



# DIRECT SELLING UPDATES

BY IDSA

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# IDSA WELCOMES THE MOVE TO REGULATE DIRECT SELLING

The Indian Direct Selling Association (IDSA) has welcomed the draft Rules for Direct Selling by the Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution. IDSA, the premier association of Direct Selling entities in India, has hailed the move to bring Direct Selling under a regulatory framework by publishing the draft Consumer Protection (Direct Selling) Rules, 2021. The Ministry has invited comments and suggestions from the interested parties by July 21st.

The Direct Selling industry had been working with the Government toward the formulation of Direct Selling Rules, especially after the notification of the Direct Selling Guidelines of 2016 and the Consumer Protection Act 2019. These Rules are expected to strengthen consumers' interest, as well as to bring about regulatory clarity for the Direct Selling business in the country. With the notification of Direct Selling rules, India will join the select group of nations that have enacted similar legislation for governing the industry.

For the last 25 years, IDSA has been championing the cause of Direct Selling in India. IDSA has represented the industry at multiple platforms, voicing opinions and striving to create a niche for the Direct Selling Industry. IDSA has successfully engaged in dialogue with various stakeholders, including Central and State governments, discussing, and deliberating on issues and concerns related to Direct Selling. Over the last few years, IDSA has made efforts to align with various stakeholders like the media, industry bodies, consumer policy experts, other agencies, and academia to mobilize the right messaging about Direct Selling. Most of these associations have yielded wonderful results as the IDSA efforts have gone from strength to strength!

## OPENING A NEW CHAPTER IN DIRECT SELLING IN INDIA!

Direct Selling is to be taught to students, for the first time in India. Beginning the academic year 2021-22, Shoolini University, Himachal Pradesh will offer a one-year PG Diploma in Direct Selling, along with other professional programs specially designed for Direct Selling.



(From left to right) Mr. Chetan Bhardwaj, Mr. Rajat Banerji, Dr. Kamal Kant Vashishth, Prof. PK Khosla, Prof. Atul Khosla, Mrs. Saroj Khosla, Shri. Rajinder Garg, Ms. Rini Sanyal, Mr. Vivek Katoch, Dr. Jitendra Jagota, Brig. Sunil Mehta



# A NEW BEGINNING

IDSA has had a long-standing association the Shoolini University and Dr. Kamal Kant Vashishth, Director of e-Learning at the University. The relationship with both came to a full circle on 19th June 2021, when IDSA & Shoolini University jointly launched the 'Center of Excellence for Direct Selling in Academics'. CEDSA has been started with a profound vision of introduction of Direct Selling into academics. CEDSA was inaugurated by Shri. Govind Singh Thakur, Hon'ble Minister of Education, Government of Himachal Pradesh and Shri. Rajender Garg, Hon'ble Minister for Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Government of Himachal Pradesh. CEDSA will also be only the 2nd global research Center on Direct Selling, after the 'Pekin University Research Center on Direct Selling' (RCDS), based in China.

Based in beautiful Solan Valley, Shoolini University is a research and the innovation-led campus that kindles great ideas and inspires out-of-the-box thinking. The University has been started to provide high-impact, high-quality university education to lesser privileged students of Himachal and India through research, innovative learning, and community service. Shoolini is a multi-disciplinary University having 230 plus full-time faculty most of whom are engaged in research and around have 3300 plus students from 28 states and 8 countries. It has one of India's most inspiring and eco-friendly campuses. Shoolini has been ranked among Asia's top 300 universities by QS 2021 Asia Rankings, making it India's 37th ranked university.

The launch of CEDSA is a historic moment for the Direct Selling landscape of the country; it is the first time that a formal educational course has been started on Direct Selling by any university in the country. Beginning the academic year 2021-22, CEDSA will offer a one-year PG Diploma in Direct Selling, along with other professional programs specially designed for Direct Selling. The students completing the Diploma will also be provided with placement options with the top Direct Selling entities in the country.

The objective of CEDSA is to popularize formal studies on Direct Selling to make it a preferred career choice among the students of the marketing & sales vertical. CEDSA aims to create a new generation of Direct Sellers who are willing to join the industry, after having undergone a formal study in the discipline. The one-year Diploma in Direct Selling will be a comprehensive regular course, covering all theoretical, conceptual, and practical aspects of Direct Selling. While the first eight months would be dedicated to theory and concepts, the remaining four months would consist of an internship in a Direct Selling entity for practical exposure.

