



## President's Address

**Manasi Saha**  
*President, ISODA*

### Dear Isodians,

Wishing all of you a Very Happy Diwali. May this Festival of Lights bring with it abundance of life, luck and light into your lives. Calling the environmentalist in you to have a sound-free Diwali with no crackers and smoke. October scored well for ISODA as per commitment, starting with the inaugural Jaipur Regional Meet event, with 32 Invitees, media and presence of ISODA Secretary (Vimesh ), RS North (Atul Modi), and RS Rajasthan (Dhiraj). This was followed by a very unique Regional Meet in Mumbai where all the focus was on every member. Each member got 180 seconds to give an elevator pitch about their organizations, strengths and how they could add value to the business of others. It was very well received by everyone present and members appreciated the flow of the meet.

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all the new members who joined ISODA recently. We have a new Woman Entrepreneur from Delhi joining us. She is Davinder Kaur of Softel Networks. Three other members joined in from the pink city - Jaipur, one from Kolkata and one from Chennai. The announcement of TSX – Baku by TSX Chairman Jiten Mehta has garnered huge response. Registrations are in full swing and I am confident that the registrations will close before the stipulated deadline. We look forward to the support from all ISODA Members to make it bigger and better. The Management Committee has decided to roll out the ASAP Webinar Series. A link for feedback on the topics of interest has been sent to everyone. I urge everyone to fill it up for the benefit of your teams.

We have couple of very interesting reads in this IC: Work from Home and Remote Work. Contributions have come from and ISODA Member as well as our Tax Consultant, who decided that for a change, a non-taxing issue can be addressed (pun intended).

Stay tuned with Interconnect for more details on TSX and other activities planned for ISODA. Season's Greetings!

### BECOME AN ISODA MEMBER

Join one of India's largest networks of IT companies across verticals.

Please sign up at <https://isoda.in/membership.aspx>  
and mail [rm@isoda.in](mailto:rm@isoda.in)



# TSX Chairman's Address

**Jiten Mehta**  
*TSX Chairman*



**Dear Isodians,**

Wishing you all a very Happy Diwali and Prosperous New Year. Welcome to TS X to be held from 5th – 8th Feb 2020 at Baku.

In 2020 we will be having our 10th Season of the TechSummit. This time in a different geographic location with European culture in Asia. And a very different weather than ours, in the Winter Chill. Baku is the capital of Azerbaijan, whose name is derived from the tribe called Azer which has lived in Baku for the last 300 years. Baku has a fire temple which houses Lord Shiva and Lord Ganpati, which has significance because of the cultural diversity that is present there. Baku has multiple Indian Restaurants co-existing with local cuisine and it is famous for its London Taxis. Of course the night life on the weekends is also an added attraction. It had OIL as a natural resource all these years, but that reserve has slowly diminished, and hence the focus on tourism.

After the success of 9 seasons of TechSummit, this season we are looking at raising the bar in terms of the time spent at TSX. This time we have nearly 90 registration as on Diwali and it is overwhelming to see a lot of new registrations. Of course there are many registrations from people that we have got used to seeing as the regulars. Hence, this TSX presents a great opportunity for everyone to network and grow their businesses.

We have started approaching Sponsors very aggressively (IT/Non IT), which will add the necessary impetus to the networking. I urge all fellow ISODians not to miss this opportunity of networking with peers and the industry leaders, as there will be a LOT to LEARN. And hence the theme for this year: **Reform. Perform. Transform.**

**Reform your path. Perform beyond expectations. Transform into a valuable player.**

We are eager to welcome you all to Baku in February. Till then, Cheers!







## Special Article

Arvind Didwania

Founder – Ant My ERP

**“ Work from Home is no more looked-down upon! ”**

It's all began 3 years ago, when we developed a Pan India Network for providing services support to all our clients. We were facing a language problem. We had many clients and service partners in southern India, and lo behold, when they talked, we could not understand the accent and what we spoke, they could not understand us completely. With due respect to all parts of the country, I am sure this problem has occurred everywhere. While we were struggling to solve this, the thought crossed our minds: why not hire a few resources at Mumbai who know the local languages of our customers. Then we thought about hiring a resource in Southern India itself. That felt better. But where would they work from? The obvious answer was Home!

