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Federation of Indian Mineral Industries

SKILLING IN MINING



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SKILL COUNCIL FOR MINING SECTOR

(Promoted by Federation of Indian Mineral Industries)
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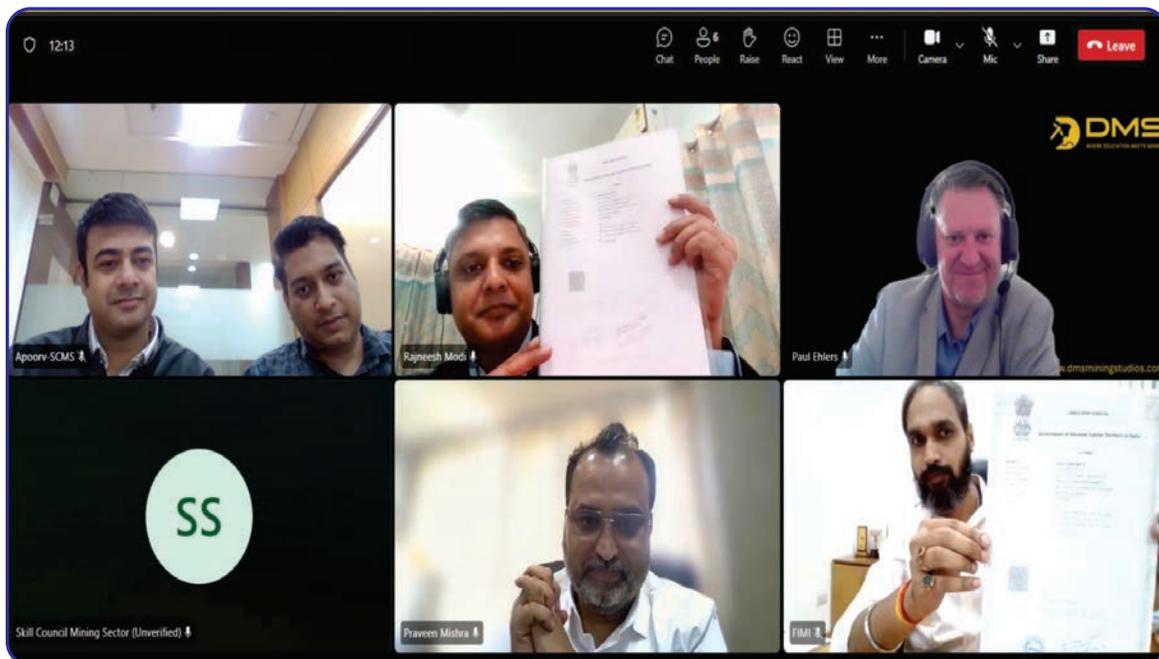
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MOU with DMS Mining Studios Private Limited

Skill Council for Mining Sector (SCMS) and DMS Mining Studios Private Limited entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 16th October 2025 with the objective of promoting advanced learning and skill development among mining professionals. This strategic collaboration aims to leverage cutting-edge simulation technology, deep operational insights, and real-world practical exposure to strengthen workforce capabilities across the mining sector.

Under the MOU, SCMS and DMS Mining Studios will jointly design and deliver training programs using gamified and simulation-based learning modules. These innovative training interventions are intended to enhance technical expertise, operational awareness, productivity, and decision-making capabilities, while fostering greater synchronicity and efficiency within the executive cadre of mining organizations.



Mr. Navneet Kumar, COO & Officiating CEO, SCMS, and Mr. Rajneesh Modi, Director, DMS Mining Studios Pvt. Ltd. signed the agreement in the presence of Mr. Paul Ehlers, CEO, DMS Mining Studios Pvt. Ltd., and Mr. Praveen Mishra, Mentor, DMS Mining Studios Pvt. Ltd.

Skill Council for Mining Sector Initiates Skill Gap Study (2025-30) for the Indian mining sector in collaboration with Ministry of Mines

SCMS is conducting the Skill Gap Study (2025-30) in the mining sector in collaboration with Ministry of Mines to develop a Skill Plan (2025-30). The first review meeting took place on 3rd July 2025 at Ministry of Mines. SCMS has constituted a Project Steering Committee for guidance and has representation from various Govt bodies, PSUs, private sector, recycling, academic and R&D institutions. The 1st meeting of Project Steering Committee was held on 12th November 2025.



1st meeting of Project Steering Committee

SCMS also organized a workshop in association with Ministry of Mines and with Deloitte India as Knowledge Partner on 16th December 2025.

The workshop commenced with a keynote address by Mr. Shakil Alam, Economic Adviser, Ministry of Mines, who shared valuable insights on the upgrading dynamics, policies, Govt. initiatives and support, etc. in the sector. He also mentioned that for the first time the entire mining value chain is being covered under the study, including Critical and Strategic Minerals.

The session brought together industry leaders, government representatives, academia, and training providers who provided valuable insights the following key focus areas:

- Workforce demand–supply dynamics
- Emerging skills and technology-driven roles
- Current skilling capacities and future readiness
- Collaborative pathways for a national skill roadmap



Glimpses of workshop conducted on Skill Gap Study

SCMS Showcases Mining Skill Innovation at IITF 2025

Skill Council for Mining Sector participated in the India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2025, held under the theme “Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat” from November 14–20 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi where the Ministry of Mines Pavilion was inaugurated by Hon’ble Union Minister of Coal & Mines, Shri G. Kishan Reddy.

The event witnessed the presence of Shri Piyush Goyal, Secretary, Ministry of Mines, along with the other senior officials from Ministry, industry representatives, and visitors. Shri Pramod Tyagi, Secretary General – FIMI and Convener – SCMS, attended the inaugural event. The pavilion also included participation from major organizations such as NALCO, Hindustan Copper Limited, Hindustan Zinc, Matrix India Minerals, and several others.

Shri Reddy took a detailed walkthrough of the Pavilion, interacted with Self Help Groups (SHGs) from various mining districts showcasing community-development initiatives supported through DMF funds. The Key highlights of the Pavilion are its focus on the National Critical Mineral Mission, sustainable mining practices, advanced exploration technologies, and innovations shaping India’s future in minerals and metals.

