

Reinventing Skill India

The Next Phase of India's Skill Revolution

**Dr Uma
Suneha Sharma**

The Skill India Programme, led by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), now integrates three key initiatives—*Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0* (PMKVY 4.0), *Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme* (PM-NAPS), and *Jan Shiksha Sansthan* (JSS) Scheme. Together, they offer structured skill development, hands-on apprenticeship training, and community-based learning to ensure equitable access to quality vocational education across both rural and urban areas. To date, these flagship programmes have benefitted over 2.27 crore individuals, including those from marginalised sections of society.

In 2015, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the Skill India Mission to make India self-reliant by aligning workforce skills with industry needs. The initiative focussed on certified training programmes and integrating skill-based education into schools for both short- and long-term employment opportunities.

While India's large youth population offers a chance to reap a demographic dividend, high unemployment and low labour force participation among non-students show that many young people remain excluded from the workforce. This signals the urgent need for long-term reforms in both skill supply and job creation.

India has a vibrant youth population, with those aged 15–29 making up over 34% of the total and projected to remain a strong 24% (365 million) by 2030. Unlike



ageing nations like China, Japan, and the USA, this gives India a demographic edge for growth. In line with the National Youth Policy 2021, the government has launched various initiatives across health, education, skills, and leadership to empower youth and drive national progress.

Each year, a large number of Indians join the workforce, forming the foundation of the country's economic growth. To support them, the government has expanded skill development and employment programmes such as the *Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana* (PMKVY), the *Deendayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana* (DDU-GKY), and the Skill India Mission. Additionally, new initiatives like the Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme, the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), the *Pradhan*

Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY), and Startup India have been launched to strengthen the entrepreneurship ecosystem. The National Career Service (NCS) plays a key role in connecting job seekers with employers.

The Skill India Programme is equipping India's workforce with industry-specific training, new technologies, and global opportunities to boost job creation, entrepreneurship, and productivity. The Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) is focussed on strengthening vocational education, promoting apprenticeships, and encouraging lifelong learning to prepare India for a skill-driven global economy.

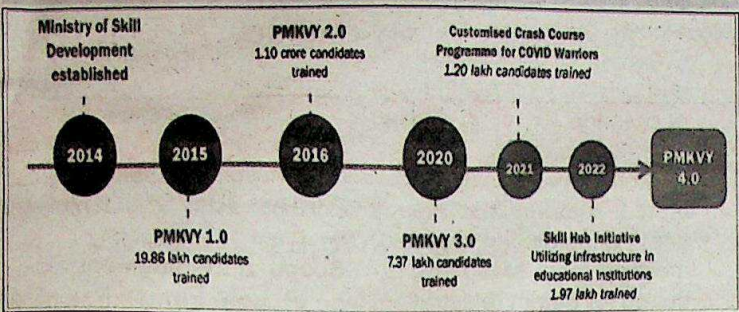
Launched in 2015 on World Youth Skills Day, the National Skill Development Mission aims to create a unified framework for skill development across national and state levels. It operates through a three-tiered structure: the Governing Council led by the Prime Minister for policy direction, the Steering Committee headed by the

Continued on page 3



Continued from page 1
Reinventing Skill India : The Next Phase of India's ...

Source: Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) 4.0 guideline



Skill Development Minister for progress review, and the Mission Directorate under the Skill Development Secretary to coordinate implementation across ministries and states.

The mission comprises seven sub-missions:

1. Skill-based Institutional Training
2. Development of Training Infrastructure
3. Integration and Convergence of Efforts
4. Capacity Building of Trainers
5. Facilitating Overseas Employment Opportunities
6. Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods
7. Utilising Public Infrastructure Effectively

The Mission Directorate is supported by three key organisations:

- The National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) – a regulatory body under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), formed by merging the former National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) and National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT).
- The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).
- The Directorate General of Training (DGT).

States have also set up State Skill Development Missions with similar structures, including

a Steering Committee and Mission Directorate.

