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# JWALADHWANI

ENERGISING KOCHI REFINERY



MERRY  
CHRISTMAS

WISHES OF THE SEASON

YEAR END  
MILESTONES

GOODBYE 2025





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# Merry Christmas

As we draw the curtains to a close on another remarkable year, let us pause for a while to recount the many milestones that we crossed this year. It has been an eventful one with excellent performances supported by people and digital interventions. We bring you the recent highlights of the same and also invite you to visit the pages of Bharat Petroleum and Kochi Refinery on the websites, intralinks and social media handles to stay updated everyday.

Let us also pause to celebrate the spirit of Christmas—a season that reminds us of hope, gratitude, and togetherness. This festive time gives us the perfect opportunity to reflect on the milestones we've achieved, the challenges we've overcome, and the collective strength that has guided us forward.

May the warmth of the season fill your homes with peace, joy, and goodwill. May the *New Year* open new doors of growth, learning, and inspiration. Together, we have created memories, forged stronger bonds, and set the foundation for an even brighter tomorrow.

Wishing you and your loved ones a truly blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year. May the season bring you renewed energy and countless moments of happiness.

Warmly,

George Thomas  
Chief General Manager (HR)



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## DIGITALLY ENABLED CONSTRUCTION POWER SYSTEM COMMISSIONED AT KOCHI POLYPROPYLENE PROJECT

Marking a new chapter of innovation at BPCL, the digitally empowered construction power system at the Polypropylene Project, Kochi, was inaugurated in the gracious presence of Mr. Sanjay Khanna, Director (Refineries) with Additional Charge of C&MD on 05 November 2025. The newly inaugurated construction power network, designed to cater to four geographically dispersed project locations, was completed in just ten months, involving the laying of 16,500 meters of cable across challenging terrain with a sharp focus on time, cost and safety.

### Key features of the system include:

- (1) Multiple power sourcing for enhanced agility, flexibility, and cost optimization – enabling faster construction, reduced infrastructure requirements, and minimized sourcing risks during operations.
- (2) Integration of past learnings to boost reliability and asset utilization. Strategic geographical positioning will ensure seamless extension of utilization from the project phase to the operational phase.
- (3) Digital surveillance facilitating efficient resource management and remote monitoring of construction activities.





- ▶ During the inauguration, Mr. Sanjay Khanna also launched the Digital Surveillance System of electrical facilities, a platform conceptualized, designed, and developed entirely by BPCL's in-house team, underscoring BPCL's commitment to technological self-reliance and innovation.

On this occasion, the first set of **Project Construction Checklist System** was also unveiled – a step towards standardization and enhanced stakeholder alignment across all project activities. First copy was handed over to Mr. Sanjay Khanna jointly by Mr. Satheeshkumar K.P. (CGM I/c - Projects Polypropylene) and Mr. Jaikishen C. Nath (CGM - Projects Polypropylene), in the presence of Mr. Sankar M. (ED-KR), Mr. Mahendiran A. (CGM - OPS, KR), Mr. Sumit Saha (CGM - P&U), and the project teams from BPCL and EIL. Appreciating the team's innovations and process improvements, the Director urged that these learnings be disseminated across BPCL to strengthen its technological leadership.

## PARLIAMENT COMMITTEE REVIEW



The Parliamentary Committee on Welfare of OBCs visited Kochi on 18th and 19th November 2025. Mr. Sanjay Khanna, Director (Refineries) with additional charge of C&MD welcomed the committee on behalf of BPCL. Other participating organisations included Spices Board of India, LIC, ESIC, CWHC, FCI, Neyveli Lignite Corporation, and UCO Bank.



## NEW SDI COMING UP AT UDYOGMANDAL

BPCL Foundation has signed a memorandum of understanding for a new Skill Development Institute to be established in Udyogmandal in Ernakulam. The new institute is coming up on the land of The Travancore Cochin Chemicals Ltd (TCC) near the Kalamassery Container Road in Ernakulam.

The MoU was signed on behalf of BPCL Foundation by Ms. Bina Mansukh, CEO (BPCL Foundation) and General Manager (Admn Facilities & Services and CSR) and Mr. Rajeev, Managing Director, TCC in the gracious presence of Mr. P. Rajeeve, Hon. Minister for Industries, Law and Coir, Govt. of Kerala, Mr. APM Mohammed Hanish IAS, Principal Secretary (Industries) Govt. of Kerala and Director, BPCL, Mr. Sanjay Khanna, Director (Refineries) with Addnl Charge of C&MD, BPCL, Ms. Priyanka, District Collector, Ernakulam, Mr. Ajith Kumar K, Executive Chairman, Board of Public Sector Transformation, Govt of Kerala, Mr. Suji AD, Chairman, Eloor Municipality, Mr. Sankar M, Executive Director (Kochi Refinery), Mr. Parthasarathy D, Executive Director (HRS), and Mr. George Thomas, Chief General Manager (HR).

