entities.

A few years back, I had written a white paper to tackle the roll-out planning madness for Warehouse Management Systems (WMS). The objective was to demolish the one-size-fits-all myth and replace it with a few flavors from which recipients can choose from. Would 3-5 options turn out to be a lot? Not at all. Is it better than a single global dogmatic template? You bet. For WMS roll-outs, I suggested that we map organizations on maturity levels across three axes: business process maturity (slightly more advanced options like assemble-to-order, kitting, cross docking, and merge-in-transit); IT maturity (in terms of current investments in core

WMS applications and their integration points with say ERP, transportation, and demand planning); and finally, the level of capital investments (storage, handling, and distribution equipment, like material handling equipment, conveyor belts, trolleys, and handhelds). I had suggested a hybrid model of local WMS instances for large and complex warehouses, while the others share the single system from a remote site (hosted or within the firewall, cloud had not caught fire so much then).

When the third-party system integrator gets bestowed with a terribly tight timeline, cloyingly agreed upon in order to grab the business, what results would be repetitive mini failures in each entity to be rolled out further cascading to repetitive stress disorders.

The key is to understand and appreciate that change management is complex; it involves the seven stages from shock, denial, anger all the way to acceptance and integration. Organizations need to handhold their constituent entities (roll-out victims) to ensure life gets back to normal post the teething troubles caused by template roll-outs. The complexities are higher when standard ERP/SCM/CRM packages like SAP, Oracle, Peoplesoft, IBM Maximo, or Sterling Commerce are rolled out since the global template would now have to accommodate an extra box for the vendor as well, thus interlinking the boxes for product changes, custom changes; global, custom changes; local, and a change management board. Training is the other big ticket item that frequently gets compromised due to time constraints.

Avoid these if only you want to see pieces of your organization unraveling in roll-out hysteria and descending into user-level chaos.

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# ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

Submit your articles for the May issue by 15 April 2011

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## Who is eligible for the contest?

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## What guidelines should you follow?

- The article should be relevant to project management.
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- If the writer uses information already published, he/she should give such references.
- An article will be rated on its topicality, high interest/usefulness for the project management community, and writing style. Articles submitted after the due date will be considered for the next issue.
- It should not exceed 600 words.
- The writer can e-mail us photographs or other illustrations to go with the article.
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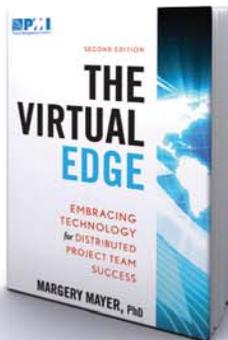
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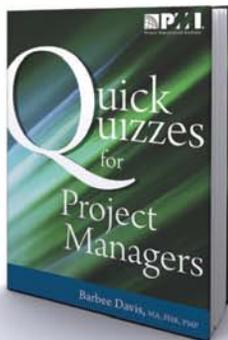
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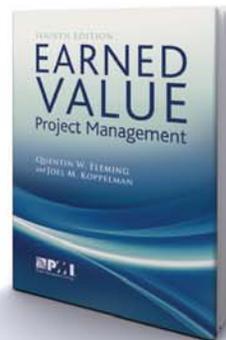
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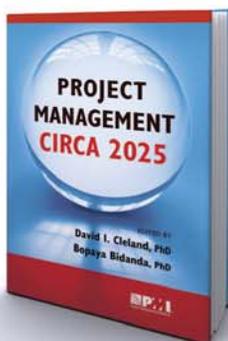
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