

CMA DIGEST

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From the Editor's Desk

Dear Readers,

Greetings from CMA!

The world continues to navigate a period of profound uncertainty. Geopolitical conflicts, climate-related disruptions, rapid advances in artificial intelligence, and evolving consumer expectations are compelling organizations to rethink how they lead, innovate, and create value. Success today depends not only on responding to change but on anticipating it with resilience, agility, and purpose.

This edition of the CMA Digest reflects these emerging realities. Our featured 'Monday Musings' sessions explore how leaders can navigate the constant stream of information without losing perspective, harness operational excellence through technology while keeping people at the centre of transformation, and strike the right balance between Artificial Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence. As markets become increasingly digital and sustainability assumes greater importance, businesses are reminded that long-term success will always be built on innovation, ethical leadership, and meaningful human connections.

The industry visit to KPR Group demonstrates how operational excellence, employee empowerment, and environmental stewardship can coexist to create globally competitive enterprises. While the challenges before us are significant, they also present opportunities to rethink, reinvent, and grow. Throughout history, periods of uncertainty have inspired remarkable progress, driven by collaboration, knowledge sharing, and the determination to build a better future. We hope this edition informs, inspires, and encourages meaningful conversations that prepare us for the opportunities ahead. Together, let us continue to learn, inspire, and remain optimistic about the future.

Best regards,

Dr. Vandana Madhavkumar

Editor

CMA Digest



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COIMBATORE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

Monday Musings

Monday Musings – 01st June 2026

Bad News Quotient - Managing Negativity in the digital era

Dr. Elgin Alexander was the speaker for the Monday Musings No 616 held on 1st June, 2026. He spoke on the topic 'Bad News Quotient: Navigating Negativity in the Information Age'. The presentation on the Bad News Quotient (BNQ) offered a thought-provoking examination of how the relentless exposure to negative information in the digital age influences human cognition, emotions, and behaviour. He began with a familiar contemporary experience about how we all start our day by scrolling through distressing news and notifications, highlighting the transition from an era of information scarcity to one characterized by unprecedented abundance of information. While access to information has become effortless, the continuous consumption of adverse content often results in heightened anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and diminished psychological well-being.

Central to the discussion was the concept of negativity bias, a deeply ingrained psychological tendency that causes individuals to pay greater attention to negative events than positive ones. In today's digital ecosystem, this natural bias has been found to be amplified by algorithms that prioritize emotionally charged content to maximize user engagement. Consequently, fear, outrage, and sensationalism frequently dominated public discourse, creating a cycle of negativity that shaped perceptions and influenced decision-making.

Speaker: **Dr. Elgin Alexander**



The presentation further explored the impact of excessive negativity within organizational environments, where it could undermine morale, weaken collaboration, impair communication, and reduce overall productivity. Recognizing these challenges, it advocated practical interventions such as mindful media consumption, digital detox practices, critical evaluation of information sources, responsible content sharing, and the cultivation of emotional resilience.

Ultimately, the presentation delivered a powerful message: although individuals cannot control the volume of negative information that exists in the world, they can exercise control over how they engage with and respond to it. Dr Alexander urged the audience to develop the ability to filter information consciously and maintain emotional balance. He emphasized that this ability was an essential skill for achieving personal well-being, effective leadership, and professional success in an increasingly interconnected world.

To quote his closing thought: "The quality of our lives is determined not merely by the information we consume, but by the wisdom with which we interpret and respond to it."

Monday Musings – 08th June 2026

Inferential Statistics: Non-Parametric Test

Dr Sibi S was the speaker for the Monday Musings No 617 held on 8th June, 2026. She spoke on the topic 'Inferential statistics: Non-Parametric Tests'. She spoke on how statistical analysis using non parametric Tests served as the foundation of evidence-based research. Across disciplines such as education, medicine, social sciences, psychology, business, agriculture, and engineering, researchers relied on statistical tools to transform data into meaningful knowledge.