Among the featured initiatives, DMFT Keonjhar was selected by the Ministry of Mines for representation. Our Training Partner “PANTISS Foundation”, showcased the skilling project at the stall.

Mr. Kuldeep Singh, Deputy Manager – Multimedia Designer & TOT/TOA, SCMS managed the stall and demonstrated virtual-reality-based mining skill training courses. The immersive VR modules included Dumper/Tipper operations, Excavator operations, and Bulldozer operations, highlighting modern, technology-enabled training solutions for the mining workforce of the future.

The event offered visitors valuable insights into how the Ministry, through DMF and PMKKKY, is driving community development, skill-building and welfare initiatives across mining-affected regions in India.



Hon’ble Union Minister of Coal & Mines, Shri G. Kishan Reddy along with Shri Piyush Goyal, Secretary, Ministry of Mines & other senior officials including Secretary General FIMI, Shri Pramod Tyagi visited the stall managed by SCMS & PANTISS Group



SCMS representative demonstrated virtual-reality-based mining skill training courses to visitors

49th Meeting of the Governing Board of Skill Council for Mining Sector

The 49th meeting of the Governing Board of Skill Council for Mining Sector (SCMS) was held on 28th November 2025 at FIMI House, New Delhi which was chaired by Mr. Pankaj Kumar Satija, Executive Vice President, Corporate Affairs, JSW Group & Chairman-SCMS.

In the opening remarks, Mr. Pankaj Kumar Satija, Chairman-SCMS, welcomed the board members and highlighted the key activities undertaken by the SCMS during Q3. He then invited Mr. Navneet Kumar, COO & Officiating CEO, SCMS to take the proceedings forward in line with the agenda.

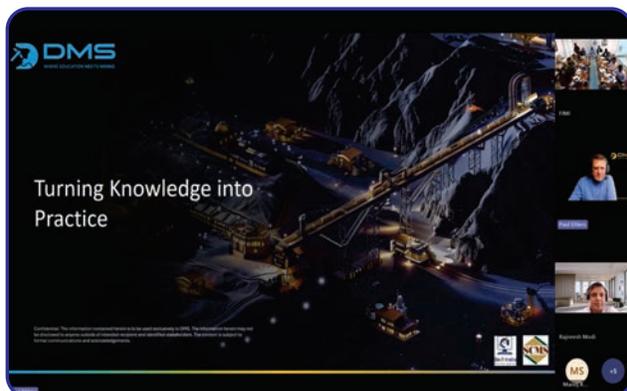
During the proceedings, Mr. Navneet Kumar delivered an insightful presentation, providing an overview of:

- Achievements of SCMS
- Ongoing initiatives and future plans
- Key challenges and areas requiring collective support from Governing Board members and the mining industry

Post conclusion of the Governing Board meeting, DMS Mining Studios Pvt. Ltd. delivered a brief presentation to all GB members on its advanced simulation software designed specifically for the entire mining chain. The presentation was led by Mr. Paul Ehlers, CEO & Founder, accompanied by Mr. Rajneesh Modi, CTO & Co-Founder, who together showcased the capabilities and potential applications of the simulation platform.



49th GB meeting in progress



Presentation by DMS Mining Studios Pvt. Ltd.

MOU with University of Western Australia (UWA)

Skill Council for Mining Sector (SCMS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the University of Western Australia (UWA) on 4th December 2025 at The Claridges, New Delhi, to jointly develop cutting-edge Micro-Credentials (pilot phase) aimed at strengthening India's mining workforce.

In the pilot phase, three job roles have been prioritized for joint development:

1. Mineral Extraction from Tailings
2. Job roles related to Critical Minerals
3. Job roles related to Mineral Exploration

The MoU signing ceremony witnessed the presence of a distinguished delegation from the University of Western Australia, led by Prof. Amit Chakma, Vice Chancellor, along with Prof. Jenniffer Howell, Pro Vice Chancellor (Global Engagement), Ms. Nashid Chowdhury, Director - Global Growth and Advocacy, Mr. Hiren Mandaliya, Project Director, and Ms. Vimala Srinivasan, Project Officer.

Representing SCMS were Mr. Pankaj Kumar Satija, Chairman - SCMS and Executive Vice President, Corporate Affairs, JSW Group, Mr. Navneet Kumar, COO and Officiating CEO, Mr. Deepak Mishra, Head - Standards & Quality Assurance, and Mr. Abhishek Shukla, Senior Manager - Industry Engagement & State Interface.

During the event, SCMS showcased its decade-long journey and key initiatives, including the Skill Gap Study undertaken in collaboration with the Ministry of Mines, as well as employment-linked skilling programs. These efforts illustrate how industry-driven qualifications and large-scale training interventions are playing a pivotal role in strengthening India's mining skills ecosystem. Both parties agreed to accelerate the operationalization of the Mutual Recognition of Qualifications (MRQ) mechanism and co-design bridge courses to align competencies and facilitate seamless workforce mobility.

SCMS also conveyed its sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India, for their encouragement and support throughout the planning and discussion phases of this collaboration.



MOU signing between SCMS & UWA

3rd Australia-India Education and Skills Council meeting

India and Australia convened a substantive bilateral dialogue to advance cooperation in skills development, workforce mobility, and the rapidly growing sports economy, at the 3rd Australia-India Education and Skills Council (AIESC) Meeting held on 8th December in New Delhi. The bilateral meet was co-chaired by Hon'ble MoS (I/C) for Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Shri Jayant Chaudhary & Minister of State for Education and Minister for Skills & Training, Commonwealth of Australia Mr. Andrew Giles MP.