Considering the proximity of major institutions in Kalamassery industrial sector, FACT, TCC, BPCL, Cochin Shipyard etc, the institute will give priority to provide the facilities required for skill development to students and employees.





## JT. CHIEF CONTROLLER OF EXPLOSIVES (PESO) VISITS KOCHI REFINERY

Dr. R. K. Rathore, Joint Chief Controller of Explosives, Chennai, and Mr. Deepak Kumar, Controller of Explosives, Ernakulam, visited BPCL - Kochi Refinery for an official inspection on 11 November 2025. The dignitaries were warmly received by Mr. Sankar M, Executive Director (Kochi Refinery), and Mr. Mahendiran A, Chief General Manager (Operations).

The officials were presented with a comprehensive overview of the refinery's operations, infrastructure, safety management systems, and ongoing project initiatives. The session underscored Kochi Refinery's commitment to operational excellence, sustainability, and strict compliance with statutory and safety regulations.

As part of the inspection, the dignitaries visited key facilities, including the Main Control Room, Fire Station, IREP units, and Tank Farm areas, gaining firsthand insights into the refinery's advanced technologies, automation systems, and strong safety practices. A sapling plantation at the Eco Park further highlighted BPCL's dedication to environmental stewardship and green initiatives.

The visit concluded with an interaction and feedback session, during which the PESO officials shared their observations and commended the refinery for its high standards of safety, efficiency, and environmental responsibility. The inspection strengthened the ongoing collaboration between PESO and BPCL - Kochi Refinery in fostering safe and sustainable operations.





## 7TH ONSHORE SECURITY COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING, KERALA

The 7th Onshore Security Coordination Committee (OSCC) Meeting for the state of Kerala was held on 20 Nov 2025 in Thiruvananthapuram, under the chairmanship of Mr. Ravada A. Chandrasekhar IPS, Director General of Police & State Police Chief, Kerala. As per directive of the central Ministry, the OSCC has been formed and the annual review is taken every year under the chairmanship of DGP along with other senior officials. The session brings together senior representatives from the State Police, Intelligence Bureau, Indian Coast Guard, CISF, SISF and Oil & Gas PSUs to review security measures across critical energy installations in the State.

The committee deliberated on key aspects including the protection of the Single Point Mooring, coastal and pipeline security, cyber security resilience and contract personnel verification. The DGP underscored the need for strict adherence to security audit recommendations and encouraged the adoption of advanced technologies such as AI-enabled CCTV systems, intrusion detection solutions and enhanced patrol management tools. Measures to prevent vehicle movement over vulnerable pipeline corridors, strengthen cyber defences and expand anti-drone capabilities were also highlighted.

The discussions also stressed the importance of seamless coordination among Police, IB, ICG, CISF, SISF and OMCs, ensuring preparedness against evolving threat scenarios. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to continually enhance the protection of vital national energy infrastructure.

BPCL Kochi Refinery was represented by Mr. George Thomas, CGM (HR), Mr. Johnson K, GM (Admin) and Mr. Vinu T Mathew, Head (Security & Administration). A presentation on refinery operations, ongoing projects and the security initiatives across refinery and offsite facilities was delivered by Vinu T Mathew, Head of Security, KR.





## JANJATIYA GAURAV DIVAS AT KR

As part of the nationwide observance of Janjatiya Gaurav Divas, commemorating the extraordinary legacy of Mr. Birsa Munda—the iconic tribal freedom fighter, social reformer, and revered leader who courageously resisted British colonial rule and championed the upliftment of tribal communities—BPCL Kochi Refinery, in association with the Federation of Central Government SC/ST Employees (Kerala) - BPCL Kochi Refinery Unit, marked his 150th Birth Anniversary on 15 November 2025 at the KR Mini Auditorium.

The programme commenced with assembled staff offering floral tributes before the garlanded portrait of Mr. Birsa Munda. The formal inauguration was carried out by Mr. Mahendiran A., CGM (Operations)-KR, who reflected on the extraordinary sacrifices made by the visionary leader at a remarkably young age for the nation and society.