However, one of the recurring challenges researchers encountered often was the failure of real-world data to satisfy the assumptions required by traditional parametric methods. Many statistical procedures, such as the t-test and analysis of variance, assume that data are normally distributed, measured on interval scales, and

Speaker: **Dr. M.S.Sibi**



characterized by homogeneity of variance. Yet in practical research settings, these assumptions are frequently violated. Researchers may work with small sample sizes, ordinal scales, skewed distributions, missing observations, or outliers that made parametric procedures less reliable. This is where non-parametric statistical methods become highly valuable.

In this session the speaker discussed the concept of non-parametric tests, their significance in research, the process of testing normality, and the applications of important non-parametric techniques including the Chi-Square Test, Sign Test, and Kruskal-Wallis H Test.

Monday Musings – 15th June 2026

OpEx for Next Gen Leaders

Mr Sandeep P was the speaker for the Monday Musings No 618 held on 15th June, 2026. He spoke on the topic 'OpEx for Next Gen Leaders'. Mr Sandeep articulated on how by bridging the gap between traditional Lean management and modern artificial intelligence, a firm provides structured frameworks that allow regional businesses to scale efficiently without losing their operational agility.

Mr. Sandeep emphasized that systematic waste elimination and process improvement were critical for the survival and growth of smaller enterprises. Operational Excellence (OpEx) though it has been often perceived as a strategy reserved for large multinational corporations. Mr Sandeep emphasized that sustainable value to customers can be delivered by focusing on SQDCP (Safety, Quality, Delivery, Cost, People) as "In a hyper-competitive market, operational excellence is the difference between growth and survival". Rather than relying solely on manual audits and paper-based standards, 'Something Works IN' advocated for AI-Powered OpEx. This approach integrated real-time IoT monitoring, automated dashboards, and predictive analytics into traditional Lean structures like Kaizen, 5S, and the DMAIC (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control) problem-solving framework.

One of the notable innovations highlighted during the session was IN Zen Pro, an AI-powered solution developed by Something Works IN to enhance quality control in manufacturing. The tool automates defect detection and reporting, significantly reducing the time spent on quality inspections while enabling shop-floor employees to focus on more value-added activities instead of manual documentation.

Mr Sandeep illustrated the practical impact of these approaches through a case study of a mid-sized precision manufacturing company in Coimbatore employing over 150 people. Following a four-month Lean diagnostic conducted by Something Works IN, the

Speaker: **Mr. P.Sandeep**



consulting team mapped the company's value stream and identified 12 process steps, of which only three were value-adding. The analysis also revealed substantial waiting times between workstations, leading to unnecessary delays and inefficiencies.

As an example, he mentioned an organization where by implementing targeted process improvements and eliminating operational bottlenecks, it achieved remarkable results. Production lead time reduced by 60%, while defect rate declined from 8% to 1.2%. Equally significant was a 300% increase in employee-generated improvement suggestions, reflecting the emergence of a stronger culture of continuous improvement and greater workforce engagement. Emphasizing the human aspect of operational excellence, the speaker noted that sustainable transformation has been driven more by organizational culture than by tools or technology alone. A common mistake made by organizations was to view operational excellence purely as an HR initiative or as a short-term cost-reduction exercise. Instead, leaders were encouraged to shift their focus from blaming individuals to improving systems, and from relying solely on top-down directives to actively incorporating insights from front line employees.

The session concluded with the reminder that operational excellence is a journey rather than a destination. Organizations embarking on this journey were advised to begin with simple yet effective initiatives such as the 5S methodology—Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize and Sustain—or short, structured Kaizen events. These practices would help build momentum, foster collaboration, and create a culture of continuous improvement in a supportive, no-blame environment.

Management Quiz

- Q1. Which Saudi Arabian low-cost carrier is set to launch operations in India in 2026?
- Q2. Which company launched "Grokopedia" to compete with Wikipedia?
- Q3. Reliance Enterprise Intelligence Limited (REIL) is a joint venture between Reliance Industries and which company?
- Q4. What was the original name of Zomato before it was rebranded?
- Q5. According to BCG, what is the projected consumption by India's Gen-Z population by 2035?
- Q6. Which of the following is Hatsun's premium chocolate brand?
- Q7. What is the name of Spencer's quick-delivery proposition?
- Q8. In the quick-commerce industry, what does MTU stand for?

