

Center and State governments review skill development initiatives in the North-Eastern Region to empower youth & create sustainable opportunities of employment

Union Minister for Skill Development, Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey meets Sarbananda Sonowal, CM, Assam; Reviews skill development initiatives in the North-Eastern Region with State Skill Ministers

- MSDE to partner Assam Government in setting up the Skill University in the State
- Center to work closely with Manipur Government to set up a new National Skill Training Institute (NSTI)
- Special focus on create entrepreneurial climate through entrepreneurship education at Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) Guwahati; Center to support research through government grant; Additional focus on local trade based short term courses to reduce migration of labor



Guwahati, July 28, 2019: Union Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey today met **Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Chief Minister of Assam** to discuss how the Centre and State can further Hon'ble Prime Minister's Skill India Mission in the State and empower the youth with market relevant skills to enhance their productivity and contribute to the economic development of the North Eastern Region of the country. The two ministers discussed and agreed to collaborate to set up the recently announced Skill University in the State aligning it to the national skill standards ensuring common framework and delivery in quality of training.

This meeting was in addition to a closed-door review meeting, organized by Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship in Guwahati late evening yesterday, on the work done so far in the North Eastern states of the country, on Saturday. The meeting was presided over by Shri Mahendra Nath Pandey, Hon'ble Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. The meeting was attended by dignitaries from States including Skills Ministers namely - **Chandra Mohan Patowary, Minister, Assam; Tumke Bagra, Minister, Arunachal Pradesh; Radhey Shyam, Minister, Manipur and Imnatiba, Minister, Nagaland.**

The Minister reviewed all programs and schemes implemented across the **eight states of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Nagaland, and Tripura**. The various schemes and programme, management structures and processes, enhanced infrastructure, and local challenges encountered within these initiatives were discussed at this session. The success of reaching out to 2.5 lakh youth is the biggest accomplishment for the ministry to be able to move towards achieving the aims of Skill India Mission, as envisioned by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

Speaking at the meeting, **Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey, Minister of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship**, said, *“I feel such institutionalized interactions like this one between Central and State leaders, and policy makers, are crucial to the strategy of bringing in synergies and convergence across all initiatives of skill development in the country, and transform the lives of our youth. This brings with it peace, prosperity and all-round progress, a key goal for the government for the North-Eastern States. We are making continuous efforts to scale up existing efforts to enhance skill development in India, in the context of the country’s transition to a knowledge-based economy through the creation of a professional skilled workforce. It is important that we focus on the ‘Look East and Act East’ policy of government to ensure we achieve the goal of Kaushal Bharat Kushal Bharat of Skill India.”*

The program and schemes like **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra (PMKK), Jan Shikshan Sansthan, Apprenticeship, Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs)** were reviewed basis the consolidated data collected in past 4 years. Apart from talking about the performance metrics of the schemes and initiatives, the agenda of the meeting was also to discuss about various other important factors like building capacity of state skill missions and focus on job creation via tourism.

On strengthening of the ITIs and NSTIs in the North-East region, it was discussed that there are 73 ITIs with seating capacity of 17,000, of which around 13,000 cater to the engineering or technical trades like electrician, auto-mechanics etc. There is a shortage of facility for training of trainers at these facilities. **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship decided to set up an NSTI in the region. Manipur Government assured all support in setting up of the institute to fill in this gap, including provision of land.** MSDE has also released Rs60 lakhs towards upgrading of training equipment in Manipur.

Further, it was also decided that there will be a **renewed focus on running local trade based short term courses** (agriculture, fisheries etc.) in the NSTIs to reduce migration of labor from the State.

Shri Pandey also visited the **Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) Guwahati** which operates under the aegis of MSDE and has been focusing on creating an entrepreneurial climate through entrepreneurship education. It has been running short term activities/courses and workshops which assist in creating opportunities of employment leading sustainable livelihoods. **The**

Hon'ble Minister announced that the institute will be braced by a central government grant to support policy research, new content and curriculum development etc. at the campus.