Members, office bearers of the association, and management representatives joined in remembering and honouring the inspiring contributions of this valiant freedom fighter and reformer who devoted his life to the cause of justice and dignity. A brief presentation further highlighted his struggles, achievements, and lasting impact on the nation.

## WORKSHOP FOR BPCL CPIOs

An exclusive workshop was organised for Central Public Information Officers (CPIO) of BPCL. Inaugurating the RTI & PG workshop, Mr. Ranjan Nair, Chief General Manager (Marketing Corporate) expressed that closing public grievances and RTIs on time, is not an individual task but a commitment of BPCL team as a whole, as at the core we are addressing issues of public interest be it of customers, complainants, vendors, senior citizens or others, through various channels of grievance redressals. "If an RTI or PG can be closed in a day, let us not wait till the maximum time allotted as per RTI / PG protocol," he added. Mr. Bipin Khedekar, DGM (Mktg Corp) gave an overview of the Ministry Portals and also discussed on specific cases. Mr. Manoj Kumar Jha, CM(Mktg Corp) gave a brief overview of the RTI Act and the responsibilities of CPIOs. Designated CPIOs of BUs and Entities represented the significant RTI cases in each area serving as genuine case studies for the team. Ms. Kavitha Mathew, CPIO for Kochi Refinery represented KR at the workshop organised at Bharat Bhavan-III, BPCL HQ on 18 Nov.





## YOUNGAGE 2025 : AMIT SINHA WINS “YOUNG MANAGER” OF KOCHI REFINERY

November was indeed a month to remember. The stage was set for yet another edition of YouNGAGE, BPCL's flagship programme to identify the Best Young Manager and nurture emerging talents of BPCL Kochi Refinery. Amit Sinha, Manager (Fire & Safety) emerged winner as Best Young Manager of Kochi Refinery.

YouNGAGE 2025, held on 4th and 5th November, 2025 at BPLC, Maradu, aimed to enhance collaboration, learning agility, strategic thinking and leadership competencies among officers below 35 years of age. The programme was inaugurated by Mr. Sankar M, Executive Director (Kochi Refinery), in the presence of Mr. George Thomas, CGM (HR), Mr. Kubade R K, GM I/C (Tech) and Mr. Johnson K, GM (Admn.). The lamp lighting ceremony, jointly carried out by the dignitaries along with the youngest and eldest participants, symbolized inter-generational learning and unity within the Kochi Refinery fraternity.

In their inaugural addresses, ED (KR) and CGM (HR) highlighted that beyond competition, the true essence of YouNGAGE lies in participation, learning and experience like in various Sports events. The programme was facilitated by Mr. Sai Sankar and Ms. Neha from M/s PSMJ, Chennai, who ensured seamless and engaging sessions throughout the two days.



A total of 58 young officers participated in structured contests, simulations, and assessments designed to foster creativity, problem-solving, and leadership curated based on BPCL Competencies. Competitions such as Innovator's Auction and Six Thinking Hats (BYM Finale) were evaluated by in-house experts from Marketing, Finance, and Operations team, while the facilitators judged other events.

Participants were assessed on strategic thinking, innovation, presentation skills, and teamwork. The Awards and Recognition Ceremony was graced by senior leadership Mr. George Thomas, CGM (HR), Ms. Shraddha Jaitly, CGM (Finance), Mr. A Mahendiran, CGM (Operations), Mr. Sumit Saha, CGM (P&U), Mr. Sibi Ignatius, CGM (Inspection), Mr. Kubade R K, GM I/C (Tech) and Mr. Kamal Raj A, GM (Finance). At the ceremony, the creativity, enthusiasm, and leadership potential of all participants were acknowledged. Winners of YouNgage 2025 are :

**Best Young Manager (BYM) :** Winner Amit Sinha (Fire & Safety), First Runner-up: Nikhil Verma (Mfg Ref II) and Second Runner-up : Soosai Raj (Maintenance).

**Taboo Challenge : Team Event -** First Kishor (P & U Utilities), Poluri Sriya (Mfg Ref II), Mulagapati Likhitha Sri Saranya (P & U Electrical); Second: Indukurai Sri Nithin Reddy (Mfg Ref II), Nikhil Verma (Mfg Ref II) and Banoth Keerthana (Mfg Ref I); Third : Patil Dipesh Ramesh (P & U - Electrical), Kandregula Yamani (Tech - Energy) and Samyukta Shaji (Mfg Ref II).