The 3rd AIESC meeting reviewed the ongoing initiatives under school education, higher education, research, and skill development, and reaffirmed the commitment to deepen institutional linkages, expand mobility pathways, and strengthen regulatory cooperation. AIESC is a bi-national body that guides the strategic direction and strengthens the partnership between the two countries in the fields of the education, training, research and skill ecosystem. The deliberations acknowledged the strong upward trajectory in India-Australia relations and reinforced the need to translate this momentum into well-structured pathways for the movement of skilled professionals. Both sides agreed to accelerate operationalisation of the Mutual Recognition of Qualifications (MRQ) mechanism and to co-design bridge courses that align competencies and facilitate seamless mobility.

Mr. Navneet Kumar, COO & Officiating CEO, SCMS, participated in the meeting as a Speaker from Indian side, on the invitation from MSDE, on 8th and 9th December 2025. Ceremonial exchange of MOU between SCMS and The University of Western Australia took place under the kind presence of Hon'ble MoS (I/C) Shri Jayant Chaudhary and Mr. Andrew Giles - Minister for Skills & Training, Commonwealth of Australia on 8th December 2025.



Exchange of MOU between SCMS & University of Western Australia

EMIL Residential Female STT Training Program

Skill Council for Mining Sector (SCMS) has received a work order from Essel Mining & Industries Limited (EMIL) to conduct a residential Short-Term Training (STT) program for 60 female candidates in the trade of Dumper Operator. The training is being conducted for Amelia Coal Mining Limited (ACML) at Singrauli, Madhya Pradesh, with a strong focus on developing job-ready skills through structured, hands-on learning. The first batch of the program has commenced on 26th December 2025, with 30 candidates enrolled.

Recognizing SCMS's proven expertise in designing and delivering female-led training program within the mining sector, EMIL has entrusted SCMS as its training partner for capacity building under this initiative. The residential training model is designed to provide an immersive learning environment, enabling participants to gain technical competence, operational confidence, and safety awareness aligned with industry standards.

This initiative reflects a shared commitment by SCMS and EMIL to promote gender inclusion, strengthen workforce participation, and build a skilled talent pipeline for heavy earthmoving machinery operations in the mining sector. The program is expected to play a significant role in empowering women with sustainable employment opportunities while contributing to the availability of a competent and diverse workforce for mining operations.



Glimpses of Mobilization, Counselling & Batch Commencement

**Recognition of Thriveni Earthmovers & Infra Pvt. Ltd.
VTC as Centre of Excellence**

Skill Council for Mining Sector (SCMS) has recognized Thriveni Earthmovers & Infra Pvt. Ltd., Surajgarh Iron Ore Mines, Gadchiroli as Centre of Excellence (CoE) of SCMS. This recognition underscores Thriveni’s commitment to modern mining practices, workforce development, and the promotion of industry-led skill advancement. To formalize the partnership, SCMS and Thriveni Earthmovers & Infra Pvt. Ltd. signed a MOU on 10th December 2025.

The MOU was signed by Mr. Navneet Kumar, COO & Officiating CEO, SCMS, and Mr. Sasidhar Aripaka, GM - Technical Training, Thriveni Earthmovers & Infra Pvt. Ltd., in the presence of Mr. Thanigaipathi S, AGM - Training, Thriveni Earthmovers, Mr. Deepak Mishra, Head - Standards & Quality Assurance, SCMS and Mr. Abhishek Shukla, Sr. Manager - Industry Engagement & State Interface, SCMS.

During the discussions, both parties explored the implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) programs and plans for the upcoming National Centre of Excellence (NCoE) in Bhubaneswar. This collaboration marks a significant milestone in strengthening the mining skill ecosystem, fostering industry-ready talent, and promoting excellence in vocational training across the sector.



**MOU signed between SCMS & Thriveni Earthmovers & Infra Pvt. Ltd.
Mr. Navneet Kumar, COO-SCMS, presented the Certificate of Recognition for
Centre of Excellence to Mr. Sasidhar Aripaka, GM – Technical Training, Thriveni
Earthmovers & Infra Pvt. Ltd for their VTC**

**Webinar on “The Use of Simulation Twins in
Operational Improvement Programs”**

Skill Council for Mining Sector (SCMS) organized a webinar titled “The Use of Simulation Twins in Operational Improvement Programs” on 8th December 2025, bringing together mining professionals to explore innovative approaches for improving productivity, reducing operational variability, and strengthening workforce capability. The session highlighted the limitations of traditional improvement programs in high-risk mining environments and presented Simulation Twins as a practical, scalable solution.

The webinar explained how Simulation Twins-gamified, rule-based, and synthesized replicas of mining operations-enable teams to safely experiment with decisions, test improvement strategies, and understand system-wide interactions without dependence on full real-time data maturity. By combining simplified

geometry, simulated sensors, and process logic within interactive environments, Simulation Twins accelerate learning, reduce implementation risk, and help validate high-value operational improvements well before a full Digital Twin becomes feasible.

The session was delivered by Mr. Paul Ehlers, CEO and Founder of DMS Mining Studios, who brings over 25 years of global mining experience across open-pit and underground operations. A leading advocate of simulation-driven learning, Mr. Ehlers shared insights from his work on developing gamified, scenario-based training and decision-support tools that enhance operational understanding, improve site performance, and support the mining industry's transition toward smarter, more integrated, and sustainable practices.

The webinar was attended by multiple participants from mining organizations, academia, SMEs, etc.



Mr. Paul Ehlers, Deliberating a session

MINING & EXPLORATION

India approves coal exports amid healthy power station stocks

India's cabinet permitted the export of coal as the country's power plants have a surplus, information minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said. Power plants that have access to coal supply will be permitted to export up to 50% of their allocation and use coal flexibly across group companies. India, the world's second-largest coal producer, has been opening its coal sector to private players and commercial mining to meet rising energy demand and reduce import dependence. The move to allow export of domestic coal comes as the country's coal-fired power generation, which typically accounts for about 75% of India's electricity output, has fallen on an annual basis in seven out of 11 months this year, the most since 2020.

The move will also benefit the country's top coal miner, Coal India, which accounts for about three quarters of the country's production. India is the world's No.2 coal producer and consumer after China. Indian power plants have comfortable stock levels because domestic coal production is strong and electricity demand growth has slowed, iEnergy Natural Resources said this week in a report.

