

Industry, agri can coexist in Odisha: GMR

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The GMR Kamalanga Energy Limited (GKEL) has claimed that industry is never a threat to agriculture sector in Odisha and both the sectors can coexist harmoniously.

"The GKEL has set an example of harmonious co-existence of both industry and agriculture. People in and around our project in Dhenkanal district realise that industry is not a threat to the farm sector rather it promotes farming and allied activity," said a company official.

Over 100 acres of land have been cultivated and cash crops like groundnut and mustard raised along the Brahmani in Mangalpur helped more than 500 farmers to earn extra income by reusing their fallow land, said GKEL officials.

"GKEL provides input support and training for growing SRI rice, fish farming, goat farming and poultry in the backyard. More than 1,000 families have benefited from the multiple livelihood support," said GKEL director and chief operating officer R Ravindranathan Nair.

GKEL, which operates a 1,050-mw thermal power plant at Kamalanga, aims to keep people in the surrounding happy, he said.

He informed that the Maa Sunyabasi Self-Help Group (SHG) in Mangalpur has received support from the company for sheep rearing and mushroom farming. They are happy and now plan to keep milch cow and start agarbati

making units with GKEL support.

Nair too said that a farmer group in Durgapur has received support from GKEL for mushroom cultivation.

Highlighting the GKEL's CSR contribution, Nair said it has launched new initiatives towards sustainable livelihood of women with an emphasis on overall development and their empowerment and making them economically self-dependent.

"We have established tailoring centers where girls work every day and stitch ladies garments. The hand made products are now in good demand in the region. We have also provided training and technical support to women for making agarbathi and phenyl. The phenyls prepared by women are used by us," Nair said.

The GKEL has also distributed health insurance policies to 2,500 members of the local community, he added.

"The GKEL is the first corporate house in Odisha to offer health insurance policies to land losers and ensure their health security as part of its CSR activities," he said.

Referring to other areas, Nair said the company has also taken initiatives to promote quality education and provide better health facility to land loser families.

The GKEL has set up a 30-bed well-equipped hospital and an English Medium DAV Public School in the Kamalanga area as part of its CSR activities.