

# Centre accelerates bid to skill Indians seeking foreign jobs

**NEW DELHI:** The Ministries of External Affairs, and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship formalised an agreement on Saturday to implement the Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PKVY), a scheme designed to offer skill development to Indians seeking jobs overseas. The MoU will institutionalise a framework to provide skill training to lakhs of Indians who go abroad to work every year.

On the occasion, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj said Indian emigrant workers, especially those who went to the Gulf through recruitment agents, were exploited due to lack of requisite skills. She termed the Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana as a "milestone" for Indian workforce seeking employment overseas, adding that acquiring skills raises employability and earning potential.

PKVY is a skill development initiative of the MEA in partnership with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), which is aimed at training and certification of Indian workforce in select sectors and job roles, in line with international standards, to facilitate overseas employment oppor-

tunities, a statement said.

"There are approximately 7-8 lakh emigrant workers going abroad every year. However, most going to the Gulf are not appropriately empowered in terms of rules, language, culture of that country or even the finesse that is required for a particular trade," said Additional Secretary, MEA, Dnyaneshwar M Mulay.

"PKVY is an important aspect of Ministry of External Affairs' mandate to train these workers as part of the five year planned programme. However, it has not been given effect and through this MoU, we will be implementing our commitment for the 12th Plan."

As part of the MoU, potential emigrant workers may avail work-related skill training under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) or any other similar government skill programme, which will adopt transnational standards.

The skill development ministry through the National Skill Development Corporation India (NSDC) proposes to establish customised International Skill Centres to operationalise this initiative. P11