For answers see page 10

Monday Musings – 22nd June 2026

Speaker: **Dr. N.Shani Janardhanan**

Balancing AI and EI

Dr. Shani Janardhanan delivered an insightful session on the evolving relationship between Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Emotional Intelligence (EI) during the Monday Musings No 619 held on 22nd June, 2026. She spoke on the topic 'Balancing AI and EI', highlighting the need for future leaders to strike the right balance between technological capabilities and human-centred leadership.

Quoting renowned psychologist Daniel Goleman, Dr. Janardhanan observed that as organizations increasingly adopt AI, routine and repetitive tasks will continue to be automated, reshaping the nature of work. While many professionals will work alongside AI-powered assistants, leadership roles will continue to rely heavily on distinctly human capabilities such as empathy, judgement, relationship building, and strategic thinking.

The session distinguished between the complementary roles of AI and EI. Artificial Intelligence, Dr. Janardhanan explained, enables machines to process data, recognize patterns, and support decision-making through advanced algorithms and machine learning. Emotional Intelligence, on the other hand, is the ability to understand, manage, and effectively express emotions while building meaningful relationships and navigating complex interpersonal situations.

Addressing the frequently asked question of whether AI will replace emotional intelligence, Dr. Janardhanan emphasized that while AI

can identify emotional patterns and generate responses that appear empathetic, it does not experience emotions in the way humans do. Qualities such as empathy, intuition, ethical judgement, and genuine human connection remain uniquely human and cannot be replicated by technology. Instead, AI should be viewed as an enabler that enhances emotional intelligence by providing insights and supporting better decision-making.

Looking ahead, Dr. Janardhanan stressed that tomorrow's leaders must be prepared to operate in an environment where AI and EI increasingly intersect. Rather than viewing AI as a substitute for human capabilities, leaders should leverage it as a powerful tool to strengthen decision-making, strategic thinking, and emotionally intelligent leadership. By integrating AI thoughtfully into learning and leadership development, institutions can prepare students to lead with empathy, adaptability, and resilience in an increasingly complex and technology-driven world.

The session concluded with a powerful message that the future belongs not to those who choose between AI and EI, but to those who effectively combine technological intelligence with emotional wisdom to create meaningful impact.



Monday Musings – 29th June 2026

Speaker: **Dr. R.Initha Rina**

The New Consumer and the Future of Marketing: Understanding Behaviour in a Digital, AI and Sustainable World

Dr. R. Initha Rina, Associate Professor, GRG School of Management Studies, delivered a talk on "The New Consumer and the Future of Marketing: Understanding Behaviour in a Digital, AI, and Sustainable World" at the Coimbatore Management Association (CMA) Monday Musings session number 620 on 29th June 2026. The session examined how digital transformation, artificial intelligence, and sustainability were reshaping consumer behaviour and influencing modern marketing practices. Dr. Initha highlighted the characteristics of today's consumers, who were digitally connected, informed, empowered, value-driven, and experience-oriented, emphasizing the need for organizations to adopt customer-centric strategies. Through contemporary examples from leading brands such as Amazon, Starbucks, Netflix, Apple, and Tata Motors, she

demonstrated how AI was transforming marketing through personalization, predictive analytics, customer engagement, and process automation. She also stressed that while AI enhanced business efficiency, human qualities such as creativity, empathy, ethical judgment, and emotional intelligence remained indispensable in building trust and meaningful customer relationships.

The session concluded with a discussion on the growing importance of sustainability, responsible marketing, and community engagement, reinforcing that the future of marketing lies in integrating technological innovation with human values to create lasting customer experiences and sustainable business success.



Industry Visit to **M/S. Quantum Knits-3 (A Unit of KPR Mill Limited),** No.460, Avinashi Main Road, Thekkalur, Avinashi, Tamil Nadu – 641654, on Friday, 22nd May 2026



Dr. C. Guna Sekaran, MC Member (CMA), Chairperson-CMA Industrial Visits organized the 17th Industry Visit on behalf of the Association for the Management Committee Members and Faculty Representatives of Students' Chapter Institutions on Friday, 22nd May 2026, to M/s. Quantum Knits - 3 (A Unit of KPR Mill Limited), located at Thekkalur, Avinashi, Tamil Nadu.

