



(Photo: Mohapatra)

### New Focal Point Office

Since November 2017 the Focal Point has a spacious 400m<sup>2</sup> –office in a central location of Bhubaneswar, including a library and training centre on occupational safety and health.

Prof. h.c. Noetel, Senior Advisor DGUV, inaugurated the Focal Point office in the presence of 20 social activists, trade union and corporate representatives. The guest of honour – Mr Kanungo, Former Finance Minister of Odisha – gave the keynote speech. Further speeches were held by B.N. Som, Secretary General SSAI, K.H. Noetel, Senior Advisor DGUV, K. Eger, Project Officer BG BAU and B.K. Sahu, Director of the Indo-German Focal Point.

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## Focal Point Highlights 2017

**1500 participants, including the former Labour Minister Bandaru Dattadreya**, participated in the International Vision Zero Conference and Exhibition at New Delhi in March 2017. The event was jointly organized by DGUV, DGFASLI and Messe Düsseldorf-India. During the conference, Dr. Breuer, Director General of DGUV, gave the key to B.K. Sahu as inauguration symbol for the Indo-German Focal Point. The official creation was on 1.1.2017 through an agreement with DGUV with support from BG BAU and BG ETEM.



(Photo: Noetel)

**6 Indian States (Kerala, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, West Bengal, Union Territory of Delhi)** promoted initiatives on occupational safety and health and Vision Zero with the support of the Focal Point, including conferences, training sessions and campaigns.

**Awareness raising programmes and materials of the Indo-German Focal Point reached over a thousand workers, women and children.** All over the year, the Focal Point staff gave workshops and trainings to schools, universities, women's associations, research centres, among others. In Odisha alone, over 1000 persons have been reached by the street plays, presentations, booklets, posters and discussions on the vision of zero accidents and diseases at the workplace.



(Photo: Sahu)

Sri B. K. Sahu & Sri R. Singh, CM  
Chhattisgarh, August 2017



(Photo: Sahu)

Workshop on occupational safety and  
health, Bhubaneswar, May 2017

## Campaign suggestion to Krishan Kumar, Commissioner of the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC): “Smart city, smart scavengers through safety, social security and skill development”

Posted on SHRAM by Mr Sahu on July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017. SHRAM is an online knowledge community on migration supported by TATA Trust of the TATA Group – the second biggest holding company of India.

Recently, newspapers reported the unfortunate and sad news about the death of 4 scavengers of Delhi Municipal Corporation while cleaning safety tanks in the city. This was preceded by similar occurrences involving scavengers in cities like Chennai and Chandigarh. As per report available through media sources, 39 scavengers have lost their lives while performing the job of cleaning safety tanks etc. to keep the cities smart and clean during the last 100 days.

During my interaction with scavengers and their contractors engaged by BMC in Bhubaneswar, they told me that they were neither provided with any safety equipment while cleaning roads and public amenities like toilets nor were they aware of safety equipment like respiratory protection, ear plugs, helmets, gloves or safety jackets. Most importantly, they are not aware of any healthcare facilities in case of sickness or accidents and hence, are left to fend for themselves, which probably results in improvisation and less productivity.



In view of the above position, I request you to lead by taking up the following suggestions:

- **Provision of safety equipment** to all scavengers engaged either directly or indirectly through contractors as per their functional requirement and taking the advice of technical officers like safety officers, health officers and institutions like CIF.
- **Training/ Awareness programmes** for scavengers and their contractors ward wise in the city on safety tips, provisions of social security and their skill development, which will ultimately result in more productivity and less absenteeism – a win-win situation for such individuals, families, society and the state as a whole.
- Most importantly, such **scavengers should be provided with primary care facilities** by attaching them to local, public or private dispensaries/ nursing homes and the expenditure to the effects should be borne by BMC – similar to construction workers vis-a-vis construction welfare board functioning with Labour Commissioner, Odisha. Such primary care facilities plus attaching them to RSBY for high ended diseases shall greatly relieve scavengers and their families where their medical care is concerned.
- Towards their social security in the form of cash compensation **in case of sickness and accidents/ deaths, they may be covered under Prime Minister Jan Suraksha Scheme** – by paying an annual premium of Rs 12 and Rs 330, such scavengers shall be protected for Rs 4 lakh cash benefit in case of accidents and deaths. Again, like construction workers, the premium amount totaling Rs 342 per scavenger per annum should be paid by BMC out of municipal tax or suitable budgetary allotment of urban department/ similar schemes funded by GOI.
- Like organized factory workers, such **scavengers may be provided with an identity card with their photographs**. During emergencies, dispensaries/ hospitals have to contact their local address. Such tag wearing will definitely boost their professional respect for the job as well as by the public.

The above suggestions can be brought under a campaign named “Smart city, smart scavengers through safety, social security & skill development”. It would be a privilege if support of DGUV involving awareness and sensitization programmes is required by BMC, for which I am available with you on this campaign.