

# Curtain Raiser Event IICA Certified Business & Human Rights (BHR) Professional Programme

10 April 2023

**CURTAIN RAISER EVENT**  
10 April 2023 | 11:00 AM | Virtual Mode

**IICA CERTIFIED BUSINESS & HUMAN RIGHTS  
(BHR) PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMME**  
Enabling Businesses to Respect Human Rights..

**Mr. G. K. Singh**, Joint Secretary  
National Consultant for Scheduled Castes  
Ministry of Social Justice &  
Empowerment, Govt. of India

**Mr. Praveen Kumar**  
Former Secretary to Govt. of India  
Director General & CEO  
Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs

**Chief Guest**  
**Mr. Devendra Kumar Singh**  
Secretary General  
National Human Rights Commission

**Mr. Inderdeep Singh Dhariwal**  
Joint Secretary  
Ministry of Corporate Affairs  
Govt. of India

**Mr. Sean Christopher Lees**  
BHR Specialist  
UNDP, Asia Pacific, Bangkok

**Dr. Sarima Dasgupta**  
Associate Professor & Head  
School of Business Environment  
Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs

**Mr. R. Mukundan**,  
Managing Director & CEO  
Tata Chemicals Ltd.

**Ms Nusrat Khan**  
BHR National Specialist  
UNDP, India

**Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs**  
(Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Govt. of India)  
Plot No.6,7,8, Sector – 5, IMT Manesar  
Distt. Gurugram, Haryana – 122052

## **Curtain Raiser Event IICA Certified Business & Human Rights (BHR) Professional Programme**

10 April 2023

**Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs**, an autonomous institution under the aegis of the **Ministry of Corporate Affairs**, Government of India has initiated a **new cadre of Business and Human Rights (BHR) Professionals in the country**. In a Curtain Raiser Event held on 10 April 2023 of the programme for creating and developing Business and Human Rights Professionals, the premier Govt. institution IICA formally disseminated the importance and relevance of BHR leaders and professionals in the country.

**Secretary General, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Shri Devendra Kumar Singh** (IAS) was the **Chief Guest** of the event. The event was also addressed by Shri Sean Christopher Lees, BHR Specialist, UNDP Asia Pacific, Bangkok; Shri Praveen Kumar, Director General and CEO, Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA); Shri Inderdeep Singh Dhariwal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Govt. of India; Shri Gyaneshwar Kumar Singh, Joint Secretary, National Commission for Scheduled Caste, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India; Shri R. Mukundan, Managing Director & CEO, Tata Chemicals Ltd.; Ms Nusrat Khan, BHR National Specialist, UNDP; and Dr. Garima Dadhich, Head, Centre for Business & Human Rights, IICA.

Addressing the gathering, **Shri Devendra Kumar Singh, Secretary General, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)** said that principles of social justice like Access, Equity,



Diversity, Participation, and Human Rights are important goals in any civilised society. Our constitution and democratic structure significantly accord a system for social Justice to all the citizens. He also mentioned that India had signed Universal Declaration on Human Rights and also endorsed the United Nations

Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. As the whole gamut of human rights is an important component, he emphasised the need for creating a cadre of BHR Professionals in India. He said that Trained manpower is need of the hour and IICA under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs has taken timely initiatives to cater the needs of transformation in industries through building capacities of the corporate functionaries in Business and Human Rights. He shared that NHRC follows the human centric approach and a mandate of 'Let everybody be happy' which is also the G-20 motto. He also highlighted the trusteeship principle of Mahatma

Gandhi and welfare of people. He informed about some of the initiatives of NHRC in different sectors relevant to BHR such as advisory for truck drivers, differently-abled, etc. He stressed on exploring more synergies between NHRC and IICA to strengthen the BHR agenda in country.

**Shri Praveen Kumar, DG&CEO, IICA** said that IICA being an eminent Govt. institute focuses on the multiple areas of corporate affairs and School of Business Environment at IICA has launched this unique first of its kind programme on Business and Human Rights to help corporate professionals build specific knowledge and capabilities to translate human rights requirements into concrete strategies and practical actions. He said that **‘Purpose before profit’** is a new vision given to the businesses. Businesses should see that their policies, practices, inputs and outputs are beneficial to multiple stakeholders. He shared that School of Business Environment, IICA has been playing an important role of providing technical policy inputs in drafting National Action Plan on BHR, National Guidelines on responsible Business Conduct, Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting, High Level Committee on CSR etc.