The cabinet also approved the auction of coal for any industrial use. The policy will allow domestic buyers to secure long-term coal supplies through auctions without end-use restrictions, except for coking coal, which will not be offered under the scheme. Traders will be barred from participating, the government said. The move aims to accelerate coal reserve utilisation, ease business processes and cut reliance on imports, the government said in a statement.

(Miningweekly.com – 12 December, 2025)

GENERAL

Shri Jayant Chaudhary Unveils NITI Aayog's Roadmap on AI for Inclusive Societal Development

Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Minister of State for Education, Government of India and Vice Chairperson, NITI Aayog, Shri Suman Bery, launched NITI Aayog's Frontier Tech Hub study, "AI for Inclusive Societal Development," developed in partnership with Deloitte.

The launch of report scheme was also attended by distinguished dignitaries including Smt. Debashree Mukherjee, Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Ms. Vandana Gurnani, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Shri S. Krishnan, Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, the CEO of NITI Aayog, and Ms. Debjani Ghosh, Distinguished Fellow at NITI Aayog and Chief Architect of the NITI Frontier Tech Hub. Their presence highlighted the collaborative approach of the Government in transforming the skill development ecosystem through modernized ITIs, strong industry linkages, and technology-driven skilling initiatives.

The pioneering report is a first-of-its-kind effort to systematically explore how Artificial Intelligence (AI) and frontier technologies can transform the lives and livelihoods of India's 490 million informal workers - the backbone of the nation's economy.

While global discourse on AI has largely centred on white-collar jobs and the formal economy, the study shifts focus to the informal sector, which contributes nearly half of India's GDP yet remains excluded from formal systems of protection, opportunity, and productivity.

Shri Chaudhary noted that the report provides a roadmap for leveraging AI to drive inclusion and productivity in the informal economy, aligning with India's vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Shri Jayant Chaudhary, said, "Empowering India's informal workers are not just an economic priority, it is a moral imperative. The goal of Digital Skilling in AI for workers aligns perfectly with our national skilling agenda by leveraging AI and frontier technologies to make learning adaptive, accessible, and demand-driven. By bringing together government, industry, and civil society, this mission will ensure that every worker—whether a farmer, artisan, or healthcare aide - has the skills, tools, and opportunities needed to thrive in the digital economy of tomorrow."

NITI Aayog's Frontier Tech Hub emphasizes that AI alone cannot transform the informal sector - technology by itself cannot dismantle deep-rooted systemic barriers. Without deliberate human intent, targeted investments, and an enabling ecosystem, the promise of AI will remain out of reach for those who need it most.

To bridge this gap, NITI Aayog has proposed Mission Digital ShramSetu - a national mission to build the roadmap and ecosystem that make AI accessible, affordable, and impactful for every worker. The mission will leverage AI, blockchain, immersive learning, and other frontier technologies to tackle constraints such as financial insecurity, limited market access, and lack of skilling or social protection - empowering informal workers with digital tools that enhance productivity, opportunity, and dignity in work.

The mission underlines that inclusion demands intent, collaboration, and coordinated action across government, industry, academia, and civil society. Only through such collective effort can AI become a true equalizer - bringing millions at the margins into the mainstream of India's growth story and advancing the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

The roadmap underscored that delays carry a heavy cost: at the current pace, informal workers' average annual income may stagnate around \$6,000 by 2047, far below the \$14,500 threshold needed for India to achieve high-income status - making immediate action imperative.

Mr. B.V.R. Subrahmanyam, CEO, NITI Aayog, emphasized the non-negotiable need for collaboration:

“If we are serious about transforming the lives of India’s 490 million informal workers, collaboration is not optional - it is non-negotiable. This goal demands cross-functional action: from focused R&D that reduces the cost of frontier technologies, to building a sustainable ecosystem of innovation tailored to the informal sector, to skilling and reskilling at scale. Only by uniting government, industry, academia, and civil society can we ensure that this mission delivers not just technology adoption, but real, lasting empowerment.”

Ms. Debjani Ghosh, Distinguished Fellow, NITI Aayog and Chief Architect of the Frontier Tech Hub, added, “For India to achieve its \$30 trillion Viksit Bharat 2047 aspiration, we cannot leave behind the 490 million workers who power our economy every day. AI will not transform their lives on its own - it requires us to deliberately build the roadmap and ecosystem that make these technologies accessible and affordable. This roadmap is unique because it finally puts their voices, challenges, and aspirations at the center of the AI conversation and lays out a mission mode approach as the pathway to turn this promise into reality.”

(Press Information Bureau, New Delhi – 8 October, 2025)

3rd Australia-India Education and Skills Council meeting (AIESC)

The 3rd Australia-India Education and Skills Council meeting (AIESC) held on 8th December 2025, was chaired by Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister of Education, Government of India and Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Education, from the Indian side. From Australia, the meeting was chaired by Hon Jason Clare MP, Minister for Education, Government of Australia and Hon. Mr. Andrew Giles MP, Australian Minister for Skills & Training.

The meeting was also attended by Dr Sukanta Majumdar, Minister of State for Education and DoNER; Hon Julian Hill MP, Assistant Minister for International Education, Govt of Australia, Shri Sanjay Kumar, Secretary, School Education, Dr. Vineet Joshi; Secretary, Higher Education; Ms. Debashree Mukherjee, Secretary, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship; senior government officials from both the sides and Vice-Chancellors & representatives of Australian universities. The 3rd AIESC meeting reviewed the ongoing initiatives under school education, higher education, research, and skill development, and reaffirmed the commitment to deepen institutional linkages, expand mobility pathways, and strengthen regulatory cooperation. AIESC is a bi-national body that guides the strategic direction and strengthens the partnership between the two countries in the fields of the education, training, research and skill ecosystem.

Speaking on the occasion Shri Pradhan said that the 3rd AIESC served as a great opportunity to build upon the progress made since the inaugural meeting of AIESC, break new ground in Australia-India education, skills and research partnership, open wider avenues for India’s youth, and further deepen our bilateral engagements across the full spectrum of education and skill development as well as in areas of national and global priority.

