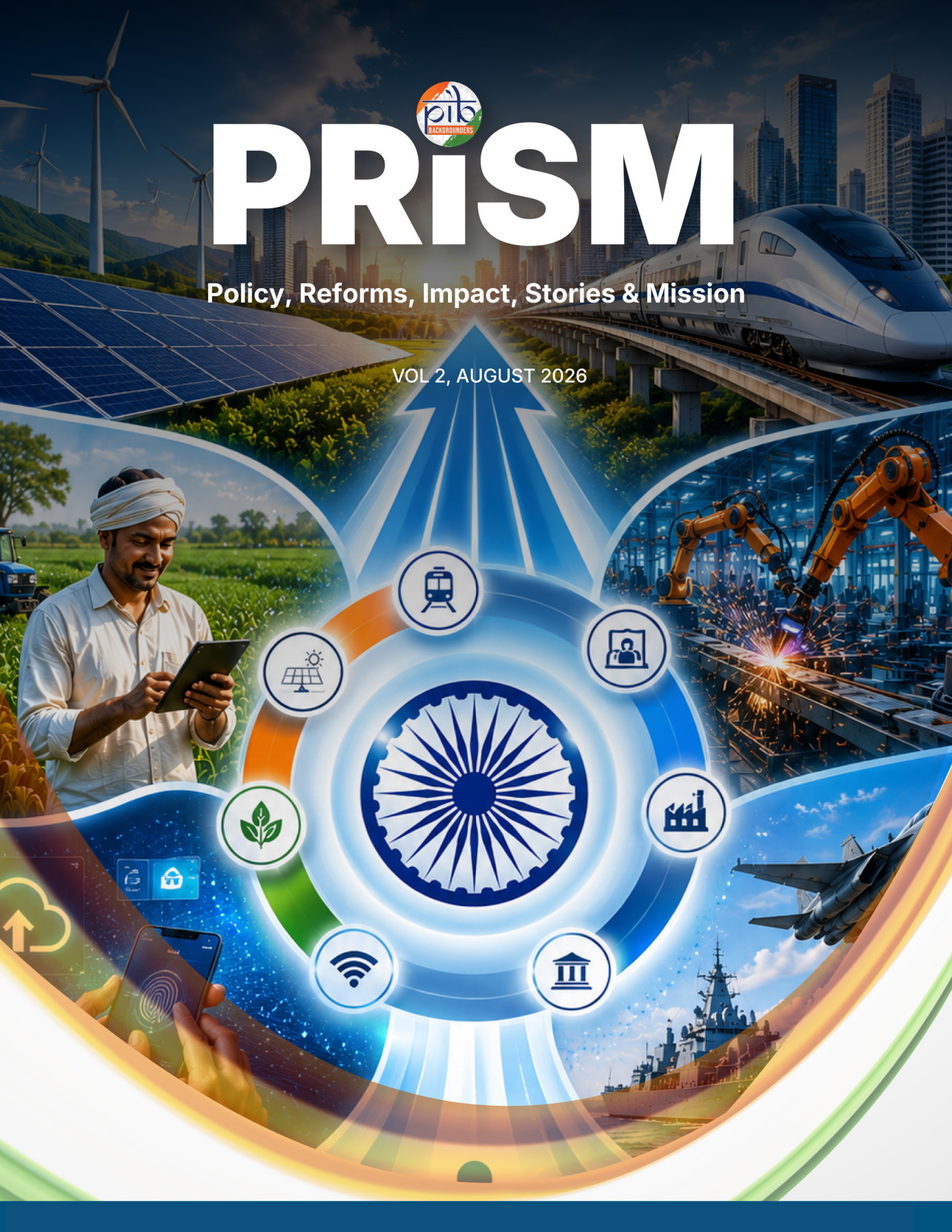
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01

India’s Solar Growth Enters a New Era

Published on: August 2, 2026

India's solar sector has received a major boost with the approval of the Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY). The plan aims to develop 5,000 MW of floating solar capacity backed by energy storage. Solar energy has become one of the strongest drivers of India's clean energy transition. Growth in capacity, manufacturing, and consumer adoption demonstrates how coordinated policy support can transform emerging technology into mainstream energy source. The sector strengthens energy security, drives economic development, advances climate action, and positions India as a global renewable energy leader.

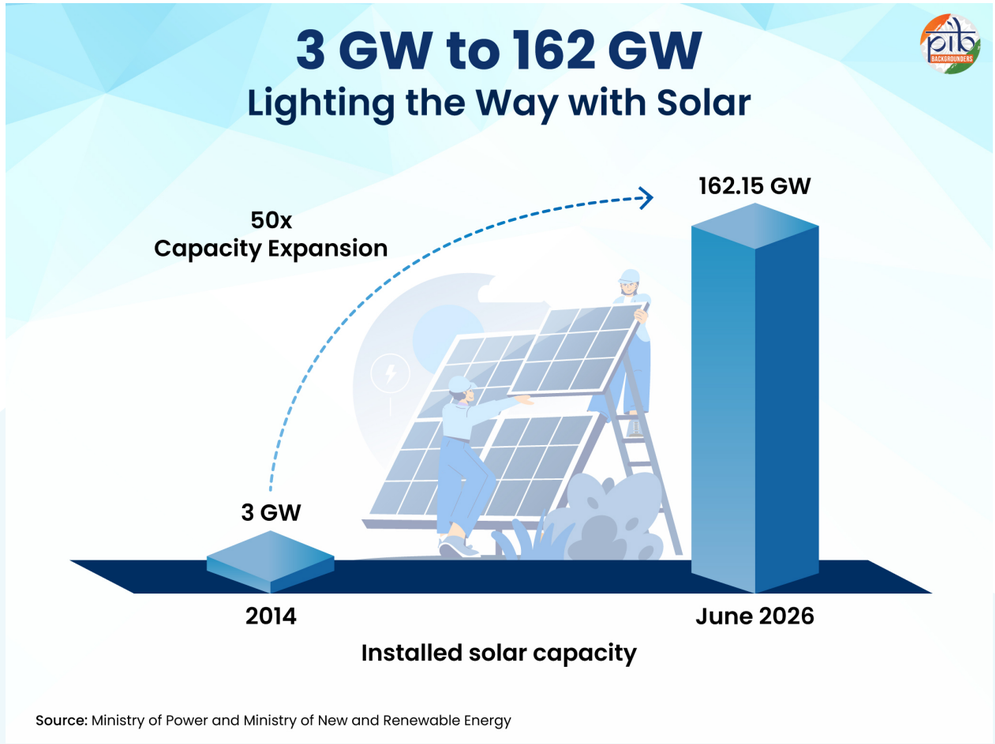
India's Solar Rise

A decade ago, solar power occupied only a small place in India's electricity mix. Today, it forms the largest share of the country's renewable energy capacity. From an installed capacity of approximately 3 GW in 2014, the sector has expanded more than fiftyfold, reaching 162.15 GW till 30 June 2026.

This transformation is driven by policy support, infrastructure development, manufacturing expansion, and citizen participation. Initiatives such as solar parks, rooftop systems, and solarised agricultural pumps are accelerating deployment across the country. The latest push for solar growth is the newly approved Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY).

The Government approved the Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY) on 31 July 2026. The scheme aims to support 5,000 MW of Floating Solar Photovoltaic (FSPV) projects with co-located Energy Storage Systems (ESS). The ESS with a minimum storage capacity of two hours (10,000 MWh) will further help states manage peak demand. By utilising existing reservoirs and industrial ponds, the scheme will reduce pressure on scarce land resources. It will also improve grid reliability through integrated energy storage. With an outlay of ₹5,070 crore, the scheme will be implemented from FY 2026– 27 to FY 2030– 31.

The scheme is based on an assessment by the National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE). The assessment estimates a floating solar potential of about 102.18 GWp across India's reservoirs and suitable inland water bodies. The scheme is expected to reduce around 10 million tonnes of CO_2 emissions annually. It will generate 16,000–17,000 full-time equivalent jobs. It will also promote domestic manufacturing of floatation systems, PV cells, modules and energy storage systems. All States and Union Territories will be eligible to benefit through this scheme. The initiative will increase India's floating solar capacity by 5,000 MW, from the current level of around 700 MW.



Source: Ministry of Power and Ministry of New and Renewable Energy

The coordinated momentum has translated into measurable outcomes. The country has added 37 GW of solar capacity in 2025, surpassing the United States in annual additions. India has also emerged as the world's second-largest solar growth market, underlining its growing role in the global clean energy transition.

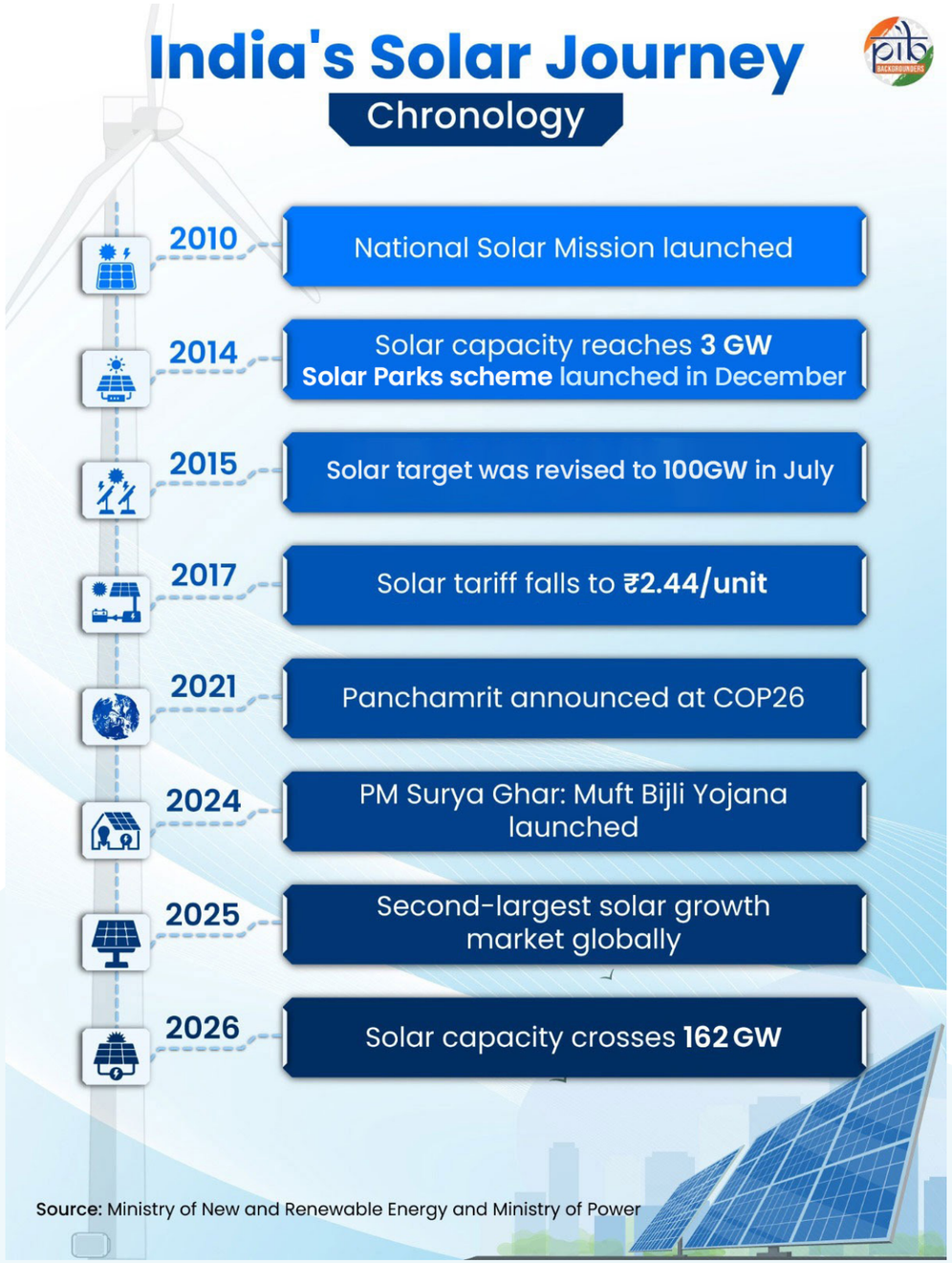
A Decade of Solar Expansion

A strong policy framework laid the foundation for India's solar expansion. Key initiatives included the National Solar Mission (2010), the Solar Parks Scheme, the Green Energy Corridor Programme, and competitive bidding. Together, they accelerated large-scale solar deployment.

Solar Capacity Across India

Solar deployment spans diverse geographies and climatic zones. Rajasthan, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra account for a significant share of installed capacity. Large solar projects contribute 118.79 GW of installed capacity. Some of the large solar projects include the Bhadla Solar Park (Rajasthan), Pavagada Solar Park (Karnataka), and Rewa Ultra Mega Solar Park (Madhya Pradesh). Rooftop solar systems connected to the electricity grid contribute another 27.88 GW. The remaining capacity comes from hybrid solar projects and off-grid solar systems. Hybrid projects combine solar power with battery storage or other power sources, while Off-grid systems provide electricity in areas not connected to the grid.





Record Growth in FY 2025–26

FY 2025–26 marked a milestone year for India's RE sector, with record additions in both solar and non-fossil fuel capacity.

- India added 44.61 GW of solar capacity, nearly double the 23.83 GW added in FY 2024–25.
- Solar module manufacturing capacity increased from 2.3 GW in 2014 to about 172 GW as of 31 March 2026.
- Total non-fossil fuel capacity reached 283.46 GW, including 274.68 GW of renewable energy capacity.
- Highest-ever annual addition of non-fossil fuel capacity recorded at 55.29 GW.
- On 29 July 2025, renewable energy sources met 51.5% of India's electricity demand, the highest monthly share recorded so far.

Policy Architecture Behind the Solar Expansion

A stable policy framework, competitive bidding mechanisms, and long-term targets have helped create a conducive environment for large-scale solar deployment. A set of mutually reinforcing measures has supported India's solar expansion. These can be broadly grouped into five pillars:

Creating Vision:Climate Commitments and Long-Term Targets

At COP26 in Glasgow, India announced the Panchamrit goals, which include 500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2070. These commitments were reflected in India's updated Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement.

Complementing these efforts, Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) promotes sustainable consumption and encourages citizens to adopt environmentally conscious practices.

Creating Demand: National Missions and Renewable Purchase Obligations

Strong and sustained demand has been central to India's solar growth. The National Solar Mission established long-term capacity targets and provided an early impetus to solar deployment.

Renewable Purchase Obligations (RPOs) require electricity distribution companies and other obligated entities to procure a specified share of their electricity from renewable sources. RPOs provide long-term market certainty for developers and investors while encouraging greater renewable energy adoption. The RPO trajectory has been notified through 2029–30, with the target for 2026–27, set at 35.95 per cent.

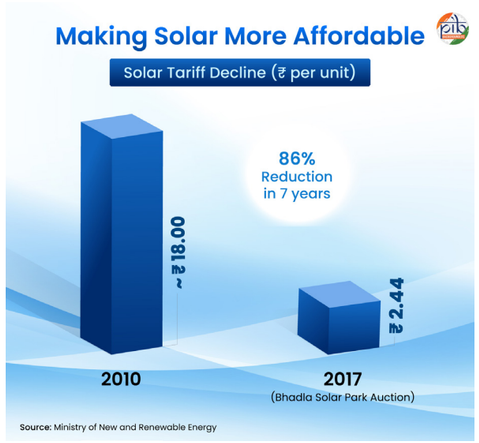
Demand has also expanded beyond utilities and large developers. PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana is encouraging households to adopt rooftop solar systems. Meanwhile, Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM) is supporting the adoption of solar pumps and feeder solarisation in the agriculture sector. Together, these initiatives are expanding the market for solar energy and strengthening participation across consumers, farmers, businesses, and power utilities.

Lowering Costs: Competitive Bidding and Tariff Discovery

One of the most significant developments in solar sector has been the decline in power tariffs over the past decade. This was driven by bidding through the e-Reverse Auction mechanism, where developers compete to supply electricity at the lowest tariff.

Procurement agencies such as the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) have played a key role in scaling this transparent tariff discovery mechanism. As more developers participated, the tariffs declined from around ₹18 per unit in 2010 to a record-low of ₹2.44 per unit. This remarkable achievement was attained at the Bhadla Solar Park auction in 2017. This made solar power more affordable and accelerated its adoption across India.

The decline in tariffs has made solar power increasingly affordable. As a result, India has emerged as one of the world's lowest-cost solar power markets. In 2025, the Levelised Cost of Electricity (LCOE) from utility-scale solar PV stood at USD 35 per MWh, well below the global average of USD 44 per MWh.



Enabling Infrastructure

The government launched the Solar Parks Scheme to provide developers with ready access to land and supporting infrastructure. The scheme was initially launched with a target of 20 GW and later expanded to 40 GW in 2017. As of February 2026, 54 solar parks with a combined sanctioned capacity of 39,188 MW have been approved across the country.

Solar parks have emerged as important hubs for utility-scale renewable energy generation across multiple states:

S.no.	States/Union Territories	No. of Parks	Capacity Sanction (MW)
1	Andhra Pradesh	5	4200
2	Chhattisgarh	1	100
3	Gujarat	7	12,150
4	Jharkhand	2	334
5	Jharkhand and West Bengal*	1	310
6	Karnataka	1	2000
7	Kerala	3	255
8	Madhya Pradesh	9	4208
9	Maharashtra	4	1,105
10	Mizoram	1	20
11	Odisha	1	40
12	Rajasthan	11	10,726
13	Uttar Pradesh	8	3,740
	Total	**54**	**39,188**

** Includes one inter-state floating solar park spanning Jharkhand and West Bengal.*

The scheme has enabled the development of some of India's most prominent solar parks.

Bhadla Solar Park: From Desert Landscape to Clean Energy Hub



Located in Rajasthan's arid Bhadla region, the park has transformed vast stretches of barren land into one of the world's largest solar power complexes. Development began in 2015 under the Solar Parks Scheme and was completed in phases by 2020.

Spread across nearly 5,700 hectares (56 sq. km.), the park has an installed capacity of 2,245 MW. The region's high solar irradiation, low rainfall, and sparse vegetation make it well-suited for large-scale solar generation.

Beyond its scale, Bhadla showcases the solar park model in action. Common infrastructure, including land preparation and transmission facilities, enabled rapid project development and attracted significant private investment. Competitive bidding at the park also contributed to some of India's lowest solar tariffs, helping make solar energy more affordable.

Supporting the Solar Parks Scheme, the Green Energy Corridor (GEC) Programme aims to facilitate the transfer of power from RE-rich areas to demand centres across the country. The initiative strengthens transmission networks and supports the seamless integration of renewable energy into the electricity grid.

As of February 2026, the programme had enabled the evacuation of 24,567.8 MW of renewable energy through strengthened transmission networks. Green Energy Corridor projects across ten states are planned to support the evacuation of around 44 GW of

renewable energy. These projects will also strengthen the integration of renewable energy into the national grid.

Supporting Manufacturing

The Government has introduced measures to strengthen domestic solar manufacturing and reduce import dependence.

Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for High-Efficiency Solar PV Modules



Launched in 2021 with an initial outlay of ₹4,500 crore, the PLI Scheme for High-Efficiency Solar PV Modules was expanded in 2022 with an additional ₹19,500 crore. The scheme promotes domestic manufacturing, reduces import dependence, and encourages value addition across the solar value chain. By October 2024, the scheme had attracted investments of around ₹35,000 crore. It had also generated direct employment for about 10,000 people.

Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM)



Introduced in 2019, ALMM is a quality assurance framework for solar PV modules and cells. It ensures that solar equipment used in eligible projects meet specified quality and performance standards. Only manufacturers and models included in the approved lists are eligible for specified government-supported and competitively bid solar projects. The framework also promotes domestic manufacturing by encouraging the use of approved products.

