

India's Path to a Skilled, Inclusive and Tech-Driven Workforce



The Conference on 'Future of Jobs: Shaping Tomorrow's Workforce: Driving Growth in a Dynamic World' deliberated on the evolving employment landscape and emphasized the critical role of skill development, innovation and Industry-Academia collaboration in shaping India's workforce.

The emergence of technologies over the past decade has marked the advent of the fourth industrial revolution (Industry 4.0). Due to rapid advancements across sectors, industries worldwide are reorienting and transforming by leveraging digitization and cutting-edge technologies to remain competitive in an evolving landscape.

As we look ahead to 2025, the world of work is at a profound transformation. The fundamental dimensions of work are changing. This shift is impacting the future of jobs in India, driven by a confluence of investments,

policy initiatives, technological advancements and evolving market demands.

India has experienced changes in the employment landscape over the past decade, with jobs growing substantially from 471.5 million in 2014-15 to 643 million in 2023-24. The contribution of MSMEs and startups has also been instrumental in reshaping the workforce ecosystem. As industries evolve and new sectors emerge, the workforce must adapt to an increasingly digital, automated and globally interconnected world of work. To navigate this transition, industries can play



(L - R): Puneet Chhatwal, MD & CEO, IHCL; Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, Minister of Labour & Employment and Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India and Sumita Dawra, Secretary, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India at the CII MOL&E Conference on Future of Jobs in New Delhi

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India's prosperity lies in fostering an Industry-friendly ecosystem. To truly thrive as a nation, we must support our wealth creators – the businesses and the Industry, who drive innovation, generate employment and power economic growth.

Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, Minister of Labour & Employment and Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India

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a crucial role by investing in upskilling and reskilling programs to help workers adapt to changing demands. With this context, CII, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India, organized a Conference on 'Future of Jobs: Shaping Tomorrow's Workforce: Driving Growth in a Dynamic World' in New Delhi on 15 January. The event brought together Industry leaders, policymakers and experts to discuss the evolving employment landscape, emphasizing the critical role of skill development, innovation and Industry-Academia collaboration in shaping India's workforce.

Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, Hon'ble Minister of Labour & Employment and Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India, underscored the importance of skill development in fostering employment opportunities and strengthening India's global talent hub. He highlighted India's potential to address global workforce shortages through initiatives like the Mutual Recognition of Skills and Standards. Stressing the need to strengthen Industry-Academia linkages, he advocated for a skill-based approach that extends beyond certifications to equip individuals with practical expertise relevant to Industry and self-employment.

"It is time to rethink our approach to skilling – rather than focusing solely on certifications, the goal should be to develop professionals with the actual skills needed to excel in the industry," the Minister added.

Ms Sumita Dawra, Secretary, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India, emphasised the need to develop a digitally proficient workforce equipped to navigate the increasingly tech-driven job market. The conference emphasized that by implementing these strategic measures, India can foster a future-ready workforce equipped to tackle both domestic and global talent requirements.

The conference featured sector-specific presentations on the future of work, with a key Industry leader presenting for each sector. Bringing together Industry experts from six key sectors – manufacturing, green jobs, hospitality & tourism, smart manufacturing, logistics and healthcare, the conference highlighted in-demand skills for emerging job roles in these sectors, along with recommendations to boost employability in these sectors.

Manufacturing & Smart Manufacturing

The session on manufacturing and smart manufacturing was led by Mr Vinod Sharma, Chairman, CII National Committee on Electronics Manufacturing and Mr Dilip Sawhney, Chairman, CII National Committee on Smart Manufacturing. The session highlighted that as India aims to become a USD 35 trillion economy, manufacturing plays a pivotal role in driving growth by boosting GDP by enhancing infrastructure, increasing exports and creating jobs. The sector aims to attain USD 1 trillion in exports by 2030.

The manual assembly line workers and machinists for traditional manual machines are highlighted as declining job roles. The session underlined the importance of promoting short-term education models and skills training tailored to industry needs. Companies should invest in apprenticeship and earn-and-learn programs that enable workers to gain hands-on experience while earning.

Green Jobs & Renewable Energy

Mr Rajendra Mehta, CHRO, Suzlon Group led the sectoral presentation for the green jobs sector. India currently ranks fourth globally in renewable energy employment with approximately 1 million jobs out of the 16 million worldwide. In this sector, skilling is required in the areas of renewable energy technologies, sustainability practices and environmental science, skills in data analysis for energy efficiency, project management and knowledge of carbon markets.

To propel employment in the sector, there is a need to encourage active upskilling to capitalize on the multiplier. There is a need to establish regional Green Jobs Skill Centers to bridge the urban-rural divide and foster local employment opportunities.

Hospitality & Tourism

Mr Ajay Dutta, Vice President – HR, Indian Hotels Company Ltd led the discussion on the hospitality and tourism sector. India's tourism and hospitality sector employed approximately 42 million individuals in 2023, reflecting a 10 per cent growth compared to pre-pandemic levels in 2019.

Emerging job roles are of AI specialists, sustainability managers, experienced designers and digital marketers. To foster growth in the sector, the session suggested granting Industry status to promote its development and encourage digital transformation through AI, automation and smart tourism tools. Establishing a dedicated task force under the Ministry of Tourism would ensure the standardisation of skills and education, with a focus on relevant curricula, global benchmarking and increased Industry participation to align with market demands.

