

## Draft Press Release

### **“The vision of Investment in People stands on three pillars – Education, Skill and Healthcare” - Shri Narendra Modi**

**New Delhi, 6 March, 2025:** Post-budget webinar on “Investing in People” was conducted on March 5 for which Department of Higher Education was the Lead Department along with MSDE. MSDE organized a **Breakout session, on “National Centres of Excellence for Skilling”**, announced in the Union Budget 2025-26, bringing together representatives from state governments, industry, international organizations and academia to discuss the roadmap for effective implementation of the budget announcement.

During the webinar, Hon’ble PM Shri Narendra Modi said, *that the vision of investment in people stands on three pillars – education, skill and healthcare. Since 2014, we have provided skill training to over 3 crore youth, announced plans to upgrade 1000 ITIs, and are establishing five Centres of Excellence with global partnership to ensure that our youth can compete at the global level.* The Hon’ble Prime Minister also stated that the PM Internship Scheme is providing fresh opportunities and practical skills to the youth by collaborating with industries.

In his closing remarks, **Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Minister of State, Ministry of Education, Govt of India** highlighted “the government’s commitment to equipping India’s youth with future-ready digital competencies. He said that the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship is developing Skilling for AI Readiness (SOAR) Program, aimed at integrating AI literacy with vocational training from as early as Class 6. The Minister emphasized that SOAR aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020’s vision of skill-based education and aims to foster computational thinking, problem-solving, and industry-aligned AI skills. Through stackable micro-credentials, digital platforms, and partnerships with global tech leaders, students will be able to seamlessly transition from foundational AI learning to advanced careers, strengthening India’s position as an AI powerhouse. He further noted that as technology evolves rapidly, India is not just preparing its workforce for AI-driven industries but shaping the next generation of AI innovators and leaders, ensuring inclusive growth and global competitiveness.”

As we approach closer to the International Women’s Day, the Minister also reaffirmed government’s commitment to provide greater opportunities for women in education, skill development, and entrepreneurship.

The Breakout Session on the “National Centres of Excellence for Skilling” was moderated by Shri Atul Kumar Tiwari, Secretary, MSDE and convened by Ms. Archana Mayaram, Economic Adviser, MSDE. The Panellists included Ms. Rashmita Panda, CEO, World Skills Centre, Odisha, Ms. Ragapriya, CITE and MD, KSDC, Government of Karnataka, Dr. Vinod Rao, Secretary, Labour, Skill Development & Employment, Government of Gujarat, Ms. Xiaoyan Liang, Lead Education Specialist, World Bank, Shri N Varaprasad, Founder &

Partner, Singapore Education Consulting Group, Mr. Suresh Natarajan, CEO, ITE Education Services, Singapore, Shri Amit Kapoor, Chair, Institute of Competitiveness, Shri Sabyasachi Das, CEO, Tata Indian Institute of Skills, Shri Sudarshan, Head-Skilling, Reliance Foundation, and Shri Ashish Singh, Head - Vocational Education & Skill, J&K Cements Ltd.

Shri Atul Kumar Tiwari, Secretary,MSDE while steering the discussions emphasized on the importance of industry collaboration and connect and leveraging global expertise by engaging with the international stakeholders. He also highlighted the need for forging strong partnerships with the state governments and academia and that all stakeholders must come together for effective implementation of the budget announcement.

The webinar concluded with several key recommendations, such as, enhancing quality of trainers, bringing about greater autonomy and accountability within the CoEs, stronger industry connect, global partnerships, increased focus on PPP, making curriculum industry-aligned, and focus on new-age courses. All the panellists appreciated and welcomed this budget announcement which would contribute towards India's skilling journey to prepare its youth for future ready jobs and compete at global level.

\*\*\*\*\*