**Stipends for apprentices higher than minimum wages, says report**

New Delhi, Mar 12 (PTI) Stipends paid to apprentices are higher than minimum wages doled out across many sectors, according to a report.

Vadodara-based TeamLease Skills University said the growing demand for skilled talent coupled with revisions in the Apprentice Act seems to be positively impacting the apprenticeship eco-system.

"The median stipend is around 41 per cent higher than the applicable minimum wages in majority of the sectors and cities," it said.

The findings are based on an analysis of data pertaining to more than two lakh apprentices.

"With a stipend that is 159 per cent higher than the minimum wages, Maharashtra topped the list as the highest paying state.

"Amongst sectors Construction & Real Estate (125 per cent), IT & ITeS (122 per cent), FMCG (110 per cent) and Automotive (82 per cent) were the top paying sector for apprentices," the report said.

Besides, stipends increase in proportion with the educational qualification.

"Manufacturing and Services sectors both pay fairly high stipends in the average range of Rs 9,000 - 10,000 per month," it noted.

As per the report, large businesses paid significantly higher stipends -- 12 to 34 per cent -- than others, while the difference in stipends between medium and small businesses is not very significant.