

## **JSPL Foundation launches India's first Skill Development Toll Free Helpline**

- *Launched under the auspices of the OP Jindal Community College - **Dastak** (1800-233-1133) will help create awareness and serve as a focal point on skill development in the country*

*New Delhi, December xxxx:* JSPL Foundation, which spearheads the CSR programmes of Jindal Steel and Power Limited (JSPL), launched India's first and only skill development toll free helpline number to aid individuals seeking advice on skill development opportunities.

The initiative named Dastak, – 1800-233-1133; has been launched by the OP Jindal Community College in Raigarh, Chhattisgarh in collaboration with the District Administration's Raigarh Livelihood College, in the region. The aim of this first-of-its-kind integrated helpline call centre is to create awareness and serve as a central point of contact on skills development, including recognition of prior learning and continuing education to upgrade skills.

The call centre provides information on training resources and services at the local as well as at the state level. The helpline number was launched as a pilot project a few days ago and initial callers ranged from school drop-outs to post graduate degree holders, most of whom are unemployed youth. The call centre helps in filling a huge gap in information dissemination and outreach.

Vocational training is a necessary and important ingredient for a nation like ours where 35% of the population is under 15 and more than 50% is under 25. Realising the importance of skill development, the Government has set a target of skilling 500 million people by 2022 and the Prime Minister's National Council on Skill Development, under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister, has been set up as an apex institution for policy direction and review.

There is widespread shortage of skilled labour in India – which indeed is one of the biggest development challenges in the economy. Luminary philanthropist and Founder of JSPL, Shri OP Jindal had opined - “Without the upliftment of disadvantaged sections of the society, a nation can never prosper.” The OP Jindal Community College (OPJCC) is the realization of his dream.

Says Ms. Shalu Jindal, Chairperson, JSPL Foundation, “In line with the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi's, call for promotion of skill development and vocational training; this initiative will immensely help the unemployed youth, empower them with skilled training and increase their prospects of gainful employment. Dastak – our flagship initiative has been conceived with a vision to provide training and facilitate placement of the unemployed; our endeavor is to connect the unemployed with opportunities and empower them with industry-recognized certification.”

Established in 2007 as the OP Jindal Institute of Technology and Skills, OPJCC today comprises five community colleges located in three states, specifically Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Odisha, where school drop-out rates and rampant unemployment is disproportionately high, especially among young adults.

Enumerates Ms. Miriam J. Carter, Director, and OPJCC, “A chronic mismatch between education and labour markets has left millions of youths marginalized and unemployable; resulting in loss of valuable human potential and talent, as well as dashed aspirations. Towards transforming the lives of these youths, OPJCC offers affordable, accessible, high-quality vocational education and training programmes focused on employability and job creation. OPJCC's comprehensive curricula has been designed to facilitate a more knowledgeable, productive and competitive workforce.”

## **About OP Jindal Community College (OPJCC)**

OPJCC is the realisation of JSPL's Founder, Shri OP Jindal's dream to create value for society. The institution is led by the Founder's profound belief that - "without the upliftment of weak and backward sections of the society, a nation can never prosper." The Institution has received wide recognition including the prestigious - 2013 Leap Vault Skills Champion Award.

The Colleges today offer 37 programs across one month, three month, six month modules as well as 1-2 year certification courses in trades that increase employability. Four out of every five pass-outs from these colleges have secured jobs, and over the next five years, OPJCC plans to graduate 100,000 students.

During the last two years, over 10,000 students have completed technical training programmes from OPJCC. The job placement rate is over 70%, with 100% placement in civil trades such as masonry, carpentry, bar bending, plumbing, electrical works and welding.

Currently, there are five OP Jindal Community Colleges in the country in the states of Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Jharkhand. In addition to the parent states, OPJCC students are currently coming from Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh as well.

Training is provided in emerging occupations in the field of Construction Management, Paramedical, Automobile Engineering, Heating/ Air-conditioning, Networking, Computer Application etc.