



**Hon'ble Finance Minister, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman launches Indian Bank's 'MSME Prerana', a Business Mentoring Programme in vernacular for MSMEs**

Chennai, 06th October 2020: 'MSME Prerana', an online Business Mentoring Programme for MSMEs, an initiative by Indian Bank was launched today by Hon'ble Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, at the Bank's Corporate Centre in Chennai. Shri Debashish Panda, Secretary, Financial Services, MOF participated by VC in the launch.

MSME Prerana is a first of its kind initiative by a Bank in the country for the MSME sector. This is for empowering entrepreneurs through skill development and capacity building workshops in the local language. The program is in collaboration with M/s Poornatha & Co, a firm that designs Entrepreneurial Development Programs in vernacular using online web based interactive sessions and case studies.

Spread over 12 sessions, "MSME Prerana" program enables MSME entrepreneurs to acquire expertise in handling Finance and Managerial skills, capacity to handle crises in business, understand the dynamics credit rating and risk management. While the sessions on Managerial and Financial skills will be handled by M/s Poornatha & Co, the Banking related topics will be handled by faculty from Indian Bank. On successful completion, all participants would get a Certificate, issued jointly by Indian Bank, Poornatha & Co and MADE (Michigan Academy for Developing Entrepreneurs), USA.

Launching the programme, Hon'ble Union Minister of Finance, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman said that Indian Bank has taken an out-of-the-box initiative in launching MSME Prerana which will handhold the entrepreneurs through a mentoring program. This novel initiative shall further inspire others in the banking sector to adopt similar measures. She appreciated the fact that the amalgamation process of Allahabad Bank into Indian Bank did not distract the Bank from the care for customers. The Finance Minister complimented the Bank's leadership and management for this unique initiative.

Smt. Padmaja Chunduru, MD & CEO, Indian Bank said "During the outreach programs, webinars and interaction with our MSME units, one main takeaway was that there is still a lot of dependence on Chartered Accountants or Agents for these units to access bank loans and scale up their operations. The barrier was language, it was the jargon, the confusion about what the bank looks for when they approach for loans, how to manage cash flows, which schemes of government are available and suitable to them, how to register themselves for these etc. Many units were remaining in the micro or small sector, despite opportunities to scale up due to the apprehension about the tax burden.

MSME Prerana is our effort to bridge this gap in the skill sets - it is a Business Mentoring Program that gives inputs in simple terms (no jargon) and in the local vernacular. The objective is to equip the entrepreneurs with business skills as well as communication & HR. The first two programs will be in Tamil for the Coimbatore clusters of Indian bank , then it will be scaled up across the country in Hindi, Telugu, Kannada, Bengali, Gujarati etc. work is already underway for this.

Shri. Debashish Panda, Secretary, Financial Services, MOF emphasized on the various initiatives taken by government to support MSMEs and lauded the efforts of Indian Bank in launching a unique initiative in MSME Prerana. He also exhorted the bank and other financial institutions to reach out to new-to-credit customers and associate with fintech players to accelerate the credit flow.

The e-launch was attended by the Board of Directors of Indian Bank, Industry Associations, Customers of the Bank. Executive Directors of Indian Bank, Shri. M K Bhattacharya, Shri. V V Shenoy and Shri. K Ramachandran along with General Managers also participated.

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