Logistics

The logistics Industry plays a key role in India's goal of becoming a USD 7 trillion economy by 2030, driven by rising demand in e-commerce and manufacturing. The logistics Industry in India is expected to grow employment by over 1.5X GDP. The key skills are required in supply chain management, transportation and fleet management, warehouse optimization and expertise in digital technologies such as data analytics, ERP systems, IoT and blockchain.

Leading the discussion on the logistics sector, Mr Sukumar K, CEO, TVS Supply Chain Solutions Ltd underlined that it is essential to enhance skill development and education and equip the workforce with expertise in modern logistics practices to advance the job opportunities in the logistics sector. Supporting logistics startups and encouraging tech investment will drive innovation while promoting public-private partnerships can strengthen industry collaboration.

Healthcare

Dr Ashutosh Raghuvanshi, Member, CII Healthcare Council and CEO, Fortis Healthcare, led the presentation for the healthcare sector. India's healthcare sector employs approximately 4.2 million professionals,

accounting for 4.5 per cent of the total workforce and contributing 1.72 per cent to the GDP, driven by rising healthcare needs and technological innovations. The emerging job roles in healthcare include telehealth professionals, AI specialists, health data scientists and precision medicine experts. To induce employment growth in the sector, it is recommended to increase government health expenditure to enhance infrastructure and access to quality care.

Additionally, developing Medi-cities for medical value tourism can attract international patients, boosting both healthcare standards and the economy. By implementing these strategic measures, India is well-positioned to become a global leader in employment and skill development, ensuring a future-ready workforce capable of addressing both domestic and international challenges.

Support to CII Model Career Center

A key highlight of Dr Mandaviya's address at the conference was his support for the CII Model Career Centres (CII MCC) as a successful model for employment. Applauding CII for its innovative employment model, he said that the Government should consider implementing it. By linking youth with the right opportunities, these career counselling centres not only support sustainable livelihoods but also help the Industry access a pool of prepared talent, he added.

In November 2024, Dr Mandaviya visited the CII MCC in Gurugram, where he understood the entire CII MCC model. The Minister was given the walk through the entire operational model of the CII MCC. Recognizing its effectiveness in nurturing emerging talent, he expressed the Government's willingness to collaborate with CII to establish 100 additional MCCs across the country.

As a result, in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Employment, CII MCC have been established in remote regions across India. Recently, CII CoE on Skills launched three new MCCs in Vadodara (Gujarat), Vijayawada (Andhra Pradesh) and Churu (Rajasthan), further extending its outreach to the remote areas.

Regarding expansion plans, Dr Mandaviya said, "This type of model (centre) should be in PPP mode... I want to set up a career counselling centre in every university through Industry bodies like CII. Universities can provide premises, while federations and local Industry bodies can manage operations. Logistics support and access will be given by the employment ministry."

QUOTES



A skilled and adaptable workforce is essential for attracting investments in key sectors like healthcare, manufacturing, logistics and green jobs. By strengthening labour-intensive industries,

we create equitable opportunities for diverse demographics, including those with limited access to advanced education.

Sumita Dawra, Secretary, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India



The shift to clean energy is creating new green skills, from renewable tech to sustainability practices. With India ranking fourth in renewable energy jobs, we are set for growth. By 2030, 10.3 million jobs will emerge

globally, driving a sustainable, energy-efficient future.

Rajendra Mehta, CHRO, Suzlon Group



Smart manufacturing is crucial for India's journey toward a USD 7.5 trillion economy, contributing 25 per cent to GDP and positioning us as the second-largest global manufacturing hub. With

90 per cent of firms being MSMEs, we must enhance competitiveness through skilling and upskilling, ensuring our workforce is prepared for analytics-driven roles and global value chains.

Dilip Sawhney, Chairman, CII National Committee on Smart Manufacturing and MD, Rockwell Automation India Ltd



Healthcare contributes 10 per cent of global GDP, with India's sector growing 7-10 per cent annually. To address the global shortage of 18 million workers by 2030 and India's gap of 2.7 million, we must

increase GHE to 2.5-3 per cent of GDP, upskill in digital health, develop medi-cities for medical tourism and strengthen rural healthcare.

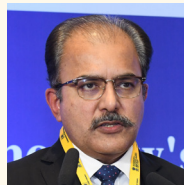
Dr Ashutosh Raghuvanshi, Member, CII Healthcare Council and MD & CEO, Fortis Healthcare



To future-proof our workforce and Industry, we must adopt an integrated National Employment Policy that streamlines employment schemes across ministries and states. I strongly advocate for

a dedicated Task Force on the Future of Jobs to address emerging challenges and a dynamic Universal Labour Management Information System to enhance job matching and skill development.

Vinod Sharma, Chairman, CII National Committee on Electronics Manufacturing and MD, Deki Electronics Ltd



I urge the Government to grant 'Industry Status' to the hospitality and tourism sector. As India's tourism rebounds, emerging trends like spiritual and wellness tourism are driving growth, with skills in

this sector transferable to retail and BPO.

Ajay Dutta, Vice President – HR, Indian Hotels Company Ltd



The Indian warehousing market, growing at a 14-15 per cent CAGR, is set to reach USD 35 billion by FY 2027. Key drivers include AI, automation, sustainability and real-time visibility through

autonomous systems and data analytics. Emerging trends like intra-storage robotics and sustainable transportation are reshaping workforce dynamics and supply chain operations.

Anil Syal, President, Safexpress Pvt Ltd



AI is welcome in healthcare in an augmented role. We should go forward slowly and steadily while strengthening digital skills in healthcare and supporting innovation.

Dr Shubnum Singh, Member, Governing Body, Healthcare Sector Skills Council

