

Skill centre working to tackle manpower crisis in rubber industry

V. Sajeev Kumar

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In a major initiative to solve the serious issue of manpower crunch in the industry, the recently-formed Rubber Skill Development Centre (RSDC) has chalked out a series of plans.

The Delhi-headquartered Centre set up by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), in collaboration with All India Rubber Industries Association (AIRIA) and Automotive Tyre Manufacturers Association (ATMA) has already commenced its operations.

On the roadmap of RSDC, Vinod Simon, its Chairman, told *Business Line* that the centre will be assisting the rubber sector across all touch points where skilling is an issue. Foremost it will identify skill development needs for the sector and prepare a catalogue of skill types.

It is already working towards standardisation of job roles/ skill types through development of the National Occupation Standards (NOS), he said.

MANPOWER GAP

"Skill development has been one of the key challenges for the manpower intensive rubber sector as 5 lakh people are directly employed in the rubber industry besides 10 million rubber growers. The sector is capable of generating another half a million jobs in the next 10 years," he said adding that unfortunately, there is a significant gap between the avail-



Vinod Simon, Chairman, RSDC.

ability and demand of trained manpower in the rubber sector.

According to Simon, there are about 4,500 units in the tyre and non-tyre industry producing a large variety of rubber items. A majority of these units are SSI/ tiny units and highly labour intensive. In the current scenario most of the skill learning on the shop floor in these units happens through largely unstructured, on-the-job training.

SHORT TERM COURSES

There is an urgent need to develop modular, short-term skill development programmes for frontline shop floor workers and supervisors. It is also important to build capacity and affordability in the training infrastructure to encourage persons from the less educated and lower income groups to opt for such courses, he said.

*sajeevkumar.v@
thehindu.co.in*