

## **Karnataka to get 2,333 seats under Centre's BPO promotion scheme for creating Jobs**

Bengaluru: Of the 50,000 seats under the Centre's ambitious India BPO Promotion Scheme (IBPS), Karnataka will get 2,333. However, experts feel, as the knowledge capital, the state must create more such seats.

Envisioned with the objective to balance the sector's growth across all states, the seats under the scheme will be allotted to tier 2 cities and rural areas. Of the 1.45 lakh jobs that the scheme aims to generate across the country, 7,000 will be created in Karnataka. The implementation of the scheme started in August 2015.

The seats have been allotted in proportion to each state's population. Karnataka, which is home to 5.25 crore people or 4.86% of India's population, has thus been awarded only 4.8% of the total seats.

'Rural BPO scheme has not taken off in state'

Infosys board member Mohandas Pai told TOI, "The state government has to be more proactive and make investments. The Karnataka government's Rural BPO scheme has not taken off. The government and IT department should be looking at 50,000 seats."

"Operations such as Bescom's call centre can be outsourced to generate more jobs. They don't need to hire government employees. That way, they will attract investments from private players," Pai added. With 8,827 seats, Uttar Pradesh will have the maximum number of seats, followed by Bihar (4,615), Maharashtra (3,941) and West Bengal (3,422). The five southern states - Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu and Kerala - have cumulatively been awarded 10,030 or 21% of the total number of seats.

D Muralidhar from the Federation of Karnataka Chamber of Commerce opined that it would reflect poorly if the state failed in creating more BPO jobs. "The state cannot expect the Centre to hand-hold it since the Union government has to look at 29 states," he added.

"The state has been talking of the importance of developing rural areas, but nothing has been done, resulting in migration. It is time the government took some decisions and started to invest," said J Crasta from Assocham.

Although the Centre has earmarked Rs 493 crore for the project, each seat will receive only Rs 1 lakh from the government. While experts feel the amount is insufficient, they agree that it is a step in the right direction.

BPO seats that boast of 50% women employment will see government bearing 5% of their capital cost. Similar incentives have also been promised to those employing the physically challenged and seats that generate more employment than the specified target.