**Shri Sean Christopher Lees, BHR Specialist, UNDP Asia Pacific**, emphasised that Increasing demands from business stakeholders, international treaties, and national regulations has forced businesses to follow a way which is sustainable to both profits and planet. He narrated his experience of BHR policies and implementation in various countries in the Asia-Pacific region. He also emphasized that India is in a progressive stage to achieve economic targets as well as targets of sustainable development, hence a balanced approach on both the fronts will lead the country to a sustainable future. He said that industrialization globally and in India has played a vital role in technological and economic growth, such growth has posed unique types of concerns in realizing Human Rights within the sphere of business.

**Dr. Garima Dadhich, Head School of Business Environment, IICA** said that by integrating business and human rights in business policies and practices, a business house receives competitive advantage in today’s edge of responsibility, it also helps preventing and mitigating associated risks for social sustainability. She expressed that ‘IICA Certified BHR Professional Programme’ is first of its kind in India. While addressing various objectives of the programme, she emphasised that the BHR is not only meant for sustainability professionals but is equally important for human resource professionals, procurement and supply chain professional, vigilance & ethics etc. Integration of BHR in business as well as in its value chain is equally important. Increasing pressure from multiple stakeholders including investors, buyers, consumers, shareholders etc. pose an unwritten mandate on businesses to adopt business and human rights principles and practices. By adopting BHR, businesses also fulfil requirements under various national and international standards. She highlighted the need of Business and Human Rights globally and nationally for businesses and how this programme being uniquely designed and developed to bridge the gap of implementing BHR practices.

**Shri Inderdeep Singh Dhariwal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Govt. of India** said that the Government of India has taken several initiatives to ensure that businesses operate with respect for human rights. As the Ministry of Corporate Affairs is the regulatory authority of the corporates, and promoting the “Business and Human Rights” in India. MCA has always been focusing towards promoting the sustainable business and inclusive growth. To ensure responsible governance, MCA has been amending the companies act from time to time

keeping in view the present corporate scenarios and the expectations from the corporates which includes their responsibility to respect the environment and society. The Government has drafted the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAP-BHR) and has also launched the National Guidelines for Responsible Business Conduct (NGRBC). He said that the average life of corporate is shrinking due to several internal and external factors, business and human rights is one of them. He highlighted the philosophy of human rights for businesses in terms of treating all human beings equally.

**Shri R. Mukundan, Managing Director & CEO, Tata Chemicals Ltd.** Spoke on business risk mitigation by integrating BHR in business policies and practices, he mainly emphasized on various international and national mandatory and voluntary compliance requirements and need for corporate executive's capacity building. Business and Human Rights related disclosures under the UNGC, GRI, NGRBC, and BRSR etc. are of utmost importance for a business to not only carry an image of a responsible business among its stakeholders but also for ensuring social sustainability. Today, various stakeholders of business like investors, consumers, communities, shareholders etc. demand business to be responsible and avoid human rights violations, and take measures to protect and respect human rights. He said that making mere disclosures may not be considered as transparency, disclosures are only one of the components of transparency. He stressed that businesses may not perfect in their initiatives today, but they have to go through the journey of continuous improvement collectively. Such initiatives by IICA are designed to help businesses in practicing BHR and become more responsible.

**Shri Gyaneshwar Kumar Singh, Joint Secretary, National Commission for Scheduled Caste, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India** emphasized on the global and national significance of Business and Human Rights and how the Government has been committed by developing National Guidelines on Responsible Business Conduct (NGRBC) and Zero Draft of National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAP-BHR). He said that there is need for CEO level action for promoting BHR in India and shared various examples of CEOs unity for this cause in different countries. He said that businesses are gradually realising importance of the BHR for business success in the era of sustainability.

The event was attended by about 150 senior corporate officials enrolled in the programmes.; Dr. Ravi Raj Atrey, Chief Programme Executive; and Ms Sudha Rajagopalan, Sr. Research Associate were also present. Vote of thanks was delivered by **Ms Nusrat Khan**, BHR National Specialist, UNDP India, she highlighted the collaboration between UNDP, European Union and the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs for promoting BHR through corporate capacity building initiatives.

'IICA Certified BHR Professional Programme' is first of its kind in India, it is meant for sustainability, CSR, human resource, procurement, supply chain, vigilance, ethics and other related functionalities in businesses including in value chains. The three-month online technology enabled programme equips the participants with embedding a human rights approach to business policies and practices, assess and mitigate risks by conducting human rights due diligence, and BHR compliance and stakeholders' engagement.

## IICA Certified Business and Human Rights Professional Programme

### Registration Process

To register visit: <https://iica.nic.in/cpbhr/>

Registration Closes on 25 April 2023

Scan the QR Code



**For further details, contact:**

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