

**Press Information Bureau
Government of India

Union Minister for Education and Skill Development inaugurates phase-II of Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship

Shri Dharmendra Pradhan called upon the youth to act as catalysts of social change at the grassroots

**New Delhi
25th October, 2021**

Union Minister for Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Shri Dharmendra Pradhan today launched the phase-II of Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship, a two-year long fellowship conceived to create opportunity for young, dynamic individuals to contribute to enhancing skill development at the grassroots.

The two-year fellowship seeks to combine classroom sessions by academic partner IIMs with an intensive field immersion at the district level to create credible plans and identify barriers in raising employment, economic output, and promote livelihoods in rural areas.

Shri Pradhan while speaking on the occasion, called upon fellows to act as catalysts of social change at the grassroots by driving skill development efforts. He also called upon district collectors and academic partner IIMs to facilitate the fellows and script a success story of change through this fellowship.

He said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, we are moving towards an Aatmanirbhar Bharat. Tremendous transformations taking place across sectors will create demand for new skills and more skilled professionals and thus calls for skill mapping at district level and directing skill development efforts accordingly, he added.

In line with the requirements of 21st century and local realities, Shri Pradhan called upon the fellows to work with global thinking and local approach including integrating local language in the skill development efforts.

Speaking about the National Education Policy 2020, Shri Pradhan outlined the vision to create strong convergence between education and skills and recent initiatives in this direction including the Academic Bank of Credit. He called upon the IIMs to make the fellows aware about the National Education Policy.

Shri Rajesh Aggarwal, Secretary, MSDE; Ms Anuradha Vemuri, Joint Secretary, MSDE; Shri Ashwin Gowda, Mission Director, Karnataka Skill Development Corporation (KSDC); Mr Swapnil Tembe, District Collector, East Garo Hills, Meghalaya; Mr P. Sunil Kumar, District Collector, Vijayapura, Karnataka and Prof Arnab Mukherji, IIM Bangalore.

Details about the Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship:

To operationalise the mission and strengthen the skill training delivery mechanism in the country, Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion

(SANKALP), a World Bank loan assisted program, was launched by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship in January 2018.

SANKALP engages with District Skill Committees (DSCs) to effectively reduce the mismatch between the supply and demand of skilled manpower in the country, thereby creating decent opportunities for the youth to work and earn.

The MGNF program under SANKALP was designed to provide a cadre of professionals at District level who not only know about governance and public policy in general but vocational education too. MGNF is a unique blend of academic and work-based training handled at the IIM campus and the districts, respectively. The academic module familiarizes the Fellows with concepts from Management, Development Economics, Public Policy and the District Skills Ecosystem. During the fieldwork (District Immersion), the fellows shall work within the district with DSC officials on skilling challenges facing the district. Along with the DSC officials, they shall put together District Skill Development Plans (DSDPs) and implementation road maps. MGNFs shall assist the districts on evidence-based planning and management of skilling in the districts. The sharp focus on developing skills for local needs gives impetus to the "vocal for local", and also building an industry-relevant skill base will help the cause of "Atmanirbhar Bharat" .

MGNF is an opportunity for young women and men in the age group of 21-30 years who already possess some level of academic or professional expertise for providing catalytic support to the district administration to improve the skill development program delivery.

MGNF Phase-I (Pilot): Launched with IIM Bangalore as Academic Partner and 69 are Fellows currently deployed in 69 districts across 6 States.

MGNF Phase-II (National Roll Out): Being launched on 25th October with 661 MGNFs who will be deployed across all districts of the country. 8 more IIMs have been on boarded taking the total to 9 IIMs (IIM Ahmedabad, IIM Bangalore, IIM-Jammu, IIM Kozhikode, IIM Lucknow, IIM Nagpur, IIM Ranchi, IIM-Udaipur and IIM Visakhapatnam)

MJPS/AK