

## India Signs Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) in Nursing with Singapore (Download PDF)

(July 17, 2018)

India has achieved 1<sup>st</sup> significant breakthrough in its attempts to export professional services by signing pact w/Singapore that could soon allow Indian nurses to practise in Southeast Asian country.



*Image of Mutual Recognition Agreement*

### Details of Nursing MRA with Singapore

- 2 countries will recognise each other’s degrees under pact, called mutual recognition agreement (MRA), which was signed after decade of intense negotiations.
- Singapore will recognise nursing degrees awarded by Delhi-based All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Manipal College of Nursing, Christian Medical College (Vellore) & College

of Nursing, Thiruvananthapuram.

## Significance of Nursing MRA with Singapore

- This is 1<sup>st</sup> such pact signed by India in services under comprehensive free trade agreement w/any country.
- MRA is aimed at enabling professionals in India & Singapore to offer services in each other's territory as pact will give recognition to their degrees in both countries.
- Singapore has recognised degrees from 4 Indian nursing institutes under MRA recently. It is 1<sup>st</sup> significant step towards enhancing bilateral ties in services sector, which is inherent strength. Idea is to start w/some institutes & then scale them up.
- It will open up safer avenue for Indian nurses, who end up in countries like Iraq where they face severe security threats. In July last year, 46 Indian nurses were rescued by govt.

## Background on Othter Agreements

- India & Singapore had signed comprehensive economic cooperation agreement (CECA) in 2005, cutting customs duties on goods, but progress is still awaited on of professionals.
- Indian Nursing Council had insisted that every nurse trained at any of country's recognised institutions be eligible to practise in Singapore, demand not found feasible by partner country.

## Other Initiatives to Promote Services Exports

- Govt. is negotiating MRAs for other professions, including chartered accountancy, architecture, medicine & den tistry w/Singapore. Besides, it is in talks w/Korea & Japan to recognise Indian degrees in various spheres including nursing & medicine.
- Although India has similar comprehensive pacts w/Japan & South Korea, there is no progress on services front w/these countries.
- India is making efforts to expand scope of its services exports, services exports, beyond information technology.
- Government announced tax incentives under Services Exports from India Scheme (SEIS), which is in form of fully transferable duty credit scrips w/reward rate ranging b/w 3% & 5%.
- Govt. is targeting combined exports merchandise & services to double to \$900 billion by 2019 - 20.

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