

Abstract

Management of human resource is one of the most important aspects and has become a deep concern to the management of an organization. The human resource of an organization comprises the entire labour force. The winning of an organization largely depends upon the human resources. Human resources are the most important assets of an organization. Unlike many other resources, such as materials, technology, etc. that can be purchased and sold easily; human resource is a ticklish and sensorial element that needs to be handled with care. Even in this robotic, automation, and internet era, human resource is always a precious and unique resource. It is the people who can get other resources moving. Among all the resources of a typical organization, the major six resources are: Man, Money, Material, Machine, Method and Market (6 M's). If you have five all major resources except Man, it's a big question that "who will manage all these?" No organization can produce outputs and render services without proper utilization of Human Resources.

In India, the tea plantation industry was materially initiated and shaped by the European entrepreneurs. In 1823, Robert Bruce discovered the indigenous tea plants in Sibsagar of Assam. Shortly after, tea cultivation was introduced in full swing in Assam and in the Northern part of Bengal. Total 276 organized tea estates of North Bengal play monumental role in the economy of this region. The industry provides 2,62,426 employments directly and several millions indirectly. There are seven employers' associations and 22 trade unions registered under the banners of different political parties.

However, in the recent years the overall scenario of tea industry is not satisfactory. Several tea gardens have been closed whereas several others have been lockout. As a consequence, hundreds of people have died due to starvation and malnutrition. These have been studied as the ill effect of the LPG (Liberalization, Privatization, and Globalization) policy which was advocated in India in 1991. Indian tea industry has confronted stiff competition in the global market due to lessening of import tariff barrier and withdrawn of the quantity ceiling on import. Thus, to remain competitive in the economy, tea producing companies of the North Bengal have been enforced on sinking the various costs, specially the labour cost. Due to the cost diminution policy, tea producing companies in this province are not in a position to execute their responsibilities viz. health, welfare, safety, working conditions, etc. to the workers in conformity with the Plantation Labour Act (PLA), 1951. Beside these, inappropriate staffing, passive attitudes of planters on providing proper training, abnormality in payment of wages, bonus, gratuity, provident fund, etc. have been enlarged significantly. Further, other non-statutory benefits for workers like fuels, umbrella, slippers, tarpaulin, etc. have been fully eroded.

Thus, the study concludes that the labour forces, i.e. human resources are not properly managed in the tea plantation industry of North Bengal. As a result, workers who are engaged with the tea industry for the survival of themselves and their families have been unfavorably affected. As a consequence, workers backed by the trade union, call strike, create stress on the management to execute their demands. Hence, labour conflict has become a usual phenomenon in this region. Finally, all these issues lead to the labour turbulence in the forms of strikes, gheraos, etc. and thus the industry has become vulnerable.