

CII Chandigarh Convenes Stakeholder Dialogue on Strengthening School Education and Industry Linkages

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Chandigarh: Education must move beyond degrees to identifying talent, building skills and creating opportunities for every child, said Mahipal Dhanda, Cabinet Minister, School & Higher Education, Government of Haryana, while addressing the CII Chandigarh Education Summit 2026.



L-R: Alba Smeriglio, British Deputy High Commissioner, Chandigarh; CII Chandigarh Education Summit Chairman Reekrit Serai; Haryana Education Minister Mahipal Dhandha; CII Chd Director Sumanpreet Singh

Calling for greater collaboration between schools, universities, industry and society, Dhandha said India's youth must be equipped with the skills and capabilities required to contribute meaningfully to a Viksit Bharat. He invited education and industry leaders to share their ideas and work alongside the government in strengthening the education ecosystem and preparing young people for the opportunities of the future.

"The future is something we build together. The Greater Chandigarh region has all the ingredients to become a model for connecting education, skills and industry. By bringing government, academia and businesses together, we can equip young people with the skills, creativity and adaptability

*needed for tomorrow. The UK is proud to be a long-term partner in this journey," said **Alba Smeriglio**, British Deputy High Commissioner, Chandigarh.*

Emphasising the importance of decisions being taken today, **Reekrit Serai**, Chairman, CII Chandigarh Education Summit 2026 and Managing Director, Satluj Group of Schools, said, *"The future is not something our children will one day enter. It is something we are building for them—in our classrooms, our institutions and in the decisions we make today."*

Highlighting the region's potential, Serai added, *"Greater Chandigarh has the ingredients to emerge as a major education and knowledge hub. Panchkula, in particular, has the potential to become a higher-education destination, attracting leading Indian and international universities, including British institutions. Education must ultimately prepare young people not simply for the jobs of today, but to think, adapt, create and lead in the world of tomorrow."*

Vivek Verma, Chairman, CII Chandigarh UT and Managing Director, Spray Engineering Devices Ltd, highlighted the growing impact of technology on education. *"The education ecosystem is undergoing a significant transformation, driven by Artificial Intelligence, digital technologies and changing industry requirements. Technology can enable personalised learning, improve access and create new approaches to teaching and assessment, but it must remain an enabler and not a replacement for the human element of education,"* he said.

The discussions at the Summit focused on strengthening the school-to-skills-to-industry connect, promoting experiential and vocational learning, enhancing teacher development, integrating emerging technologies and creating greater industry exposure for young learners.

The Summit also brought together perspectives from both the

academic and institutional ecosystems, enabling stakeholders to examine how schools, higher-education institutions, policymakers and industry can collectively respond to rapidly changing workforce and societal requirements.

Stakeholders underlined the need for closer collaboration between government, academia and industry to ensure that education remains aligned with evolving workforce requirements while continuing to nurture the broader intellectual, social and human capabilities of young people.

The dialogue reaffirmed CII Chandigarh's commitment to facilitating industry-led engagement on education and supporting the development of a future-ready, inclusive and skills-oriented education ecosystem.

