

Agnivahini: Women power to fight fire in Jharsuguda

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AT a time when women empowerment is setting the perfect tone for General Elections, a group of young women has broken the gender stereotypes to form a fire-fighting squad.

Christened as 'Agnivahini', the team comprises women employees of Vedanta Limited at Jharsuguda who have been meticulously trained by the company's Fire Safety personnel.

A member of the squad, Arti Sehgal said they are not just fire fighters, they are saviours. "Agnivahini has given us the pride, platform, team and strength to channelise our inner fighter to serve for the safe-

ty of those around us. We serve to save," she said.

So far, 46 women from two batches of Agnivahini have already received training and currently third batch is undergoing training. Started last year, two six-month programmes are being conducted every year.

They undergo rigorous and exacting training for three months following which they have to qualify uncompromising assessments before they are certified as members of Agnivahini, said Head (Fire Safety) of Vedanta Gagandeep Ojha. Agnivahini is a dream project and it stands testimony to the fact that women are an integral part of building a fire-



safe culture. Initially, Agnivahini was intended to support

the fire safety team. In a year it plans to work with the Jharsu-

guda community and make the district fire safe.

The women squad will soon conduct a series of awareness camps throughout the district and impart fire safety training to children and adults specifically focusing on emergency preparedness amongst women and children.

The CEO of Vedanta Ltd Abhijit Pati said safety remains a domain that needs involvement of more women. "It was conceived from the idea that fire prevention and combat is not a job of men only and women have a significant role to play. We feel it is an immense sense of responsibility in pioneering the concept of an all-women fire fighting team," he added.