However, the role of CEDSA will not only be limited to imparting formal education in the field of Direct Selling. CEDSA aims to have a much wider and greater socio impact. Over the coming years, CEDSA will be facilitating extensive research in the field of Direct Selling and be granting fellowship to the researchers having an interest in the business model.

In the long run, CEDSA is envisioned to be established as the hub of knowledge & information on Direct Selling coupled with training and intelligence on the business model. Having successfully introduced Direct Selling in formal education curriculum, IDSA has joined an elite list of Direct Selling Associations to have initiated such a step. The journey towards a bigger Direct Selling landscape has just begun with the little initiative in form of CEDSA. IDSA is certain in the coming years, more academic institutions would be encouraged to start a formal curriculum on Direct Selling.





# CHAIRPERSON'S VISION

"Well begun is half done, stepping towards a brighter future ! "

## **Ms. Rini Sanyal, Chairperson, IDSA**

IDSA has earned quite a name for itself - working relentlessly to create a business environment devoid of ambiguity and conducive to the Direct Selling Industry. The core objective of the management at IDSA has always been to come up with new ideas and resolutions that can be implemented to bring innovative ways of promoting the Direct Selling business. In the last few years, IDSA has adopted a multi-pronged strategy to imbibe the awareness about the Direct Selling business model across the regions. A conscious decision has been taken by the IDSA management to continuously explore new avenues towards the growth of the Direct Selling business.

One such avenue is the launch of Centre of Excellence for Direct Selling in Academics (CEDSA). IDSA found a great partner in Shoolini University, HP to launch India's first education center for Direct Selling. CEDSA would be imparting a year-long PG Diploma in Direct Selling. With the launch of CEDSA, IDSA has become only the 2nd Direct Selling Association in the world to facilitate a Diploma in Direct Selling, after the DSA of France.

I strongly feel that CEDSA would be instrumental in shaping up careers of scores of Indians having the potential to make it big in the Direct Selling business. In the last few years, Direct Selling has become a preferred business option for millions of Indians, who have understood the entrepreneurial importance of the business model. While these are positive signs, IDSA also felt there is a need to make the common man more familiar with the concept of Direct Selling. An exhaustive academic & professional curriculum would be an apt stepping-stone for those who prefer having their own business to succeed.

CEDSA would play a key role in imparting requisite theoretical knowledge as well practical skills required in the field of Direct Selling. In the coming years, CEDSA would become a hub for training and education in Direct Selling in India. The launch of CEDSA has opened a new chapter in the Direct Selling ecosystem in the country and I remain hopeful that other educational institutions also give a much-needed impetus on formal studies in the Direct Selling business model

CEDSA has been launched with a vision of creating a strong educational system around the business dynamics involved in Direct Selling. Such a step is necessary to mobilize further, the growing popularity of Direct Selling in India. I feel it is vital to introduce Direct Selling in academics, as students will have a choice either to venture as an independent business entrepreneurs or access an employment-oriented curriculum. At the same time, students will also enjoy research-based education, practical training, an internship in the Direct Selling MNCs, which will further boost their careers.

In the coming years, it is envisioned that CEDSA will grant fellowship to deserving research scholars. CEDSA's future includes undertaking research assignments by corporates, government, NGOs related to the Direct Selling industry. At the same time, CEDSA will also help in clearing misconceptions about the industry by way of engaging the academic world with the industry and the government.

I have a strong belief that our efforts today will reap long-term benefits in the years to come. CEDSA is poised to become a game-changer in formalizing education around Direct Selling and others will follow the path. They say- "well begun is half done". I remain assured that this would come true with CEDSA.



# PARTNER'S CORNER

## Inauguration of CEDSA and its future plans

### **Dr. Kamal Kant Vashishth, Director-e Learning, Shoolini University**

In a unique initiative, Shoolini University and Indian Direct Selling Association (IDSA) jointly launched a 'Centre of Excellence for Direct Selling in Academics' (CEDSA), a central objective of which is to add an academic vertical to the Direct Selling industry. This shall be achieved primarily through formal education, quality research, industry collaboration, and awareness campaigns. Based out of the University's campus in Solan, CEDSA is the first of its kind center in entire South Asia. The only other such centers present globally, dedicated to the Direct Selling a business is the US-based DSEF (Direct Selling Education Foundation) and the Research Centre on Direct Selling (RCDS) at Peking University in China.

However, both these centers focus primarily on the research part- providing fellowships, facilitating student awareness through campus events, etc., and do not provide any stand-alone academic qualification in the mentioned field. CEDSA would offer a full-fledged regular PG Diploma in Direct Selling (PGDDS) starting the Academic year 2021-22.

