

Centum GRO organizes the first ever Indian Sign Language Interpreter Retreat

Event aims to focus on 'Enhancing and Strengthening Interpreting Skills in India'

New Delhi, January 4, 2018: Centum GRO, an initiative of Centum Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Centum Learning, today organized the first ever Indian Sign Language Interpreter Retreat themed 'Enhancing and Strengthening Interpreting Skills in India'. The 4-day event is being held at Zorba The Buddha, New Delhi from January 4-7, 2018. The event is being supported by ISLIA (Indian Signed Language Interpreters Association), ASLI (Association of Sign Language Interpreters) and Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC). This first-of-its kind initiative was sponsored by Tech Mahindra Foundation. Other sponsors include Enable Travel and OM Metals Infraprojects Limited.

With an aim to highlight the much needed improvements in the field of Interpreting for the deaf, the workshop is designed to focus on the Ethics and Etiquettes of Sign Language Interpreting, Sign Language Structure, Interpreter Settings and Professionalization of Interpreting.

The retreat is being facilitated by two American experts who will share their expertise in the field of Sign Language Interpreting. The participants who have come from different parts of India, will have the opportunity to engage themselves in the momentum for creating inclusion and empowerment for the deaf and hard of hearing community in India. The event will also have a panel discussion where Deaf Indian Leaders will share their experiences related to working with sign language interpreters. We foresee this kind of partnership as one of the ways for building respect and trust among each other and fostering the spirit of ally-ship.

Currently, India has approximately only 250 qualified Indian Sign Language (ISL) interpreters for a population of over 1 Crore Deaf and Hard of Hearing (HoH) individuals. They represent a huge community that demands quality and ethical ISL Interpreters at Schools, Colleges, Govt. Offices and every other information-transaction, recreational or employment or educational institutions.

Dr. Alim Chandani, Associate Vice President, Centum Foundation & Head, Centum Gro said, *'The Deaf community is whole-heartedly vouching for equal employment rights and there is a massive need to provide quality interpreting services which will contribute towards creating general awareness about 'equal opportunities' and 'diversity and inclusion' at workplace. So, the more the deaf get exposure and can open up, the more their chances to grow and only an interpreter can be their ears and voice.'*

Ms. Aarti Chandna, Head - Centum Foundation said, *'The interpreters are a deaf person's window to the world. Through this initiative, we plan to focus on skilling the Sign Language Interpreters in India who act as communication facilitators between deaf and*

Centum Foundation

hearing individuals. We are trying to go all out to improve the Sign Language Interpreting Structure in India to develop a comprehensive skill development ecosystem.'

Under the "Education" section of Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Bill 2016, it is stated to "ensure that the education to persons who are blind or deaf or both is imparted in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication". Given this requirement, the retreat is the perfect opportunity for experienced interpreters to gather together and provide a space to discuss the next steps.

About Centum Foundation: Centum Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Centum Learning, is engaged in carrying on social and charitable activities of national importance including vocational training across India. The society has conducted programs impacting national issues in the field of environment protection, women welfare and empowerment, vocational training and health awareness. Having worked with over 25 corporates in this genre, Centum Foundation has also launched a dedicated vertical, called Centum GRO Initiative to empower the Deaf in India which assists this segment to skill and avail respectable jobs in different domains.

About Centum Learning:

Centum Learning Limited, an ISO 9001:2015 certified skilling MNC providing technology enabled blended learning solutions. With around 1700 learning and development specialists and their domain expertise in 21 industry verticals, Centum has skilled more than 1.2 million people across 15 countries. It operates out of over 100 skilling centres and has successfully trained over 1,50,000 school students in over 1200 schools across 15 states in India through its distinguished forum of over 1250 specialized trainers dedicated for the vocational training programme.

Centum Learning has successfully partnered Skilling programs of Central and State Ministries, Central Board of Secondary Education-CBSE, Public Sector Enterprises and more than 350 corporates such as Delhi International Airport, Tata Motors, Google, Bharti Airtel, Panasonic, Siemens, National Bank of Kenya, Mckinsey, Lafarge Cement and Maruti Suzuki. In India, Centum Learning has set up Centum WorkSkills India to enhance skills of millions of youth across the country empowering them with employability linked and livelihood programs.

The CSR arm of Centum Learning- 'Centum Foundation', provides livelihood skilling to underprivileged youth including people with disabilities in association with clients like ACC, Bajaj Electricals and Jubilant Foodworks to name a few. Centum Foundation has also launched a dedicated vertical, called Centum GRO Initiative to empower the Deaf in India which will assist this segment to avail respectable jobs in different domains.

Centum has been widely recognized in several fora- it has received 'Excellence in Training' award from 'World HRD Congress', has featured as the 'Top 15 Emerging Leaders in Training Outsourcing' worldwide amongst several other prestigious awards and has been Certified as a Great Place to Work for the year 2017-18 amongst companies which feature in the gold standard lists and rankings that identify and classify the world's best workplaces.