Together, the PLI Scheme and ALMM have strengthened India's domestic solar manufacturing ecosystem. They have supported greater self-reliance while enabling rapid expansion of solar deployment. The framework also provides greater confidence to consumers and project developers by ensuring the use of approved solar equipment.

Taking Solar to Every Household and Farm

India's solar transition extends beyond large-scale power plants. Through dedicated schemes for households and farmers, solar is improving energy access, reducing electricity costs, and creating new livelihood opportunities.

PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana



Launched on 13 February 2024 with an outlay of ₹75,021 crore, PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana brings rooftop solar benefits directly to households nationwide. It is the world's largest domestic rooftop solar programme. Eligible households receive subsidies for rooftop solar installations, while collateral-free loans facilitate adoption. The scheme is implemented through a dedicated national portal, enabling seamless registration, installation, and subsidy disbursement.

Key Achievements

- Over **43 lakh households** were solarised as of June 2026.
- **₹14,771.82 crore** disbursed as Central Financial Assistance till December 2025.
- Over **7.7 lakh households** received zero electricity bills as of 09 December 2025.

The scheme enables households to generate their own electricity. It reduces electricity bills and promotes rooftop solar adoption. PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana has also received international support, with the World Bank approving financing to help scale up residential rooftop solar adoption in India.

From High Electricity Bills to Solar Savings

On learning about the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, Sudhanshu Dubey, a resident of Jawar Colony in Gwalior, opted for rooftop solar.

The installation and subsidy process were completed smoothly, and the subsidy amount was credited directly to his bank account. For more than a year now, the benefits have been visible every month. Earlier, his household electricity bill often exceeded ₹10,000; today, it is almost negligible. The rooftop solar system continues to generate power reliably, helping the family meet its electricity needs while reducing monthly expenses.

For Sudhanshu, the scheme has turned sunlight into savings. His experience reflects how PM Surya Ghar is enabling households across the country to adopt clean energy and gain greater control over their electricity costs.

Pradhan Mantri-Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM)

Launched in 2019, the PM-KUSUM seeks to expand the use of solar energy in agriculture. The scheme supports the installation of decentralised solar power plants, standalone solar agriculture pumps, and the solarisation of grid-connected agricultural pumps. It aims to provide reliable daytime power for irrigation, reduce dependence on diesel,

and enhance income opportunities for farmers.

PM-KUSUM enables farmers to harness solar energy both for irrigation and power generation. Under the scheme, farmers install solar pumps for irrigation and sell surplus electricity to distribution companies, where eligible. The scheme is focused on adding around **34,800 MW** of solar capacity by 2026-27, with Central financial support of **₹34,422 crore**.

Key Achievements

- Nearly **11.49 lakh off-grid solar pumps** installed for agricultural use.
- More than **15.89 lakh agricultural pumps** are covered through feeder-level solarisation.
- Around **1,726 MW** of decentralised solar power capacity commissioned on farmers' land.
- Over **21.77 lakh farmers** benefited across the country.

Both schemes have emerged as an important pillar of India's distributed solar energy landscape.

In FY 2025–26, distributed solar solutions contributed **16.3 GW**, or **36%**, of the **44.61 GW** of solar capacity added during the year. Of this, **7.6 GW** came from PM-KUSUM and **8.7 GW** from rooftop solar.

India's Growing Leadership in Global Solar Cooperation

India's leadership in solar energy extends beyond its borders. The country is strengthening international cooperation, technology exchange, and capacity building.

- **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**: Co-founded by India and France at COP21 in Paris in 2015, the ISA has emerged as a key platform for global solar cooperation. The Alliance brings together countries including the Maldives, Greece, Germany, Italy, Bhutan, Luxembourg, and Argentina to accelerate solar deployment, share knowledge and technology. The ISA has evolved into an important platform for cooperation among member countries.
- **One Sun One World One Grid (OSOWOG)**: Proposed by India in 2018, OSOWOG is a vision for an interconnected global renewable energy network. To advance this vision, India and the United Kingdom launched the **Green Grids Initiative–One Sun One World One Grid (GGI–OSOWOG) at COP26 in 2021**. The initiative is supported by Australia, France, the United States, and the International Solar Alliance. It promotes cross-border RE trade through interconnected electricity grids, strengthening energy security and accelerating the clean energy transition.

Through the ISA and other partnerships, India has strengthened renewable energy cooperation across the Global South. During its G20 Presidency, India also helped build consensus on tripling global renewable energy capacity by 2030.

The Road Ahead

India's achievements in the solar market reflect sustained policy support, expanding manufacturing, strengthened infrastructure, and growing public participation. As India progresses towards its Panchamrit commitments and net-zero target by 2070, solar power will remain a key pillar. It will continue to drive the clean energy transition.

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PIB Research





02

Rebuilding Farming Systems

Regenerative Agriculture for a Resilient India

Published on: August 23, 2026

India's farms have sustained agricultural growth, but long-term productivity depends on healthy soils and resilient ecosystems. Regenerative agriculture offers a pathway to restore soil vitality, improve biodiversity, and strengthen resilience against climate stresses. Across the country, farmers are adopting practices such as natural farming, agroforestry, micro-irrigation, integrated farming systems, and scientific soil management. Government support has accelerated this transition. As of March 2026, **natural farming clusters covered 8.80 lakh hectares** and enrolled **18.19 lakh farmers.** About **109 lakh hectares** have been brought under **Per Drop More Crop** as of May 2026. In addition, **25.89 crore Soil Health Cards** have been generated since inception, as of March 2026. These efforts are helping build a more productive, resource-efficient, and environmentally responsible future for Indian agriculture.

The Imperative for Regenerative Agriculture

India's agriculture and allied sectors have demonstrated strong and sustained progress. During FY16-FY25, it recorded **decadal growth of 4.45 percent, the highest** in previous decades. This achievement reflects the resilience of the sector and the continued efforts of farmers across the country. Yet, sustaining this momentum requires strengthening the ecological foundations that support long-term agricultural productivity.

Each season, farmers return to the same fields with renewed hope and growing responsibility. Years of intensive cultivation, heavy chemical use, and erratic rainfall leave many soils tired and less responsive. Yields that once came easily now demand higher inputs, while heatwaves, dry spells, or excess rain can undo months of labour. For millions of small and marginal farmers, declining soil health often translates into higher costs and uncertain harvests. As a result, the sustainability of farming has become an increasingly important concern.

This is where **Regenerative Agriculture** finds its relevance. By rebuilding soil vitality, strengthening ecosystem functions, and improving resilience to climatic variability, it addresses both soil and productivity challenges. More importantly, it offers a pathway to revive India's agricultural foundations while supporting long-term environmental balance and farm prosperity.

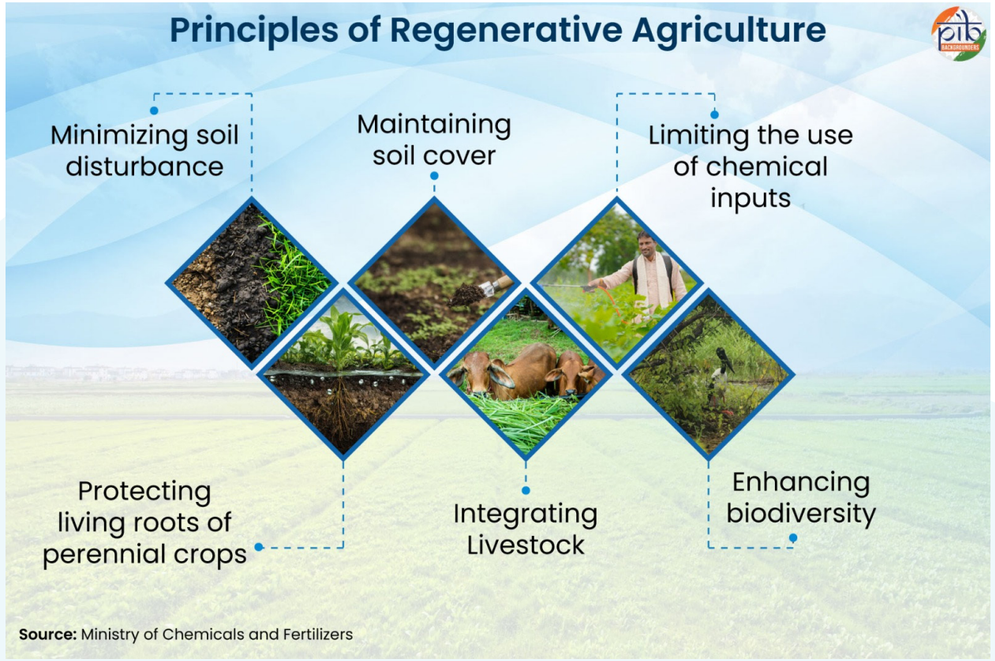
Understanding the Regenerative Agriculture Approach

Regenerative agriculture is a **holistic farming approach** centred on **restoring soil health and enhancing biodiversity.** At the same time, it seeks to ensure long-term productivity and resilience in farming systems. Healthy soils support higher food and nutritional output, store more carbon, and promote biodiversity. Unlike sustainable farming, which primarily aims to maintain existing conditions, regenerative agriculture seeks to improve them. It goes a step further by a**ctively rebuilding soil health, enhancing biodiversity, and strengthening ecosystem resilience.**

It is based on the following principles:

- Minimizing soil disturbance
- Protecting the living roots of perennial crops
- Maintaining soil cover
- Integrating Livestock
- Limiting the use of chemical inputs
- Enhancing biodiversity

In essence, Regenerative agriculture offers **a practical and forward-looking pathway for the future of farming** by restoring the natural foundations of agriculture.



Source: Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers

Strengthening Agricultural Resilience through Regenerative Approaches

Regenerative agriculture draws upon a **diverse set of farming practices adopted in India.** While the spectrum of regenerative approaches is much broader, some of the prominent practices can be broadly classified into the following categories:

Water and Resource Efficiency

Micro-irrigation systems such as drippers, sprinklers, and foggers deliver **water directly to plant roots.** This reduces water wastage and improves water-use efficiency. By optimizing farm-level water management, these systems enhance crop productivity and strengthen resilience to droughts and water stress. As a result, farming systems become more climate-resilient and economically viable.

Farm Mechanization involves the use of **agricultural machinery and equipment to streamline and automate** various farm operations. It helps optimize the use of key inputs such as water, fuel, and fertilizers, reducing wastage and lowering the carbon footprint. By enabling timely and precise farm operations, mechanization **improves resource management, enhances productivity, and helps reduce the environmental impact of farming.**

Soil and Nutrient Management

Nitrogen Fertilizer Management helps reduce nitrous oxide emissions while improving crop productivity. It focuses on selecting the right fertilizer and optimizing application timing and dosage. Other practices include deep placement of supergranular urea and the use of leaf color charts for precise assessment of nitrogen status. The approach also promotes biological inputs such as cyanobacteria and legume intercropping. Overall, these measures improve nitrogen-use efficiency and minimize environmental losses.

Natural farming is a **chemical-free agricultural approach** rooted in India's traditional knowledge systems. The system relies on on-farm biological inputs such as Beejamrut, Jeevamrut, GhanJeevamrut, Neemastra, and Dashparni, prepared using inputs from native livestock. It also promotes the use of traditional seed varieties and the integration of trees along farm boundaries. Pest management is undertaken through locally prepared, on-farm botanical formulations. Practitioners are encouraged to adopt **continuous cover cropping, multi-cropping, mulching, and minimal soil disturbance** to maintain soil fertility and ecological balance. The **integration of livestock with diversified cropping systems** further helps improve soil health, restores ecosystems, and reduces input costs for farmers.

Soil Health Management Practices such as green manuring, cover cropping, and mulching play a vital role in regenerative agriculture. Green manuring involves growing and incorporating specific crops into the soil to add organic matter and nutrients. It helps in improving soil fertility, structure, and carbon sequestration. Cover cropping refers to growing crops primarily to cover the soil rather than for harvest. It protects against erosion, maintains soil organic carbon, and supports nutrient cycling. Mulching involves covering the soil surface with organic residues such as leaves, straw, etc. It helps conserve moisture and regulate soil temperature. Mulching also suppresses weeds, promotes beneficial microbial activity, and improves crop productivity.

Integrated and Climate-Resilient Farming Systems

Integrated Farming Systems (IFS) is a **holistic agricultural approach** that combines multiple farm enterprises into a single system. It integrates crops, livestock, fisheries, and allied activities such as horticulture, agroforestry, and apiculture. The approach promotes practices such as intercropping, crop rotation, multi-cropping, and mixed farming that maximize resource use. This also reduces the risk of crop failure, diversifies livelihood opportunities, and enhances resilience to climate extremes such as floods and droughts.

Agroforestry integrates perennial tree systems with fruit and plantation crops to create a more sustainable and profitable farming system. It helps farmers earn additional income while improving soil moisture, regulating local temperatures, and storing more carbon.

In rainfed regions, agroforestry plays a crucial role in rejuvenating degraded land. These systems help mitigate the impacts of unpredictable rainfall, enhance agricultural resilience, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions over time.

Climate-Resilient Agriculture (CRA) encompasses a plethora of strategies and technologies to fortify agricultural systems **against a changing climate.** Its key components include:

- balanced use of nutrients and fertilizers,
- effective pest management,

- efficient and judicious use of water,
- conservation of soil moisture at the field level,
- and appropriate land preparation practices that safeguard soil health and enhance crop performance.

In addition, CRA includes innovations such as water-sharing groups, seed and fodder systems, community nurseries, and collective marketing mechanisms. Together, these practices and innovations strengthen agricultural systems, enabling them to better withstand climate-related stresses and shocks.

The Multifaceted Benefits of Regenerative Farming

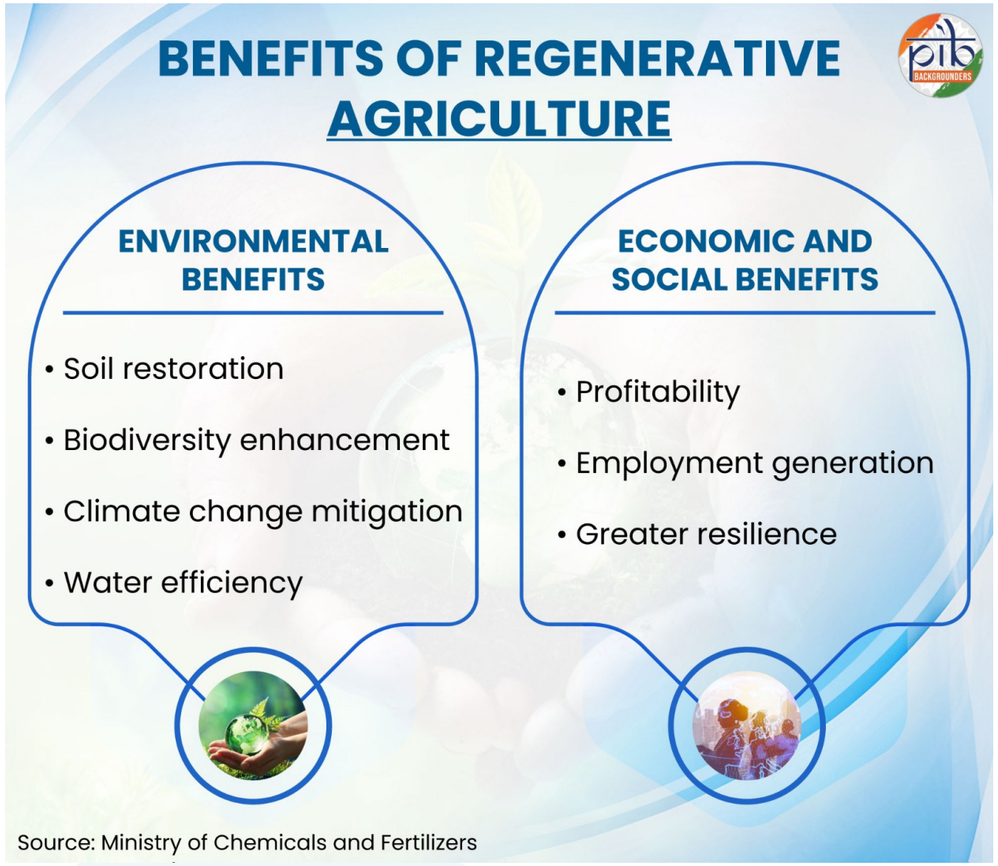
Regenerative agriculture offers a wide range of environmental, economic, and social benefits, supporting both healthy ecosystems and resilient farming.

Environmental Outcomes

- **Soil restoration:** Regenerative practices rebuild soil organic matter, improve soil structure, and enhance long-term soil fertility, supporting stable agricultural productivity.
- **Biodiversity enhancement:** Regenerative approaches create favourable conditions for a wide variety of species, including pollinators, beneficial insects, and soil microorganisms. This helps in strengthening overall ecosystem balance.
- **Climate change mitigation:** These systems absorb and store more carbon than they emit, helping reverse agricultural emissions.
- **Water efficiency:** Healthier soils improve water retention and reduce runoff. This limits soil erosion and the flow of sediments and pollutants into rivers and lakes, helping protect water bodies.

Economic and Social Outcomes

- **Profitability:** Healthier soils reduce dependence on synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, and irrigation. This lowers input costs, stabilizes yields, and enhances farmers' net incomes.
- **Employment generation:** Regenerative agriculture creates new livelihood opportunities across farming, advisory services, technology, and ecological management.
- **Greater resilience:** Farms adopting regenerative practices are better equipped to withstand climate variability and market fluctuations.



Source: Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers

Advancing Sustainable Development Through Regenerative Agriculture



Regenerative agriculture is closely aligned with SDG 13 (Climate Action). Target 13.1 focuses on strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related risks and natural disasters. Since regenerative practices help reverse greenhouse gas emissions, they contribute to reducing climate-related risks at the farm level. Consequently, they help in enhancing farm-level climate resilience and strengthening adaptive capacity in the face of increasing climate variability.

Promoting Regenerative Agriculture through Targeted Interventions

The government is implementing a **wide range of schemes** to promote regenerative agricultural practices. **Some of the key initiatives** support **natural and organic farming, agroforestry, micro-irrigation, integrated farming systems, and scientific soil health management.**



Source: Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare

National Mission on Natural Farming

The **National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF), launched in 2024,** creates a **favourable support ecosystem** to help farmers progressively transition to natural farming. The scheme provides an output-based incentive of **₹4,000 per acre per year for two years,** covering up to one acre per farmer. In order to support farmers with easy access to bio-inputs such as Jeevamrit and Beejamrit, the mission provides for **10,000 need-based Bio-input Resource Centres.** It also envisages the formation of **natural farming clusters.** Each cluster is supported by **two Community Resource Persons (CRPs)** to guide farmers in natural farming practices.

As of 05 March 2026, 18,786 clusters have been formed across the country. These clusters cover 8.80 lakh hectares, and 18.19 lakh farmers have been enrolled to promote Natural Farming. Additionally, 33,676 CRPs have been trained at Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs)/ Agricultural Universities (AUs)/ local natural farming institutions.

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), launched in 2015, has emerged as a key pillar of India's organic farming initiative. It provides farmers with an organized framework for adopting eco-friendly practices, obtaining organic certification, and accessing markets that reward sustainable production. Under the scheme, farmers adopting organic farming are supported with **₹31,500 per hectare over three years.**

As of 31 October 2025, a total area of 16.90 lakh ha has been covered under PKVY since its inception.

Per Drop More Crop

Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) is being implemented across the country since 2015-16. It helps improve on-farm water use efficiency through micro-irrigation systems, specifically drip and sprinkler irrigation. Drip irrigation delivers water directly to plant roots through pipes and emitters, reducing water wastage. Sprinkler irrigation sprays water onto the field through pipes and nozzles, ensuring uniform coverage.