The Union Cabinet has extended the Skill India Programme till 2026 with a budget of Rs. 8,800 crore. It now includes three key schemes: *Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0* (PMKVY 4.0) with Rs. 6,000 crore, *Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme* (PM-NAPS) with Rs. 1,942 crore, and *Jan Shikshan Sansthan Scheme* (JSS) with Rs. 858 crore. This revamp reflects the government's focus on building a future-ready, tech-driven workforce aligned with industry needs.

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)

With a median age of 28, India has the potential to become a global skills hub. To harness this potential, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) launched its flagship scheme *Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana* (PMKVY) in 2015. The programme offers free short-term skill training and certification to empower youth, support the vision of 'Amrit Kaal', and drive India's growth towards a multi-trillion-dollar, tech-driven economy. The scheme has been implemented in four phases:

- PMKVY 1.0 (2015–2016),
- PMKVY 2.0 (2016–2020),
- PMKVY 3.0 (2020–2023), and
- PMKVY 4.0 (from 2023 onwards).

From 2015 to 2021, Rs. 8,590 crore was allocated to empower young job seekers. Across three phases (2015–2022), over 1.37 crore youth were trained in various sectors using diverse approaches.

PMKVY 4.0 (2023): Launched in February 2023, PMKVY 4.0 offers flexible, industry-aligned training with a focus on Industry 4.0 skills, on-the-job learning, and expanded access to training centres. It includes both long-term programmes like the *Craftsmen Training Scheme* at ITIs and NSTIs, and short-term initiatives such as skill courses, special projects, *Kaushal* and *Rozgar Melas*, and job placement support.

The core of PMKVY 4.0 is short-term training (2–6 months) for school/college dropouts and unemployed youth at NSQF Level 2 or 3, delivered through PMKVY Training Centres. Trainees receive soft skills, entrepreneurship, financial, and digital literacy training, along with placement support and a fixed subsidy after course completion.

The scheme also includes Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) to certify skills gained through informal or formal experience.

Key Goals of PMKVY 4.0:

- Empower youth to build careers aligned with their strengths.
- Align training with market demands to boost employability.
- Simplify and digitise the skill ecosystem.
- Expand access to training across diverse geographies, including remote areas.
- Promote inclusivity for SC, ST, women, and underrepresented groups.
- Enable lifelong learning and upskilling to meet evolving job markets.
- Ensure high-quality training through industry-aligned content and assessments.
- Improve job opportunities with incentives and employment support.
- Provide candidate-focussed, demand-driven training programmes.

The Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme-2 (PM-NAPS 2)

PM-NAPS 2 supports the transition from education to employment by offering hands-on industry training to youth aged 14–35. The government provides a stipend of Rs. 1,500/month per apprentice (up to 25% of the salary) via Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) during training. From 2016 to October 2024, over 37.94 lakh apprentices have been trained across manufacturing and emerging fields like AI, robotics, blockchain, green energy, and Industry 4.0, aligning skill development with future job trends.

The 2015 National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship highlights apprenticeship as a key tool for building India's skilled workforce. It offers hands-on industry training with a stipend, allowing in-

dividuals to learn while earning. Globally, apprenticeships are considered one of the most effective ways to gain practical skills and experience.

In the Indian context, the Apprentices Act of 1961 and the Apprenticeship Rules of 1992 were put in place to address the need for workers and support growth by offering hands-on learning opportunities to young people. The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) introduced the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) on 19 August 2016 to offer rewards to businesses that take on apprentices under the Apprentices Act of 1961.

The primary objective of the NAPS 2 is to encourage and support apprenticeship training across the nation by offering assistance to apprentices working under the Apprentice Act of 1961 and enhancing the apprenticeship system through various initiatives and guidance for stakeholders involved in the process.

The objectives of NAPS-2 are as follows:

- To enhance the workforce's expertise for the economy through encouraging on-the-job experiential training.
- To encourage establishments to enrol apprentices by sharing partial stipend support with the apprentices.
- Offering opportunities for training to individuals who have completed short-term skill programmes supported by Central and State Government schemes.
- Encouraging the participation of apprentices in businesses is vital for enhancing skills development of areas like the northeastern part of the country.

Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) Scheme

Originally launched in 1967 as *Shramik Vidyapeeth* (SVP), the *Jan Shikshan Sansthan* (JSS) scheme aims to deliver non-formal skill training to individuals through registered societies (Non-Governmental Organisations – NGOs), fully funded by the Government of India.

The scheme follows a people-centred approach, making vocational training accessible and inclusive for economically disadvantaged groups, especially women and rural youth aged 15 to 45 years. By offering flexible training schedules, JSS supports those most in need, promoting both self-employment and job opportunities.

So far, over 27 lakh individuals have received training and 26 lakh have been certified. Beyond skill development, the scheme also focuses on community empowerment through awareness on health, hygiene, financial literacy, gender equality, and education. It works in alignment with key government initiatives like:

- *Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan* (PM JANMAN)
- Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society (ULLAS).

Objectives of the *Jan Shikshan Sansthan* (JSS) Scheme:

Promote self-employment and skill development to boost household income among marginalised groups such as women, Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Other Backward Classes (OBC), and other disadvantaged communities.

Support non-literates (70%), school dropouts (20%), and graduates (10%) aged 15–45 years, with exceptions for differently abled individuals and women in special cases.

Prioritise women and underprivileged groups in both rural and urban areas, especially from SC, ST, OBC, and minority communities.

Challenges in Skill Development

Since 2008, and more actively after 2016, India has worked to overcome structural and institutional barriers to achieve the goals of the National Skills Policy. Key challenges include aligning training with market needs, expanding short-term courses and apprenticeships, ensuring placements, standardising content, and improving course quality. Strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) by integrating it with school and higher education, building governance frameworks, and creating quality institutions for trainees and trainers remains essential for promoting entrepreneurship and sustainable skill development.

Limited Adoption of Training Opportunities: Despite policy efforts, training capacity growth has lagged behind targets, leading to a mismatch between the number of youth and market demand for skilled workers.

Demographic Dividend & Regional Disparities: India's rising working-age population offers a demographic advantage till 2040, but this potential can only be realized if youth are equipped with skills and access to stable jobs.

A 2020 Observer Research Foundation report highlights rising demand for skills in tech design, IT, digital security, and business strategy. However, only 22% of companies offer on-the-job training, and just 6% collaborate with vocational centres. McKinsey projects 60–65 million new digital jobs by 2025, alongside major job role shifts for 40–45 million workers—underscoring the need for large-scale reskilling. The government's Skill India Programme aims to address these gaps by promoting continuous upskilling aligned with industry changes, as reflected in the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS).

(Dr. Uma is an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics, University of Delhi. Ms. Suneha Sharma is a Research Scholar in the Department of African Studies at the University of Delhi. Feedback can be sent to feedback.employmentnews@gmail.com).

Views expressed are personal.

No. A-12025/1/2025-SA

Government of India

Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution

Department of Food & Public Distribution

INDICATIVE VACANCY CIRCULAR

Applications are invited from the eligible officers for filling up the post of **Assistant Library and Information Officer**, a General Central Service, Group 'B' Gazetted, Non-Ministerial post in Level-7 of the Pay Matrix at National Sugar Institute, Kanpur - a subordinate office of the Department of Food & Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, by Composite Method: Deputation (including short-term contract) or Promotion. Details of the post, eligibility conditions etc. may be accessed from the Department's website: www.dfpd.nic.in

2. Applications of only such officers/candidates will be considered as are routed through proper channel and are accompanied by:-

(i) * Bio-data - each page of the Bio-data and all supporting documents to be attested by an officer not below the rank of Under Secretary and certified by the Employer/ Cadre Controlling Authority.

(ii) Photocopies of APARs for the last five (5) years duly attested on each page by an officer not below the rank of Under Secretary.

(* as per prescribed proforma available on the website.

3. Applications of suitable and eligible officers and who can be spared immediately in the event of selection may be sent directly to the **Under Secretary (SA), Department of Food & Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, (Room No. 476), Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi-110001** within a period of 60 days from the date of publication of this advertisement in the **Employment News**. Unemployed and private candidates are not eligible; therefore, they need not apply.

(Suresh Kumar Nayak)

Deputy Secretary to the Government of India

Tel: 2338 0266