**Fish Bowl Debate : Team Event :** First Suraj S (Maintenance), Nikhil Verma (Mfg Ref II) & Diya Mahesh (Mfg Ref I), Second : Karthikeyan Vinod (P&U - Electrical), Samyukta Shaji (Mfg Ref II), Patil Dipesh Ramesh (P&U - Electrical) and Third-Prakhar Kumar (Maintenance), Prakyath N Shetty (OM & S) and Chandaka Nitish (Mfg Ref I).

**Business Quiz :** First - Arjun Anand (OM & S) and Soosai Raj (Maintenance), Second: Nikhil Verma (Mfg Ref II) and Indukuri Sri Nitin Reddy (Mfg Ref II) and Third: Suraj S (Maintenance) and Sohan Dey (Mfg Ref II).

**Innovator's Auction : Team Event :** First - Nikhil Verma (Mfg Ref II, Kishor (P & U - Utilities), Banoth Keerthana (Mfg Ref I), Amit Sinha (Fire & Safety), Prakyath N Shetty (OM & S) and Devendar Kumar Meena (Maintenance); Second: Pinjari Mabu Basha (OM & S), Titas Adhikary (Petchem), Suraj S (Maintenance), Shreejeet Pillai (Finance), Guguloth Supraja (AS - Inspection), Arjun Anand (OM & S), Mrinal V S (P & U - Electrical) and Third : Soosai Raj (Maintenance), Nongmaithem Jayaluxmi Devi (HR), Mugilan S (Mfg Ref I), Anjali K M (Finance) and Mamidi Siddharthan (Petchem), M. Saaket (OM & S) and Padakanti Virat (Mfg Ref I)

The event concluded with a photo session capturing the spirit of collaboration and youthful energy that defined YouNGAGE 2025. YouNGAGE 2025 once again reaffirmed BPCL Kochi Refinery's commitment to nurturing its young talent through experiential learning and leadership development.



## SERVICE CITATIONS

30 YEARS



Ajitha KS  
CPO/KR



Rajesh K D  
OM&S



Bijumon CP  
Maint



Mohammed Nizar  
PA / HR



Dileep P M  
OM&S

20 YEARS



Kiran Philip  
HR



Ramesh AV  
OM&S



Ajith Prasad K  
OM&S



Shaibu CS  
OM&S



Kishor Kumar EK  
HR

25 YEARS

### SUPERANNUATING THIS MONTH



**AJITH D**  
joined KR in the  
Manufacturing  
Dept in 1987 and is  
retiring from here  
as Chief Manager



**SURESH KUMAR**  
joined KR in the  
Security Dept in  
2001 and is retiring  
from here as  
Assistant.

## The OM&S SPORTS MEET

The OM&S Sports Meet was welcomed with great enthusiasm and active participation from employees across various sections of the department. Participants were grouped into two teams – **Blending Bulls** and **Stock Blasters** – creating a spirited and friendly competitive atmosphere. The sports meet was inaugurated by Mr. A Mahendiran, CGM-(Operations). A wide range of games and sports were organized, including Cricket, Football, Volleyball, Cards, Chess, Carroms, and several other team activities. The competitions were held across multiple venues – KR Oval Ground, KR Jwalagiri Club, and VandiPetta Club – ensuring excellent facilities and smooth conduct of all events. The program concluded with a Grand Finale and Award Ceremony on 26 November, where Mr. Vinod P L, GM (OM&S), addressed the gathering and distributed the awards. After a series of closely fought contests, the **Blending Bulls emerged as the overall championship**, marking a proud and well-deserved achievement for the team. The OM&S Sports Meet proved to be a memorable and engaging experience, further strengthening unity, collaboration, and enthusiasm among all employees.





## 150th Birth Anniversary of Birsa Munda

Cochin Refineries School marked the 150th Birth Anniversary of Birsa Munda, the revered tribal freedom fighter, with great respect and enthusiasm on 11 November 2025 as part of Janjatiya Gaurav Divas. At the special assembly for Classes I to XII, 'Birsa Munda' was portrayed by a student of Class VII, who was ceremoniously led to the stage by a group of Class V students dressed as Munda tribals, accompanied by rhythmic traditional music and dance. The engaging presentation brought history alive for the young audience. A compelling speech in the voice of Birsa Munda was delivered drawing attention to his role in India's struggle for independence. Principal Mr. Vinumoan K. Mathew also emphasized on the significance of the occasion and the enduring legacy of Birsa Munda. A soulful tribal song presented by the students, added cultural depth to the ceremony.

