

Media Release

**Kotak Mahindra Bank and its CSR Associate - Youth4Jobs Foundation Launch
“SwarajAbility” - India’s First AI Triggered Jobs Platform for Persons with Disabilities**

New Delhi, 18th October 2022: Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited (“Kotak” / “KMBL”) and its CSR Associate Youth4Jobs Foundation (“Youth4Jobs” / “Y4J”) announced the launch of “SwarajAbility” - India’s first Artificial Intelligence (AI) triggered Jobs Platform for Persons with Disabilities at New Delhi on 12th October, 2022. The launch event was attended by Rajesh Yadav, IAS, Joint Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice, Micheal Fembek, CEO, Zero Project, Austria, Dr. Pratima Murthy, Director, National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences (NIMHANS), Dr. B. S. Murthy, Director IIT Hyderabad, Raghavendra Singh, President, Public Affairs, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Meera Shenoy, Founder, Youth4Jobs.



(L-R): Rajesh Yadav, IAS, Joint Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice, Micheal Fembek, CEO, Zero Project, Austria, Dr. Pratima Murthy, Director, NIMHANS, Dr. B.S Murthy, Director IIT Hyderabad, Raghavendra Singh, President, Public Affairs, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Meera Shenoy, Founder, Youth4Jobs

“SwarajAbility” is a combination of two words *Swarajya* – which means independence - and Ability. The development of *SwarajAbility* is a multi-stakeholder collaborative effort for betterment of life of persons with disability. The partners are the Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (IITH) for Artificial Intelligence (AI), Office of the Principal Scientific Advisor to the Govt. of India (PSA) for monitoring & Reviewing the portal, NIMHANS for its expertise in intellectual disabilities, CII IBDN for enabling Industry engagement. Youth4Jobs brought its rich experience in skilling, disability, and job linkages, and Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited, under its CSR Project for Education and Livelihood, has funded the entire *SwarajAbility* Project.

SwarajAbility, will provide independence to persons with disabilities, through 21st century training and jobs. Accessibility and ease of use for youth with disabilities is key. The portal will in phases incorporate all 21 disabilities as listed in the RPWD Act 2016. On the occasion, the CII-IBDN signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Youth4Jobs to commit and enable the Indian industry’s engagement with PwDs.

Rohit Rao, Joint President & Group Chief CSR Officer, Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited said, “Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited is committed to the cause of education & livelihood for persons with disabilities. The Bank’s collaboration with Youth4Jobs Foundation to develop India’s First AI Triggered Jobs Platform for Persons with Disabilities - “*Swarajability*” has a common goal of betterment of lives of persons with disabilities. It is our sincere effort to create equal livelihood opportunities for persons with disabilities to enable them to lead a dignified and independent life.”

Meera Shenoy, Founder-CEO, Youth4jobs said, “We are proud to say it is a *Atmanirbhar* project with the best of Indian creativity and innovation, to ensure the most vulnerable section of society, youth with disabilities get linked to organized sector jobs. It deepens and scales our work. While Kotak Mahindra Bank has generously supported us, it is our gift to the nation for NGOs, Companies, and Parents of People with disabilities and to youth to register, get trained, linked to jobs, to improve their quality of life”

Kotak Karma is the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) identity of Kotak Mahindra Group.

About Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited

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.

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. The premise of Kotak Mahindra Group's business model is *concentrated India, diversified financial services*. The bold vision that underscores the Group's growth is an inclusive one, with a host of products and services designed to address the needs of the unbanked and insufficiently banked. As on 31st December, 2021, Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd has a national footprint of 1,647 branches and 2,609 ATMs, and branches in GIFT City and DIFC (Dubai).

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

About Youth4Jobs

Youth4Jobs is a not-for-profit organization started in 2012 provides placement - linked skilling for youth with disability. It is led by Meera Shenoy who has the unique experience of working in senior government positions, and with multilateral funders like World Bank and UNDP across South East Asia.

The focus of Youth 4 Jobs is to move the disabled from their present vicious cycle of poverty to the virtual cycle of opportunity. In the last ten years, our work has been a **system changer** – changing mindsets that youth with disabilities cannot work -in villages, on one hand, and companies on the other. To demonstrate this at scale, Y4J has set up 27 residential centres in 18 states of India and works in 24 colleges/universities focusing on youth with locomotor disabilities, speech, and hearing impaired, low vision and visually impaired from poor families.

Youth 4 Jobs' (Y4J) vision is a hands-on, grass-roots transformation of Persons with Disability lives at the country level and emerging as a thought leader at the global level. The work is driven by the mantra that hiring Persons with Disability makes business sense

To date, Y4J has trained 32000+ youth with disabilities and reached out to more than 9.3 million households. On the demand side, Y4J works closely with 980 companies to ensure the youth hired is productive and helps business.

The work is challenging but transformational. Youth4Jobs has won the highest national and international awards, ranging from National Award for Empowerment of Persons with disabilities from the President of India and Asia winner of MITs prestigious Future of work award, MIT Inclusion Innovation Challenge.

For more information, please visit Youth4Jobs website at <https://www.youth4jobs.org/>

For further information, please contact:

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