

OFFICE OF RAJIV PRATAP RUDY

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
(INDEPENDENT CHARGE) AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

PRESS RELEASE

UKIERI to fast-track Skill Development in India

DELHI, 9 December 2015: A United Kingdom delegation led by their University and Science Minister Mr. Jo Jonson, today met the Union Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Rajiv Pratap Rudy to explore possible collaborations between the countries to strengthen the skill ecosystem.

In the meeting, both the Ministers discussed on the joint initiative 'UK India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI)' with the aim of enhancing educational and knowledge exchange links between India and UK. The programme aims to deliver systemic changes in the educational and vocational training ecosystem, by focusing on capacity building and leadership development within these institutions.

Earlier a MoU was signed between The Department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), UK and Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) in April 2015 involving NSDC and Sector Skills Councils to undertake skilling initiatives.

During the interaction, both the Ministers appreciated the collaboration between the two countries in the area of skill development and discussed way forward to deepen this collaboration under UKIERI III, which will begin in April 2016. It was agreed that the two countries could mutually benefit from this partnership.

UK side expressed interest in supporting MSDE to create 8 new Centres for Excellence over the next few year, where they will focus on upgrading the capacity of existing institutions through training of trainers, capacity building programmes and creating robust systems for assessment and certification.

Minister Jo Johnson also highlighted some of the recent initiatives undertaken in UK to increase the number of apprenticeships. He explained the UK's recent proposal to apply an Apprenticeship Levy on the bottom-line of large companies. This levy will provide the funds required to scale up apprenticeship training on a large scale.

Minister Rudy welcomed UK's association with India for skill development and highlighted the fact that it is important to move at speed in operationalizing UKIERI III, in order to meet India's massive skilling requirements.