



Media Release

## Over 850 People, with and without disability, participate in Kotak Wheelchair Marathon 2017, Chennai

**Chennai, September 3, 2017:** Kotak Wheelchair Marathon 2017, the first and only wheelchair marathon in India organised by the disabled, received a strong response with participation from across India. In its second edition, the event witnessed over 850 people with disability and able-bodied runners racing alongside each other in three categories – the Half Marathon (21.1 km), 10 km and 5 km.

The marathon is an initiative by The Spinal Foundation in partnership with Kotak Mahindra Bank to empower people with disability to live life to the fullest and to their highest potential.

The grand success of the event also reflects in the surplus raised that will provide good quality manual wheelchairs to 50 persons with Spinal Cord Injury over the next year. The event also saw participation of about 650 runners, who were sponsored through a crowd funding campaign and other direct contributions.

Justin Jesudas, International Paralympic Swimmer & Rifle Shooter, whose brainchild the Kotak Wheelchair Marathon is, said, “The marathon teaches participants to focus on what is in their control, which is their ability and not on their disability. While one’s disability can be measured, no one can measure ability. It is all about what one makes out of it.”

Karthi Marshan, Senior EVP & Head – Group Marketing, Kotak Mahindra Bank, said, “Kotak Wheelchair Marathon promotes inclusiveness. It highlights the strength and determination of people with disability and their resolve in leading fuller lives and becoming an integral part of society. It is heartening to see the enthusiastic response to the marathon. The success of the event is a testimony to the passion of the organisers and establishes the need to create similar platforms across the country.”

Participants ran alongside Ankur Dhama, India’s first blind runner to make it to the Paralympics, and Shailesh Kumar, India’s fastest half marathoner on a wheelchair. Shailesh Kumar completed the half marathon in a time of 1 hour 45 minutes and 50 seconds.

The event saw participation from Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand, Bihar, Odisha, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

### **About The Spinal Foundation:**

**The Spinal Foundation** is the Pan-India Self-Help Group for persons with Spinal Cord Injury. (Helpline 1800 425 1210).



### **About Kotak Mahindra Bank:**

Established in 1985, Kotak Mahindra Group is one of India's leading financial services conglomerates. In February 2003, Kotak Mahindra Finance Ltd. (KMFL), the Group's flagship company, received banking license from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), becoming the first non-banking finance company in India to convert into a bank - Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd.

Effective April 1, 2015, ING Vysya Bank Ltd. merged with Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. As on June 30, 2017, Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd, has a national footprint of 1,362 branches spread across 689 locations and 2,173 ATMs.

The Bank has four Strategic Business Units – Consumer Banking, Corporate Banking, Commercial Banking and Treasury, which cater to retail and corporate customers across urban and rural India.

For more information, please visit the company's website at <http://www.kotak.com/>

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