

Info Capsule

CABINET APPROVES SANKALP & STRIVE SCHEMES TO BOOST SKILL INDIA MISSION¹

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved two new World Bank supported schemes of Rs. 6,655 crore - Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) and Skill Strengthening for Industrial Value Enhancement (STRIVE). SANKALP is Rs 4,455 crore Centrally sponsored scheme including Rs. 3,300 crore loan support from World Bank whereas STRIVE is a Rs. 2,200 crore - central sector scheme, with half of the scheme outlay as World bank loan assistance. SANKALP and STRIVE are outcome focused schemes marking shift in government's implementation strategy in vocational education and training from inputs to results.

There has been a long felt need for a national architecture for promoting convergence, ensuring effective governance and regulation of skill training and catalysing industry efforts in vocational training space. The two schemes shall address this need by setting up national bodies for accreditation & certification which shall regulate accreditation and certification in both long and short term Vocational Education and Training (VET). The architecture shall help, for the first time in the history of vocational education in India, to converge the efforts of various central, state and private sector institutions thereby avoiding duplication of activities and bringing about uniformity in vocational training thus, creating better impact.

Both the schemes are aimed at institutional reforms and improving quality & market relevance of skill development training programs in long and short term VET. In past many government schemes such as Vocational Training Improvement Project (VTIP) have focussed on strengthening ITIs and over 1600 ITIs have already been modernized under the schemes. STRIVE scheme shall incentivize ITIs to improve overall performance including apprenticeship by involving SMEs, business association and industry clusters. The schemes aim to develop a robust mechanism for delivering quality skill development training by strengthening institutions such as State Skill Development Missions (SSDMs), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), Sector Skill Councils (SSCs), ITIs and National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) etc. The schemes shall support universalization of National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) including National Quality Assurance Framework (NQAF) across the skill development schemes of central and state government, thus ensuring standardization in skill delivery, content and training output.

The schemes shall provide the required impetus to the National Skill Development Mission, 2015 and its various sub missions. The schemes are aligned to flagship Government of India programs such as Make in India and Swachhta Abhiyan and aim at developing globally competitive workforce for domestic and overseas requirements. To this end, over 700

¹ Available at: <http://pib.gov.in/newsite/erelease.aspx>

industry led institutions are being set up for providing job oriented skill training to lakhs of aspirants. An innovative challenge fund model has been employed to select and support proposals to set up such institutions in identified sectors and geographies. 66+ India International stalling institutions are being promoted to focus upon skill training as per global standards for overseas placements. Over 30,000 aspirants shall be trained in IISCs and get certificates from International Awarding Bodies (IABs). Upgrading 500 ITIs, as model ITIs across India and improving their industry connect, is also envisaged by ushering in reforms such as on-line examination, centralised admission, improving efficiency and transparency in the system.

National Policy of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015 highlighted the need of quality assurance measures such as building a pool quality trainers and assessors. SANKALP envisages setting up of Trainers and Assessors academies with self-sustainable models. Over 50 such academies are to be set up in priority sectors. DOT, MSDE has already made significant progress in this direction by setting up a number of Institutes for Training of Trainers (IToT) in public and private sector, offering training in over 35 trades. The schemes shall leverage such institutions for training the trainers in both long & short term VET thereby bringing about convergence. Additional trainer academies shall be set up on the basis of identified sectoral and geographical gaps.

Greater decentralization in skill planning will be ensured by institutional strengthening at the State level which includes setting up of State Skill Development Missions (SSDMs) and allowing states to come up with District and State level Skill Development Plans (DSDP/SSDP) and design skill training interventions to suit the local needs. SANKALP aims at enhancement of inclusion of marginalized communities including women. Scheduled Castes (SCs), Schedule Tribes (STs) and Persons with Disabilities (PWD) to provide skill training opportunities to the underprivileged and marginalised section of the society.

