

FM launches Indian Bank's MSME mentoring programme

FE BUREAU

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UNION FINANCE MINISTER

Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday launched MSME Prerana, an online business mentoring programme for MSMEs in local language by Chennai-based public sector lender Indian Bank. The initiative is meant for empowering entrepreneurs through skill development and capacity building workshops in the local language.

The programme is in collaboration with Poornatha & Co, a firm that designs entrepreneurial development programmes in vernacular languages using online web based interactive sessions and case studies.

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 programme. This novel initiative shall further inspire others in the banking sector to adopt similar measures.

Spread over 12 sessions, MSME Prerana programme 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 Poornatha, the banking related topics will be handled by faculty from Indian Bank. On completion, all participants would get a certificate, issued jointly by Indian Bank, Poornatha & Co and MADE (Michigan Academy for Developing Entrepreneurs), US.

Padmaja Chunduru, MD & CEO, Indian Bank said: "During the outreach programmes, 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 and how to register themselves for these. Many units were remaining in the micro or small sector, despite opportunities to scale up due to the apprehension about the tax burden."