He appreciated the Australian Ministers and the delegation for the substantive discussions on the agenda items - school education, higher education and research and skills and also for their vigorous efforts to elevate the AIESC platform to a higher-level. Shri Pradhan further said that education, skills and research are the key pillars of India-Australia Strategic Partnership. Both India and Australia remain committed to working together and collaborating more in Early Childhood Care and Education, technology adoption, sports education, building institutional capacities, empowering teachers, preparing youth for critical and

emerging areas, like AI, advanced materials, semiconductors, MedTech, energy, and sustainability and also for innovative skilling partnerships, he added.

Taking forward the spirit of collaboration and ambition, the Minister urged all stakeholders to successfully implement the outcome-centric and in-depth discussions held today across school, higher and skill education and to ensure that the bridges built today continue to grow stronger in the years to come.

He mentioned that the agenda today focused on integrating sports curriculum into school and higher education. This marks the beginning of a wide-ranging partnership in the field of sports. Shri Pradhan said that both sides should also explore opportunities for collaboration in the area of Hackathons at both School and Higher Education levels to address the pressing challenges of everyday life.

Speaking on the occasion, Hon Jason Clare MP, Australian Minister for Education, said “This is a win-win. It is good for Australia and it is good for India. “It is a great sign of the strength of the relationship between India and Australia.”

Highlighting the depth and uniqueness of the India–Australia skilling partnership, Shri Jayant Chaudhary stated that the two countries share a one-of-its-kind institutional platform that is translating discussions into tangible outcomes through structured frameworks, such as, the Mutual Recognition of Qualifications (MRQ) 2023, a dedicated Skills Mapping Framework for demand assessment, and the signing of three key MoUs to strengthen cooperation.

He noted that sectors, such as agriculture which have already created functional mobility pathways for utilising recognised qualifications and stressed the need to replicate this success across emerging domains. Emphasising youth-centric collaborations, he underlined that both sides have agreed that sports is a major area of cooperation, particularly in the context of marquee global sporting events to be hosted by both the countries in the near future.

Further, Hon Andrew Giles MP, Australian Minister for Skills & Training, said that “Australia and India share a critical partnership which is invaluable to progressing both nations’ skills and training capabilities. Growing our nation’s footprint represents another significant step forward for this relationship.”

Elaborating further, Hon Julian Hill MP, Assistant Minister for International education said, “Today’s announcement reflects the strength of the Australia-India education relationship. By bringing worldclass Australian education directly to India, UNSW has reinforced the commitment made by other Australian institutions to educate and support Indian students to access high quality education”.

Shri Dharmendra Pradhan also held a bilateral meeting with his Australian Counterpart, Hon Jason Clare MP, and Hon Julian Hill MP, Assistant Minister for International Education, today. During the meeting the Ministers reviewed the existing cooperation in education, innovation and research and had meaningful discussions on further deepening engagements from ‘Pre-school to PhD’. Shri Pradhan stressed that fostering critical thinking in our students and creating an AI-ready generation are priorities for India. He further said that both the Ministers remain committed adding new dynamism to the vibrant India-Australia educational partnership, including through collaborations between HEIs of both our countries, joint research funding in areas of strategic importance and smoother pathways for two-way mobility, among others.

A key highlight of the day was the handing over of the Letter of Intent (LoI) to the University of New South Wales (UNSW) under the University Grants Commission (Setting up and Operation of Campuses of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions in India) Regulations, 2023, by Dr. Vineet Joshi, Secretary, Higher Education and Chairman UGC. UNSW is one of Australia’s premier universities and an academic institution ranked top-20 globally in the QS World University Rankings. This is in addition to the Letter of Intent given to 4 Australian universities earlier this year, including La Trobe University, Victoria University, Western

Sydney University and University of Western Australia, to establish campuses in India. With this LoI, we now have 7 Australian Universities with 8 campuses across India.

Discussions were organised around the following thematic pillars:

A. School Education and Higher Education & Research

- early childhood education and care collaborations
- teacher professional development
- sports integration in school education
- avenues for a CBSE-affiliated school in Australia
- updates on foreign university campuses
- online and blended learning
- announcement of 10 new SPARC-funded India–Australia research projects in frontier areas such as AI, quantum, biodiversity, MedTech, sustainability, smart mobility, and space (₹9.84 crores sanctioned, i.e., 1.64 million AUD). With this, out of a total of 865 projects, 129 are with top Australian universities, with a combined financial value of 16 million AUD.

B. Skills, Training & Workforce Development

- joint curricula in priority sectors
- bridge courses and mutual recognition pathways
- partnerships between NSTIs and Australian TAFEs
- new opportunities in hospitality, construction, agriculture, digital technologies, and health sciences
- operationalisation of Centres of Excellence, including the NCoE agenda

During the day, multiple Indian and Australian higher educational institutions and skilling bodies exchanged MoUs/LoIs to deepen cooperation:

1. **LoI on Early Childhood Education (GoI & Australia):** Alignment of the CBSE ECCE curriculum with Australia’s Certificate III in ECEC, promoting workforce development and curriculum innovation.
2. **James Cook University & Government of Odisha:** Establishment of a Marine Ecological Research Centre linked to the Odisha Marine Biotechnology & Innovation Corridor.
3. **University of Western Australia, Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Mumbai & Indian Institute of Technology (Indian School of Mines) Dhanbad:** Collaboration in mining exploration, mining logistics, and mining automation and sustainability.
4. **Deakin University & Confederation of Indian Industry (CII):** National scaling of Deakin’s Global Job Readiness Program to improve employability outcomes for Indian learners.
5. **Deakin University & IIT Roorkee:** Setting up a Centre of Excellence in Disaster Resilience.
6. **Western Sydney University & Government of Andhra Pradesh:** Agricultural research and innovation through linking WSU to Andhra Pradesh’s Ratan Tata Innovation Hub.
7. **Monash University & Government of Uttar Pradesh:** Establishment of a Teaching Excellence Academy for large-scale teacher professional development.
8. **University of Western Australia (UWA) & Skill Council for Mining Sector:** Development of a global mining talent pool between Australia and India.

