

Ambuja Cement's skill development initiative collaborates with DDU-GKY

- **Hon'ble Minister Purnendu Basu inaugurates the project**
- **Initiative aims to train 1,125 youth in the next three years in association with Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) and Utkarsh Bangla**

Ambuja Cements Ltd., a part of the global conglomerate LafargeHolcim and one of the leading cement manufacturing companies in India, today announced its skill development project in partnership with Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), which has been inaugurated by Shri. Purnendu Basu, Hon'ble Minister, Technical Education and Training and Skill Development, Government of West Bengal.

The project initiated under the DDU-GKY, a skilling and placement scheme of the country's Ministry of Rural Development, aims at enhancing the employability of underprivileged youth, thereby promoting rural livelihood. Implementation of this DDU-GKY will be carried out by Ambuja Cement's CSR arm Ambuja Cement Foundation in coordination with West Bengal's flagship skill training program 'Utkarsh Bangla'.

Under this new project, Ambuja Cement Foundation plans to train 1,125 youth in industry-specific courses over the next three years through its unique intervention initiative Skill and Entrepreneurship Development Institutes (SEDI).

Speaking at the inauguration program held at Ambuja Cement's Sankrail plant, **Shri. Purnendu Basu**, Hon'ble Minister said, *"Millions of people are entering the labour market in the country. To ensure their inclusive growth, there is an urgent need for a greater focus on youth skill development initiatives. The West Bengal government has been effectively addressing the workforce gap through various skill training programs. I would like to thank Ambuja Cement for joining hands with us through this new project in the state that will train the vast pool of talent."* The Minister hailed the skill development initiatives carried out so far by Ambuja Cement.

Ambuja Cement's MD & CEO **Ajay Kapur** said, *"We are proud to be associated with the DDU-GKY initiative which will be driven in close coordination with West Bengal government. Skill development is the key to keep up with the rapid globalisation and intense competition. Emphasis on youth skill enhancement particularly in rural regions has always been one of our primary focus areas to enrich rural communities and boost shared prosperity."*

Mr Kapur added, *"Our SEDIs have been designed to nurture the employability skills of the younger generation in West Bengal. We, as always, will strive to deliver excellence and make underprivileged youth job-ready."*

Ambuja Cement Foundation, which has celebrated its 25th year recently, was selected to implement the project at its two SEDI centres – one at Sankrail and the other at Farakka in Murshidabad district – based on the superior quality of training, infrastructure and processes followed by the organisation.

Ambuja Cement's Sankrail Unit Head Arun Kumar Jha expressed gratitude towards the Hon'ble Minister Purnendu Basu and Hon'ble MLA Sital Kumar Sardar for their gracious presence at the inaugural program. Mr Jha assured that Ambuja Cement continues to be a partner of progress in West Bengal, particularly in the space of skill development. The event witnessed participation from the government, current skill training partners, job providers, community representatives and the company employees.

West Bengal is a key state for human resource – being the fourth most populous and second most densely populated state of India. The estimated population in the 15-59 age group is expected to grow to 665 lakh by 2022. Availability of large pool of human resources in the state makes West Bengal a possible source of manpower for the outside of the state as well. Hence the focus on skill development in the state becomes all the more crucial.

The SEDI centres in Sankrail and Farakka have cumulatively trained over 5100 youth so far. Since 2006, Ambuja Cement Foundation has been spearheading the nationwide skill development campaign and till date, it has empowered more than 40,000 youth across 10 states in the country. The trainees undergo various short and intensive courses in various trades from 12 different organised sectors, computer literacy programs and vocational skill training.

About Ambuja Cements Ltd:

Ambuja Cements Ltd., a part of the global conglomerate LafargeHolcim, is one of the leading cement companies in India. Operating for over 30 years, Ambuja has proved to be the best cement for construction and the best cement manufacturing company in India with its uniquely sustainable development projects. Its environment friendly initiatives have played a key role in India's efforts to become a green state. The sustainable constructions and renewable energy projects undertaken by it have a lion's share in creating a blueprint for sustainable development in India's bright future. Currently, Ambuja has a cement capacity of 29.65 million tonnes with five integrated cement manufacturing plants and eight cement grinding units across the country. In West Bengal, Ambuja Cement has two manufacturing plants with a cement capacity of 3.65 million tonnes.

About Ambuja Cement Foundation:

Established in 1993, Ambuja Cement Foundation is the social development arm of Ambuja Cements Ltd. exclusively working with rural communities to make them self-reliant and help them utilize their potential for a prosperous life. Completing its 25th year, Ambuja Cement Foundation has been working on issues related to water resource management, sustainable agriculture, skill-based livelihoods, health & sanitation, quality education and women empowerment. With its presence in 21 locations across 11 states, Ambuja Cement Foundation is currently reaching out to nearly 26 lakh people across India.