

## Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways launches Giftmilk programme in Nagpur

Shri Nitin Gadkari, Hon'ble Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways launched NDDDB Foundation for Nutrition's (NFN) unique and novel Giftmilk programme at Lal Bahadur Shastri Hindi Madhyamik School, Hanuman Nagar, Nagpur on 11 August 2018. Shri Chandrashekar Kishanrao Bawankule, Minister of State for Energy, New & Renewable Energy, State Excise, Govt of Maharashtra; Smt Nanda Jichkar, Mayor, Nagpur, Smt Nishatai Sawarkar, President, Zilla Parishad, Nagpur and Shri Dilip Rath, Chairman, NDDDB graced the occasion.

NFN has received concurrence of Mother Dairy Fruit and Vegetable Pvt Ltd (MDFVPL) to cover around 6,000 students of 21 schools in Nagpur district under CSR assistance. 200 ml (fortified with vitamin A and D) flavoured milk per day per child will be supplied on all working days. The Bhandara Zilla Dugdh Utpadak Sahakari Sangh, Bhandara will supply milk for the programme.

While launching the programme Shri Gadkari said that children are the foundation for strong and vibrant India. Meeting their nutritional needs in early formative years becomes very important. Malnutrition can be addressed through milk as it is a wholesome food. Regular consumption of milk by children

improves their health, cognitive parameters and reduces nutritional deficiencies.

The Union Minister said that NDDDB's intervention supported by State Government will go a long way in addressing the livelihood problems and nutritional security in the state and build a better future for the young generation.

In his address, Chairman, NDDDB said that malnutrition still remains the major cause of morbidity and mortality among the children in the country. As per the National Health Survey, 2015-16, about 36% of children are undernourished. Maharashtra has a similar scenario with Nagpur having around 33.6% of its children undernourished.

Shri Rath thanked Government of Maharashtra for providing all the support and cooperation for initiating the Giftmilk programme. He requested Shri Gadkari to persuade public sector undertakings to join hands with NFN by allocating their CSR funding so that more children are covered under this programme. Shri Rath urged the Centre/State to have a policy to promote school milk programmes on a countrywide basis targeting children in primary school level by procuring milk from local dairy cooperatives. This will have the twin advantage of improving child nutrition and also alleviating dairy farmers' distress in the country.

NFN has already initiated Giftmilk programme in Gujarat, Jharkhand, Telangana and Tamil Nadu covering around 22,000 children studying in Government schools.