The Australian Minister, Hon. Jason Clare, invited Shri Dharmendra Pradhan for the 4th AIESC meeting in Australia. Both Ministers agreed that more deliverables and outcomes should be achieved within a clear timeline. **(Press Information Bureau, New Delhi – 8 December, 2025)**

Govt. amends Colliery Control Rules to ease opening coal, lignite mines

The government announced it has amended the Colliery Control Rules in order to simplify the provisions governing approval for the opening of coal and lignite mines. It said the change would make the coal sector more business friendly and removes procedural redundancies.

What did the earlier rules require for opening coal and lignite mines?

Under the earlier rules, a coal or lignite mine owner was required to obtain prior permission from the Coal Controller's Organisation (CCO) for opening the mine as well as individual seams or sections of a seam. The CCO's permission was also required for starting a mine if it was not operational for more than 180 days.

"To eliminate procedural redundancies, accelerate coal production, and improve efficiency in the approval process, the requirement of obtaining prior opening permission from the CCO has now been dispensed with through amendment of Rule 9 of the Colliery Control Rules, 2004. The Notification amending this Rule has been issued on 23 December 2025," the coal ministry said in a statement.

Who will approve mine opening permission under the amended rules?

Under the amended provisions, the authority to approve mine opening permission has now been vested with the board of the concerned coal company. This reform would streamline the approval process, while ensuring that compliance responsibility remains firmly with the company's highest decision-making authority, the ministry said, adding this reform is expected to reduce up to two months in operationalisation of a mine.

What safeguards have been included in the new process?

As a safeguard, the new rules provide that the board of the coal company can approve mine or seam opening after the requisite approvals from the government and statutory bodies have been obtained, and the company has to submit information about mine opening to the CCO.

(Business Standard, New Delhi – 26 December, 2025)

ALLIED INDUSTRY

Steel demand to grow 8 percent in FY26 amid price pressures: ICRA

The domestic steel demand is estimated to grow by around 8 percent in FY26, but softer steel prices will keep margins under pressure for producers, rating agency ICRA said on 17th December 2025. In a report, IcrA projected the industry's operating margin to remain flat at about 12.5 percent in FY26, lower than earlier expectations of an improvement. "While we project steel demand growth to remain healthy at 8 percent for FY26, incremental supply has created a temporary surplus, resulting in continued pressure on steel prices," said Girishkumar Kadam, Senior Vice-President & Group Head, Corporate Sector Ratings, ICRA.

Domestic hot-rolled coil (HRC) prices, which had spiked to Rs 52,850 per tonne in April 2025 following a safeguard duty, corrected to around Rs 46,000 per tonne in November and are currently trading below import parity, Icria noted. Structural headwinds in China have led to its steel exports reaching an all-time high of 88 million tonnes in the first nine months of CY2025, weighing on global prices. Chinese HRC export prices averaged about USD 465 per tonne in the first seven months of FY26, down from USD 496 per tonne a year earlier.

While India's finished steel imports have declined sharply by about 33 percent year-on-year in the current fiscal, the rating agency emphasised that the continuation of the safeguard duty remains critical to prevent a surge in imports. In its baseline scenario, it expects domestic HRC prices to average around Rs 50,500 per tonne in FY2026. Operating profit per tonne of steel production is pegged at USD 108, marginally below the USD 110 per tonne registered in FY2025.

The sector outlook is maintained as 'Stable'.

The rating agency also highlighted risks to the large capacity expansion plans of the industry. Domestic steel mills are targeting an addition of 80-85 million tonne, involving investments of USD 45-50 billion over FY26-31. However, unless earnings improve meaningfully, such large-scale investments could spike industry leverage levels over the medium term. On green steel, Kadam said, "Green steel's share in India's overall demand is expected to rise from about 2 percent (around 4 MT) in FY2030 to nearly 40 percent (150 MT) by FY2050".

However, he noted that the economics remain challenging, with large-scale adoption constrained until green hydrogen prices fall closer to USD 1.5-1.6 per kg, which is unlikely in the near to medium term.

(The Economic Times, New Delhi – 17 December, 2025)

Govt to prioritise steel output, raw material security as 2030 target nears

The government will continue to prioritise higher steel production and raw material security in the coming year, as India enters the final five years of its journey towards achieving an installed steelmaking capacity of 300 million tonne (MT) by 2030. Alongside capacity expansion, the emphasis will remain on the adoption of low-carbon technologies, the development of green steel capacity and the production of special and high-end steel grades to meet the evolving needs of domestic industries and export markets, a steel ministry official said.

The push comes at a time when India is the world's second-largest crude steel producer, and steel demand continues to be supported by strong infrastructure spending, housing, railways, automobiles, defence manufacturing and capital goods under government initiatives such as PM Gati Shakti, National Infrastructure Pipeline, and Make in India. However, the industry is also bracing for continued challenges in 2025, including rising imports, volatile raw material prices and global trade uncertainties. Imports, particularly from Asian markets, remain a concern for domestic producers despite safeguard and anti-dumping measures already in place.

In May 2017, the government unveiled the ambitious National Steel Policy (NSP), targeting the addition of over 200 MT of steelmaking capacity with investments estimated at around Rs 10 lakh crore. The policy also envisages actual steel production of 250 MT and per capita steel consumption of 160 kg by 2030-31. According to steel ministry data, India's steel production capacity rose from 97 MT in 2012-13 to 138 MT in 2017-18, and has since expanded steadily with significant brownfield and greenfield investments by both public and private sector players.

As per data research firm BigMint, India's installed steelmaking capacity was 235 MT as of November 2025, and it is estimated to remain at around the same levels by FY26. The production is projected at 167 MT against current levels of 110 MT. By March 2026, the per capita steel consumption is estimated at 107 kg, compared with 105 kg currently. Based on these estimates, the country needs to add another 65 MT of capacity over the next five years to stay on track for the NSP targets.

