

Restaurant biz offers employment

By Supriya Bhardwaj

THE organised sector of the restaurant industry may be growing at a pace of 20 to 25 per cent annually, but when it comes to skilled workforce, it's still way short of the required figures.

This shortage of skilled manpower is emerging as the biggest challenge, according to the first white paper on the restaurant industry released by the National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI) in the city on Saturday. The issue was pondered upon by many eating joint owners, CEOs, managing directors of multi-cuisine restaurant chains and experts from the hospitality as well as tourism industry during the function.

According to industry experts, hotel management institutes are producing 80 per cent managers and 20 per cent workers whereas as per the requirement, management institutes should churn out more workers than managers. "The restaurant industry ardently requires 75 per cent workers and just 25 per cent managers to manage its affairs," said Vikram Bakshi, former president, NRAI, and managing director of Mc Donald's India.

The acute shortage finds a detailed mention in the report and one of the strongest recommendations made during the report release ceremony by the industry stalwarts was the need to step up more hotel management institutes and courses based on the industry's requirement.

"We need greater number of institutes to supply trained manpower. The contribution of the industry to the employment generation in the country is approximately 5 million which is ten times the employment provided by

DEMAND-SUPPLY GAP EMERGING AS A BIG CHALLENGE

FIVE-FOLD GROWTH IN JOBS

- ▶ The restaurant industry employs more than five times the number of people who are working in the IT services industry (a little over a million).
- ▶ The restaurant industry offers direct employment to 5 million individuals. By 2015, the number is expected to jump to around 20 million because of a likely surge in new restaurants.

WORKFORCE MISMATCH

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NUMBER CRUNCHING

- ▶ Rural jobs created by restaurants: **2.3 million; 11.5 per cent** of rural employment in services;
- ▶ Urban jobs created by restaurants: **2.69 million; 16.9 per cent** of urban employment in services
- ▶ Total workforce: **5 million**

hotels. This figure is expected to be 20 million by 2015 but the desired workforce is lacking," the report stated.

Although the industry in India is still in its growing phase the market is currently undersupplied in terms of being staffed and a large number of

training institutes are required in the country to provide the adequate manpower.

The thorough analysis of the data collected for white paper revealed that the restaurant industry is a highly labour-intensive one. On an average a mid-

sized restaurant of a seating capacity of 80 people in India employs about 70 to 80 individuals directly. On the other hand, a large restaurant can employ on an average some 100-120 people per outlet.

Amitabh Kant, CEO & managing

Mail Today

Restaurant biz offers employment windfall.

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windfall

director of Delhi & Mumbai Industrial Corridor Development, and the man behind the Incredible India campaign, said: "Our new cities will be dead in case our nightlife, culture and restaurants are missing. It is the restaurant industry that will be the hub of the job sector in India. However, the first attempt will be to get the work done in a professional manner. The manpower will be a big issue and it has the potential to create a huge imbalance in the industry." He added that Indian managers will play a key role to enable restaurant owners to understand preferences of Indian travellers.

Citing that the restaurant industry employs more than five times the number of people employed by the IT services industry, which is a little over one million, industry experts said that the educational infrastructure is still not updated to match the requirement. "We would like the government to play an active role in this and help the restaurant chains and other private players to set up educational institutes. The top priority is to get trained staff and managers," said Samir Kuckreja, president, NRAI and CEO of Nirula's. The NRAI has suggested the government to allow private restaurant chains to enter the education sector, very much on the lines of ITC's collaboration with Manipal.

In our country, it is the National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology (NCHMCT) — an autonomous body under the ministry of tourism — that currently regulates the curriculum for hospitality and hotel administration. Under NCHMCT, there are 24 Institutes of Hotel Management and seven Food Craft Institutes that are spread across the nation.