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The Times SME Icons

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Surendra Rawat & Deepak Chaudhary, NEC Wire & Cables Pvt Ltd receiving Times SME ICON from Pratap Sarangi in the category of LV & MV switchgear panels, busduct, wire & cables

ENABLING AN 'ATMANIRBHAR' INDIA

The second edition of the Times SME icons applauded the contribution made by some of the exemplary industry leaders of the SME sector

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The present COVID-19 has brought out the unsung heroes of our community to the fore. And this time, with the Prime Minister's call for 'vocal for local' has brought to fore the immense contribution made by the small and medium manufacturers who have not only been strengthening the country's economy through their work, but are also helping to make the country 'Atmanirbhar' in the true sense of the word. These small and medium enterprises have been contributing significantly by employing local workforce and also buying from local suppliers since long.

The SME segment has got a significant boost with the present government's Make in India initiative since it has given a new lease of life to the manufacturing in the country. This initiative has ensured that the local businesses that are manufacturing domestically are promoted and are facilitated to ensure that they can flourish enabling employment and consumption of raw materials. With support from the government, these businesses are all to see and follow suit.

Celebrating the success of these SMEs and paving way for other players in myriad industries, the second edition of Times SME Icons was recently organised by the Times of India Group and SSMS BusinessSME Pvt Ltd, where 25 SMEs were felicitated for

their work towards making the country 'Atmanirbhar'. Anurag Agrawal, senior vice president, The Times of India Group, welcomed the chief guest Pratap Chandra Sarangi, minister of state for micro, small & medium enterprises and fisheries, animal husbandry and dairying, government of India. In his welcome speech, Agrawal said, "Our chief guest for today is closely connected with the grass root level and understands the SME sector extremely well. The last five years have witnessed an immense growth of the SME sector and it is extremely strong now. This sector is the 2nd largest employer of the country, second only to agriculture and also contributes significantly to the country's economy."

Addressing the gathering, the chief guest Sarangi said, "During the lockdown, the Prime Minister understood that most of our necessities are being manufactured in other countries. And it is for sure that a nation cannot prosper with so much dependence on other countries for its requirements. This is when the call for being atmanirbhar was made. Every nation, if it has to prosper, has to focus on manufacturing and not trading. During the lockdown, we found that we are not manufacturing any PPE kits in the country and they are being imported from other nations. And this was something that needed to be addressed and therefore the Prime Minister called for vocal for local."

Talking about an incident where Swami

Vivekananda had a chance meeting with Jamsheji Tata, the founder of the Tata Group. Sarangi said, "When travelling together, these two icons happened to talk to each other and Vivekananda asked Tata what he did for a living. When Tata informed him to start manufacturing as a nation candidate. And this was when Tata realised what importance of faith since without faith, one cannot succeed and he also added that to make India self-reliant, a transformation of people is needed as well."

A coffee table book, 'Times SME Icons' that talks about the milestones achieved by these organisations was also unveiled at the event. Thereafter the minister felicitated 25 SMEs for their contribution to the country's growth story. The vote of thanks at the event was given by Rahul Bambi, general manager at The Times of India Group.

THE SME SEGMENT HAS GOT A SIGNIFICANT BOOST WITH THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT'S MAKE IN INDIA INITIATIVE SINCE IT HAS GIVEN A NEW LEASE OF LIFE TO THE MANUFACTURING IN THE COUNTRY. THIS INITIATIVE HAS ENSURED THAT THE LOCAL BUSINESSES ARE PROMOTED WELL