

For Immediate Release: September 3, 2025

PRESS-RELEASE

Three-Day Training on High-Quality Millet Cultivation under CSR Initiative of Coal India Limited at Bankura, West Bengal

The current phase of the training programme on High-Quality Millet Cultivation has shifted its focus towards **entrepreneurship, packaging, and value chain development**, aiming to equip participants with the knowledge and skills required to establish millet-based enterprises and access wider markets.

Being conducted from **03–05 September 2025** at **Salma Gram Panchayat, Saltora Block, Bankura District, West Bengal**, this three-day programme is part of the CSR initiative of **Coal India Limited (CIL)**, implemented by **IIT (ISM) Dhanbad**. It follows the successful completion of the initial training module, which introduced farmers and community members to scientific practices of millet cultivation.

The first two days of this phase are being led by **Prof. Sudipto Bhattacharya**, Principal of Bandhan School of Business, Bolpur-Santiniketan, West Bengal. A Certified Entrepreneurship Educator from Stanford University, Goldman Sachs Scholar, and Certified Start-up Mentor from London Business School, Prof. Bhattacharya is providing participants with hands-on guidance in entrepreneurship development, business planning, market strategies, and start-up mentoring, enabling them to view millet cultivation as a viable enterprise model.

On the concluding day, the training will feature **Dr. Bidhan Das**, Deputy Director and Branch Head of the Indian Institute of Packaging, Kolkata. A senior packaging professional, government advisor, and educator, Dr. Das is imparting valuable insights on scientific packaging, branding, and quality standards for millet-based products, preparing participants to compete effectively in larger markets.

The programme has generated an encouraging community response, drawing active participation from Panchayat officials, NGOs, Krishak Bandhus, health workers, Anganwadi workers, agricultural officers, and more than 100 villagers who have expressed interest in adopting millet cultivation and pursuing related entrepreneurial ventures.

This project is being led by **Prof. Niladri Das (Principal Investigator)** and **Prof. Rashmi Singh (Co-Principal Investigator)** of IIT (ISM) Dhanbad, with support from the implementation team comprising **Rohit Singh, Sunny Kumar, Sumana Banerjee, and Firdous Ansari**.

Through this initiative, **Coal India Limited (CIL)** reaffirms its commitment to promoting **inclusive rural development, sustainable agriculture, and livelihood generation** by empowering tribal and rural communities of West Bengal with scientific knowledge, entrepreneurial skills, and market readiness.

Rajni Singh
Dean (Corporate Communications)