A steel ministry official said the government has taken several steps to protect the domestic industry, including the imposition of safeguard duties and anti-dumping duties on imports of flat steel products from countries such as China and Vietnam. To promote value-added steel, the ministry has rolled out the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, offering fiscal incentives for the manufacturing of high-end and speciality steel used in sectors such as defence, power transmission, renewable energy, automobiles and aviation.

The government is also focusing on strengthening raw material availability. "New reserves of coking coal are being explored, and we are engaging with resource-rich countries to diversify sourcing," the official said. For iron ore, auctions are already underway, and steelmakers are encouraged to participate. The ministry is also promoting beneficiation and pelletisation of low-grade iron ore to improve resource efficiency. With just five years left to meet NSP targets, industry leaders say momentum must accelerate.

Naveen Jindal, President of the Indian Steel Association (ISA), said India has made strong progress, but needs faster execution. "The pathway ahead demands sustained demand creation, policy stability and bold investments. These will determine whether India not only meets its goals but sets a new benchmark in competitive, low-carbon steelmaking," said Jindal, who is also Chairman of Jindal Steel.

Industry body Assocham noted that while the government support has been significant, challenges such as rising coking coal costs, high logistics expenses, limited availability of railway rakes and infrastructure bottlenecks continue to weigh on the sector. Assocham expects a pickup in steel demand and does not anticipate further relaxation of quality control orders (QCOs). It also flagged growing trade barriers globally.

"Trade restrictions imposed by other countries on Indian steel exports are increasing. Some relief could emerge if free trade agreements with the EU and the US are concluded, supporting the domestic industry," it said. On the green steel transition, PHDCCI Secretary General Ranjeet Mehta said it remains a highly capital-intensive industry, with greenfield capacity requiring very large investments per tonne.

Referring to the European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), he cautioned that as global demand shifts towards low-carbon steel, Indian producers, many of whom rely on coal-based blast furnace routes, could face competitiveness challenges unless decarbonisation accelerates through technologies like hydrogen-based DRI, increased scrap usage and renewable energy integration.

Meanwhile, ratings agency Icria has projected around 8 percent growth in steel demand in FY26, although pricing pressures are expected to persist. The industry has added a record 15 MT of capacity over the past three to four quarters, with another 5 MT likely by the end of FY2026. However, incremental demand of about 1112 MT has lagged supply growth, creating a temporary surplus and softening domestic prices.

Commenting on price trends, Girishkumar Kadam, Senior Vice-President and Group Head, Corporate Sector Ratings, Icria, said domestic hot-rolled coil (HRC) prices have corrected sharply. "Domestic HRC (hot rolled coils) prices have declined from Rs 52,850 per tonne in April 2025 to around Rs 46,000 per tonne by November 2025, trading below import parity. Despite healthy underlying demand, pricing remains under pressure due to global headwinds and elevated Chinese exports," Kadam said.

(Business Standard, New Delhi – 26 December, 2025)

SCMS IN ACTION

IMFA Jajpur (Odisha) – CER Project

SCMS received a work order from Indian Metals & Ferro Alloys Limited (IMFA) on 5th September 2025 to conduct training and certification program under the CER Project at IMFA's Jajpur facility in Odisha. The project covers training for a total of 90 candidates in the trades of Dumper/Tipper Operator, Loader Operator - Underground, and Loader Operator (Mining).

The first batch of 30 candidates for the Dumper/Tipper Operator commenced on 16th October 2025, followed by the second batch of 30 candidates for the Loader Operator (Mining), which began on 6th December 2025. Both the batches consists of a diverse mix of male and female candidates, reflecting the programs inclusive approach to skill development.

This initiative is playing a vital role in strengthening the mining ecosystem by creating a skilled, safety-oriented, and job-ready workforce.



Glimpses of Classroom, Simulator & Practical Training

IMFA Jajpur (Odisha) – One-Day Defensive Driving Training Program

SCMS received a work order from Indian Metals & Ferro Alloys Limited (IMFA) on 6th November 2025 to conduct a one-day Defensive Driving Training and Certification program for 48 candidates at IMFA's premises in Kaliapani, Sukinda, Jajpur, Odisha.

The training program was successfully conducted on 12th November 2025 at the GVTC, IMFA, as part of the 43rd Annual Mines Safety Week observance. A total of 48 trainees from various mines across the Jajpur region participated in the program. The session focused on strengthening safe driving practices in mining operations, with emphasis on hazard identification, compliance with road safety protocols, and responsible vehicle handling in challenging mining environments.

The program concluded with the successful certification of all participants, reinforcing the importance of proactive safety measures to reduce accidents and promote a safer and more responsible working environment across mining operations.



Glimpses of one-day Defensive Driving Training and Certification program

Consultative Workshop on PM-SETU

A Consultative Workshop for various stakeholders for the implementation of the Component-II of Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs (PM-SETU) scheme was held on 9th November 2025 in Chennai. The workshop was chaired by the Ms. Debashree Mukherjee, Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India, and co-chaired by the Ms. Madhusmita Das, Additional Secretary & Financial Adviser, MSDE.

Mr. Navneet Kumar, COO & Officiating CEO, SCMS attended the meeting on behalf of SCMS at the invitation of DGT.

MOU with District Mineral Foundation Trust, Keonjhar

Skill Council for Mining Sector (SCMS) is executing a Skill Development Project with District Mineral Foundation Trust, Keonjhar (Odisha) for “Short term Training” project covering 720 local candidates/PAPs in the trades of Mine Electrician, Mine Welder, HEMM Mechanic, HEMM Electrician, Hydra Crane Operator, Dumper/Tipper Operator, Loader Operator, Excavator Operator and Upskilling/Reskilling of 500 existing mine’s workers in their related trades through RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) program.

At the Training Centre set up near Nihal Singh Square, Keonjhar, on 15th October 2025, Dr. Reena Pradhan, IAS, Chief Executive Officer, District Mineral Foundation (DMF), Keonjhar, along with Shri Pawan Kumar, IAS, visited and inspected the Training Centre. During the visit, they reviewed the infrastructure, training facilities, classrooms, and residential arrangements made for the candidates. After a detailed inspection and interaction with the centre team, Dr. Reena Pradhan and Shri Pawan Kumar expressed their satisfaction with the overall preparedness of the centre and approved the commencement of training programs at the facility.

