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### The challenge before builders

*According to a study, the Indian construction sector, driven by acute labour shortage, looks at project management and mechanisation to bridge delays and bring in professionalism*

| COST OF CORE MATERIALS-PRICES (In Rs.)                 |            |           |          |
|--|------------|-----------|----------|
| Core Materials   | 2002       | 2012      | % Change |
| ▶ Cement   | 150/Bag    | 250 Bag   | 93.33    |
| ▶ Steel  | 16000/Mt   | 48000/Mt  | 166.67   |
| ▶ Structural steel                                     | 25000/Mt   | 60000/Mt  | 140      |
| ▶ Sand   | 12/CH      | 55/CH     | 358.33   |
| ▶ Glass for facade (6 mm hard coated reflective glass) | 800/Sqmt   | 1300/Sqmt | 62.50    |
| ▶ Concrete blocks (200 mm)                             | 16/Block   | 35/Block  | 118.75   |
| ▶ Shuttering ply                                       | 12/Sqft    | 60/Sqft   | 400      |
| ▶ Aggregates (40 mm)                                   | 10/Cuft    | 28/Cuft   | 133.33   |
| ▶ GI Pipes (25 mm)                                     | 109/Rmt    | 307/Rmt   | 181.65   |
| ▶ PVC Pipes (75 mm)                                    | 80/Rmt     | 215 Rmt   | 168.75   |
| ▶ Brick  | 1.50/Brick | 6         | 300      |
| ▶ Paint  | 80/Ltr     | 180/Ltr   | 125      |

Note: As the quantity of commodities vary across the board, the above-mentioned table is broadly indicative of overall trends.

Industry observers feel the unorganised construction sector in India is soon going to be plagued by labour shortage. The unavailability is expected to steeply go up by 65 per cent by the next decade with more workforce moving from the traditional brick and mortar industry to more lucrative industries. The labour shortage is expected to make the industry go in for large-scale mechanisation and project management, as per the Report titled 'Indian Construction Sector – The Great Leap Forward', by Synergy Property Development Services, a global project management consulting and turnkey solution company.

The comprehensive report has clearly indicated that the future of the construction sector will hinge on project management, mechanisation and pre-cast or prefabricated technology, to meet the challenges of cost, quality and time.

Sankey Prasad, CMD, Synergy Property Development, says, "The last decade was very interesting. We witnessed the high and low of all aspects of the construction sector, the demand supply of materials, the housing market, labour availability and geographic shifts. Overall it was a honeymoon period. The next 10 years will be a period of caution and uncertainty, with innovation and technology adoption being the guiding force. Further rise in cost of construction materials and inflation will remain a concern."

The report highlights the fact that the rate of mechanisation in India (at 20 per cent) is low compared to the developed countries where it was between 60 and 70 per cent. With India at the cusp of rapid urbanisation and development, there is ever-increasing demand for commercial and residential space and it could be best met only through adoption of mechanisation and project management practices.

The report gives a multi-faceted perspective on compulsions and circumstances that led to the present state of affairs.

The report, which is timely and incisive, reiterates the potential of the construction sector to propel India to becoming the country with the third largest GDP in the world in just two decades.

With rapid development across Tier II & III cities, India will witness acute labour shortage in the coming years. It is here that project management services will provide the customer with a one-stop professionally trained and proven solution that will enable integrated and supervised project implementation, from design to delivery.

The report showcases the labour trend: in 2002, the number of labourers required to build half-a-million sq. ft was about 700-800; in 2012, with gradual mechanisation it had come down to about 200 workers and by 2022, it would reduce much further.

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