The visit was arranged with the objective of providing participants with practical exposure and managerial insights into the operations of a rapidly growing, professionally managed, technology-driven, and export-oriented garment manufacturing organization.

CMA purposefully selected the KPR Group for the industry visit because of its remarkable journey and distinctive achievements. From its humble beginnings in 1984 as a weaving operation with power looms, the Group had evolved into a diversified textile giant with an annual business turnover of approximately 6,500 crores and a market capitalization of around 30,000 crores. Today, KPR Group serves customers in more than 60 countries and has established itself as a globally recognized leader in the textile and apparel sector.

A 15-member delegation comprising of CMA members and faculty from partner colleges participated in the visit to the manufacturing facility of Quantum Knits -3. The delegates were introduced to the



impressive growth story of the KPR Group, which has built a strong reputation over four decades through its commitment to technology, quality, sustainability, employee welfare, and customer satisfaction. The delegation learned about the inspiring entrepreneurial journey of Shri K.P. Ramasamy, Chairman of KPR Group. Hailing from an agricultural family, Shri K.P. Ramasamy began his career as a power loom cloth manufacturer in 1971 and, with the support of his brothers, transformed a modest enterprise into one of India's leading vertically integrated textile organizations. Beyond his business success, he earned recognition for his commitment to social responsibility and employee empowerment.

One of the most notable aspects of the KPR Group has been its exemplary employee development initiatives. For KPR Group,

employee well-being extends beyond physical welfare, the Group has implemented an unique educational empowerment model that enables employees to pursue higher education while working. Through collaborations with universities and the provision of modern educational infrastructure, more than 31,000 employees have benefited from these initiatives. Many employees have excelled in government examinations, securing high ranks, gold medals, and academic distinctions.

The delegates were informed that over 45,000 women employees have graduated through these educational programs during the past two decades, while more than 5,500 employees are currently pursuing higher education. These initiatives have significantly enhanced career progression opportunities for employees, making KPR Group a benchmark for human resource development.

The interactive session was led by Shri M. Nagarajan, Vice President – Marketing & Merchandising, who highlighted the scale and operational excellence of the organization. He explained that Quantum Knits -3 is one of the largest garment manufacturing facilities in Asia, employing approximately 5,000 people under a single roof, out of the Group's total workforce of around 30,000 employees.

He shared several impressive operational statistics. Quantum Knits had:

- Daily spinning capacity of 300 tonnes of yarn.
- Captive consumption of approximately 100 tonnes of yarn per day.
- Production of 120 tonnes of fabric per day through 300 state-of-the-art knitting machines.
- Daily production of nearly 5 lakh garments.
- Rejection rate maintained at just 0.2%, with a target of reducing it further to 0.1%.

The delegates learned that these achievements were possible due to the Group's complete vertical integration, covering the entire value chain from "Fiber to Fabric to Finished Garments."

A key success factor emphasized during the session was the Group's system-driven culture. Every process was standardized and rigorously monitored to ensure operational excellence. Approximately 90% of the workforce consisted of women from rural backgrounds across India. The organization provided free accommodation, food, and educational opportunities, thereby

creating a highly motivated and productive workforce.

An especially noteworthy practice was the absence of discrimination in employee welfare facilities. The same quality of food was served to everyone on campus, from the Chairman to the shop-floor workforce. Across all campuses, nearly one lakh meals were served daily. Each of the Group's nine campuses functioned as an independent Strategic Business Unit (SBU), ensuring efficiency and accountability.

The delegates were also briefed on the Group's educational institutions, which offer programs in Engineering, Arts, Science, Commerce, Management, and related disciplines, contributing significantly to regional educational development.

From a business perspective, the Group's diversified international market presence across more than 60 countries has reduced dependence on any single market, thereby providing resilience against global trade uncertainties. KPR Group's commitment to sustainability was another area of focus. The organization currently utilizes approximately 65% green power and operates a 5 MLD Effluent Treatment Plant with a Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) system, demonstrating its strong environmental responsibility.

The Group has also diversified into the sugar industry through a major facility in Kalaburagi District, Karnataka, featuring:

- 20,000 TPD sugarcane crushing capacity.
- 470 KLPD ethanol production facilities.
- 90 MW cogeneration green power plant.