The schemes will develop a skilling ecosystem that will support the country's rise in the Ease of Doing Business index by steady supply of skilled workforce to the industry. The schemes will also work towards increasing the aspirational value of skill development programs by increasing the marketability of skills, through better industry connect and quality assurance.

DIRECT TAX COLLECTIONS FOR F.Y. 2017-2018 SHOW GROWTH OF 15.8% UP TO SEPTEMBER, 2017²

The provisional figures of Direct Tax collections up to September, 2017 show that net collections are at **Rs. 3.86 lakh crore** which is **15.8%** higher than the net collections for the corresponding period of last year. Net Direct Tax collections represent **39.4%** of the total Budget Estimates of Direct Taxes for F.Y. 2017-18 (Rs. 9.8 lakh crore). Gross collections (before adjusting for refunds) have increased by **10.3%** to **Rs. 4.66 lakh crore** during April to September, 2017. Refunds amounting to **Rs.79,660 crore** have been issued during April to September, 2017.

An amount of **Rs. 1.77 lakh crore** has been received as **Advance Tax** up to 30th September, 2017 reflecting a growth of **11.5%** over the Advance Tax payments of the corresponding period of last year. The growth in Corporate Income Tax (CIT) Advance Tax is **8.1%** and that in Personal Income Tax (PIT) Advance Tax is **30.1%**.

² Available at: <http://pib.gov.in/newsite/erelease.aspx>

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR CHAIRS THE MEETING OF INDUSTRIAL TRIPARTITE COMMITTEE ON PLANTATION INDUSTRY ON PROPOSED AMENDMENT IN PLANTATION LABOUR ACT, 1951³

Second Tripartite meeting to discuss the Plantations Labour (Amendment) Bill, 2017 was held at Ooty, Tamilnadu on 11.10.2017. This meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar, the Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Labour & Employment to discuss the provisions of the Amendment Bill modified on the basis of suggestions received by representatives of plantations owners, trade unions and State Governments during first Tripartite Committee meeting.

During the meeting, Shri Gangwar said that objective of the amendment to the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 is to balance the requirement of both plantation workers and plantation owners. The Minister said that he wanted to discuss the provisions of the bill before finalizing the draft amendment Bill. He further added that Central Government would ensure better working conditions for the workers by way of providing improved welfare facilities to them and at the same time making the plantation financially viable and competitive.

Secretary, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Smt. M. Sathiyavathy also emphasized that the intention of the proposed amendments to Plantation Labour Act, 1951 is to provide enabling provision so that the welfare facilities to be provided under the statute may either be provided by the plantation owners themselves or by giving effect to the various schemes of either Central Government, State Government, Local Bodies, Panchayats or appropriate agencies. However, the ultimate responsibility would be that of the plantation owners to provide welfare facilities.

During discussion most of the stakeholders appreciated that the suggestions provided by them during the first tripartite meeting have been incorporated. Representatives from various State Governments acknowledged the fact that the enabling provision would reduce the financial burden on the plantation owners. At the same time, it would not be absolved the plantation owner responsibility.

It was also mentioned by the representatives from Trade Unions and State Government that the workers should not be paid less than the Minimum Wages and along with amendment the emphasis should also be laid on the implementation of various provisions of the Act.

Some other specific suggestions were also provided by representatives of plantation owners, Trade Unions and State Government. They were assured that the suggestions provided would be examined and incorporated if required in such a manner that it is beneficial to both workers and the plantation owners.

Smt. M. Sathiyavathy also mentioned that the execution of the provision of this Act are in the ambit of State Government and so all the plantation state should take active role in its proper implementation.

Prior to the meeting Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar, Minister for Labour & Employment(IC) alongwith other officials of the Central Government visited a tea plantation at Coonoor to have a feel of the quality of existing welfare facilities for the workers and also the challenges being faced by the plantation owners in the changing economic scenario.

This on field information would further contribute in framing an effective and relevant Plantation Labour Amendment Bill so that it leads to a win-win situation for both plantation workers and plantation owners.

Team ICSI

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