

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

**FINANCE MINISTER GIVES AWAY STAR CERTIFICATES TO OVER
300 CANDIDATES OF THE NATIONAL SKILL CERTIFICATION AND
MONETARY REWARD SCHEME (STAR) ; OVER ONE LAKH
ENROLLED UNDER STAR SCHEME SINCE SEPTEMBER 2013; FIRST
EVER SKILLING CARD IN INDIA: NSDC-BANK OF INDIA STAR
DEBIT CARD LAUNCHED**

New Delhi, February 5, 2014
Magha 16, 1935

The Union Finance Minister, Shri P. Chidambaram felicitated here today the first batch of over 300 successful candidates from the National Capital Region (NCR), who have completed their industry oriented training courses under the National Skill Certification and Monetary Reward Scheme. These candidates who were trained under the STAR scheme skilled in 11 different industry sectors received their STAR certificates on the completion of their respective courses. The scheme was launched by the Finance Minister on August 16, 2013 and is being implemented on a pan-India basis by the

Branded as STAR (Standard Training Assessment & Reward), the scheme is the first of its kind in the country and was first proposed by the Finance Minister in the last Union Budget. A sum of Rs 1,000 crore was allocated for this initiative with an objective to motivate 1 million youth of our country during the first year of launch to acquire a vocational skill which will help make their lives better.

Speaking at the certificate distribution event in the Capital today, the Finance Minister said, "I would like to congratulate each and every successful candidate on this momentous occasion. This is our first milestone under STAR, an initiative which is in line with the National Skilling Mission. Every certified candidate is now a part of the skilled workforce which is the pride of our nation. I strongly encourage more young women and men to join the STAR scheme and build a better future for themselves and the nation. I am particularly proud of the fact that every successful candidate under this unique scheme gets a customised debit card to access their reward money. This is the kind of financial inclusion this Government is committed to."

Addressing the audience, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia congratulated the certified candidates and urged the private sector to continue investing in skill development and support the economic growth of the country, which will help the industry to resolve the shortage of skilled manpower.

Speaking at this momentous occasion, Shri S Ramadorai, Chairman of National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) & the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) said, "My heartiest congratulations to the students and best wishes for their future. While over 1.1 lakh people have enrolled under the STAR scheme, I am glad to announce that a cumulative sum of over Rs 1.4 crore is already transferred to the bank account of successfully certified

candidates. I would also in particular like to thank our Sector Skill Councils, our training partners and the assessment agencies who have put their best foot forward in making the first phase of the program a big success.”

The event also marked the launch of the NSDC-BOI STAR debit card – the first ever skilling card in India. Candidates who have received the reward money under the STAR scheme now have an access to a bank account, which also comes with a Rs 50,000 accident insurance cover. Shri B.P. Sharma, Executive Director, Bank of India and Shri Uttam Nayak, Country Manager, VisaIndia together announced the launch, in the presence of the Finance Minister and other dignitaries.

The STAR Scheme that was launched in August 2013 and rolled-out nationally on September 16, 2013 already has more than 1.1 lakh candidates enrolled. Over 175 training organizations, comprising NSDC funded training partners, Government affiliated training agencies and other private training providers, are affiliated to Sector Skill Councils under the Scheme, providing a wide coverage of over 2,600 training centres across the country. Eleven (11) independent assessment agencies are affiliated with various Sector Skill Councils, and are conducting these assessments through individual assessors.

National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) today announced the release of its first television commercial campaign to be aired nationally from the second week of February. NSDC also announced the launch of India’s first weekly reality show dedicated to skill development, supported by Ministry of Labour and Employment and NSDC. The show will be televised on Doordarshan starting from February 9, 2014.

National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), which is formed under the Ministry of Finance, is a one of its kind public private partnership with 51 per cent equity held by private sector and the 49 per cent by the Government of India. Formed in 2008, NSDC is a professionally run not-for-profit company that includes 28 Sector Skill Councils and 114 training partners with over 2500+ training centres spread across 352 districts in the country. NSDC is mandated to skill 150 million Indians by 2022.
