

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN INDIA AND THE UAE

Leveraging Government of India's Investments in Skilling



April 22, 2018, Dubai: The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), in collaboration with National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) today hosted a skill mapping conference in Dubai. The conference was jointly endorsed by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization (*MoHRE*), Government of UAE, and the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Government of India, and was supported by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (GoI). The objective of the conference was to deliberate on the human workforce requirements in the UAE and the support that can be extended by the *GoI*.

The conference was attended by a strong delegation from India, led by Dr. KP Krishnan, Secretary, MSDE, GoI and Mr. TV Mohandas Pai, Chair, FICCI Skill Development Committee and Chairman, Aaron Capital. The event was also represented by H.E. Mr. Navdeep Suri, Ambassador of India to the UAE; Mr. Manish Kumar, CEO & MD, National Skill Development Corporation; Ms. Shobha Mishra Ghosh, Assistant Secretary General, FICCI and Mr. Amar Nath Jha, CEO, Jharkhand Skill Development Mission Society. They were joined by H.E. Mr. Humaid Mohammed Bin Salem, Secretary General of the UAE



Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Dr. Thani Al Muhairi, Director General of the UAE's National Qualifications Authority.

The keynote speeches were delivered by Dr. K.P. Krishnan, Secretary, MSDE, GoI and Dr. Omar Abdulrahman Salem Al Nuaimi, Assistant Under Secretary, MoHRE, Government of the UAE. Prominent UAE-based employers who recruit Indian workers and representatives of registered recruiting agencies from India also participated in the conference.

Panel discussions on skilled labour supply and demand and skill harmonization between India and UAE were held during the conference. One of the discussions on skilled labour supply considered the impact of the Indian government's programme to invest in skills, with a look at the key sectors and mobility pathways for skilled workers. The panel on skilled labour demand addressed the acceleration of joint recognition of skills certification and included the case for requiring structured skilling of domestic labour.

In his keynote address, Dr. KP Krishnan said that, *"India is committed to jointly work with the UAE Government and aims to draw a mutually beneficial roadmap to ensure that the workers' skills and qualifications can be assessed, certified and recognized which can meet the skill demands of UAE's employers and also that Indian workers are paid adequate skill-premium."*

Mr. TV Mohandas Pai in his address, said, *"The new global markets driven by industry 4.0 are accelerating the demand for higher order skills within each occupation. This requires a robust assessment of migrating skilled workers and mapping of labour market in demand side country to ensure placement of right candidates in the right jobs. Further we need studies on productivity to attract highly skilled people at the right wages. This will address the issue of stagnant wages, which often leads to flow of inadequately skilled people."*

National Skill Development Corporation, the implementing arm of the MSDE, was represented by Mr. Manish Kumar, MD & CEO, who spoke about the demand and supply of skilled labour. Mr. Kumar said, *"Our interaction with state and private leadership in the UAE aims to develop priorities, design platforms, and address experiences of the Indian workforce in the UAE. The priorities include assessments of local labour market, examination of the supply of the Indian workforce to UAE and meeting parameters such as quality, credibility and cultural fit. The participants agreed that a mutually*

beneficial labour exchange needs to be embedded in clear G2G demand articulation which must be supported by a clear quality mandate mutually acceptable to both the countries”.

Ms Shobha Mishra Ghosh, Assistant Secretary General, FICCI, commented, *“I believe, it was an exceptionally successful event. FICCI would further work with the stakeholders in India and the UAE to draw a roadmap on key outcomes of the deliberations. As India transition towards being a modern skill-based economy a focused approach is needed to skill, re-skill and up-skill the workforce for better labour mobility and social security benefits to the workers”.*

Dr Omar Al Nuaimi, Assistant Under-Secretary, Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation, said, *“This event is a testament to the fact that we have already hit the ground running, following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on labour between the governments of India and the UAE earlier this year. As the UAE moves towards a knowledge economy, the demand for skilled labour is going to increase, and we see India as one of the key suppliers for high skilled workers in the future.”*

Dr Thani Al Muhairi, Director General of the UAE’s National Qualifications Authority, appreciated FICCI’s organisation of the event. He quoted, *“Today’s event has made an important contribution to the debate on the importance of mutual recognition of skills, with all contributors adding depth to the understanding of the issues at hand. The collaboration between India and the UAE in the field of skilling is something that the NQA looks forward to being closely involved in.”*

H.E. Mr. Navdeep Suri, Ambassador of India to the UAE, said, *“The UAE is one of our largest overseas job markets and it is vital that we match our skills programs with the job market here so that our workers can move up the value chain. Our e-migrate system and minimum reference wages are designed to help our migrant workers get a better life and to ensure that we don't end up exporting poverty.”*

The Secretary General of the UAE’s Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Humaid Mohammed Bin Salem, said, *“As the voice of business in the UAE, the FICCI is intensely focused on improving the skills mix available to UAE employers. The harmonisation of skills will enable UAE businesses looking to invest in India to do so in the knowledge that there is compatibility in terms of*



workforce standards. Joint recognition of skills therefore, has the potential to be a pillar of the mutual exchange of people, goods and services.”

The event culminated with the two governments announcing a partnership to strengthen the certification and joint recognition of skills. Both India and the UAE have agreed to engage with each other on skills harmonization, aimed at matching India’s programmes for up-skilling workers with the requirements of UAE’s job market.

The day’s event was followed by a networking dinner hosted by the National Skill Development Corporation.

*****END*****