Finally the decision was taken: we wanted a local resource who could work from home. But there were also things to consider: trust, data security and business systems. To solve this problem, we started building the systems itself and after many a trial-and-error, we were able to develop a solution. And it worked beautifully! It is now known as Ant My ERP, and it is my flagship solution. We hired 3 resources at local levels at Chennai, Bengaluru and Lucknow. After a few teething issues (the usual), we were able to take care of the local clients in a more positive way. This experience of ours laid the base for work from home.

We hired a Happy Caller from the Small Town and Village to manage our service calls quality and it also worked. We were happy that we have created an employment.

As luck would have it, a fire broke out in our office at the start of 2019. And we were all forced to work from home till things got back to normal. That time frame where we were forced to work outside the office then laid the foundation for work from home in a complete manner. We never wanted our clients to know about the fire. Instructions were given to the team to manage as if it was business as usual. We all worked for more than 2 months from home. And after 2 months, we switched off our office. It is now nearly a year and we haven't had a single challenge. Every employee feels fresh when they speak to clients. We meet often at coffee shops to maintain the human touch. Especially in Mumbai, the 15 of us who once used to spend time at office are now spending more time with family, yet their productivity levels for business has doubled. As a new strategy, we have now started pushing team members whose families are not in Mumbai, to relocate to their native place and stay with their family. And still contribute to the company. And a lot of our employees have jumped at that idea.

So what changed? Here is my deep analysis of a year of executing Work from Home.





## Special Article (contd.)

### Benefits of Work from Home:

| For Employees  | For Employers   |
|--|---|
| Less time spent commuting                                | Improved employee retention.  |
| Increased productivity.                                  | Access to a wider pool of applicants                                |
| Making better use of technology                          | More autonomous employees   |
| Higher Morale  | Lower costs of acquisition  |
| Higher Happiness Index                                   | Can hire the best, no matter where they are.                        |
| Increase in employee loyalty.                            | Less wasting time on useless meetings.                              |
| Less wasting of time on useless meetings.                | Employees take fewer sick days.                                     |
| More Time with Family                                    | Good resultant PR   |
| Employees don't constantly feel the need for a vacation. | Employees work longer on a day-to-day basis.                        |
| Employees from other companies are now jealous.          | Reduced overheads like Salaries, Office Space, Office supplies, etc |

**More is yet to come!**

#### About Arvind Didwania

Arvind Didwania is the founder of AntMyERP. The company intends to help businesses adopt 'Work from Home' culture in their organization by using Ant My ERP. This will help them to hire resources from anywhere in the world with a freedom for employees to work from anywhere and that too anytime. This could be a game-changing benefit for the segment as 'Work from Home' will not only bring down the total cost of business operations, but will also ensure total data security. This is because they have used the best of the technologies to build the solution.







## Inaugural Rajasthan Regional Meet

4th October 2019  
Holiday Inn | 7:00 PM

**Inauguration - Rajasthan Chapter**

**Introduction to ISODA**

**Introductions of attendees**

**Cocktails and Dinner**

## West Regional Meet

10th October 2019  
Hotel Kohinoor | 6:30 PM

**Registration and Networking**

**YOUR Time (First 25 to come)**

**Sponsorship slot**

**Cocktails and Dinner**





# Tax

## Remote Work

With 2020 on the horizon and the 2010's decade coming to an end, there is an onslaught of nostalgic articles about what we will miss about the previous decade and what will be the 'trends' of the upcoming one. Although the author of this article refrains from reading such articles, but the clickbait headlines don't seem to spare anyone.

Remote work is one such 'trend' which seems to have been gaining traction and is being spoken a lot about. Not to be confused with 'working from home' which is merely a temporary working arrangement, remote work is more of a permanent arrangement and a method of work. Remote work seems to be the answer to all the questions which bothers employees / freelancers on the whole, mainly being flexible work schedule, avoiding congested roads and commute, feeling trusted and avoiding distractions at work. There are estimates that by 2025, some 70 percent of the workforce will work remotely at least five days a month.