Following the informative session, the delegates were taken on a guided tour of the garment manufacturing facility by Mr P. Veera Prabhu, Factory Manager. Participants observed world-class production processes supported by advanced machinery sourced from Germany, Japan, Italy, and Austria.

The tour provided valuable insights into:

- Modern garment manufacturing technologies.
- Barcode-based production tracking systems.
- Intelligent four-point quality inspection systems.
- Compliance with AQL 2.5 quality standards.
- Advanced automated pallet racking and warehouse management systems.
- Efficient inventory monitoring and retrieval mechanisms.

The delegates also learned about the Group's in-house design capabilities, which enable the creation of innovative apparel collections alongside customer-specific designs.

During the visit, participants observed several internationally recognized certifications held by KPR Group, including:

- ISO 9001 – Quality Management Systems
- ISO 14001 – Environmental Management Systems
- SA 8000 – Social Accountability Standards
- GOTS (Global Organic Textile Standard)

These certifications reflected the organization's commitment to quality, sustainability, compliance, and global best practices. The delegation was also introduced to the Group's retail brand, "FASO," which caters to the domestic market with organic, skin-friendly garments featuring contemporary designs and premium quality fabrics.

With nearly four decades of industry experience, robust infrastructure, strategic location advantages, a diverse product

portfolio, and an unwavering commitment to quality and innovation, KPR Group continues to strengthen its position as a global leader in the textile and apparel industry.

The visit provided delegates with a unique opportunity to witness firsthand the operations of a professionally managed organization driven by values, technology, sustainability, and social responsibility. The experience offered valuable lessons in leadership, employee empowerment, operational excellence, quality management, and strategic growth.

At the conclusion of the visit, the delegates expressed their sincere gratitude to the President and Secretary of the Coimbatore Management Association for organizing such a meaningful, informative, and well-structured industrial visit. The participants also requested that CMA continue to organize similar knowledge-enriching industrial visits in the future.

Dr. C. Guna Sekaran

Chairperson-CMA Industrial Visits

Interactive Session

An engaging interactive session with Mr. Dhruv Suyamprakasam, Co-Founder & CEO of iCliniq and Member, Advisory Board, Nasdaq, was held on Friday, 12 June 2026, at Hotel Ibis, Coimbatore. Drawing from his entrepreneurial journey, Mr. Dhruv offered a candid account of building a successful technology venture, sharing valuable insights into the challenges, setbacks, breakthroughs, and defining moments that shaped his path. His reflections on resilience, innovation, leadership, and the principles that guided his decisions resonated strongly with the audience. His authentic and engaging storytelling made the session both inspiring and thought-provoking.

Adding to the richness of the evening, Mr. Dhruv was accompanied by a few of his accomplished entrepreneur friends, who shared their own experiences from the technology and creative industries. Among them was a leading Visual Effects (VFX) specialist who has worked on films directed by Lokesh Kanagaraj, including projects



featuring popular actors Rajinikanth and Vijay. Their presence provided participants with a rare opportunity to interact with successful techpreneurs and creative professionals, making the session a truly memorable and enriching experience.

The Importance of Cybersecurity in the Age of AI

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In today's digital age, cybersecurity is no longer just a technical concern—it is a vital part of our everyday lives. Almost everything we depend on, from banking and healthcare to communication and government services, relies on digital systems. While this digital transformation has made life faster and more convenient, it has also introduced serious risks.

With the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the cybersecurity landscape has changed dramatically. AI has made both defence systems and cyberattacks more advanced, faster, and harder to predict. To truly understand this shift, it helps to look at how cybersecurity worked before AI and how it is evolving today.

Cybersecurity Before the Rise of AI

Before AI became widely used, cybersecurity systems were largely manual and reactive. Security depended heavily on human effort and predefined rules.

1. Manual Threat Detection

In the past, security teams had to monitor systems manually. They would analyse logs and look for suspicious activities

themselves. This process was slow and often ineffective, as threats were usually discovered only after damage had already been done.

2. Signature-Based Protection

Traditional tools like antivirus software relied on known "signatures" of viruses. This meant they could only detect threats that had already been identified. New or unknown attacks, especially zero-day threats, often went unnoticed.

