

## **Centum Foundation unveils a report on ‘Working experiences of Deaf Employees in India’**

*Ms.Dolly Chakraborty, Joint Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, launched the report*

**New Delhi, December 8, 2017:** Centum Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Centum Learning, today launched a report on ‘Experiences of Deaf Employees in India’ at an event themed ‘*Creating Inclusion for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs)*’ at the Constitution Club of India, New Delhi to highlight the challenges faced by deaf at their workplaces in India. The bilingual (written English and videos signed in Indian Sign language) survey done by Centum GRO, an initiative of Centum Foundation to empower the Deaf in India, reflects the limited opportunities for the deaf, challenges due to limited accessibility and employers being unaware about creating inclusive spaces for the deaf.

The report was launched by Ms. Dolly Chakraborty, Joint Secretary, Department of Empowerment for Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment who was the Chief Guest at the event. A panel discussion was also conducted on ‘Creating an Inclusive Workplace’ which was moderated by Shrikant Sinha, CEO – NASSCOM Foundation. Some of the key panelists in the session were - Mr. D.K. Panda, Under Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment; Ms. Aradhana Lal, VP Sustainability Head, Lemon Tree Hotels; Mr. Sanjaya Pradhan, Lead – Affirmative Actions, NSDC, Mr. Rajat Sachdeva, Alumnus, Centum GRO Initiative now employed with Boeing India Pvt. Limited and Ms. Sharmishthaa Atreja, Professor, Delhi University.

**On the occasion of the launch of the survey, Mr.Sanjay Bahl, President, Centum Foundation and Managing Director & CEO, Centum Learning said,** *“We are trying to go all out to discover the challenges faced by PwDs in India in securing employment so that we can address them and develop comprehensive skill development ecosystem accordingly. Through our survey we are trying to capture their experiences and possible encounters with obstacles at their workplaces. We believe knowing the truth is very important before beginning to take measures on tackling it. A person’s disability needs to become an attribute and not a liability...we are only working towards that.”*

**Aarti Chandna, Head, Centum Foundation,** added, *“Centum GRO Initiative has been empowering the Deaf by offering self-initiation training program to the Deaf. In India many deaf individuals are reluctant to take up a job because of the unfavourable environment or even if they manage to bag a job, do not stick around for a considerable period of time. And, this is primarily because of the lack of inclusiveness and sensitivity in their work environment. This survey is the first step to create awareness about the situation and take cognizance of the fact that only providing employment to PwDs is not enough.”*

Responses of the survey were collected from over 500 employees of whom, 92.1% were deaf and 7.4% were hard of hearing. **Dr. Alim Chandani, Head - Centum GRO** shared the key findings of the report:

- *Getting jobs for deaf women is more challenging in India*
- *A meagre percentage of the employed deaf people are working in domains like Accounting and IT, 7 % as graphic designers and very few are self-employed. The job market open for deaf people is still stereotypically in retail stores, housekeeping roles, waiters or at the maximum level, a Data Entry Operator*
- *Only 56% of deaf people have access to a sign language interpreter during the interview and provided with accessible services during training programs*
- *Deaf employees mostly feel that they are not given equitable promotion as compared to the hearing employees*
- *Deaf employees do not like their work environment because of the feeling of being left out, getting strange looks from colleagues, rude behavior from colleagues, etc.*
- *42.6 % of the deaf employees did not experience any cultural sensitization workshop at their workplace*
- *Not many deaf employees are satisfied with their salary*
- *There is a huge need to provide deaf awareness training to hearing employees*

The assembled dignitaries emphasized the significance of the Prime Minister's vision of Skilled India and how transformation of the deaf people in the country is a key part of this vision. They also observed that it is critical for the industry and government to work together to achieve the mission.

**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 centers 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.