

“Leather sector has the potential to create 2 million jobs in the next 5 years” - Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey, Union Minister

- Minister, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship distributes certificates to RPL trainees under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana
- More than 2 million candidates across the country have received RPL certification under the PMKVY (2016-2020)
- Launch of Mochi Swabhimaan Initiative – a nation-wide effort in which LSSC will support the cobbler community who provide leather-based services, with CSR funds ensuring they work in a dignified manner



Chennai, Sept. 22, 2019: Speaking at a ceremony today where more than a thousand candidates in the leather sector were awarded Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Certificates in Chennai, **Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey, Hon'ble Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Govt. of India** said the Leather Sector is an Export driven sector and has the potential to create 2 million jobs in the next 5 years. The Government of India had recently announced in the Budget of 2019 that export duty be rationalized on raw and semi-finished leather increasing opportunities in the sector.

Dr. Pandey distributed Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) certificates to the graduating trainees under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) of Skill India, who were trained, assessed

and certified on their existing skill sets across leather companies with the due effort of the Leather Sector Skill Council (LSSC). The certification ceremony was graced by **Shri K Pandiarajan, Minister for Tamil language, Tamil Culture and Archeology.**

Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship works closely with the LSSC under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) which encourages skill development to boost employability and productivity of youth by incentivizing skill training. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), under PMKVY, certifies skills acquired informally and drives youth to venture into aspirational job roles. For the industry, formalizing the skills of employees will give a clear picture about the available skill sets, skill gaps and the need for upgradation to achieve desirable quality and productivity benchmarks. The outstanding candidates, certified under RPL, were given Best in Class Employer Scheme and HRD Scheme certificates during the ceremony.

As of last week, more than 2 million candidates across the country have received RPL under the PMKVY (2016-20). As per the latest report (17 September), of the 2.78 million candidates enrolled, 2.70 million have been trained while 2.15 million have been assessed and 2.03 million have been given certificates.

Lauding the efforts of LSSC, **Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey, Hon'ble Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship** stated, "Globally, India is the second largest producer of leather garments and footwear and with this phenomenal market potential, the sector seems promising in the years to come. When we look back at our past, India has always had a rich heritage of leather crafts like footwear and accessories. These were prepared by highly skilled craftsmen from various clusters like Agra, Kanpur, Ambur and other regions. Today, these skills need to be preserved and people should be encouraged to make them a means of sustainable livelihood. I am glad to see the outcome of your RPL programs undertaken in close collaboration with the industry. I congratulate all the candidates who are receiving their certificates today and wish them better opportunities for continued learning and career development. I wish you all great success and I extend continued support to LSSC team and all their partners."

"The Government of India has allowed 100% foreign direct investment (FDI) in the sector and rationalized export duty on raw and semi-finished leather. The sector employees over 2.5 million people and has potential to create 2 million jobs in the next 5 years," **he further added.**

India accounts for about 13% of the world's leather production. Footwear and Leather products in the world. The leather and leather products industry contribute less than 1% to India's GDP and Footwear industry contributes about 2% to India's GDP. Indian leather industry has huge potential for exports. It can reach USD 9.0 billion by 2020, from the present level of USD 5.85 billion. India has trade agreements with Japan, Korea, ASEAN, Chile etc., and is negotiating Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with European Union, Australia etc.

"Fashion and trends have a great influence in this industry. There are many opportunities for entrepreneurship in traditional leather trades and new forms of leather substitutes. We need to cater to basic needs as well as luxury segments, with vast potential for exports. On this occasion, I would advise the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Micro, Small and Medium

Enterprises (MSMEs) to review their manufacturing processes in terms of quality of output and wastage reduction by skilled professionals. I am also happy to announce the “Mochi Swabhimaan Initiative, a nation-wide activity where LSSC will extend support to the cobbler community who provide leather-based services, with CSR funds and bring respect to their skills by giving them better working environment in the form of kiosks/umbrellas . The government will also support this idea and will ensure they work in a dignified manner,” **said Dr. Pandey.**

“Technology has had a huge impact on every industry and leather is not left behind. While your manufacturing set up and factory premises need quick upgrades you should also focus on today’s e-commerce scenario. This brings in the need for multiskilling the workforce in the leather industry, since they will need appropriate digital skills to interact with online systems and a global customer base. I hope you are already taking these steps in this direction to expand your global outreach,” **said the Minister.**

To recognize and enhance the value of skilled manpower, LSSC has successfully implemented the RPL program to certify the workforce as per the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF). The certification will contribute to the mobility of the workforce and will reduce employer dependence for recognition. Particularly, for the women who form a large chunk of the workforce, RPL will encourage them to enhance their skills basis their certification levels.

About Leather Sector Skill Council (LSSC)

The Leather Sector Skill Council (LSSC) is an NSDC approved non-profit organization dedicated to meet the demand for skilled workforce in the leather industry in India. The council, in partnership with CLE, caters to the training and employment needs of various sub-sectors in the leather industry. Set up in 2012, LSSC works with a host of members from the industry, government organizations, the academia, the training partners and the assessment partners.