Under PDMC, the Government provides 55% financial assistance to small and marginal farmers and 45% to other

farmers for installing these systems. In addition, some states provide top-up subsidies to farmers from their own budgets.

Implemented since 2015-16, the scheme has covered about 109 lakh hectares as of May 2026. A total of ₹26,325 crore in central assistance has been released, significantly improving water-use efficiency.

Rainfed Area Development Programme

The Rainfed Area Development Programme (RAD), being implemented since 2014-15, promotes Integrated Farming Systems (IFS) through an area-based cluster approach. The programme encourages practices such as multi-cropping, crop rotation, inter-cropping, and mixed cropping. These are integrated with allied activities, including horticulture, livestock, fisheries, and apiculture, to enhance farm income, strengthen livelihoods, and build resilience to climate extremes.

Under RAD, clusters of about 20 hectares are developed within one or more adjoining villages. This approach promotes convergence, encourages community participation, and supports wider replication of successful models. Farmers are supported with financial assistance of ₹30,000 per family for adopting IFS. An additional ₹10,000 per cluster is provided for training and capacity-building activities.

Since its inception, ₹2251.98 crore has been provided as Central Assistance to States for adopting IFS. The scheme covered 9.53 lakh hectares and benefitted 15.73 lakh farmers (as of December 2025).

Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) further support the programme through demonstrations and training on location-specific IFS models. During 2024-25, KVKs conducted 4,416 demonstrations and trained 96,013 farmers on different IFS models.

In FY 2025–26, an allocation of ₹343.86 crore was made to States/UTs for the implementation of RAD, under which 96,013 farmers received training.

Sub-Mission on Agroforestry

The erstwhile Sub-Mission on Agroforestry (SMAF) was restructured as the Agroforestry Component under the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY) from 2023-24. It supports the establishment of agroforestry nurseries to provide Quality Planting Material (QPM) to farmers. The scheme component includes:

- establishment of new nurseries,
- raising of saplings in existing nurseries,
- setting up tissue culture units,
- skill development and awareness,
- research and development,
- monitoring and evaluation,
- specialised technical activities,
- formulation of projects for the voluntary carbon market in the agriculture sector, and
- local initiatives.

It provides 100% assistance to Government agencies and 50% back ended credit-linked assistance to private beneficiaries.



During 2025-26, as on 31 October 2025, sanctions amounting to ₹78.31 crore were issued to 27 States/UTs. A total of 135 new nurseries were established. Sapling production was undertaken in 614 existing nurseries. About 176.59 lakh saplings were raised in these nurseries, benefitting around 25,693 farmers.

Soil Health Card Scheme

Launched in 2015, the Soil Health Card Scheme (SHC) provides farmers with plot-wise soil test reports, generated through scientific testing, for each landholding. The card assesses soil health on 12 key parameters, covering macronutrients, micronutrients, and critical soil properties.

Issued every 2 years, the Soil Health Card helps farmers understand the nutrient status and physicochemical conditions of their soils. It provides crop-specific recommendations on the appropriate use of chemical fertilisers, bio-fertilisers, organic inputs, and soil treatments.

As of 13 March 2026, a total of 25.89 crore Soil Health Cards have been generated since inception. Around 7.17 lakh demonstrations have been conducted to promote balanced fertiliser use. These demonstrations were conducted through advisories supported by the Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs). In addition, 70,002 Krishi Sakhis have been trained to support the dissemination of soil health advisories at the grassroots level.

Growing towards a More Resilient Future

Regenerative agriculture is gradually reshaping the future of Indian farming. It restores soil health while improving resilience and resource efficiency. Practices such as natural farming, agroforestry, micro-irrigation, and integrated farming are contributing to resource-efficient agricultural systems.

Government initiatives are helping farmers adopt these approaches at scale. As more farmers embrace regenerative practices, agriculture can become both environmentally sustainable and economically rewarding. The journey begins with healthier soils and leads towards more resilient farms and secure livelihoods.

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PIB Research





03

The Digital Transformation of the Indian Judiciary

e-Courts Mission Mode Project

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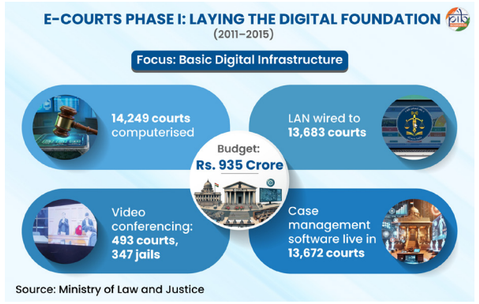
The e-Courts Mission Mode Project has transformed India's paper-based judiciary into a digitally enabled and trackable justice delivery system. Since 2014, both case filings and disposals have nearly tripled, with courts consistently disposing of more cases than are filed each year. Over 753 crore pages of court records have been digitised, while thousands of e-Sewa Kendras are helping bridge the digital divide by expanding access to judicial services. Together, these reforms are making the justice system faster, more transparent, and more accessible to everyone.

Digitising India's Judiciary

India's judiciary, which serves over a billion people, has long relied on paper records and brick-and-mortar infrastructure. Many citizens incurred excessive travel and other expenses visiting courts and other establishments for their matters and documents. This archaic system made the delivery of justice slow, cumbersome and expensive for the people it served.

The Government launched the **e-Courts Mission Mode Project in 2007** to address these challenges. This Mission aims to systematically speed up proceedings by **digitising various court proceedings and documents.** It is also making the judicial process **more affordable, accessible and transparent** for all involved, including lawyers, judges and clerks. Now in its third phase, the Mission has transformed the judicial system using technology.

Phase I (2011–2015) laid the foundation of this Mission, by computerising over 14,000 courts and building basic network infrastructure needed to support technology-enabled judicial services.

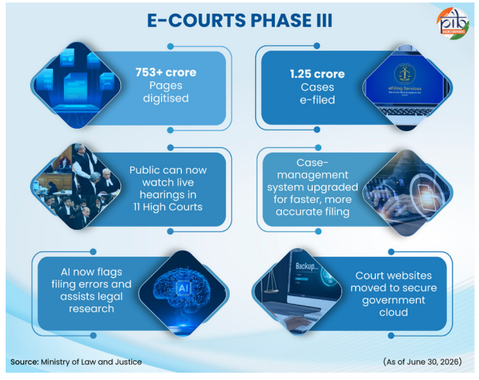


Phase II (2015–2023) built on this with a range of citizen-centric services, introducing the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), eFiling, and eSewaKendras (a physical help desk providing digital court services).The phase also expanded video conferencing infrastructure more than fivefold, significantly enhancing virtual access to judicial proceedings.



The project is now in its **third phase (2023–2027)**.

This phase envisions a transition towards digital, paperless and more intelligent courts through large-scale digitisation of records, wider use of virtual hearings,



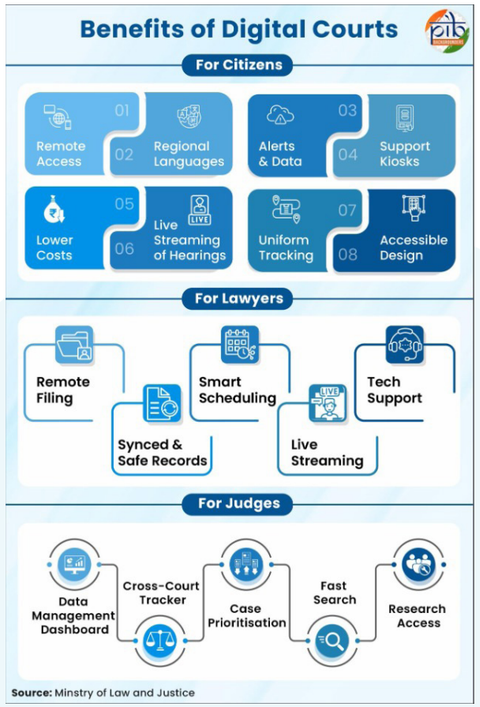
deeper interoperability across justice institutions and adoption of emerging technologies including **Artificial Intelligence (AI), analytics and Optical Character Recognition (OCR).**

S.No	Component Name	Achievement
1	Fully functional **eSewa Kendras**	1,806 established across court complexes.
2	Setting up the infrastructure for **paperless courts**	474 courts are equipped with the necessary hardware.
3	Expansion of the **Virtual Courts** for hearing of court cases by creating the robust digital infrastructure	538 courts are equipped.
4	Implementation of **e-filing** of court case	4,519 courts

5	Provision for enhancing and upgrading the available infrastructure of **Video Conferencing (VC)**	7,553 establishments have VC facilities including courts, jails and hospitals.
6	**Solar facilities** for ensuring seamless availability of ICT infrastructure	1,626 courts complexes are equipped.
7	**Providing National Service & Tracking of electronic Processes** (NSTEP) facility	6,895 courts have NSTEP facility.
8	Migration of all High Court and District Court websites to S3WAAS platform	734 courts sites migrated
9	Additional hardware to courts and judicial officers in Phase II	18,380 courts provided
10	Integration with Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) to enable seamless transfer of data and information among different pillars like courts, police, jails, forensic labs	All High Courts have implemented ICJS
11	Training of all stakeholders	2,372 trainings held
12	Knowledge Management	Indian Institute of Technology, Madras is developing Learning Management System (LMS)
13	Connectivity	174 Sites connected with Software Defined Wide Area Network (SDWAN) technology.

Benefits of Court Digitisation

Virtual courts, video conferencing facility, case trackers and dashboards showing pending and disposed cases, among other digital tools, have organised and sped up court proceedings. These reforms benefit all stakeholders involved.



Transparency in pending and disposed cases through National Data Judicial Grid

The **National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG)**, launched under Phase II, is an online public dashboard that tracks court orders, judgements and case details in real time. This include spending cases across all levels of the judiciary.

The NJDG comprises three dedicated dashboards for the **Supreme Court, High Courts and District Courts.** Together, they provide insightful details on the functioning of courts across the country by tracking:

- The **number of pending and disposed cases** in High Courts and Subordinate Courts across the country.
- The **distribution of cases by category and stage of proceedings**, such as admission, hearing, judgment and disposal.
- The **reasons for case delays**, including non-availability of parties, pending documents, court stays and other procedural factors, along with the duration of such delays.

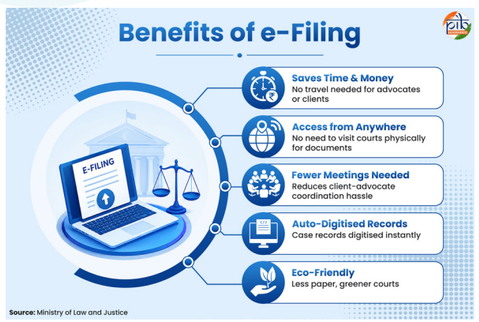
The NJDG aims to improve transparency and accountability in the system by making data on pending court cases public. It has also helped in judicial planning, monitoring and remote administration by the High Court judges, District Judges and High Court Registry.

Speeding up of processes through e-Filing of documents

Previously, citizens and lawyers had to file court documents — such as complaints, written statements, replies and other applications — in person. The e-Filing system now removes this need, allowing documents to be filed online from anywhere. To make justice more inclusive, it supports English as well as regional languages, and works across District Courts, High Courts and the Supreme Court.

The E-filing system supports/provides for:

- Online payments
- Online submission of Vakalatnamas
- E-signing of documents
- Online video recording of oaths
- Application filings
- Portfolio management for advocates and litigants
- Adding of colleagues, juniors etc as partners to manage cases collaboratively
- Dashboards tracking the status of all completed/pending cases
- Readymade templates for various commonly filed pleadings



Since inception till June 30, 2026:

- **More than 1.25 crore** cases have been filed through the e-filing platform.
- The e-payments system has processed transactions worth **Rs. 1,404 crore in court fees and Rs. 75 crore in fines**

Digitising legacy court records for efficient case retrieval and storage

Crores of older court records are being digitised under Phase III of the mission. This helps preserve valuable records from physical damage and makes retrieval and research faster and more efficient.

Affordable access to court proceedings through remote hearings

Litigants, lawyers, witnesses, and other stakeholders can now participate in hearings remotely through video conferencing. This has eliminated the need for travel, enabling easier access to courts across cities and states and improving access to justice.

- Video conferencing facilities have been expanded across 7,553 establishments including courts, jails and hospitals.
- Courts across the nation have conducted **over 4.18 crore remote hearings** through this method.
- Livestreaming of court proceedings is operational in **11 High Courts.**
- 31 Virtual Courts have been established to enable online adjudication of traffic challans – virtual courts have received 11.33 crore challans amounting to Rs. 1,135.79 crores.
- Nyaya Shruti, launched in 2024 under the Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS), enables accused persons, witnesses, police officials, prosecutors, scientific experts, and prisoners appear and testify virtually via video conferencing — saving time and resources while speeding up case resolution.



Connecting Police, Courts, Prisons and Forensics

Digitisation now links the entire criminal justice chain, not just the courts.

ICJS (Interoperable Criminal Justice System) – platform letting police, courts, prisons, forensics and prosecution exchange FIRs, charge-sheets, orders and reports electronically.

CCTNS (Crime & Criminal Tracking Network and System) – computerises police processes from FIR to charge-sheet, with Nyaya Sanhita-linked deadline alerts for investigating officers.

ITSSO (Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences) – dashboard tracking investigations in women/child sexual-offence cases against charge-sheet deadlines.

e-Sakshya – secure app for capturing

and managing digital evidence, preserving its integrity from collection to court.

e-Summons – electronic generation, transmission and execution of court summons.

MedLEaPR (Medico Legal Examination and Postmortem Reporting) – hospitals' online system for medico-legal exams and postmortem reports.

Nyaya Shruti – video-conferencing platform for virtual testimony by the accused, witnesses, police, prosecutors and forensic experts.

e-Forensic – end-to-end digital case handling across forensic labs.

e-Prison – cloud-based national network for prison and prisoner management.

e-Prosecution – digital workflow linking police and prosecution for timely legal opinions.

NAFIS (National Automated Fingerprint Identification System) – centralised biometric database for real-time fingerprint matching against criminal records

Enabling seamless tracking of judicial business through digital platforms

Lawyers, litigants, judges and others can now **track case status and updates** through digital platforms such as apps, the multilingual e-Courts Services Portal, email and SMS. These services have enhanced tracking and transparency, reducing the need for physical visits to courts and easing judicial service delivery.

- Over **4 lakh SMSs, 6 lakh** emails are sent **daily.**
- The **multilingual e-Courts services portal** records about 35 lakh hits daily.
- The **e-Courts Services mobile app** (3.84 crore downloads) provides lawyers and litigants relevant information about case status, cause lists etc.
- The **JustIS app** (22,594 downloads) is a management tool for the judges, assisting them to effectively organise and monitor their judicial business.
- **National Service and Tracking of Electronic Processes for GPS-tracked delivery of summons:**

1. Bailiffs use NSTEP — a centralised, GPS-enabled web and mobile app — to serve summons and notices electronically and in real time. NSTEP replaces the erstwhile slow, paper-based process with a transparent, trackable digital system, enabling faster service across districts and states.

Improved understanding of legal process through e-SEWA Kendras

E-Sewa Kendras established within court complexes serve as citizen-friendly assistance centres. It is where people can get guidance on various legal procedures and processes. These kiosks provide the following facilities:

- Answer queries on case status, next hearing date and related case details.
- Process online applications for certified copies.
- Handle e-filing of petitions — scanning hard copies, appending e-signatures, uploading to CIS and generating a filing number.
- Assist with online purchase of e-stamp papers and e-payments.
- Help litigants apply for and obtain Aadhaar-based digital signatures.
- Promote and assist with downloading the eCourts mobile app (Android/ iOS).
- Book eMulakat appointments for jail visits with relatives.
- Answer queries on judges' leave schedules.
- Guide litigants to free legal aid via the District, High Court and Supreme Court Legal Services Authorities/ Committees.
- Facilitate traffic challan disposal through virtual courts, including online compounding of challans and other petty offences.
- Explain how to set up and join a video-conference hearing.
- Share judgment/order copies via email, WhatsApp or other digital channels.
- There are **49 e-Sewa Kendras** functional across all High Courts and **2,535 e-Sewa Kendras** across District Courts (as on June 30, 2026).

Advancing Digital Justice through Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning

AI and Machine Learning in High Courts through 2027 is the next step under Phase III of the Mission. **Rs. 53.57 crore of the total Rs. 7,210 crore** outlay has been earmarked for this development. Legal research, case management, transcriptions, translations, and judicial decision-making support get enhanced with the integration of these technologies.

Key initiatives which are under pilot testing include:

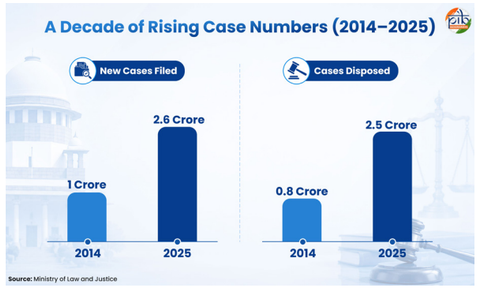
- **AI and ML tools** transcribe oral arguments in Constitutional Bench

matters, with transcripts published on the Supreme Court's website.

- **LegRAA** (Legal Research and Analysis Assistant) helps judges with legal research and document analysis.
- **Digital Courts 2.1** lets judges and judicial officers manage cases in a paperless format, giving them a single window for all case-related information and tasks.
- It includes **voice-to-text (ASR-SHRUTI)** and **translation (PANINI)** tools to assist with order and judgment dictation.
- Judgments are being translated into **18 Indian languages through the eSCR portal**, with the National Informatics Centre — **over 83,000 translated so far, including 36,344 into Hindi** (as of March 2025).
- An AI tool built with IIT Madras automatically flags defects in e-filed petitions and extracts case data/metadata; prototype access has been granted to 200 Advocates-on-Record, with integration into the e-filing system and the Court's case management software (ICMIS) underway.

An Overhauled Judicial System

The e-Courts Mission has modernised and digitised India's judicial system. It has replaced tedious processes — in-person court visits and physical paperwork — with something far easier, more trackable and more efficient. New AI tools are helping various stakeholders work more effectively. Through these interventions, anyone can access judicial services from anywhere. Justice delivery is now more transparent, faster and more affordable for the public.



A More Accessible, Transparent and Efficient Judiciary

The e-Courts Mission has transformed a traditionally paper-heavy, process-driven and opaque judiciary into a more accessible, transparent, and technology-enabled online system. The National Judicial Data Grid has made pending cases visible for the first time. Over 753 crore pages of old court records have been digitised and made searchable.

With these new tools and technology, the judiciary can handle increased caseloads in an efficient manner. As Phase III progresses through 2027, it is further advancing the vision of a justice system that works for all, regardless of their location or circumstances.