So far, the STT training of 60 candidates in HEMM Mechanic trade has been completed, while training for another batch of 60 candidates is currently underway. Placement 40 trained candidates has also been completed, and the placement process for the remaining candidates is in progress. Under the RPL program comprising two days of training followed by one day of assessment, the training and certification of 470 existing mine workers have been completed.

The project is being strongly monitored by the District Administration, DMFT Team and dedicated team from Chief Ministers Office. All updates are being shared by the District team on social media platforms and tagging the CMO.



RPL training program of DMFT-Keonjhar



DMF-Keonjhar officials visited training centre



Glimpses of STT training of DMFT-Keonjhar

MOU with District Mineral Foundation Trust, Jajpur

SCMS is executing Phase-II of the Skill Development Project at Jajpur, Odisha under funding from DMFT for Short Term Training (STT) for 360 local youth in the trades of Mine Electrician, Mine Welder, HEMM Mechanic, Hydra Crane Operator, Dumper/Tipper Operator, Excavator Operator and upskilling/re-skilling of 500 existing mine's workers in their related trades through RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) program.

The training of 180 STT candidates in the trades of Mine Electrician, HEMM Mechanic, Excavator Operator and Dumper/Tipper Operator have been completed so far. Currently training of 60 candidates is under progress at the Skill Development Centre, Chandama, Vyasnagar, Jajpur. Multiple placement drives have been conducted and a total of 114 candidates have been offered the jobs so far. Under RPL, 280 existing mine workers have been trained and 174 have been certified so far. For rest of the targets, continuous mobilization and registration activities are being carried out currently.

On 7th December 2025, the nominated nodal officer from government of Odisha, Shri Sanjeev Kumar Mishra, Principal Secretary, Department of Finance, Government of Odisha, visited the centre along with the District Collector, Jajpur, Shri Amber Kumar Kar and CDO, Jajpur, Shri Yudhister Nayak. The officials inspected the facilities and live trainings in Class Rooms, Practical Labs, AR/VR Lab, and Simulator training room etc. The officials also met and interacted with both the currently undergoing trainees and already trained and placed trainees, under the program. The officials were satisfied with the training quality including facilities available and placement output. Post inspection, the officials also had a briefing to press media about the program.



Against this Work Order, 583 candidates have been trained and assessed till 30th December 2025. The program has been planned with 2 days of soft skills-cum-domain skills training followed by assessment on the third day.



Training & Assessment at MOIL

**NLC India Ltd. Reskilling and Upskilling Program
for Regular & Contractual Workforce**

SCMS has been awarded the project for RPL/reskilling/upskilling training program of 100 regular/contractual workforces by NLC India Ltd. in November 2025 wherein the employees was to be trained & assessed for the job roles of Mine Welder, Bulldozer Operator, Dumper/Tipper Operator, Mine Electrician, and Mine Mechanic/Fitter. The training program was planned in 2+1 mode (2 days of soft skills and domain training followed by assessment on the third day). The training commenced on 15th December 2025 and is scheduled for successful completion by end of January 2026.



Glimpses of Assessment at NLCIL

Adani Enterprises (Talabira) STT Project

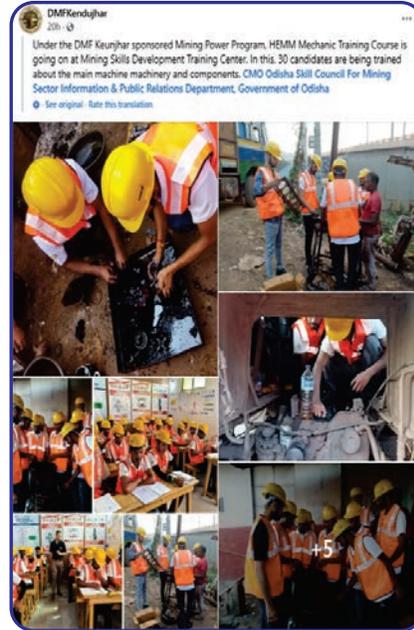
Post successful completion of Phase-I STT program, SCMS again received a similar work assignment from Adani Enterprises for skilling another lot of 20 fresh youth (PAPs) for the trades of Mine Electrician, HEMM Mechanic, Mine Mechanic/Fitter and Assistant Opencast Mines.

The program was initiated with 17 candidates on 1st December 2025 at SCMS Training Centre, Jajpur and is currently ongoing.



Practical Training in Mine Electrician & Mine Mechanic/Fitter roles is underway

MEDIA



Ministry of Mines, Govt of India
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A vibrant Sunday at the DMF Pavilion, IITF 2025!

Visitors are flocking to explore and shop local treasures — from aromatic herbal tea of Tehri Garhwal and fine Sambalpuri cloth from Jharsuguda to pure lemongrass oil and organic rice from Dantewada.

The crowd's favorite attraction: a VR dumper simulation offering a glimpse into mining safety and skill training under DMFT Keonjhar.

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Inaugurated the Ministry of Mines Pavilion at the India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2025 today in New Delhi.

With the participation of all Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) under the Ministry — NALCO, HCL, GSI, MECL, JNARDDC, NIRM — along with Hindalco & HZL, the pavilion reflects the best of India's mining ecosystem.

Narendra Modi and 7 others

Jayant Singh • Following
 Minister of State (Independent Charge) - Ministry of Skill Developme...
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Met **Amit Chakma**, Vice Chancellor **The University of Western Australia**.

Discussed UWA's upcoming campuses in Mumbai and Chennai, joint work in **#STEM** and mining technology, and the new MoU with Mining Sector Skill Council to expand industry-aligned skilling, stackable micro-credentials and applied research.

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3rd Australia-India Education and Skills Council (AIESC) meeting held today in New Delhi was host to wide ranging deliberations on strengthening the India Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. ...more



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