In order to impact the grassroot and rural areas, the Institute **would identify potential segments** like agri/horticulture, and food processing, floriculture, crafts and handloom and handicrafts, bee-keeping, emerging service sectors like adventure tourism and use **the cluster approach to deliver services for economics of scale and sustainability** and ensuring the upscaling of enterprises.

The Hon'ble Minister, MSDE also **visited the North East Skill Center running under Assam Skill Development Mission** and was happy to see facilities being offered at the institute for the youth of the region. He said that it is important that we should match the offering under Skill India Mission to the aspirations of the youth of today, keeping in mind the changing time and new age skills that are being introduced to today's work culture. He also said that the youth of North East is very passionate and vibrant and have innovative ideas contributing to the sustainable development of the country and their personal growth. These should be encouraged at each level by both Center and State government and more opportunities of engagement should be created for them.

Achievement under Skill India in NER Region:

The Skill India programs have taken significant strides in the North Eastern states. Under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), free skill training and certification across roles is provided to improve employability. In the North East Region, 2.5 lakhs youths have been trained since 2016, of which 1.82 lakhs have been certified. To improve the livelihood opportunities of more than 80 thousand traditional arts and handicrafts artisans have had their skills certified under the PMKVY in the region. The Ministry has allocated 103 Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra (PMKKs) multi-skill institutes for better employability of NER youths who are in demand in many industries such as retail, tourism, music, health care etc.

Further, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) last year introduced National Skill Training Institute (NSTI) for skilling women of Tripura in non-traditional roles and increasing gender sensitivity in the workplace. Training is provided in CNC mechanics, automation specialists, warehouse packers, mine welders, toolmakers and die-makers, security guards, vermicomposting producers among others. Under a Skill India Special Project to support the Bru Tribe Women, almost 250 women have been trained under PMKVY 2, and employed. Jan Shikshan Sansthan under MSDE have been established and re operated through NGOs, providing vocational skills.

MSDE have also undertaken several initiatives to promote entrepreneurship pan India including the north east region. This is the unexplored potential in Northeast region. Certain area of Northeast e.g. Arunachal Pradesh, 40% of fruit goes waste due to lack of storage &

transportation, the same can be used to produce fresh juices at very affordable pricing. Therefore, youngsters are heading towards the northeast states & venturing into entrepreneurship

The entrepreneurial nature of women in North East region is evident from the fact that in the 2018 National Entrepreneurship awards organized by these Ministry 214 applications were received from the North East region, and out of 33 winners 5 were from North East of which 3 are women. The ministry has ensured that there is a single regulator for training ecosystem (for both short-term and long-term training) to streamline all skill trainings to one legal entity. MSDE has further established the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) which was approved by the Cabinet in October 2018. NCVET is in the process of being set up as an overarching skills regulator by merging the existing skill regulatory bodies- National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) & National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT).

As part of the review, the minister also looked into the PM-YUVA scheme that was implemented in 2017 on entrepreneurship education and training across the country through Institutes of Higher Learning (IHL). Six IHL from North East region participated in the scheme and 684 students received entrepreneurship training in 2017-2018. The scheme is now being restructured to make it relevant for the candidates emerging from skilling ecosystem (ITI, Polytechnic, PMKK, JSS and RPL trainees). As per Finance Ministry, the revised PM YUVA scheme is to be implemented in the next Financial Commission period from April 2020.

To further encourage the skilling efforts of the government, the MSDE organizes the National Entrepreneurship Awards Scheme (2016-21) and recognized the efforts of exceptional first-generation entrepreneurs (this year-39) and individuals and organizations supporting entrepreneurs in their entrepreneurial journey. Last year, 214 applications were received from the North East region and out of 33 winners 5 were from North East. There are also special category awards for women, SC/ST, PwC and entrepreneurs from difficult areas. The call for application for this year's awards will open from August 1 till 10th September 2019.

In another development, the administrative charge of the Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship in Guwahati was transferred to MSDE in May 2015. Since then, MSDE has helped the institute streamline its role with focus on Entrepreneurship. Last year (2018-19), MSDE sanctioned a grant of Rs4.63 crore, including Rs2.05 crore from North East pool fund, for renovation of the institute.