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04

Nuclear Energy Technology in India

Sustainable and Self-Reliant Future

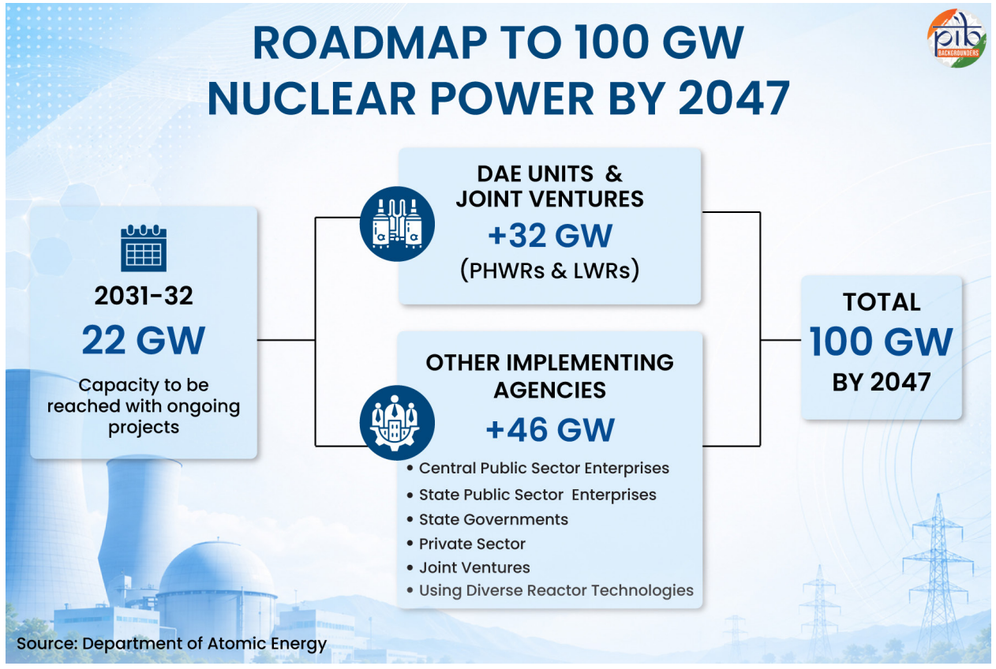
Published on: August 28, 2026

India's nuclear programme is guided by a strategy of technological self-reliance, developed to overcome historical fuel embargoes while harnessing the country's vast thorium reserves. At its core is the indigenously designed three-stage nuclear power programme, which enables a gradual transition from uranium- to thorium-based fuel cycles. By advancing indigenous innovation, expanding clean and reliable electricity generation, and ensuring long-term energy security, the programme is contributing to India's vision of sustainable development and achieving 100 GW of nuclear power capacity by 2047.

Nuclear Energy Supporting India's Sustainable Energy Security

India is committed to building a secure, sustainable, and self-reliant energy future to support its journey towards Viksit Bharat. Recognising the growing demand for clean, reliable and **stable baseload** electricity, the Government of India has placed nuclear energy at the core of its long-term energy strategy. Nuclear power provides round-the-clock, low-carbon electricity, complementing renewable energy while ensuring grid stability. It also reduces dependence on imported fossil fuels and supports India's climate commitments. Guided by the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat, the Government of India is developing robust indigenous capabilities across the entire nuclear fuel cycle, including reactor design, fuel fabrication, waste management, and advanced technologies.

India currently operates **24 nuclear power reactors** with a total installed capacity of **8.78 GW. Nine reactor units,** with a combined capacity of **7.5 GW,** are under construction. The Government has also approved **10 indigenous Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs)** in fleet mode and pre-project activities for **two 500 MW Fast Breeder Reactors (FBR).** Recent policy initiatives, including the **Nuclear Energy Mission (2025–26)** and the **SHANTI Act, 2025,** are accelerating capacity expansion, strengthening domestic manufacturing, promoting innovation and enabling greater private sector participation. Together, these initiatives are creating a resilient nuclear ecosystem that supports sustainable development and advances India's goal of achieving **100 GW of nuclear power capacity by 2047.**

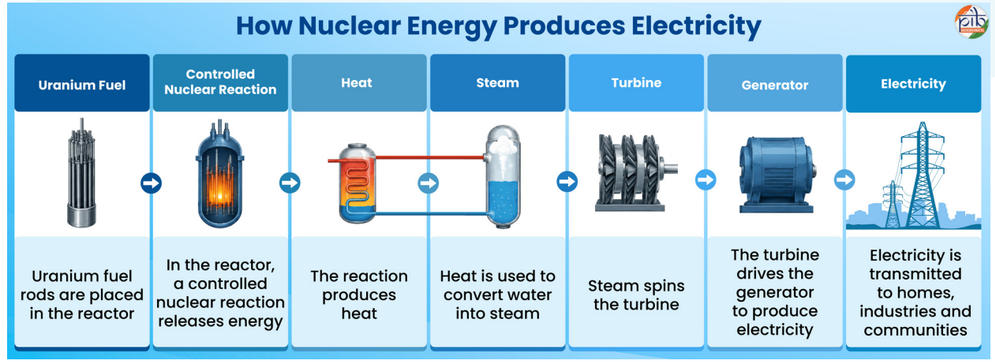


Baseload Electricity

Stable baseload electricity is the minimum, **uninterrupted** amount of power an electric grid needs to remain operational. It acts as the backbone of our power supply, ensuring reliable electricity for hospitals, communication networks, defence establishments, industries, and other essential services. Reliable baseload power is essential for economic growth, national security, and disaster resilience.

Understanding Nuclear Energy: An Overview

Nuclear power plants generate electricity by harnessing heat released through a carefully controlled process called nuclear fission. The heat converts water into steam, which drives a turbine connected to a generator. The generated electricity powers homes, industries, and essential services. The entire process operates within multiple engineered safety barriers and a robust regulatory framework.



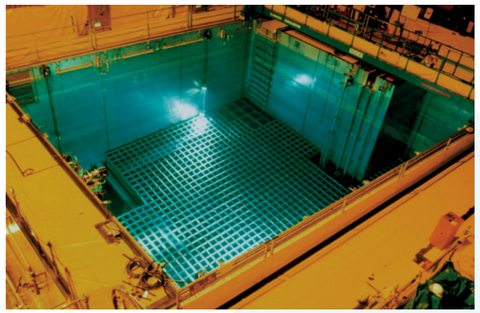
Nuclear Fuel

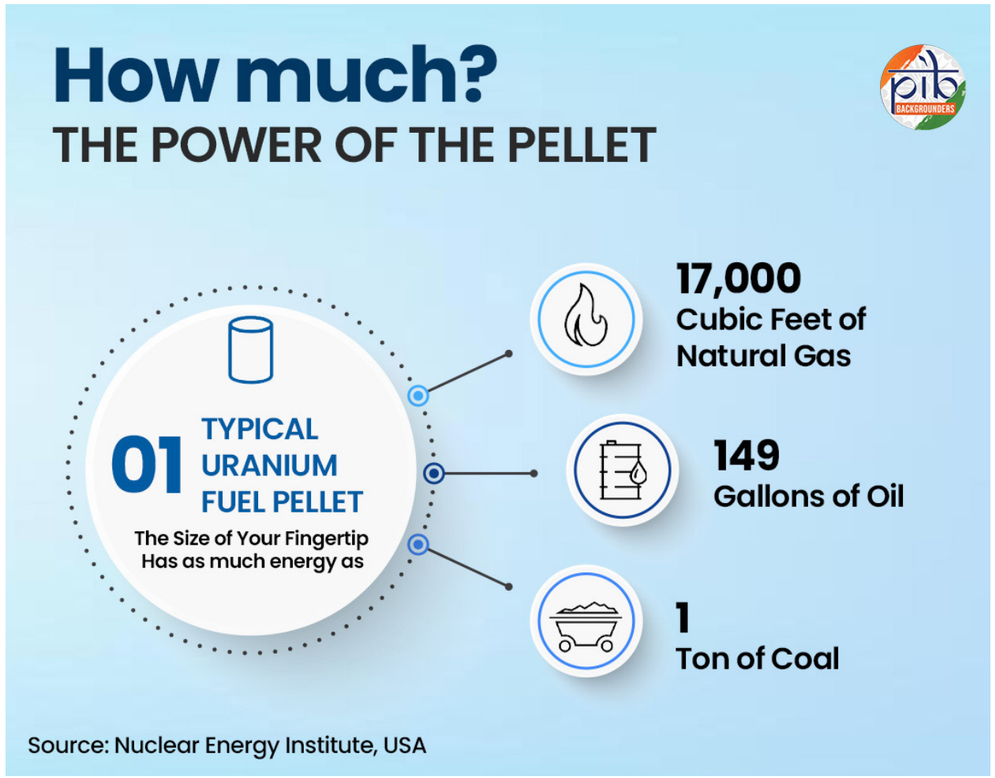
Nuclear fuel is the material placed inside a nuclear reactor to generate electricity. Its atoms split through nuclear fission and release large amounts of heat. The heat converts water into steam. The steam drives turbines to generate electricity.

Nuclear reactor fuels can be **fissile,** which directly sustain the chain reaction or **fertile,** which are first converted into fissile fuels inside the reactor. The most common nuclear fuels are **Natural Uranium, Uranium-235 (U-235), Low-Enriched Uranium (LEU), Plutonium-239 (Pu-239),** and **Mixed Oxide (MOX) fuel.**

Most countries, including the United States, France, China, Japan, South Korea, Canada, and Russia, use **Low-Enriched Uranium (LEU)** in Light Water Reactors. India mainly uses **Natural Uranium in Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs),** which do not require uranium enrichment. India also uses **MOX fuel in its Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR).**

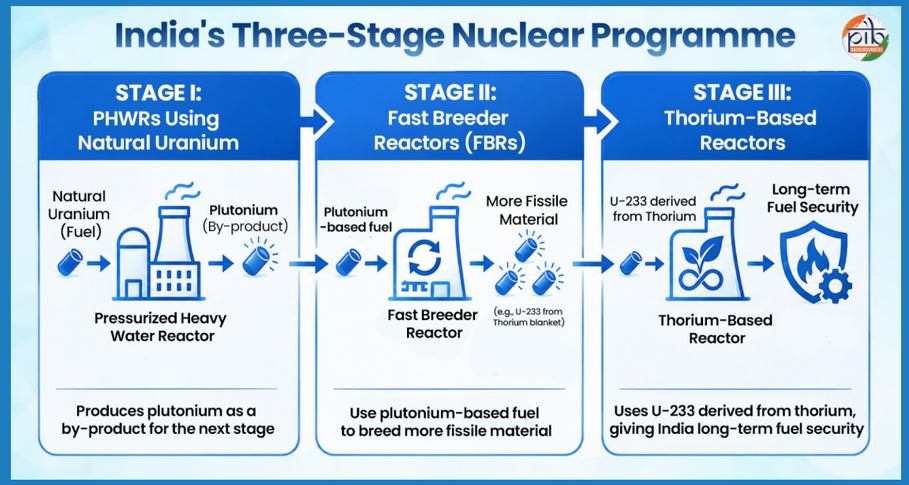
India's uranium reserves are of low grade and therefore need to be supplemented through imports. India, however, has abundant reserves of thorium (Th-232). This is a fertile rather than fissile radioactive material, found mainly in the coastal sands of **Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal and Jharkhand.** Inside a reactor, Th-232 absorbs a neutron and transforms into **Uranium-233**, which is fissile. India's long-term nuclear strategy is centred on utilising its abundant **thorium reserves**, through its three-stage nuclear power programme.





India's Three-Stage Nuclear Programme

Dr. Homi J. Bhabha proposed the three-stage nuclear power programme in 1954 to maximise the use of India's indigenous resources and achieve long-term energy security. India achieved a major milestone in **April 2026** when the **Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR)** at **Kalpakkam** attained **first criticality**. A breeder reactor is one that produces more fissile material or fuel while generating electricity. This marked the beginning of the second stage of India's three-stage nuclear power programme. The milestone brings India closer to harnessing its abundant thorium resources for long-term, clean, and self-reliant energy security. To read further: A New Chapter in India's Nuclear Journey



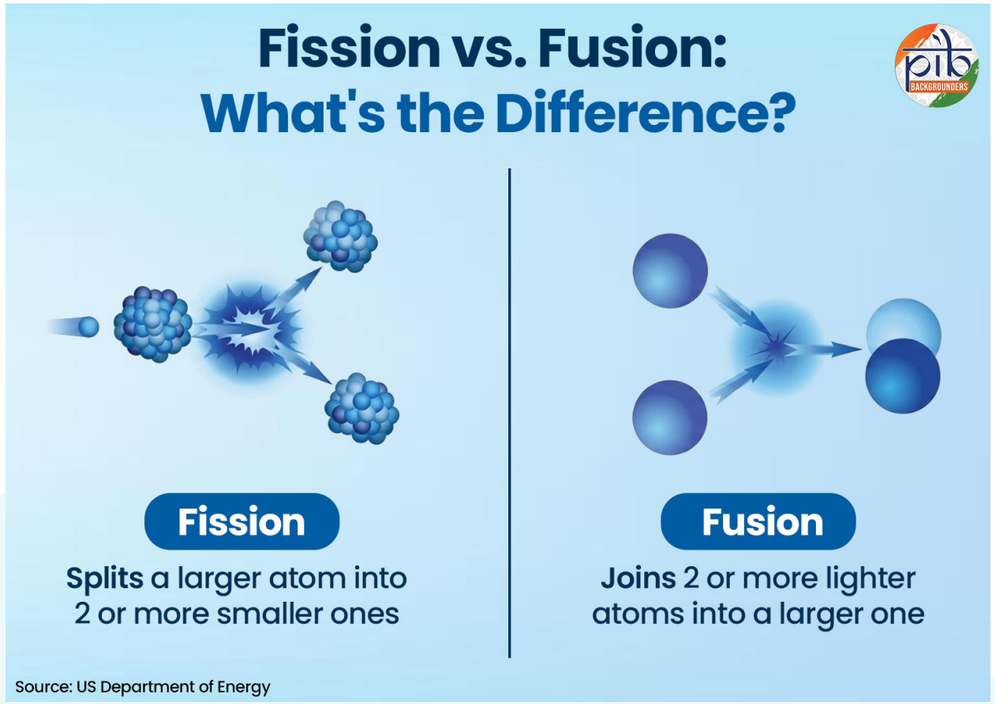
In the **first stage**, Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) use natural uranium to generate electricity. The spent fuel is reprocessed to recover plutonium, which becomes the primary input for the second stage. In the **second stage**, Fast Breeder Reactors (FBRs) use this plutonium to generate electricity while breeding additional fissile material. They also produce uranium-233 from thorium, laying the groundwork for the third stage. In the **third stage**, thorium-based reactors use uranium-233 to harness India's abundant thorium reserves. Each stage feeds into the next, unlocking long-term energy security.

The Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR) led the design, development, testing, safety assessment, commissioning and indigenisation of India's **Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR)**. Through close collaboration with Indian industry, IGCAR achieved **nearly 90 per cent domestic manufacturing** of the reactor's equipment and systems, strengthening India's self-reliance in advanced nuclear technology and supporting the country's second stage of the Three Stage Nuclear Power Programme.

Nuclear Reaction

A nuclear reaction releases energy from the nucleus of an atom. The two main types are **nuclear fission** and **nuclear fusion.** Nuclear power plants use nuclear fission.

In a nuclear reactor, a neutron strikes the nucleus of a uranium or plutonium atom, causing it to split into two smaller atoms. This process, known as nuclear fission, releases a large amount of heat and additional neutrons. These neutrons trigger further fission reactions, creating a carefully controlled chain reaction. The heat generated is used to convert water into high-pressure steam. The steam drives a turbine, which is connected to a generator. As the turbine rotates, the generator produces electricity.



Nuclear Fusion

Nuclear fusion combines two light atoms to form a heavier atom. Fusion powers the Sun and stars. It can produce much more energy than fission. However, fusion technology is still under development for commercial fusion technology is still under development for commercial electricity generation.

Nuclear Reactors

The nuclear reactor is the heart of a nuclear power plant, where the process of nuclear fission is safely controlled to generate heat. It contains nuclear fuel, such as uranium or plutonium, control rods to regulate the fission reaction, a coolant to transfer the heat produced, and multiple safety systems to ensure safe and reliable operation.

India primarily uses **Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs),** which operate on natural uranium. The country also operates **Boiling Water Reactors (BWRs)** and **Pressurised Water Reactors (PWRs).** India is advancing **Fast Breeder Reactors (FBRs)** to utilise plutonium and support the transition to thorium-based reactors. India is also developing **Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)** as the next generation of nuclear technology.

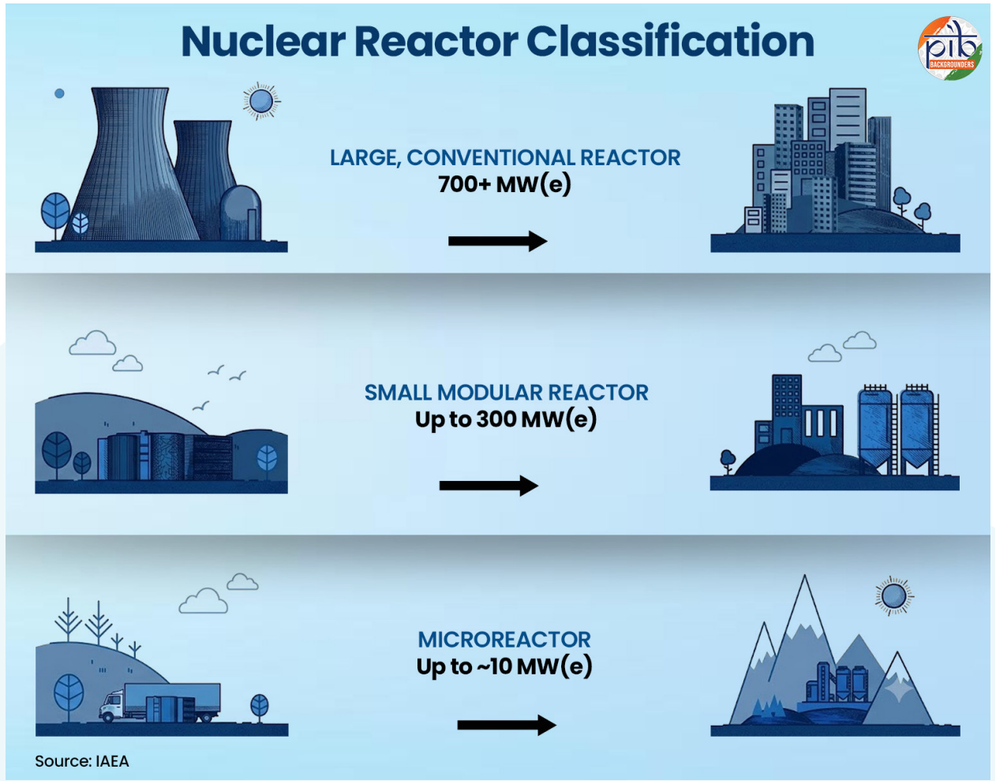
Nuclear Reactor Technologies used in India

Reactor Technology	Primary Use	Status in India	Representative Locations
Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR)	Commercial electricity generation using natural uranium	Predominant indigenous reactor technology	Rajasthan, Kakrapar, Kaiga, Narora, Madras (Kalpakkam), Tarapur (Units 3 & 4)
Boiling Water Reactor (BWR)	Commercial electricity generation	Operational	Tarapur Atomic Power Station (Units 1 & 2)
Pressurised Water Reactor (PWR)	Commercial electricity generation	Operational	Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (Units 1 & 2)
Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR)	Fast breeder technology to support India's three-stage nuclear power programme	Operational (First Criticality Achieved, April 2026)	Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu

Source: NPCIL

Small Modular Reactor

SMRs typically generate **up to 300 MWe** through nuclear fission. Their compact, modular design enables factory-based manufacturing, faster construction, improved quality, and phased deployment. Under the **Nuclear Energy Mission**, announced in the **Union Budget 2025–26**, the Government has allocated **₹20,000 crore** for the research, design, development, and deployment of indigenous SMRs. India is developing the **220 MWe Bharat Small Modular Reactor (BSMR-200)**, jointly designed by **BARC** and **NPCIL**, the **55 MWe SMR-55**, and a **High-Temperature Gas-Cooled Reactor** for hydrogen production. The Government aims to operationalise **at least five indigenous SMRs by 2033**.



