

Govt must set up commission for roadmap on 21st century skills: Report

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New Delhi, Oct 30 () The government should establish a commission for 21st century skills to prepare a 15-year roadmap on transferable skills that can meet present as well as future demand from industries, says a report.

The report titled 'Skilling India - No Time to Lose' by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) notes that rigid labour laws and poor infrastructure impede the pace of transition of the country's labour force from informal to formal jobs.

According to the report, India is trapped in a vicious cycle of low skills and a few good jobs. The combination of inadequately skilled workers, obsolete labour laws, a rising ratio of wages to the price of capital and persistent informality are resulting in fewer good formal jobs than India is capable of and badly needs, it said.

The report suggests that the commission tasked with preparing the prospective plan for the period 2020-35 should comprise 4 or 5 knowledgeable persons who will reach out to central and state governments, training providers, companies and current as well as future workers.

"The Central and state governments should create appropriate incentives for workers to pursue such skills and make sure that labour markets are working efficiently," said the report in its policy recommendations for adapting and anticipating skills.

The report, unveiled Tuesday, also recommended improving the investment climate and ease of doing business.

It observed that India needs a trinity of unemployment benefits, old-age pensions and health benefits so that a flexible labour market may be created.

\RIt points out that India faces the challenge of promoting the creation of more well-paying jobs, including for women.

The other challenges include creating and regulating efficient pathways for skill acquisition and job matching to ensure workers have the right skills and employers find the right workers; and protecting the vast numbers of low-paid, informal, low-skilled workers with social protection benefits as they try to transition into better jobs.

Moreover, the report calls for changing the country's educational and training systems as quickly as possible to focus on quality, adaptability and learning outcomes.

It recommends simplifying the skills definitions to make it easier to understand what is needed, besides calling for a three-part framework comprising acquiring, matching and anticipating skills for improving the country's skilling ecosystem.

Secretary in the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship K P Krishnan said the report can fulfill the need for addressing information asymmetry and creating a high quality labour market system to deal with the skilling challenges faced by the country.

"Another challenge is to create a consolidated regulatory system which brings together the currently fragmented skilling system at the Union level rather than through the functioning of multiple agencies. The goal is to bring down government regulation in private institutions in the skilling and educational ecosystem," Krishnan said at the launch.

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