3. Slow Response Time

Handling cyber incidents was a time-consuming process. Security teams had to investigate alerts one by one, which could take hours or even days. During this time, attackers had more opportunities to cause harm.

4. Limited Data Analysis

Earlier systems lacked the ability to process large volumes of data quickly. Detecting patterns across millions of events was extremely difficult, which meant many hidden threats were missed.

5. Simpler Cyberattacks

Cyberattacks were generally less sophisticated. Hackers relied on basic phishing emails or simple malware, and launching large-scale attacks required significant effort and expertise.

The Rise of AI in Cybersecurity

The introduction of AI has transformed cybersecurity into a smarter, faster, and more proactive field. However, it has also given cybercriminals powerful new tools.

We now live in what can be described as an "AI vs AI" cybersecurity environment, where both attackers and defenders are using advanced technologies.

How AI is Being Used for Cyberattacks

1. AI-Powered Phishing

AI can generate highly convincing phishing emails that mimic real people or organizations. These messages use correct grammar, natural tone, and even personal details, making them much harder to identify.

2. Deepfakes and Voice Cloning

AI can create realistic fake videos and cloned voices. Cybercriminals use these to impersonate executives, employees, or public figures, leading to fraud and identity theft.

3. Automated Hacking

AI allows hackers to scan systems automatically, identify vulnerabilities, and launch repeated attacks at a massive scale. These systems can even adapt based on how defences respond.

4. AI-Generated Malware

Modern malware has become more intelligent. It can change its own code to avoid detection, hide from traditional security tools, and spread efficiently across networks.

5. Smart Data Exploitation

AI can quickly analyse stolen data to identify valuable information, such as passwords or financial details. This enables attackers to target victims more effectively.

How AI is Strengthening Cyber Defense

Despite the risks, AI has also greatly improved cybersecurity defenses.

Modern systems use AI to:

- Detect unusual patterns and behaviours in real time
- Identify new types of malwares faster
- Predict potential threats before they occur
- Automate responses to attacks
- Analyse massive amounts of data instantly

These capabilities allow organizations to react within seconds instead of hours, significantly reducing damage.

From Reactive to Proactive Security

One of the biggest changes AI has brought is the shift from reactive to proactive cybersecurity.

In the past, action was taken only after an attack occurred. Today, AI can detect early warning signs and prevent threats before they happen.

This proactive approach is critical in minimizing risks.

The "AI vs AI" Cybersecurity Era

Today's cybersecurity landscape is a continuous battle between:

- AI-powered attackers
- AI-driven defence systems

This dynamic environment means that success depends on speed, adaptability, and intelligence. Both sides are constantly evolving, making cybersecurity more complex than ever.

Why Cybersecurity Matters More Than Ever

As digital dependency grows, so do the risks. Cyber threats can lead to:

- Financial losses
- Identity theft
- Corporate data breaches
- Attacks on governments
- Disruption of critical infrastructure

Even a small vulnerability can result in large-scale damage, making cybersecurity essential for individuals and organizations alike.

Challenges in the AI-Driven World

Despite its advantages, AI also introduces new challenges:

- Rapid evolution of cyberattacks
- Increased difficulty in detecting deepfake content
- Increasing system complexity
- Data privacy concerns
- Shortage of skilled cybersecurity professionals

These challenges highlight the need for continuous innovation

and awareness

Conclusion

Cybersecurity has come a long way—from manual, rule-based systems to intelligent, AI-driven solutions. While AI has significantly strengthened our ability to defend against threats, it has also made cyber attacks more powerful and sophisticated.

In today's AI-powered world, cybersecurity is not optional, it is a fundamental necessity for protecting data, maintaining trust, and ensuring the safe functioning of modern society.

UPCOMING AIMA EVENTS



Topic : **AIMA's 20th Student Management Quiz (2026-27)**

Date : **10th August 2026**

Venue : **Regional Rounds**



1. Flyadeal

2. xAI

3. Facebook Overseas Inc. (Meta Platforms)

4. Foodlet.com

5. \$2 trillion

6. Havia

7. JIFFY

8. Monthly Transacting Users