Source: IAEA

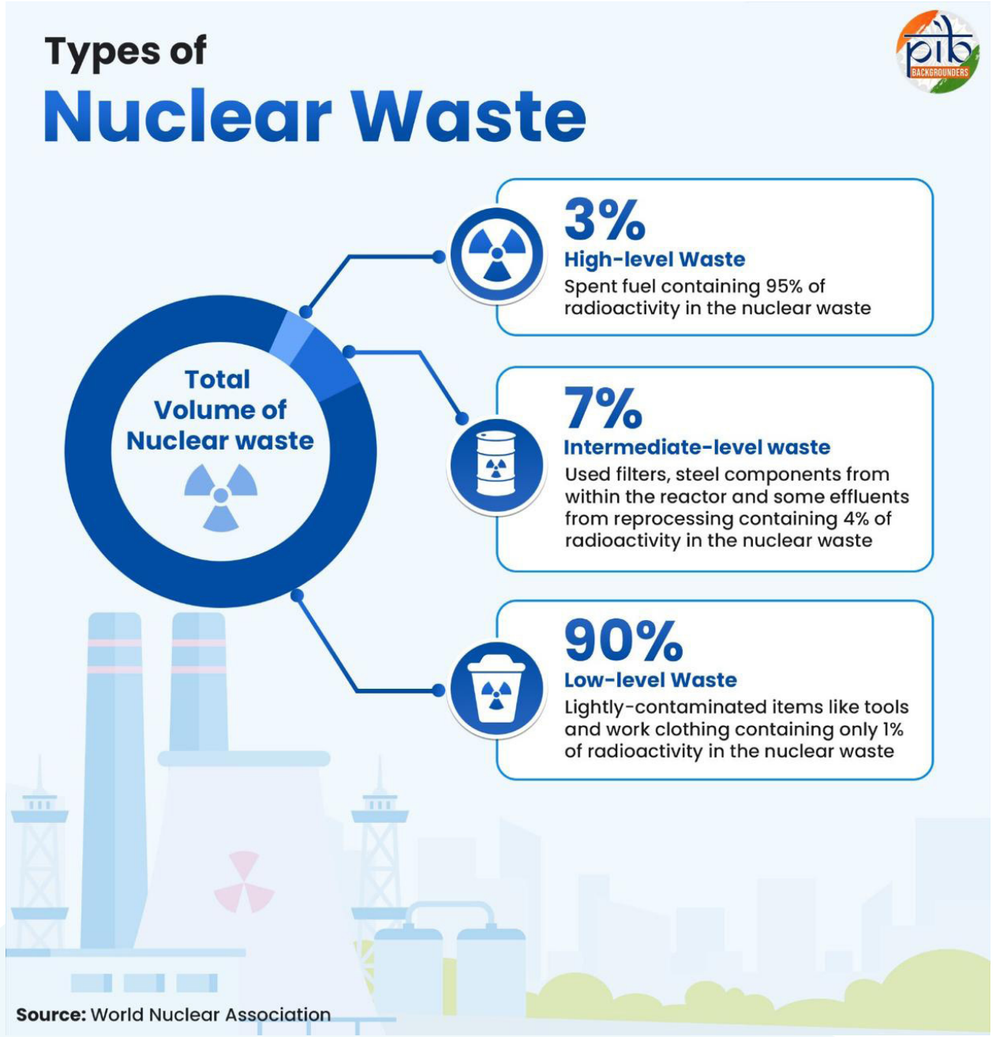
Classification of Nuclear Reactors

Nuclear reactors are designed for different applications. **Large conventional reactors** (700–1,600 MW) supply continuous baseload power to national grids, cities, and industries. **Small Modular Reactors** (up to 300 MW) and **Micro Reactors (up to 20 MW)** serve remote areas, replace retiring coal plants, supply industrial process heat, and support hydrogen production.

Nuclear Waste

Nuclear waste is the radioactive material generated during the operation of a nuclear power plant. It includes used nuclear fuel and other materials, such as protective clothing, filters, tools, and equipment, that become radioactive after being used in the plant. Since it emits radiation, it is managed under strict safety standards to ensure the protection of people and the environment.





India follows a **closed nuclear fuel cycle**, where spent nuclear fuel is reprocessed to recover valuable materials for reuse in future reactors. The remaining high-level radioactive waste is immobilised and safely stored, reducing waste and supporting India's three-stage nuclear power programme.

Vitrification Technology

India is among the few countries with vitrification technology for high-level radioactive waste. The process converts high-level radioactive waste into a stable glass form, making it safer for long-term storage, transport, and eventual disposal.

Powering India's Clean Energy Future

India's nuclear energy programme reflects the country's commitment to innovation, sustainability and self-reliance. By combining advanced technologies with rigorous safety standards and indigenous capabilities, nuclear energy is helping build a secure and resilient energy future. As the nation progresses towards Viksit Bharat, nuclear energy will continue to complement other clean energy sources, supporting economic growth, environmental sustainability and long-term energy security.

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05

Samudra Manthan – National Offshore Exploration Scheme

Churning the Ocean for Energy

Published on: August 03, 2026

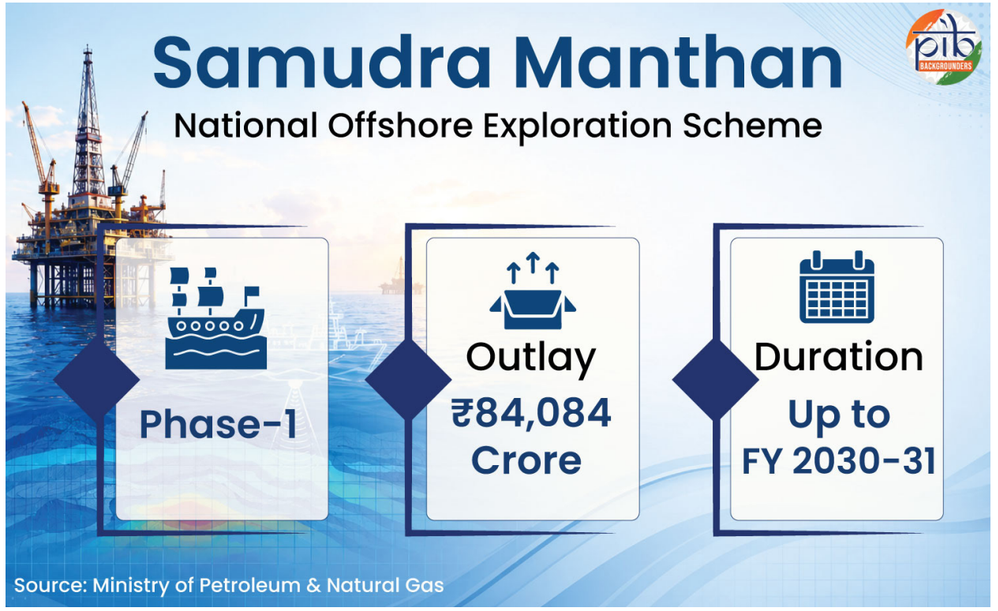
Samudra Manthan marks a decisive step in India's journey towards energy security and self-reliance. With a Phase-I outlay of ₹84,084 crore up to FY 2030–31, the scheme is designed to unlock India's vast offshore hydrocarbon potential. It focuses on accelerating exploration, deploying modern technology, creating shared infrastructure, and strengthening domestic manufacturing. It aims to add over 600 MMTOE of hydrocarbon reserves, raise domestic production, reduce import dependence, and build a globally competitive offshore energy ecosystem.

A New Chapter in Offshore Exploration

Energy powers every aspect of modern life. It fuels homes, farms, industries, transport, and the wider economy. As India continues its rapid growth, ensuring a reliable, affordable, and secure energy supply has become a national priority. While the country's energy needs continue to rise, a significant share of its crude oil and natural gas requirements is met through imports. Expanding domestic production is therefore essential to strengthen energy security, reduce import dependence, and conserve valuable foreign exchange.

Among the country's key energy resources are hydrocarbons—organic compounds made of hydrogen and carbon. They occur deep below the land and the seabed. Crude oil and natural gas are the widely used hydrocarbons. They provide the raw material for petrol, diesel, LPG, petrochemicals, fertilisers, and numerous industrial products.

India's offshore basins hold vast untapped hydrocarbon potential. A basin is a large natural depression in the earth where hydrocarbons collect. Unlocking these resources requires modern exploration, reliable geological data, advanced drilling capabilities, and a strong domestic supply chain. To accelerate this effort, **Samudra Manthan – the National Offshore Exploration Scheme** has been approved on 31 July 2026. With a Phase-I outlay of ₹84,084 crore up to FY 2030-31, it aims to boost the hydrocarbon exploration and production sector.



Why The Seas Hold the Key for India

India is the **world's third-largest consumer of crude oil.** Its annual import bill is nearly **USD 144 billion,** or about **₹13 lakh crore.** Recent global events have shown how vital uninterrupted energy access is. Higher domestic output has thus become critical for a rapidly growing economy.

The Offshore Opportunity

Much of India's future oil and gas potential lies offshore. Deepwater and ultra-deepwater basins are sea zones with very high-water depth. India's eastern and western offshore basins extend to water depths of up to 3,000 metres. They are estimated to hold over **5,600 MMTOE** (Million Metric Tonnes of Oil Equivalent) of hydrocarbon potential. Recent finds in the Cauvery, Mahanadi, and Andaman basins have reinforced this promise.



ONGC's Fixed Offshore Platform

The Challenge of Deepwater Exploration

Exploration is a costly and patient activity. Moving from the award of an exploration block to commercial production typically takes 5–10 years. A single deepwater exploratory well costs about USD 125–150 million. Such high stakes can discourage offshore exploration.

There is another reason why constant search matters. Existing fields witness a natural decline of around 6–7 percent every year. New discoveries are needed simply to sustain current output. Sustained exploration thus serves as a path to lasting self-reliance in energy.

Inside the Samudra Manthan Mission

Samudra Manthan marks the transition from policy reform to mission-mode implementation. The scheme adopts a risk-sharing approach to attract **sustained investment** into frontier waters. It seeks to **de-risk offshore ventures** and encourage private capital, building enduring national capability across the value chain. In doing so, it converts a decade of reform into concrete action at sea.



Components of Samudra Manthan

Offshore exploration depends on reliable data, advanced technology, modern infrastructure, and a resilient supply chain. Samudra Manthan brings these elements together through four components.

1. **Seismic Data Acquisition, Processing, and Interpretation**

   Limited offshore seismic coverage restricted the identification of drill-ready oil and gas prospects. The scheme funds large-scale **2D and 3D seismic surveys** with an outlay of **₹28,534 crore.** Advanced technology and Artificial Intelligence will speed up processing and interpretation. Older data in the National Data Repository will also be re-processed with modern tools.

2. **Accelerated Offshore Exploration**

   High cost and long gestation make deepwater drilling a risky venture. To share this risk, the scheme allocates **₹43,200 crore** for drilling 60 deepwater and ultra-deepwater wells. Financial support covers up to **50 percent** of eligible drilling cost, or **₹675 crore** per well, whichever is lower. The scheme is open to both public and private Exploration and Production (E&P) operators to increase oil and gas reserves. It will accelerate reserve accretion and unlock India's deepwater potential.

3. **Common Offshore Infrastructure**

   Many offshore discoveries remain unproduced due to costly infrastructure, particularly in the Mahanadi and Kutch basins. The scheme provides **₹10,000 crore** for shared production and evacuation facilities in select basins. Common infrastructure lowers project costs and turns idle finds into producing fields.

4. **Oil and Gas Manufacturing and Services Zone**

   Low domestic manufacturing increases exploration costs, import dependence, and foreign exchange outflow. In view of this, an integrated Oil and Gas Manufacturing and Services Zone will be established with **₹2,000 crore.** It will build domestic capabilities in manufacturing, repair, warehousing, engineering, and services. This directly advances Make in India across the supply chain. An amount of **₹350 crore** supports monitoring, digital interventions, evaluation, human resources, awareness and outreach, events, and media.

Component-Wise Allocation

S. No	Component	Amount (₹ Crore)
1	**Offshore data acquisition**	**28,534**
1A	2D seismic data acquisition for basin-wide coverage	12,000
1B	3D seismic data acquisition (and other techniques)	12,534
1C	NDR data re-processing and AI tools implementation	4,000
2	**Offshore exploration and infrastructure-led production**	**55,200**
2A	Offshore exploration acceleration	43,200
2B	Infrastructure-led deepwater production and exploration	10,000
2C	Development of oil and gas manufacturing and services zones	2,000
3	**Monitoring and support activities**	**350**
Total		**84,084**

An Integrated Enabling Ecosystem

Beyond funding, the scheme creates a supportive environment for the entire value chain. Dedicated provisions cover:

- Digital programme management for transparent and efficient implementation
- Capacity building for professionals across the sector
- Adoption of cutting-edge technologies
- Continuous stakeholder engagement
- International outreach to attract global partners

What Samudra Manthan Will Deliver

The scheme is designed to create value for the economy and future generations. Subject to exploration success, it is expected to bring wide-ranging gains:

- **Larger Reserves:** Increase of over 600 MMTOE of hydrocarbon reserves, expanding the resource base from 1.6 billion to 2.2 billion Tonnes of Oil Equivalent (TOE).
- **Higher Output:** Annual domestic production is targeted to rise from around 62 MMTOE to 80 MMTOE. Incremental production of 10–15 MMTOE is expected, with a peak potential of 20 MMTOE.
- **Lower Import Bill:** Additional output can cut crude imports by nearly ₹1 lakh crore every year, generating significant foreign exchange savings.
- **Investment and Growth:** The scheme will promote investments across the value chain and drive strong GDP expansion.
- **Employment:** Large-scale jobs will be created in exploration, production, and allied activities.
- **Indigenous Strength:** Domestic manufacturing will deepen under Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat, fostering a globally competitive ecosystem for offshore technologies.

Together, these outcomes strengthen the country's energy resilience. They also nurture technological leadership and long-term opportunities for industry and innovation.

A Series of Reforms

In recent years, India has steadily rebuilt its hydrocarbon exploration and production ecosystem. A series of structural reforms has made the sector open, transparent, and investor-friendly.

- **Opening Up Offshore Acreage:** More than 99 percent of the earlier "No-Go" areas have been removed. Over one million square kilometres of the Exclusive Economic Zone is now available for exploration. This zone is the sea area where India holds rights over natural resources.
- **New Licensing Framework:** The Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP) was launched in 2016. Under it the Open Acreage Licensing Programme (OALP) was launched which replaced the old nomination-based approach. HELP provides lower levies, uniform licensing, revenue sharing, and incentives to promote hydrocarbon exploration and early production.

- **Simpler Contracts:** India moved from Production Sharing Contracts (PSC) to Revenue Sharing Contracts (RSC) in 2016. In PSC, profits were shared between the Government and the contractor after recovery of cost. In RSC, the contractor bears all exploration risks, production and development costs in return for its stipulated share of revenue. Thus, this fiscal framework became simpler and more transparent, with less administrative intervention.



- **Modern Law:** The Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Amendment Act, 2025 provided contractual stability and stronger dispute resolution. It recognised integrated petroleum operations and created a contemporary regulatory architecture.
- **Enabling Rules:** The Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules, 2025 operationalised these changes. They promote ease of doing business and streamline the administration of petroleum leases.
- **Level Playing Field:** The composition and mandate of the Empowered Committee of Secretaries were standardised across all contract regimes. Every operator now enjoys consistent treatment, whenever their contract was signed.
- **Sharper Focus:** The performance parameters of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India were reoriented towards exploration. This reinforces the national commitment to expanding the domestic resource base.

Good exploration begins with good data. **Seismic surveys** send sound waves into the earth to map rock layers below the seabed. India has made sustained investments in such geoscientific knowledge through several national initiatives. These include **Mission Anveshan, the National Seismic Programme, the Extended Continental Shelf Survey, the National Data Repository, and the Hydrocarbon Resource Assessment Study.** Together, these have created one of the world's most comprehensive geoscientific databases.

The reforms have inspired visible confidence. Nearly 81 percent of active exploration acreage has been awarded after 2014. Under OALP, 172 blocks covering nearly 3.8 lakh square kilometres have been awarded. Committed investments in these blocks exceed USD 4.3 billion. Activity on the ground has gathered pace as well. During FY 2025-26 alone, around 674 wells were drilled. Five new discoveries were made and seven discoveries were monetised.

A New Chapter Begins in the Mahanadi Basin

The hydrocarbon exploration reform journey reached a proud moment on 25 July 2026. Drilling of the first appraisal well commenced in the Mahanadi Offshore Basin. An appraisal well is drilled to further evaluate the quality and commercial value of the hydrocarbon discovery. The programme will deploy world-class deepwater drilling technology. The MN-DWN18-1-HD well is the first of four planned deepwater wells. These wells will systematically evaluate one of India's most prospective offshore basins.

The spudding (start of drilling a new well) marks the beginning of one of India's most challenging deepwater campaigns. Every prospect evaluated and every well drilled will take the nation closer to self-reliance.

Towards a Secure Energy Future

India stands at the threshold of a promising energy era. The nation's energy future doesn't rest on a single discovery. It is being built through sustained reform, science, and the dedication of thousands of geologists, engineers, and offshore professionals. Samudra Manthan blends data, shared risk, common facilities, and homegrown capability into one mission. As the churn of the ocean begins, it carries the aspirations of a rising nation. Each step taken beneath the waves brings the country closer to a secure and self-reliant tomorrow.

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06

India’s Makhana Sector: Traditional Crop to Global Superfood

Published on: August 19, 2026

Makhana, or fox nut, has emerged as a fast-growing agri-food product in India. This is due to its nutritional value, rising health awareness, and increasing global demand. India is the world's largest producer of makhana. Bihar contributes nearly three-fourths of the country's production and around 80–85 percent of the global supply. In 2025–26, India exported 7,264.89 MT of makhana products (export value ₹19296.08 lakh). Domestic prices also increased significantly due to strong demand for healthy and premium snacks. Government initiatives, including the National Makhana Board and the ₹476.03 crore Central Sector Scheme, support research, processing, branding, exports, and farmers. With growing domestic and international demand, makhana has strong potential to increase farmer incomes. It can also generate rural employment and strengthen India's agri-food exports.

Makhana: India's Superfood Sector on the Rise

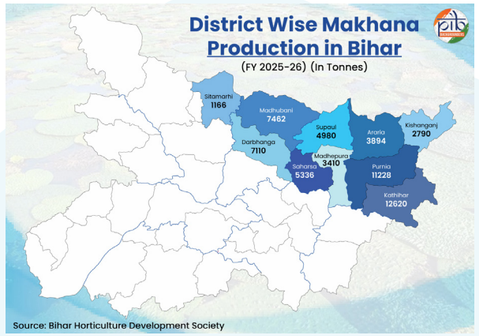
Makhana, scientifically known as Euryale ferox, is an aquatic crop grown mainly in shallow ponds, lakes, and wetlands. The edible part of the plant is its seed. After roasting or processing, the seed is popped and consumed as a fox nut. India is the world's largest producer of makhana. This position is supported by suitable agro-climatic conditions and long-standing cultivation practices, mainly in **Bihar, West Bengal, and Assam.**

Over the years, makhana has evolved from a **traditional food of Bihar into a widely consumed health food across the country**. This transformation has been driven by rising health awareness and supportive government policies. The growth of startups producing value-added makhana products and the increasing role of Farmer-Producer Organizations (FPOs) have also contributed to the sector's expansion. In line with the sector's growing importance, the Government announced the establishment of the **National Makhana Board** in the **Union Budget 2025-26**. The Board was formally launched in Bihar on **15 September 2025**. This initiative marks a significant step towards strengthening and modernizing the makhana value chain.

To further support the sector, the Government has **approved a Central Sector Scheme for the Development of Makhana** with a total **outlay** of **₹476.03 crore** for the period from **2025-26 to 2030-31**. The scheme focuses on promoting research and innovation, improving the availability of quality seeds, and strengthening farmers' skills. It also aims to upgrade harvesting and post-harvest practices, promote value addition, branding, and marketing, enhance exports, and reinforce quality control systems. Under the Central Sector Scheme for the Development of Makhana, **₹30 Crore** was approved for 2025-26 and **₹90 Crore** for **2026-27**.