Students of Classes VI to VIII displayed informative charts on "Tribals of India" in the school auditorium. Class X students presented creative bulletin board displays on "Honouring Birsa Munda's Legacy: Upholding Tribal Rights and Constitutional Values." An Interhouse Quiz Competition on "Tribals of India" was organised for Classes VI to VIII, with the First, Second, and Third prize winners receiving certificates and trophies. The celebrations aimed to instill in students a deeper appreciation for the rich cultural heritage and contributions of India's tribal communities.

## Ideathon 2025

Team CRS delivered an exceptional performance at IDEATHON, organised by AISAT College of Engineering, Kalamassery. Competing against 32 participating schools, our talented team advanced to the Top 10 in Phase 1 and went on to secure an admirable position in the Top 3 during the finals.



## Double win for CRS Volleyball Team

The Cochin Refineries School Volleyball Team (U-19) clinched the Champions Title at the KIZSAPS Tourney 2025 held at St. Antony's School, Kizhakambalam on 4th & 5th November 2025 and "Champions" title in the "COURT CLASH" tournament by Bhavan's Vidya mandir, Girinagaron 14th and 15th of November. Team Members Suryakiran P Sujith (Captain, XII), Adwin A (XII), Ishan Ismail (XII), Kevin Shinto (XI), Mohan V R (XI), Mayookh Lajju (XI), Shravan V Uday (X), Akhil Krishna (X), Sarang C U (X), Devjith Krishna (X), Stuart Tom (VIII), and Imran Ibrahim (VIII) with Coach Tom Joseph brought CRS these amazing wins! Hearty Congrats Team CRS!!





## Top honours for Creativity & Teamwork

The students of Cochin Refineries School delivered an impressive performance at the Fringes and Impulse Inter-School Competitions, bringing home top honours with their creativity and teamwork. At Fringes, in the Tales from the Bazaar - Storytelling Competition, Parvana R of Class 5A captivated the audience with her expressive narration and secured the First Prize, marking a proud moment for the school.

In the Impulse Inter-School Competition, the creative presentation "The Enigma of the Four Realms" stood out for its originality and remarkable coordination. The team—D. Harshanandhini (12C), Geetanjaly H Anand (12C), Levin Leo (12B), Alvi Susan B Kunnathu (12B), and Abhiram K A (12C)—won the Second Prize, showcasing exceptional imagination and teamwork. Another highlight of the event was "The Golden Bazaar," where the participating team demonstrated outstanding innovation and collaborative spirit. The group comprising Shreyas M R (12C), Pranav T Saji (12A), Arpith S N (12C), T. Jeevan Raghuram Prabhu (12B), Neha Jithin Chand (10A), and Ganga Anil (10A) secured the Second Prize, adding yet another accolade to the school's growing list of achievements.

## SCIENTIA 2025, SAGEON

Team CRS secures top honours in various inter-school competitions conducted by The Choice School, Thripunithura. In **Poster Designing**, Agness Manoj (Class 11C) clinched the First Prize with her creative and impactful design. **The Elocution** (Languages) event witnessed an outstanding performance by our talented speakers – Neha Jithin Chand (10A), Iris Shaju (9B), Devaki Krishna (12B), and Nandana Rajesh (11A) – all securing the First Prize in their respective categories. In the **Economics Debate**, the dynamic duo Gourisankar K S (12B) and Abhiram K A (12C) showcased their analytical brilliance, bagging the Second Prize. The **Commerce Quiz** team – Arpith S N (12C), Shreyas M R (12C), Purnami Satheesh (12C), and Geetanjaly H Anand (12C) – emerged victorious, winning the First Prize through their exceptional teamwork and business acumen. In **Chemaivation** (Chemistry), Niranjan M (11B) and Nishan Nidhish (11B) secured the First Prize, proving their strong grasp of chemical concepts. **The BIOSYNC** (Biology) event saw Jacob Johny Karukunnath (11B) and Manav D (11B) excel with their scientific insight, achieving the First Prize.

## Stieve selected

**Stieve Benjamin Mathew**, s/o Mathew Benjamin/Mfg has been selected to Kerala Cricket Association under -14 Boys inter district matches to represent Ernakulam district 2025-26. Best wishes to Steve!





## IMAAN launched at VAW 2025 in CRS

Cochin Refineries School marked Vigilance Awareness Week with a vibrant line-up of intra-school and inter-school competitions supported by the Vigilance Department of BPCL Kochi Refinery. Students from sixteen schools participated in events such as Colouring with Crayons, Pencil Drawing, Storytelling, Declamation, and Poster Designing, making the celebration lively and engaging.