The trend has been made possible primarily because of a boom in internet penetration and more importantly because of a slew of digital workplace tools which allow for easy collaboration across distances and time zones. Workplace communications software like Slack, Zoom and GoToMeeting are prime examples.

For people who still feel like they haven't effectively 'started working' till the time they leave their house, there is the benefit of having an option of working at a nearby co-working space. There is no denying that the demand for remote work has fuelled the requirement of co-working spaces, CBRE estimates that flexible office space now makes up nearly 2 percent of all office space in the 40 markets CBRE measures and is expected to grow to 13 percent by 2030.

It would be wise for Indian Companies to realize this trend as here to stay and start developing structures and solutions to offer employees to 'remote work' thereby retaining the best talent and be able to access an employee pool across geographies





# Legal

A. The Ministry of Labour and Employment has, with a view to the changing industrial and economic scenario of the nation, proposed to amend the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 vide the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions (Amendment) Bill, 2019 ("Bill") on August 23, 2019. The Bill was open for suggestions and objections from the concerned stakeholders and other members of the public till September 22, 2019.

## The key highlights of the bill are as follows:

- a. As per the new bill, the definition of the word "Wages" is now in conformity with the definition of "Wages" as brought in by the Code on Wages, 2019, as notified earlier on August 8, 2019. While earlier, the basis for computation of provident fund was basic wage, it has now become computational to wage which is inclusive of basic pay, dearness allowance and retaining allowance. The amendment specifically excludes various specific payments made by the employer to the employee such as any bonus, the value of house accommodation, contribution by an employer to pension or provident fund, conveyance allowance, house rent allowance, overtime allowance, retrenchment allowance etc. However, the Bill specifically states that if all such excluded payments exceed 50% or such other percent of all remuneration calculated, then such exceeded payment shall be deemed as remuneration and shall be made part of "Wages".
- b. The Bill has proposed flexibility regarding the rate of contribution for various classes of employees. Central Government has been given the power to determine such percentage and the period for which such rates shall be applicable. Further, the Bill clarifies that the employer shall not be under an obligation to pay any contribution over and above his contribution of 12%. This modification and flexibility in rates come in pursuance to the announcement made in the annual budget of year 2015-2016 wherein it was stated that EPF contribution shall be made optional for employees below a certain threshold of monthly income. While the idea took 3 years to come on papers, it is a positive change to ensure no additional burden on low income earner is brought in.
- c. Section 7A of the Act deals with the initiation of inquiry regarding the applicability of the Act and determining the amount due from any employer under any provision of the Act. The Act provided no limitation to the initiation of inquiries under Section 7A of the Act, thereby allowing the competent authorities to initiate inquiries for any period of time, be it from the date of the commencement of such establishment. Such an ambiguous and open-ended power to the authorities was prone to misuse. Therefore, the Bill now amends Section 7A wherein a limitation period of five years has been brought in to initiate inquiry from the date the alleged amount is considered to be due. Further, the Bill also states that the inquiry should be held on a day to day basis and should be concluded within a period of two years, as far as practicable. In the event the inquiry is not concluded within two years, the authority must record the reason for such a delay.
- d. Bill clearly emphasizes vide Section 11 that any amount due for the provident fund shall be considered as a first charge on the assets of the establishment and it shall be paid in priority to all debts. Therefore, the Bill proposes that if an establishment has various debts and the creditors and approached competent authorities under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016, it must be ensured that the amount due under this Act is prioritized and paid before any other dues.

B. Now, at the same time, the Ministry of Labour and Employment is now called for objections for a new bill titled Code on Social Security, 2019 for which the last date for sending in objections is 25.10.2019. This new code encompasses 8 different labour laws into one relatable code and it includes subjects such as, provident fund, insurance, gratuity, maternity benefit, employee compensation etc., amongst other things. The bill is available on the Ministry of Labour and Employment and can be downloaded for everyone's reference.