India's Makhana Boom

India continues to be the clear global leader in makhana production. **Bihar** accounts for nearly **three-fourths of** India's Makhana production and contributes around **80-85% of the global supply**. Makhana cultivation is mainly concentrated in **North Bihar.**



It is especially prominent in the **Kosi basin districts of Supaul, Saharsa, and Madhepura**, as well as in nearby areas of the **Mithila and Seemanchal regions.** This makes the state the central hub of the makhana sector.

In 2024-25, as per final estimate of Horticulture Statistics Unit, DA&FW, the total production of makhana in India was 63,910 Metric Tonnes (MT), with an average productivity of 2.03 MT per hectare. As per the Second Advance Estimates (2025–26), total production of makhana in India is 80,590 MT, with an average productivity of 2.34 MT per hectare. Bihar is the leading producer of makhana in the country, with a production of 60,000 MT in 2025–26 and average productivity of 2.00 MT per hectare.

Traditionally grown in ponds, modern techniques like field-system farming and improved varieties such as **Swarna Vaidehi** and **Sabour Makhana-1** have helped increase productivity. The growth has been driven by an increase in cultivated area, improved productivity, and reduced cultivation risks.

Makhana-Geographical Indication (GI) Tag

"Mithila Makhana" has been granted a GI tag, recognizing the unique quality, reputation, and traditional knowledge associated with makhana produced in the Mithila region of Bihar. The GI status provides legal protection, enhances market differentiation, and strengthens branding potential in domestic and international markets.

Domestic Production and Consumption Dynamics in Makhana Market

India produces more than **0.6 lakh metric tonnes** of makhana each year. **About 40 percent, or nearly 0.23-0.25 lakh metric tonnes**, is exported, while the remaining quantity is consumed domestically. With growing global demand for clean-label and plant-based superfoods, India's strong production base places makhana as a premium snack in international markets.

The domestic makhana market recorded **annual growth of 17-18 percent between 2021-22 and 2024-25**. This growth has been driven by rising health awareness, premiumization, and the expansion of branded players. Strong domestic demand has also helped shield the sector from fluctuations in export markets.

The market is expected to reach **₹11,000-12,000 crore by 2029-30**. Production volumes increased by **only 4 to 5 percent** during the period from **FY 2022 to 2025**. Average prices increased from about ₹500 per kilogram during 2020-2022 to nearly ₹1,250 per kilogram in 2025. This increase is linked to higher demand for health-focused snacks, premium branding, and limited supply response.

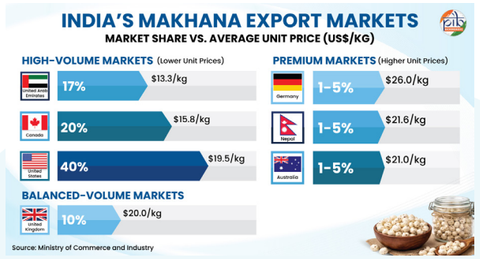
Estimated Monthly Domestic Consumption (Popped)

India's monthly domestic consumption of popped makhana is estimated at **3,000-3,500 metric tonnes.** During festive periods, **when demand for snacks peaks**, consumption rises to around **5,000 metric tonnes**.

Within domestic consumption, branded Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and organized snack players account for **1,800-2,000 metric tonnes per month**. This is driven by the rapid premiumization of the category and the expansion of retail penetration. **Loose and unorganized retail contributes 1,200-1,400 metric tonnes per month,** remaining significant in Tier-2 and Tier-3 markets, even as packaged formats gradually gain popularity.

Local Fields Serving Global Shelves: Export Journey

Prior to 2025, makhana was classified under general Harmonized System of Nomenclature (HSN) codes. This resulted in the non-availability of product-specific export data. To address this gap, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) introduced a separate HSN code for popped makhana and other makhana products in 2025. In 2025–26, India exported **7,264.89 MT** of makhana products (export value **19296.08 lakh**).



India's export markets are highly concentrated. T**he United States (40%), Canada (20%)**, and the **United Arab Emirates (17%)** together account for **77%** of total makhana exports. However, these high-volume destinations offer **relatively lower unit prices, US ($19.5/kg), Canada ($15.8/kg), and the UAE ($13.3/kg).** In comparison, **smaller markets** such as **Germany ($26.0/kg), Nepal ($21.6/kg), and Australia ($21.0/kg)** command premium prices despite limited **volumes (1–5%)**. The **United Kingdom** presents a balanced profile, with a 10 percent market share and average price realizations of **$20/kg**. This indicates an opportunity to diversify beyond the US and Gulf markets by targeting premium-paying regions to enhance overall realizations.

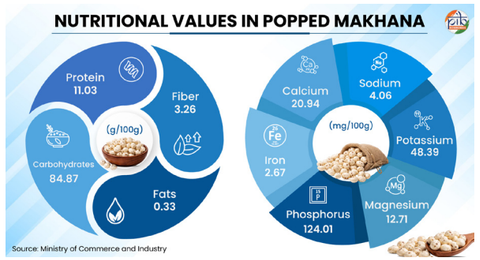
Expanding Makhana Cultivation and Strengthening Farmer Support

Under the scheme, an additional area of 1,010 hectares has been brought under Makhana cultivation across the states, while 73 hectares have been covered under seed production programme. A total of 89 Front Line Demonstrations (FLDs) were conducted to demonstrate improved production technologies of makhana. Capacity building of farmers was undertaken through seminars, exposure visits and training programmes organized at State Agricultural Universities (SAUs), Central Agricultural Universities (CAUs), Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) institutes etc. Under the Central Sector Scheme for Development of Makhana, a total of 8159 farmers in the country have

benefited in 2025-26.

The Science Behind the Crunch: Makhana's Nutritional Edge

Makhana is nutrient-rich, containing carbohydrates, high-quality protein, dietary fibre, and essential micronutrients such as magnesium, potassium, phosphorus, and iron. Its low-sodium and cholesterol-free composition makes it suitable for a wide range of dietary needs.



Makhana is valued for its nutritional and health benefits and is increasingly recognized as a **global superfood.** It has a low glycaemic load, making it suitable for people **managing diabetes.** It also supports h**eart health, aids digestion,** and is known for its **anti-aging properties**. Studies indicate that **makhana's nutrient profile is superior** to that of many commonly consumed nuts such as al**monds, walnuts, and cashews**.

It contains very little **fat (0.33 g per 100 g)**, is rich in fibre, provides various essential amino acids and has about **95 percent protein digestibility**. Its essential amino acid index and chemical score are comparable to those of fish.

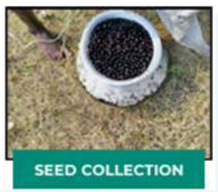
Making of the Superfood: From Seed to Snack

Makhana production involves several stages that together form the value chain. Harvesting and seed collection take place at the farm level. Cleaning and drying are part of primary processing. Activities such as roasting or popping, grading, polishing, and packaging fall under secondary processing and value addition.

Farm-Level Production

Farm-level production includes pond preparation, seed broadcasting, crop management, and manual harvesting from water bodies. This stage is highly labor-intensive and depends on skilled manual work. Seed collection is particularly demanding as it is carried out underwater. Traditional cultivation practices continue to dominate the sector, and the level of mechanization remains limited.

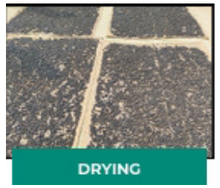




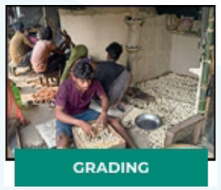
Primary Processing

Primary processing of makhana is mostly carried out at the household or village level using **traditional tools and methods.** The process begins with drying and cleaning the raw seeds, followed by high-temperature roasting. The heated seeds are then popped, expanding into the **light, crunchy form** commonly consumed as a snack. After popping, the makhana is polished, sorted, and graded according to size and quality. Larger, higher-quality makhana fetch higher prices in the market.









Secondary Processing and Value Addition

The final product, which is popped makhana, is polished and packed. In recent years, secondary processing has expanded beyond traditional forms. It now includes **flavoured makhana, ready-to-eat snacks, makhana flour, and other products**. This segment offers strong potential for value addition and employment generation.





National Research Centre for Makhana (NRCM)

The National Research Centre for Makhana (NRCM) plays a key role in modernizing India's makhana sector through research and capacity building. It also promotes improved cultivation and processing practices across the sector. NRCM has developed high-yield makhana and thornless water chestnut varieties, introducing water-efficient and integrated farming systems, and launching Makhana-cum-fish farming. Over the years, NRCM has distributed **15,824.1 kg** of high-yielding makhana seeds to farmers, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, and various organizations. Major beneficiaries include institutions such as NABARD, State Fisheries Departments, Bihar Horticulture Development Society, and others.

Between 2012 and 2023, more than **3,000 farmers** were trained in improved cultivation, processing, and marketing practices. The training focused on

efficient water use, appropriate cropping systems, and balanced nutrient management. The Centre has also provided **technical support to 24 enterprises,** supporting rural livelihoods and the growth of makhana-based agro-industries.

Building on the capacity-building efforts, NRCM, with State Agricultural Universities and the Central Agricultural University, Bihar, has proposed a train-the-trainers approach. This approach aims to strengthen extension services across the makhana value chain. It covers cultivation, processing, grading, drying, popping, packaging, and branding.

Additionally, NRCM has developed several pieces of equipment and machinery for makhana popping and the production of value-added products. These technologies have been licensed to manufacturers for commercialization. Examples include the **makhana seed washer, seed grader, primary roasting machine, popping machine, and popped makhana grader.** Technologies for producing various value-added products have also been transferred for commercial use.

The Crop Connecting Nutrition, Farmers, and Global Markets

Makhana has emerged as one of India's fastest-growing agri-food sectors, driven by rising health awareness, expanding domestic demand, and strong export potential. Backed by favourable agro-climatic conditions, traditional expertise, and continuous technological advancements, India remains at the forefront of global makhana production.

The establishment of the National Makhana Board reflects a strong commitment to strengthening the sector across the entire value chain. At the same time, institutions such as the National Research Centre for Makhana are **advancing research, enhancing farmer skills,** and **supporting value addition.**

Global demand for healthy, plant-based, and premium food products continues to rise. In this context, makhana is well-positioned to contribute to **higher farmer incomes, rural employment,** and **agricultural exports**.

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07

The Making of a Sporting Nation

Khelo India and the Road to International Excellence

Published on: August 03, 2026

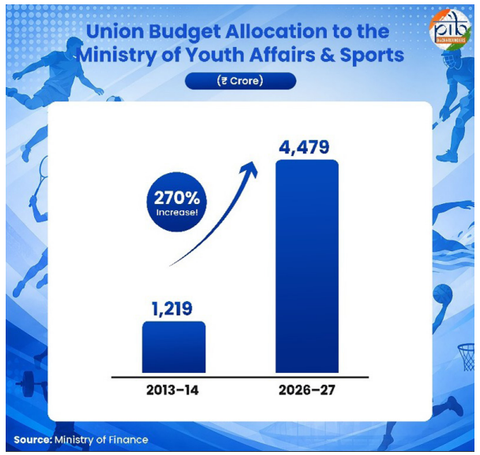
The Union Cabinet's approval of the revamped Khelo India Scheme marks a major step in India's sporting journey. This features an enhanced Assistance to National Sports Federations, with a combined outlay of **₹36,441 crore** for the period **2026–27 to 2030–31.** Through stronger talent identification, wider opportunities and sustained athlete support, the programme seeks to create a clear pathway from grassroots participation to global podiums. Together with other initiatives, it is nurturing talent and preparing the champions of tomorrow.

The Spirit of a Sporting India

Sports carry immense power to transform a nation, shaping individuals and elevating countries onto the world stage. It builds character and confidence in citizens, while announcing a nation's arrival as a sporting superpower. Victory on the field brings immense national pride, uniting people beyond caste, creed and religion. This shared pride helps build a happier, healthier and more cohesive society.

India's greatest sporting asset is its youth. Around 65 per cent of the population is below 35 years of age. Recognising this immense potential, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports continues to strengthen youth development and promote sporting excellence across the country. The **Union Budget** 2026–27 allocated a record ₹4,479.88 crore to the Ministry, up from ₹1,219 crore in 2013–14.

At the heart of this transformation stands the Khelo India programme, which has now entered a significantly expanded phase. The Union Cabinet has approved an expanded scheme that takes its vision far beyond competitions and infrastructure.



From school playgrounds and village fields, young athletes will now have a clearer path forward. Early identification will be followed by quality coaching, scientific support and regular competition. Stronger institutions and wider partnerships will help promising athletes move steadily towards international excellence. Complemented by several other key initiatives, Khelo India promotes mass participation and sporting excellence across rural and urban India. Together, these efforts provide infrastructure, scientific training and financial support to identify and nurture talent at every level. It seeks to ensure that talent is not held back by geography, limited resources or lack of opportunity.

This vision builds on the sporting foundation India has created in recent years. The country's fourth-place finish at the Commonwealth Games 2026 offered another glimpse of that growing strength. Such moments capture something larger than medals alone.

The Khelo India Vision

Launched in 2017 to create a strong foundation for Indian sport, the Khelo India Scheme brought together three existing programmes. It merged the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan, Urban Sports Infrastructure Scheme and National Sports Talent Search Scheme into a unified framework for sports development.

The scheme follows a comprehensive approach to strengthen every stage of the sporting ecosystem. Its five key pillars are:

- Establishing training centres at different levels to identify talented athletes and guide them towards professional excellence.
- Building the capacity of coaches and support staff through dedicated development programmes.
- Expanding the use of sports science and advanced technology to improve athlete performance.
- Organising competitions and leagues to promote a vibrant sporting culture and provide competitive opportunities.
- Developing sports infrastructure to support both training and competitive events.

The Mission envisions one Khelo India Training Centre in every district through State and Union Territory plans. It also promotes structured athlete pathways supported by sports science, psychology and nutrition. Data driven platforms enable real time athlete tracking. This integrated approach aims to position India among the world's leading sporting nations by 2036.

Growing Investment in Khelo India

2017–18 to 2019–20: **₹1,756 crore** approved for three years to revamp the scheme.

2020–21: Allocation of **₹328.77** crore for one year.

2021–22 to 2025–26: Financial outlay increased to **₹3,790.50 crore** for five years, expanding activities and strengthening sports infrastructure.

2026–27: Allocation of **₹924.35 crore,** reinforcing continued support as the scheme enters a new phase of outcome-oriented implementation.



Key achievements of the Khelo India Scheme include (As of July 2026):

- **349** new sports infrastructure projects approved, with a total investment of **₹3,176 crore.**
- **1,067 Khelo India Centres (KICs)** established to strengthen grassroots training and athlete support.
- **267 academies** supported to nurture sporting talent across disciplines.
- **2,745 Khelo India Athletes (KIAs)** supported with coaching, equipment, medical care and a monthly out of pocket allowance.

Through sustained investment and a clear long-term vision, Khelo India is creating a strong pipeline of champions for India.

Revamped Khelo India Scheme: A Pathway from Grassroots to Global Excellence

The Khelo India Scheme has entered a significantly expanded phase for the period **2026–27 to 2030–31.** Together with enhanced Assistance to National Sports Federations, it has a combined outlay of **₹36,441 crore.**

A Comprehensive Athlete Development Pathway

For the first time, young sportspersons will receive structured support at every stage—from talent identification and scientific training to international exposure and Olympic preparation. The nationwide ecosystem will bring together:

- National Centres of Excellence
- Khelo India Centres of Excellence
- SAI Training Centres
- Khelo India Accredited Academies
- Khelo India Centres
- Youth Sports Companies of the Armed Forces

Together, these institutions will provide modern infrastructure, professional coaching and sports science support across the country.

The scheme also introduces **Khelo India Feeder Schools and Khelo India Utkrishta Vidyalayas.** These initiatives will integrate sports with mainstream education and enable the early identification and systematic development of talented children.

Expanding India's Athlete Pool

The new Emerging Khelo India Athletes category will expand the structured athlete pool nearly ten-fold. A stronger talent identification system and a clear pathway from grassroots competitions to Khelo India and TOPS will support athletes from early identification to international excellence.

More Competitions and Wider Opportunities

School, university, regional and sport-specific leagues will provide regular competitive exposure. Greater opportunities will be created for women, para-athletes and indigenous sports, along with support for the National Games and major international events.

Fitness, Coaching and Technology

The expanded Fit India Movement will promote active lifestyles and wider participation. A National Coach Accreditation Board will strengthen coaching standards, while a unified digital platform will integrate athlete data, infrastructure, competitions, assessments and funding.

Partnerships for Sporting Excellence

Partnerships with private academies and corporate institutions will bring investment and expertise into sports development. Enhanced support to National Sports Federations will strengthen coaching, sports science, equipment, training and international exposure.

Advancing India's Global Sporting Ambitions

Aligned with Khelo Bharat Niti 2025 and the National Education Policy 2020, the scheme integrates sports with education, fitness, technology and high-performance training. It will support preparations for the 2030 Commonwealth Games, India's Olympic and Paralympic hosting ambitions, and the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047.

Khelo India Games: A Stage for Future Champions

The Khelo India movement entered a new phase with the launch of the Khelo India School Games in 2018. Held in New Delhi, the event brought young sporting talent from across the country onto one platform.

Later that year, the Indian Olympic Association joined the initiative. From 2019, the event was renamed the **Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG).** It continues to serve as the flagship competition under the Khelo India umbrella.

The Khelo India Games have steadily expanded to create more opportunities for athletes across disciplines. Annual competitions now bring together participants representing their States and universities, helping them compete, excel and prepare for higher levels. **Since 2018, more than 63,000 athletes have participated in the Khelo India Games.**

The **Khelo India University Games (KIUG)** and the **Khelo India Winter Games (KIWG)** were introduced in 2020. The **Khelo India Para Games (KIPG)** followed in 2023.The expansion continued in 2025 with the launch of the **Khelo India Beach Games (KIBG)** and the Khelo India Water Sports Festival. **The Khelo India Tribal Games (KITG)** made their debut in 2026.

The Khelo India Games continue to strengthen India's sporting culture by giving young athletes a national stage to pursue excellence.



Enabling India's Sporting Success

India's sporting rise extends beyond infrastructure and competitions. Several focused initiatives strengthen athlete development, identify emerging talent and build long term sporting capacity. Collectively, these efforts are creating a stronger pathway from grassroots participation to global success.

Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS)

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports launched the **Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS)** in September 2014 to improve India's performance at the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The scheme was revamped in April 2018 with a dedicated technical support team to provide holistic assistance to athletes.

TOPS supports athletes through foreign training, international competitions, coaching camps, specialised equipment and a monthly stipend of ₹50,000. A Development Group was also introduced

to support junior athletes with a monthly stipend of ₹25,000.

As of April 2026, the scheme currently supports **51 Core Athletes, 52 Para Core Athletes** and **130 Development Athletes.** TOPS played an important role in India's medal winning performances at the Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

KIRTI

The Khelo India Rising Talent Identification (KIRTI) initiative identifies and nurtures sporting talent among children between 9 and 18 years of age. It uses Talent Assessment Centres, standardised assessment protocols and advanced IT tools, including Artificial Intelligence and data analytics, to ensure transparent and merit-based selection.

At present, **174 Talent Assessment Centres** operate across **3 States and Union Territories,** with 1**,87,921 assessments** completed. KIRTI aims to build a sustainable talent pipeline to help India become a top 10 sporting nation by 2036 and a top 5 sporting nation by 2047.

Sports Goods Manufacturing

The Union Budget 2026–27 announced a dedicated initiative for sports goods manufacturing with an allocation of **₹500 crore.** The initiative seeks to strengthen India's position as a global hub for high quality and affordable sports goods.

Its key objectives include expanding domestic manufacturing capacity, promoting research and innovation in equipment design, advancing material sciences, strengthening India's presence in global sports supply chains and generating employment across manufacturing and allied sectors.

These initiatives are strengthening India's sporting ecosystem and preparing athletes to compete with confidence on the global stage.

