

**[September 5, Bangalore]** This evening at Bangalore, the SBI Youth for India Fellowship marked its Valediction Ceremony for the batch 2018-19, bringing to an end the eagerly anticipated event. It was the day to revisit projects and accomplishments made by the fellows over the past year. The gathering was held at the State Bank Learning Centre in Bengaluru on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019 and was honoured by Dr. Kalpana Gopalan, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary Department of Youth Empowerment & Sports and Department of Public Enterprises to Government of Karnataka as the Chief Guest.



Launched in 2011, SBI Youth for India Fellowship is the flagship initiative of SBI Foundation, the CSR arm of State Bank of India. It's a 13-months rural development program that connects the educated urban youth with a desire and passion to work at the grassroots level with prominent organisations working in the development sector.

The Valediction Ceremony witnessed presentations by outgoing fellows on their year-long projects in various domains, including health, education, livelihoods, environment, and many more. The stories told by the cohort were enlightening and provided a unique insight into the rural India and the state of development of our villages. The event also had a display of products made by various rural communities all over the country, with an aim to increase their visibility and provide them with a platform for better marketing.

The highlight of the ceremony was the address by Hon'ble Lt. Governor Dr. Kiran Bedi through a virtual call on Skype. She remained connected for a significant part of the ceremony, sharing her expert inputs on the presentations by fellows, along with holding a lively interaction with the audience, answering their queries about challenges faced in the social sector. Inspiring the changemakers with her experience, she emphasized on the importance on persistent efforts, regardless of the results.



Addressing the new batch of fellows and the esteemed guests, Mr. Nixon Joseph, President & COO, SBI Foundation, said, "We conduct the Valediction Event to appreciate the change these young people have made, to bring think tanks and to find better ways to engage youth in rural development. It's also

to guide the fellows who have completed their journey to continue further on this path.”

The ceremony was graced by Mr. Abhijit Majumder, Chief General Manager- Bengaluru Circle, State Bank of India and representatives of Partner NGOs, along with M.P. Vasimalai, Founder of Dhan Foundation, Mr, Liby T. Johnson, Executive Director, Gram Vikas and Ankitha Chherakathil, Executive Director of Foundation for Community Consensus.

The splendid evening was concluded by Shri Mahendra Kumar Rekhi, MD and CEO, SBI Foundation, sharing insights on the CSR domain and welcoming the highly motivated fellows to the development sector. “To bridge the gap between rural and urban India, there’s a requirement of sensitization, strategization and formulization, all of which require human capital that understands these hurdles and shares a passion for inclusive economic growth. The Fellows, through their innovative projects. have created a movement that will definitely create a ripple effect,” Mr. Rekhi observed.

### **Brief about Valediction Event**

Every year twice, the Valediction Program is held which acts as an avenue for our outgoing Fellows to share their learnings and the work carried out by them during the 13 months of rural fellowship. The fellows give presentations and receive completion certificates by our esteemed chief guest.