The week's highlight was the inauguration of IMAAN, held at the Kochi Refinery Club Auditorium. The ceremony was graced by Mr. Sibi Ignatius, Chief General Manager (Inspection), BPCL KR, along with senior officials Mr. Joji J. Melel and Mr. Sashi V. Chandrasekhar. Principal Mr. Vinu Moan Mathew welcomed the gathering, and Integrity Club Coordinator Smt. Sindhu S. shared insights into the club's initiatives and objectives. Competitions were held across various venues on campus, culminating in a valedictory function where awards were presented by Mr. Joji J. Melel and Mr. Sashi Nair. The programmes concluded on a high note, reinforcing the values of integrity and vigilance among students.



## Kerala Piravi

The Kerala Piravi Day celebrations at Cochin Refineries School were conducted with grace and solemnity. Principal Mr. Vinu Moan Mathew delivered the special address, followed by the Kerala Piravi pledge led by Abhiram K. A. of Class XII. V. Nandakrishnan of Class XII B then shared insightful reflections on the significance of the day.

A vibrant cultural showcase unfolded on stage, celebrating the rich heritage of Kerala. The padayani performance by B. Devanandan of Class V offered a unique and refreshing visual treat. Students rendered the soulful "Kerala Ganam," penned by poet Bodheswaran, glorifying the land of Keralamba. A captivating dance performance set to nostalgic drama songs further enchanted the audience.

Vice Principal Mrs. Latha Shaji and Primary HOD Mrs. Nalini graced the occasion. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks, marking the end of a memorable celebration.



## Construction Commences



In March 1964, vacant possession of about 200 acres of land was obtained. The State Government completed the acquisition of a further 370 acres and handed it over to CRL in May 1964.

Ground breaking was held in March itself. The first major task was to construct the access roads, including the two-mile stretch from SN Junction at Thripunithura to Ambalamugal. By the end of 1964, several hundred tonnes of steel and construction tools had reached the site.

The prime contractor, Philips Petroleum International Corporation, had entrusted the work to Pacific Procon Limited, a company incorporated in USA, who had expertise in constructing refineries. Their job was 'Construction and Erection of a Complete (Grass Root) Refinery.' Procon had further entrusted Chicago Bridges & Iron, another US based company, for complete construction of storage tanks.

Procon had then deployed over 1,000 of their own staff. L R Myers who was the project manager is remembered as a strict task master. Except for Civil which was headed by Malayalee engineer Jacob Thomas, the other departments of Design, Fabrication, Electrical, Instrumentation and Welding were led by American expatriates. "The top officials of Procon, especially Myers, were all matter-of-fact persons. During work hours they expected hundred percent dedication from one and all. Off work, it was fun time," recalls Koshy Varghese who Joined Procon soon after completing his Degree in Electrical Engineering in February 1965.

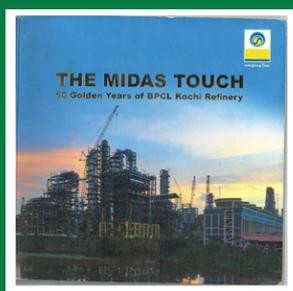
For instance, my boss Floyd Utz was a tough task master. But after work, he occasionally took his senior staff for dinner in the hotel where he stayed at Thevara. Reward and increments were strictly on the basis of performance in the job."

Koshy recalls the remoteness of Ambalamugal. "During the project implementation, I was living in a house near Chitrapuzha Bridge. Every morning i would walk to the site. In front of the site gate were three traditional tea shops. I would have my breakfast and enter the site." Employees came by foot or in public buses with their own food. There were hardly four buses in Hill Palace-Ambalamugal route", he recalls.

Commencing the work itself in this hinterland was a real challenge. Enterprising individuals started small contracting firms and took up sub-jobs from Procon and Chicago. Many local people, who were till then engaged in farming, found jobs with local contractors and firms.

"Then many of us did not have the expertise for mechanical and other skilled jobs. Skilled workers from Kerala and neighbouring states, including the famed Khalasis of Beypore, were engaged for mechanical work. I started as a worker with a small firm Tekon, started by a few local people, at a daily wage of Rs 2.45. There were other such contractors like Tharakandom Varkey and Kunnathu Jacob," says KT Thankappan who is now the president of one of the contract workers' union.

In a few years, more enterprising contractors joined the fray and local people were exposed to technical skills.



Stories adapted from  
**The Midas Touch**  
Golden Jubilee Coffee Table  
Book of Kochi Refinery



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