India's Rise on the Global Sporting Stage

The investments made in India's sporting ecosystem are delivering results on the global stage. India's performances at major international sporting events reflect the country's growing strength across Olympic, Paralympic and multi-sport disciplines. Stronger athlete development, better training support and sustained investment have translated into consistent improvements on the world stage. The steady rise in participation and medal tallies highlights India's emergence as an increasingly competitive sporting nation.

Olympic Games

India's Olympic journey witnessed a remarkable transformation between 2016 and 2024. The country progressed from two medals at Rio 2016 to seven at Tokyo 2020. India maintained this momentum with six medals at Paris 2024. Neeraj Chopra became India's first Olympic athletics gold medallist at Tokyo 2020. Mirabai Chanu also emerged as one of India's most consistent Olympic medallists.

Year	Host City	Indian Athletes	Medals Won
2016	Rio de Janeiro	117	**2**
2020	Tokyo	119	**7**
2024	Paris	117	**6**

Paralympic Games

India's Paralympic performances have witnessed exceptional growth over the last three editions. The medal tally increased from four at Rio 2016 to 19 at Tokyo 2020. Paris 2024 marked India's best ever Paralympic campaign with 29 medals. Avani Lekhara, Sumit Antil and Pramod Bhagat have been among the country's standout performers. Programmes such as TOPS and the Khelo India Para Games have strengthened support for para-athletes.

Year	Host City	Indian Athletes	Medals Won	Gold	Silver	Bronze
2016	Rio de Janeiro	19	**4**	2	1	1
2020	Tokyo	54	**19**	5	8	6
2024	Paris	84	**29**	7	9	13

Asian Games

India has consistently raised its performance at the Asian Games through larger contingents and stronger medal winning displays. The country won 57 medals at Incheon 2014 and improved to 69 at Jakarta 2018. Hangzhou 2023 became a landmark edition as India recorded its highest ever medal tally of 107. Neeraj Chopra, Lovlina Borgohain, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty were among the leading contributors.

Year	Host City	Indian Athletes	Medals Won	Gold	Silver	Bronze
2014	Incheon	541	**57**	11	9	37
2018	Jakarta	570	**69**	15	24	30
2023	Hangzhou	655	**107**	28	38	41

Commonwealth Games

India has remained one of the strongest performers at the Commonwealth Games. The country won 64 medals at Glasgow 2014 and improved to 66 at Gold Coast 2018. India followed this with 61 medals at Birmingham 2022. Wrestling, weightlifting, table tennis, badminton and athletics have consistently contributed to India's success. PV Sindhu, Vinesh Phogat and Achinta Sheuli have been among the country's notable performers.

Year	Host City	Indian Athletes	Medals Won	Gold	Silver	Bronze
2014	Glasgow	215	**64**	15	30	19
2018	Gold Coast	218	**66**	26	20	20
2022	Birmingham	210	**61**	22	16	23

India's growing global success reflects the strength of its sporting ecosystem and the determination of its athletes to excel on the world stage.

Commonwealth Games 2026

The Commonwealth Games 2026 were held in Glasgow from 23 July to 2 August 2026. The Games brought together athletes from 74 countries across a 10-sport programme, including six fully integrated Para Sports, hosted at four venues. India delivered a strong performance securing fourth place with 39 medals – 13 gold, 17 silver and nine bronze.

India was represented by a **124-member contingent,** comprising 78 male and 46 female athletes. The contingent reflected the country's growing depth of talent across multiple sporting disciplines.

Jhandu Kumar opened India's medal account with a bronze in para powerlifting. **Rishikanta Singh** became the first able bodied Indian medallist after winning silver in the men's 60 kg weightlifting event. He also set a new Commonwealth Games record in the snatch.

Mirabai Chanu delivered another historic moment by winning India's first gold medal in Glasgow. The victory marked her third consecutive Commonwealth Games title. **Muthupandi Raja** also added to India's medal tally with a silver in the men's 65 kg weightlifting event.

Boxing became the highlight of India's campaign. **Indian boxers** won **10 medals,** including an unprecedented seven golds, the best performance by any country in the sport at a single Commonwealth Games. **Sakshi Chaudhary** was among the gold medallists, while Olympic medallist **Lovlina Borgohain** secured silver.

Glasgow also witnessed several Indian firsts. **Asmita Dey** became the country's first Commonwealth Games gold medallist in judo, before **Harsh Tokas** added another gold in the sport. **Gulveer Singh** became the first Indian track and field athlete to win two individual medals at one edition. **Tejaswin Shankar** earned India's first decathlon medal. **Neeraj Chopra's** silver in the men's javelin throw added another memorable moment to a campaign that reflected India's growing strength across sports.

From Khelo India to Glasgow Glory

Arundhati's Golden Journey: From Khelo India to Glasgow



A gifted student with a flair for mathematics, Arundhati Choudhary chose the boxing ring over a conventional career. The Khelo India Games gave the young boxer from Kota a national platform at a defining stage of her journey. She made the opportunity count by winning three consecutive gold medals—at Delhi 2018, Pune 2019 and Guwahati 2020.

At Glasgow 2026, Arundhati completed another golden chapter by winning the women's 70 kg boxing title. Her journey shows how early opportunities can transform emerging talent into a Commonwealth champion.

Asmita Dey: From Khelo India Champion to Judo History



Asmita Dey's journey began in Belonia, Tripura, far from international sporting arenas. Her father was a bicycle mechanic. Asmita Dey quietly built a dream through judo.

The Khelo India University Games gave that dream a national stage. Multiple gold medals strengthened her belief and announced her arrival in Indian judo.

That belief travelled with her to Glasgow in 2026. In a tense final, she held her nerve and defeated Canada's Heidi Quach. The victory made her India's first Commonwealth Games judo champion.

The Pursuit of Sporting Excellence

India's sporting journey continues to gather momentum. Sustained investment, stronger support systems and focused athlete development are creating a lasting foundation for success. Rising participation and improved performances at international competitions reflect the impact of these efforts. With the Commonwealth Games 2026 still underway, Indian athletes continue to compete with determination and pride. Every performance inspires the next generation to dream bigger and aim higher. As India looks to the future, the nation remains committed to building champions and strengthening its place among the world's leading sporting nations.

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PIB Research



08

Nuclear Energy in India

Applications, Safety, and Preparedness

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India's nuclear energy programme is built on the principle of safety first. Guided by stringent regulatory oversight, multiple layers of protection and comprehensive emergency preparedness, it safeguards people and the environment while providing reliable low-carbon electricity. Beyond power generation, atomic energy supports healthcare, agriculture, food preservation, industry, scientific research and clean hydrogen production. Through the SHANTI Act, 2025, the Nuclear Energy Mission for Viksit Bharat and indigenous technologies, India is expanding nuclear energy as a safe, sustainable and future-ready pillar of national development.

Nuclear Energy for India's Inclusive Development

Nuclear energy has been an integral part of India's development journey since the Tarapur Atomic Power Station began operations in 1969. Today, it powers homes, industries, and economic growth with reliable, low-carbon electricity. Beyond power generation, nuclear technologies support healthcare, agriculture, food preservation, industry, water desalination, and scientific research. Safety remains the cornerstone of India's nuclear programme. Every nuclear facility operates under a robust regulatory framework with multiple safety barriers, continuous monitoring, emergency preparedness, and stringent security protocols.

India also works closely with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to strengthen nuclear safety, security, and safeguards. India currently operates 24 nuclear power reactors across seven sites with a total installed capacity of 8.78 GW. Nine additional reactors are under construction, while preparations continue for 10 more units. The Nuclear Energy Mission for Viksit Bharat aims to achieve 100 GW of nuclear power capacity by 2047. The Union Budget 2025–26 allocated ₹20,000 crore for indigenous Small Modular Reactors. The SHANTI Act, 2025, further strengthens the framework for the safe, secure, and future-ready expansion of India's nuclear energy programme.



Nuclear Power: Carbon-free Source of Power

Nuclear power is India's most carbon-efficient clean energy source per unit of installed capacity. In FY 2025–26, one gigawatt of nuclear capacity avoided about 5.4 million tonnes of CO_2 equivalent emissions, compared with 2.7 million tonnes for hydropower, 1.6 million tonnes for wind, and 0.9 million tonnes for solar power. Since 1969, India's nuclear power programme has cumulatively avoided 851 million tonnes of CO_2 equivalent emissions- equivalent to the annual carbon sequestration of over 38 billion mature trees.

Nuclear Energy Applications Beyond Electricity

Nuclear energy technologies have diverse applications across sectors. These applications contribute to public welfare, technological advancement and sustainable national development.

Healthcare

Nuclear technology is transforming healthcare through early disease diagnosis, precision cancer treatment, and advanced medical research. Research institutions under the Department of Atomic Energy, including the **Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), Tata Memorial Centre (TMC), Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR),** and **Harish-Chandra Research Institute (HRI),** are developing indigenous radiopharmaceuticals, advanced imaging technologies, and innovative cancer therapies.

The Government is also expanding access to affordable cancer care. In 2025, the **150-bed Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital and Research Centre** in Muzaffarpur was inaugurated. During FY 2024–25, the **Tata Memorial Centre** registered **1.3 lakh patients** and screened **around five lakh** women for oral, breast, and cervical cancers. Indigenous radiation technologies also sterilised **1.53 crore medical devices,** improving patient safety and reducing healthcare-associated infections.

Agriculture

Nuclear technology supports agriculture through the development of improved crop varieties using radiation-induced mutagenesis along with cross breeding. These varieties offer higher yields,

larger seed size, improved quality traits, early maturity, and greater tolerance to drought, heat, salinity, and diseases. The DAE is also promoting radiation technologies for the preservation of food and agricultural products by extending shelf life, reducing post-harvest losses, enabling chemical-free preservation of grains and spices, and helping meet international phytosanitary requirements for exports.

BARC has developed 70 crop varieties, including TBM-9 banana and RTS-43 sorghum, released in 2025. These high-yielding and early-maturing varieties are cultivated across the country. BARC also collaborates with the **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)** and agricultural universities to accelerate crop improvement and strengthen food security.

Food Preservation

Radiation technology supports food preservation by extending the shelf life of agricultural produce, fish and spices while reducing spoilage. The shelf-life extension of mangoes has enabled cost-effective export by sea route, while the shelf-life extension of onions and potatoes reduces spoilage and provides economic benefits to farmers. Radiation processing of various food items is approved by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India.

The government signed 17 MoUs in 2025 to expand food irradiation infrastructure. **Six gamma radiation processing facilities were commissioned,** increasing the country's operational facilities to 40. These facilities help preserve the quality of fruits, vegetables, grains, and other perishable commodities.

Mining and Rare Earth Elements

Nuclear technology is playing an important role in strengthening India's critical mineral and rare earth ecosystem. Advanced nuclear analytical techniques support the exploration, characterisation and processing of mineral resources, improving the accuracy of ore assessment, extraction and quality control.

India has released its first Certified Reference Material, **Ferrocarbonatite (FC)** – BARC B1401, for Rare Earth Elements. It is the first of its kind in India and the fourth globally. It provides a standard benchmark for geochemical analysis, supporting reliable exploration, efficient extraction and process control in rare earth ore mining, while contributing to the country's critical mineral security.

Semiconductors and Electronics

Nuclear technology is contributing to the growth of India's semiconductor ecosystem through indigenous research and advanced materials development. High-purity isotopes and speciality materials produced using nuclear technologies are critical for semiconductor manufacturing, supporting precision fabrication, advanced electronics and strategic technology applications.

India has established its first **Electronics-grade (99.8% purity) Boron-11 Enrichment Facility** at Talcher for semiconductor applications. The enriched product has been successfully converted into purified enriched boric acid for further processing, strengthening the **India Semiconductor Mission,** reducing import dependence on critical electronic materials, and advancing technological self-reliance.

Green Hydrogen

Hydrogen is widely regarded as a key energy carrier for the future and is expected to play an important role in the transition to clean and sustainable energy systems. Nuclear energy offers a carbon-free pathway for hydrogen production by providing both reliable electricity and high-temperature process heat, reducing dependence on fossil fuels and greenhouse gas emissions associated with conventional production methods

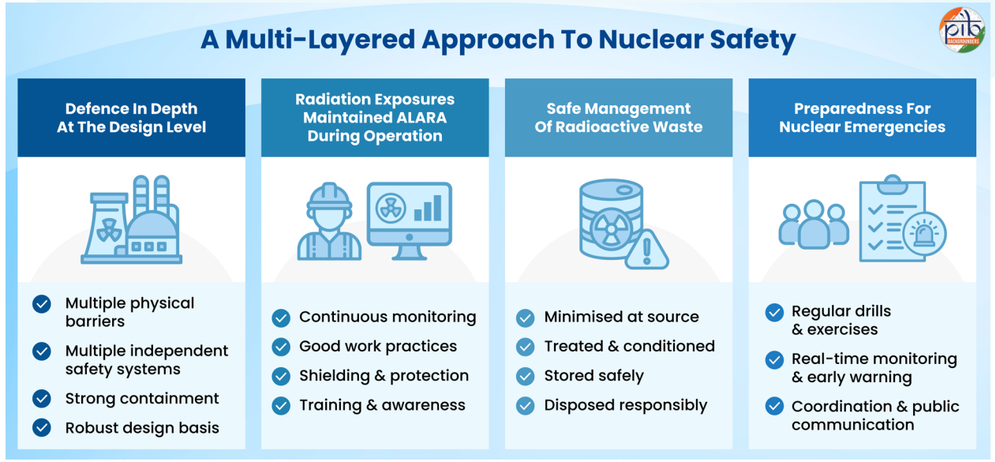
In 2026, India inaugurated the **world's first hydrogen production facility using nuclear process heat at Kalpakkam.** The indigenous technology supports clean energy, energy security and India's Net Zero and National Green Hydrogen Mission goals.

The expanding applications of nuclear technology reflect India's growing scientific and technological capabilities. Continued investments in research, innovation, and indigenous technologies will unlock new opportunities across strategic sectors, supporting economic growth, energy security, and national development.

India's Nuclear Plants Ensure Safety

The accidental release of radiation and radioactive material into the surrounding environment and atmosphere is the primary safety concern associated with nuclear power plants. Indian nuclear power plants are designed, constructed, and operated with multiple layers of safety to protect people and the environment.





Design Level Safety

India's nuclear power plants follow the globally accepted **Defence in Depth** design philosophy, ensuring **multiple layers of protection** against accidents. Safety begins with high-quality design, construction, rigorous quality control, and fail-safe engineering. Continuous monitoring, regular testing, and redundant safety systems detect and manage equipment or human failures. **Multiple physical barriers** prevent the release of radioactive material into the environment. These include ceramic fuel pellets, sealed zirconium alloy fuel rods, a robust pressure vessel or pressure tubes, and a reinforced concrete containment structure. **Independent backup systems** provide emergency reactor shutdown, core cooling, and reliable power supply during unlikely events. Every plant is designed to withstand earthquakes, floods, cyclones, tsunamis, and other external hazards.

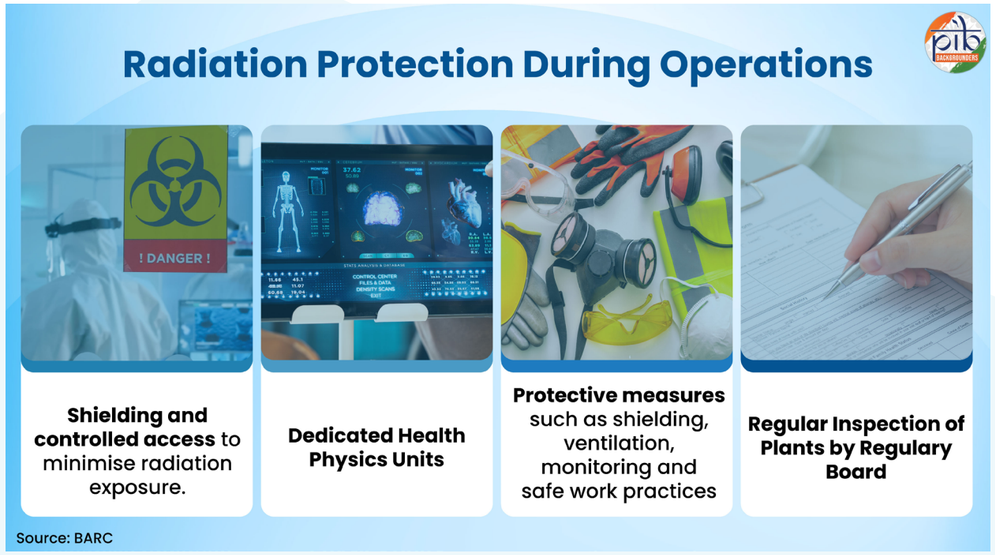


Radiological Protection during Operations

India's nuclear power plants follow the **As Low as Reasonably Achievable (ALARA)** principle to minimise radiation exposure. Plant layouts, shielding, and maintenance practices are designed to keep occupational radiation doses as low as possible. The AERB prescribes an average occupational dose **limit of 20 millisieverts (mSv) per year over five years, with a cumulative limit of 100 mSv and a maximum of 30 mSv in any year.** Every nuclear power plant has a dedicated **Health Physics Unit** that



continuously monitors radiation levels, personnel exposure, plant systems, and environmental releases. **Engineering controls, protective equipment, ventilation systems, and regular training** further strengthen radiation safety.



Millisievert (mSv)

A mSv measures the effect of radiation on the human body. In India, the **annual radiation dose limit for the public is 1 mSv,** which is well within safe limits and ensures strong protection of people and the environment during normal nuclear power plant operations. AERB conducts periodic regulatory inspections to verify compliance with these radiation safety standards.

Management of Radioactive Waste



Safe radioactive waste management is central to India's nuclear programme. Every stage, from treatment to disposal, follows a rigorous, multi-layered regulatory framework. The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) oversees all waste management activities. Operations comply with the **Atomic Energy (Safe Disposal of Radioactive Wastes) Rules, 1987** and the **AERB Safety Code on Radioactive Waste Management.** The Environmental Survey Laboratories of the BARC continuously monitor environmental safety. Waste handling facilities also remain under round-the-clock surveillance.

Liquid radioactive waste is treated, diluted and discharged only after meeting stringent safety standards. **Solid waste** is processed and disposed of in specially engineered on-site facilities. **Disposal methods** are matched to the waste's radioactivity levels. The AERB prescribes **site-specific discharge** limits and regularly verifies compliance. Nuclear power plants continuously reduce waste generation through improved technologies and operational practices. This comprehensive approach protects people, safeguards the environment, and upholds the highest standards of nuclear safety.

Vitrification Technology

India is among the few countries with indigenous **vitrification** technology for the safe management of high-level radioactive waste. The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) has developed this technology, which converts high-level radioactive waste into stable glass blocks for safe long-term management.

Collectively, these measures ensure the safe, secure, and reliable operation of India's nuclear facilities in line with stringent national regulations and international safety standards.

Preparedness for Nuclear Emergencies

India has established a multi-level governance framework for nuclear emergency preparedness, integrating national, state, district, and plant-level response mechanisms. Led by the DAE and regulated by the AERB, the framework ensures coordinated planning, rapid response, and public protection during any unlikely nuclear or radiological emergency.

- **Integrated National Framework:** Nuclear and radiological emergencies are covered under the **National Disaster Management Plan** and integrated into **district disaster management plans.**
- **Dedicated National Coordination:** The DAE leads technical preparedness and response through a dedicated Crisis Management Plan.
- **Mandatory Emergency Preparedness:** Every nuclear power plant maintains mandatory **On-site and Off-site Emergency Response Plans** approved by the AERB.
- **Multi-Agency Emergency Planning:** Nuclear power plants, District Administration and District Disaster Management Authorities conduct **regular mock drills and emergency exercises.**
- **Capacity Building and Public Protection:** Police, emergency responders and other agencies receive specialised training. **Radiation detection equipment** has been deployed at key locations.
- **Medical Preparedness:** The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Atomic Energy and Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited **train medical professionals** and **maintain Radiation Emergency Medical Networks** for specialised care.
- **Exclusion and Emergency Planning Zones:** Nuclear power plants are located in low-population areas, with dedicated safety zones and a **16-kilometre Emergency Planning Zone** to support coordinated emergency response, if ever required.
- **Monitoring:** Every nuclear power plant has an **Environmental Survey Laboratory** that continuously monitors air, water, soil, vegetation and food during normal operations and any unlikely emergency.