In addition to the introduction of Post Graduate Diploma in Direct Selling as well as other academic programs/specializations, CEDSA has several other objectives as enumerated below:

- Providing a common platform to academicians associated with Direct Selling through research or else.
- Facilitating quality research in the field of Direct Selling with the help of all stakeholders.
- Providing fellowships to the worthy candidates willing to pursue doctoral studies in Direct Selling.
- Organizing campus events across the universities wherein we showcase various real-world examples of Direct Selling and related industries helping students better understand the same.
- Familiarizing the students with a variety of corporate and entrepreneurial opportunities present in the industry.
- Providing teaching content to all academic organizations willing to introduce this promising subject to their curriculum.
- Finally, development of a collaborative MOOC to be developed and launched to provide first-hand genuine knowledge and updates on the industry to all DS fraternity.

CEDSA will develop a strong community of researchers and academicians to pursue some high impact research on the industry. This would not only help in growth of the industry but would also create an ecosystem of knowledge, understanding and trustworthiness among the higher social strata of Indian economy. Nothing can prove to be more impactful in creating social acceptance and improving the perception of the industry than a strong presence in academic and research circles. There are a lot of industry sympathizers already associated with the Higher Education Institutes (HEIs), and with the establishment of a platform like CEDSA, all of them would love to collaborate and contribute to the cause. In the next couple of years, we would surely be able to create momentum around Direct Selling research by getting multiple papers published in global or at least UGC indexed journals.



# STAKEHOLDER'S VIEW

Direct Selling in academics; a superb initiative by  
IDSA-Shoolini University

## **Mr. Ramesh Sharma, Chief of Bureau, UNI, Chandigarh**

A big development has taken place recently in the education sector, a first of its kind in the country when a new academic stream was opened for folks particularly the youth who would be aspiring for their career growth in the direct selling industry.

With the introduction of a formal one-year PG diploma in direct selling, a long-awaited dream was seen becoming true when Indian Direct Selling Association (IDSA) and Shoolini University (SU) joined hands together to launch the dedicated curriculum under specially carved Centre of Excellence for Direct Selling' within the University campus. The initiative was indeed appreciative and much-awaited to create a well-equipped educationally and professionally human resource as per the industry needs. The course can be construed as supercritical to fill the demand and supply gap of trained and skilled manpower and would serve the industry for a long time.

The initiative of IDSA-SU is in sync with the Government of India's mission of Skill India, Make in India, Start-up India and may also trigger a race and prompt other educational institutions to introduce courses on similar lines keeping in view of rising demand for skilled manpower. The country, which is a big consumer market, and the Direct Selling sector is growing and broadening its spectrum at a steady pace and considered to be more or less in the niche stage at present. The sector, thus, would be having huge growth potential for coming years and the rise in demand for trained professionals so on and so forth.

The aspirants, during their course, will have real insight into organized & unorganized Direct Selling business along with other important aspects of Direct Selling. They will also be trained and versed with critical & supportive factors in direct selling, regulatory framework, guidelines, rules, acts besides communication, public speaking, the art of presentation, and selling. They will also be groomed with Entrepreneurship, Digital and social media marketing, and of course exhaustive practical training sessions in the leading industries of the sector just on Earn while you learn' pattern.

Such industry-tailored course will not only develop the overall personality of the students but also make them employable, generate employment, hone their entrepreneurship capabilities, besides instilling more confidence to take up a career in the industry or as Direct Sellers with strong footing and in a more responsible manner unlike in present scenario where most of the persons involved as direct sellers have no specific education and skilling in the field. They will be much aware of good practices, conduct and nuances of business, regulatory framework about the industry, guidelines notified by the Centre and state governments on Direct Selling, rules & acts regarding counterfeit products, protecting the consumers and industry as well.

The course will also prove a boon for anyone who wishes to pursue a career in Direct Selling at a time when the country is faced with problems like the Covid-19 pandemic, unemployment, lack of jobs & entrepreneurship opportunities, poverty, shrinking in earnings and economic growth.







# THE GALLERY





# ABOUT IDSA

Incorporated in the year 1996, IDSA is an autonomous, self-regulatory body for the Direct Selling industry in India. The Association acts as an interface between the industry and policy-making bodies of the government facilitating the cause of the Direct Selling industry in India.

IDSA strives to create and further an environment conducive to the growth of the Direct Selling industry in India, partnering industry and government alike through advisory and consultative activities.



For more information,  
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