PHWRs Built with Multi-Layered Safety

Indian Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) are equipped with two independent and diverse shutdown systems. If abnormal operating conditions are detected, these systems automatically shut down the reactor, while dedicated cooling systems continue to remove heat from the reactor core to maintain safety.

These measures reflect India's commitment to protecting people, the environment, and critical infrastructure through a robust, internationally aligned nuclear emergency management system.

Nuclear Energy: Myths and Facts

Nuclear energy has transformed electricity generation, healthcare, agriculture and industry, yet several misconceptions continue to shape public perception. Scientific evidence and decades of safe operation provide a clear understanding of its safety, reliability and peaceful applications.

Myth: Living near a nuclear power plant is harmful to health.

Fact: Radiation from operating nuclear power plants remains well within prescribed safety limits and poses no increased health risk to nearby communities.

Myth: Radioactive waste cannot be managed safely and will permanently contaminate the environment.

Fact: Radioactive waste is safely managed through multiple protective barriers, continuous monitoring and strict regulatory oversight.

Myth: Any amount of radiation is harmful.

Fact: Radiation is a natural part of our environment. Low levels of radiation from the sun, soil, air and food are part of everyday life and are not harmful.

Myth: India's nuclear power plants are unsafe.

Fact: India has maintained a strong nuclear safety record for decades. Multiple safety systems and physical barriers ensure the safe operation of nuclear power plants.

Myth: Transporting nuclear material on our roads/railways is extremely risky for the public.

Fact: Nuclear material is transported in specially designed, tested containers that meet national and international safety standards.

Myth: Nuclear power harms the environment just like coal or oil.

Fact: Nuclear power generates clean, low-carbon electricity without burning fossil fuels, helping reduce carbon dioxide emissions by replacing coal.

Myth: Plutonium / Nuclear material: Touching it can be fatal.

Fact: Nuclear materials are handled under strict safety controls. Specialised procedures and protective equipment prevent exposure and ensure safe handling.

Myth: We should choose renewables instead of nuclear.

Fact: Nuclear and renewable energy complement each other. Nuclear provides reliable 24×7 electricity and requires much less land than solar.

India's nuclear programme is built on scientific excellence, stringent safety standards and regulatory oversight. Greater public awareness strengthens confidence in the safe, secure and peaceful use of atomic energy for national development.

Radiation Monitoring

Extensive health surveys around Uranium Corporation of India Limited's uranium mining areas in Jharkhand have found that the health issues observed among villagers are similar to those generally found in rural areas with comparable socio-economic conditions. There is no evidence that local disease patterns are linked to radiation exposure. Continuous health monitoring, environmental surveillance and community welfare programmes are being carried out by the UCIL in collaboration with the BARC and regulatory agencies.

Conclusion

India's nuclear programme reflects the Government of India's steadfast commitment to energy security, technological self-reliance, public welfare, and the highest standards of safety. Beyond generating clean electricity, nuclear technologies are transforming every sector across the country. Guided by transformative initiatives such as the Nuclear Energy

Mission for Viksit Bharat and the SHANTI Act, India is building a resilient, innovation-driven, and future-ready nuclear ecosystem. Robust regulatory oversight, advanced reactor designs, and comprehensive emergency preparedness continue to ensure the safe and secure operation of nuclear facilities. Following the **2011 Fukushima accident,** every Indian nuclear power plant underwent a comprehensive safety review, reaffirming the strength of India's reactor designs. All recommended short-term and medium-term safety enhancements have been completed, while long-term upgrades continue across existing and future reactors. As India advances towards Viksit Bharat 2047 and its Net Zero target by 2070, nuclear energy will remain a key pillar of sustainable development, energy security, and national progress.

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PIB Research





09

Ship Recycling in India: Regulatory Transformation and Global Leadership

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India's ship recycling sector has evolved into a modern and internationally aligned industry. In 2025, India became the world's leading ship recycling nation. Its global market share increased from 30.1% in 2024 to 35.4% in 2025. Ship recycling volume also rose from 1.86 million gross tons to 2.99 million gross tons. This represents nearly 60% growth in recycling volume. The Alang-Sosiya cluster remains the backbone of India's recycling capacity. Comprehensive legislation, alignment with the Hong Kong International Convention, and yard modernisation have strengthened safety, compliance, and competitiveness.

The Evolving Maritime Industrial Landscape



A strong maritime ecosystem extends beyond shipbuilding and port operations. It also requires responsible management of ships at the end of their service. Ship recycling is an integral part of the maritime lifecycle. It enables the safe, environmentally sound and resource-efficient dismantling of ships at the end of their operational life. When undertaken under a robust regulatory framework, it supports circular economy objectives through the recovery of steel and other reusable materials. It also safeguards the environment while ensuring the health and safety of workers.

Stronger legislation and enhanced institutional oversight have driven the transition from conventional dismantling practices into an internationally aligned industry. Compliance, sustainability and worker safety are now central to its operations. These reforms have strengthened India's global standing. Today, India has emerged as a leading destination for environmentally sound ship recycling.

Why Ship Recycling Matters?

Ship recycling is strategically important for India's resource security, economic growth, and environmental sustainability.

Environmental Significance

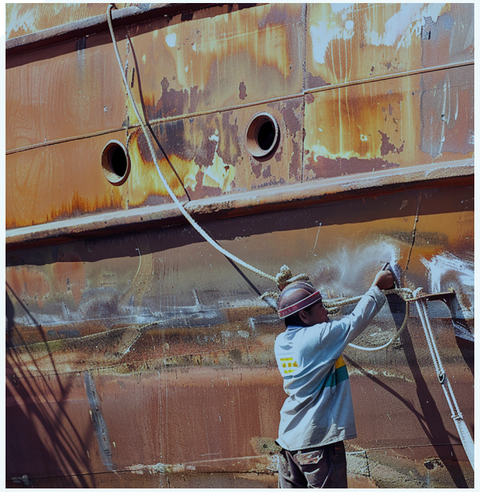
- Regulated ship recycling prevents unsafe disposal of end-of-life ships. It reduces the risk of marine and coastal pollution.
- Proper recycling practices ensure the safe handling of hazardous materials under strict regulatory supervision.

Resource Significance

- Ship recycling provides a significant source of ferrous scrap for the domestic steel industry. It reduces dependence on imported raw materials and strengthens supply security.
- The recovery and reuse of steel supports efficient resource utilisation and promotes a circular economy.
- Recycled steel requires substantially less energy than primary steel production. It also results in lower greenhouse gas emissions, supporting India's sustainability and decarbonisation objectives.

Economic and Industrial Significance

- The ship recycling sector generates large-scale employment. It supports the livelihoods of workers involved in dismantling, processing, and material recovery activities.



- It sustains a wide network of ancillary industries. These include transport, re-rolling mills, equipment suppliers, and waste management services.
- Recovered steel and reusable components support domestic manufacturing and industrial production. This aligns with national initiatives such as Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat.

India at the Forefront

India's ship recycling sector has witnessed sustained growth in recent years. According to the latest report of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), **India ranked first globally** in ship recycling in 2025. India's share of global ship recycling increased from **30.1%** in 2024 to **35.4%** in 2025. This marks a significant milestone in the country's maritime and industrial development.

Ship recycling volume in India also increased from **1.86 million Gross Tonnes (GT)** in 2024 to **2.99 million GT** in 2025. This represents nearly **60% growth** in recycling volume. The rise reflects India's expanding capacity and indicates the growing competitiveness of Indian ship recycling yards in the global market. The target set under **Maritime India Vision (MIV) 2030** to become the world's leading ship recycling nation has been achieved five years ahead of schedule.



Alang-Sosiya: Powering India's Ship Recycling Sector

The **Alang-Sosiya** ship recycling cluster in Gujarat forms the backbone of India's recycling capacity. It is recognised as the world's largest ship recycling hub. The cluster accounts for approximately **98%** of India's ship recycling activity. It has an annual recycling capacity of around **6 million GT.** Around **3.50 million metric tonnes** (MMT) of steel is produced per annum at Alang without exploiting natural resources. It is supported by authorised ship recycling yards, downstream steel re-rolling mills, and waste management infrastructure. Over the years, the cluster has undergone extensive modernisation and represents India's primary interface with the global ship recycling market.

India aims to nearly double its ship recycling capacity to about **9 million light displacement tons** (LDT). This expansion will be achieved through the planned development of the Alang Ship Recycling Yard. A comprehensive master plan has been prepared to support future demand. The plan focuses on improving infrastructure and strengthening India's competitiveness in the ship recycling market.

The Safety Training and Labour Welfare Institute at the Alang-Sosiya ship recycling yard has trained over **1.5 lakh workers** cumulatively. The training covers occupational safety, hazardous material handling and emergency response. In addition to this, India has a ship recycling yard at Amar Iron Udyog in Kolkata and another at Steel Industrials Kerala Limited (SILK) in Kerala.



Alang-Sosiya Ship Recycling Yard

Indian ship recycling yards have undergone major upgradation in recent years. They now operate with the following facilities and arrangements:

- Engineered and demarcated recycling plots.
- Impermeable working surfaces and drainage systems.
- Mechanised material handling and lifting equipment.
- Segregated hazardous waste storage areas.
- Authorised downstream waste treatment and disposal linkages.
- Structured safety, health, and emergency response arrangements.

These improvements have strengthened the safety, environmental compliance, and operational efficiency of Indian ship recycling yards.

Regulatory and Compliance Framework



India has established a comprehensive statutory and regulatory framework for ship recycling activities. The framework is aligned with international conventions and recognised global best practices. It regulates the entire ship recycling lifecycle. This includes ship preparation, certification, yard authorisation, operations, and compliance monitoring.

Legal and Institutional Architecture

- **Ship Recycling Act, 2019:** The Act provides the primary legal framework for regulating ship recycling in India. It gives domestic effect to international standards. It also designates the Directorate General of Shipping as the National Authority. The Act mandates authorisation, certification, inspection, and enforcement mechanisms.
- **Ship Recycling Rules, 2021:** The Rules operationalise the Act by prescribing procedural and technical requirements. These include facility authorisation, ship recycling plans, hazardous material management, worker safety, training, and reporting obligations.
- **Ship Recycling Regulations, 2026:** The Regulations strengthen implementation through detailed operational, safety, and environmental standards. They support uniform compliance and effective monitoring across ship recycling facilities.

Together, the Act, Rules, and Regulations establish a structured and enforceable regulatory framework for ship recycling in India. The framework also aligns domestic practices with internationally accepted standards.

Alignment with the Hong Kong International Convention (HKC)

- **The Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships** is the principal international instrument governing ship recycling. It lays down legally binding requirements for ships and recycling facilities. The Convention came into force on 26 June 2025. From this date, compliance became mandatory. India has aligned its domestic framework through the Ship Recycling Act, Rules, and Regulations. Financial assistance of ₹53.5 crore has been provided for the modernisation of ship recycling yards. This support has helped **115 facilities** achieve compliance with the Hong Kong Convention.

- **35 ship recycling yards at Alang,** Gujarat, have applied for EU green-listing, and the EU side has initiated the inspection process of Indian yards. Shree Ram Vessel Scrap and Y. S. Investments have been included in the draft of the 16th European List of Ship Recycling Facilities.

Ensuring Safe Recycling through IHM



The **Inventory of Hazardous Materials (IHM)** forms a key element of safe ship recycling. It identifies and records hazardous substances present on board ships throughout their operational life and before recycling. India follows a lifecycle-based compliance approach. This ensures transparency, traceability, and effective risk mitigation before ships enter authorised recycling facilities.

Ship-breaking Credit Note Scheme

The **Ship-breaking Credit Note Scheme,** introduced under the **Ship Building Financial Assistance Scheme (SBFA) 2.0,** encourages shipowners to recycle vessels at compliant Indian ship recycling yards. It also promotes the construction of new vessels at Indian shipyards. This scheme incentivizes ship scrapping by issuing a Credit Note equivalent to 40% of the recycled ship's scrap value. This can be used toward payment of up to 5% of the value of a new vessel built at an Indian shipyard. The scheme supports both sustainable ship recycling and the growth of India's shipbuilding industry.

Ex-INS Viraat – Showcasing India's Responsible Ship Recycling Capabilities



The recycling of Ex-INS Viraat at Alang, Gujarat, stands as one of India's most significant ship recycling projects. After serving the Indian Navy for 30 years and the Royal Navy for 27 years, the aircraft carrier was decommissioned in March 2017. It arrived at Alang for recycling in September 2020. Recognised by the Guinness World Records as one of the world's longest-serving warships, Ex-INS Viraat symbolised decades of distinguished naval service. Its final journey showcased India's growing capabilities in environmentally responsible ship recycling.

The vessel logged more than 22,622 flying hours during its service. It spent 2,252 days at sea and sailed over 5.88 lakh nautical miles (10.94 lakh kilometres). Recycling such a large and complex vessel highlights India's ability to recover valuable materials safely. It also reflects the country's evolving environmental and occupational safety standards, supporting employment and economic activity.

Strengthening a Responsible Recycling Ecosystem



Ship recycling in India has evolved into a modern, regulated, and internationally aligned industry. The sector contributes to resource security, economic growth, employment generation, and environmental sustainability. Through sustained infrastructure upgrades and reforms, India has strengthened the safety and competitiveness of its ship recycling ecosystem. India's emergence as the world's leading ship recycling nation in 2025 reflects the success of these efforts. The increase in market share and recycling volume demonstrates the expanding capacity and competitiveness of Indian ship recycling yards. The achievement also underscores the effectiveness of the policy measures undertaken under Maritime India Vision 2030. As ship recycling continues to evolve, India is well positioned to remain a credible destination for ship recycling.

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PIB Research





10

India’s Coconut Sector

From the Tree of Life to Global Prominence

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India's coconut sector supports rural livelihoods, agricultural growth, and cultural traditions. Nearly **30 million people**, including around **10 million farmers**, depend on the sector. **India ranks first** in global coconut production, with Keralam leading in area, Tamil Nadu in production, and Andhra Pradesh in productivity. India's export basket has expanded from traditional products to value-added products like virgin coconut oil, coconut milk, and activated carbon. The Government, primarily through the Coconut Development Board, implements a range of schemes to strengthen the coconut ecosystem. During 2025-26, about **2,175 hectares** were **added under cultivation,** while **1,672 hectares** were covered under **rejuvenation**. The Union Budget 2026-27 further introduced the **Coconut Promotion Scheme** to strengthen sustainability, exports, and farmer incomes. With continued policy support, India's coconut sector is steadily advancing across production, value addition, exports, and livelihoods.

Coconut: A Livelihood and Cultural Asset

Revered as the **"Kalpavriksha,"** the tree providing all necessities of life, the **coconut** is rooted in India's heritage, culture, and agrarian economy. Celebrated across civilizations **as a tree of a thousand uses,** the coconut's enduring symbolism is rooted in **its remarkable versatility**. It provides food, drink, medicine, fibre, timber, fuel, and a diverse range of raw materials. These resources sustain households, traditional practices, and a growing ecosystem of value-added industries.

In India, coconut cultivation has a well-documented history spanning **nearly three millennia** and remains a critical driver of rural employment and economic resilience. About **30 million people, including 10 million farmers,** depend on the coconut sector, making it vital to rural livelihoods. Predominantly cultivated by small and marginal farmers, coconut aligns closely with inclusive growth and the strengthening of farm-based economies. One such example of its growing significance can be seen in Chhattisgarh, where farmers have begun adopting coconut cultivation as a viable livelihood option.

In the Bastar Plateau of Chhattisgarh, farmers traditionally depended on paddy, millets, maize, and minor floret produce. Through the efforts of the Coconut Development Board's DSP Farm, Kondagaon, coconut cultivation gradually emerged as a promising livelihood option. Farmers were trained to utilize the vacant spaces between young coconut palms with suitable intercrops. The practice provided income until coconut production commenced.



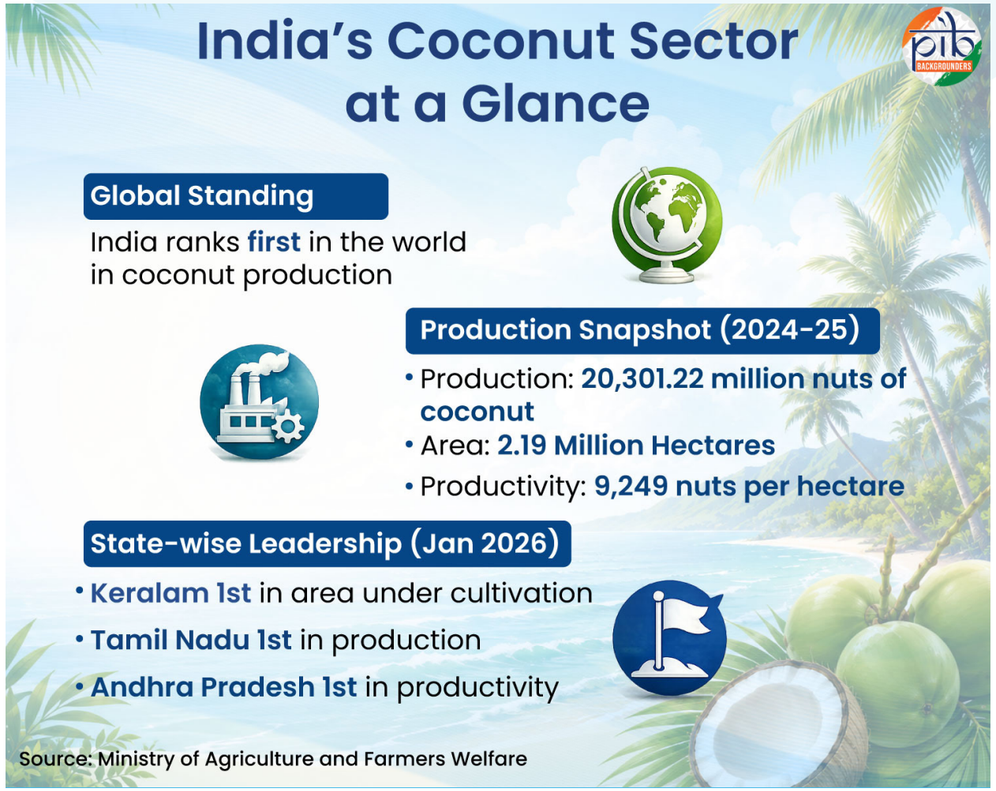
Coconut-Based Multi-Tier Farming in Chhattisgarh

Among them, **Shri Eshansh Singh Rathore,** a 36-year-old MBA graduate from Bakawand block, became a leading example. Coming from a farming family and having worked in the corporate sector, he adopted coconut cultivation systematically after receiving technical guidance from the Board. He established **2,500 coconut palms,** mostly dwarf varieties, of which about **500 had started yielding**.

Shri Rathore adopted a **multitier cropping system** that integrates high-value fruits and vegetables. Under his coconut plantation, he cultivated **4,000 pineapple plants, 800 dragon fruit plants, 1,000 mango trees, 600 citrus trees,** along with banana, guava, papaya, litchi, coffee, strawberry, and seasonal vegetables. This diversified model enhanced the productivity of his land and ensured continuous income. His farm generated **₹5-6 lakh annually from coconut** cultivation. Intercrops added around **₹10 lakh**, making coconut farming highly profitable. His success encouraged many farmers in Bastar to view his coconut-based system as a sustainable, replicable model.

India in the Global Coconut Economy

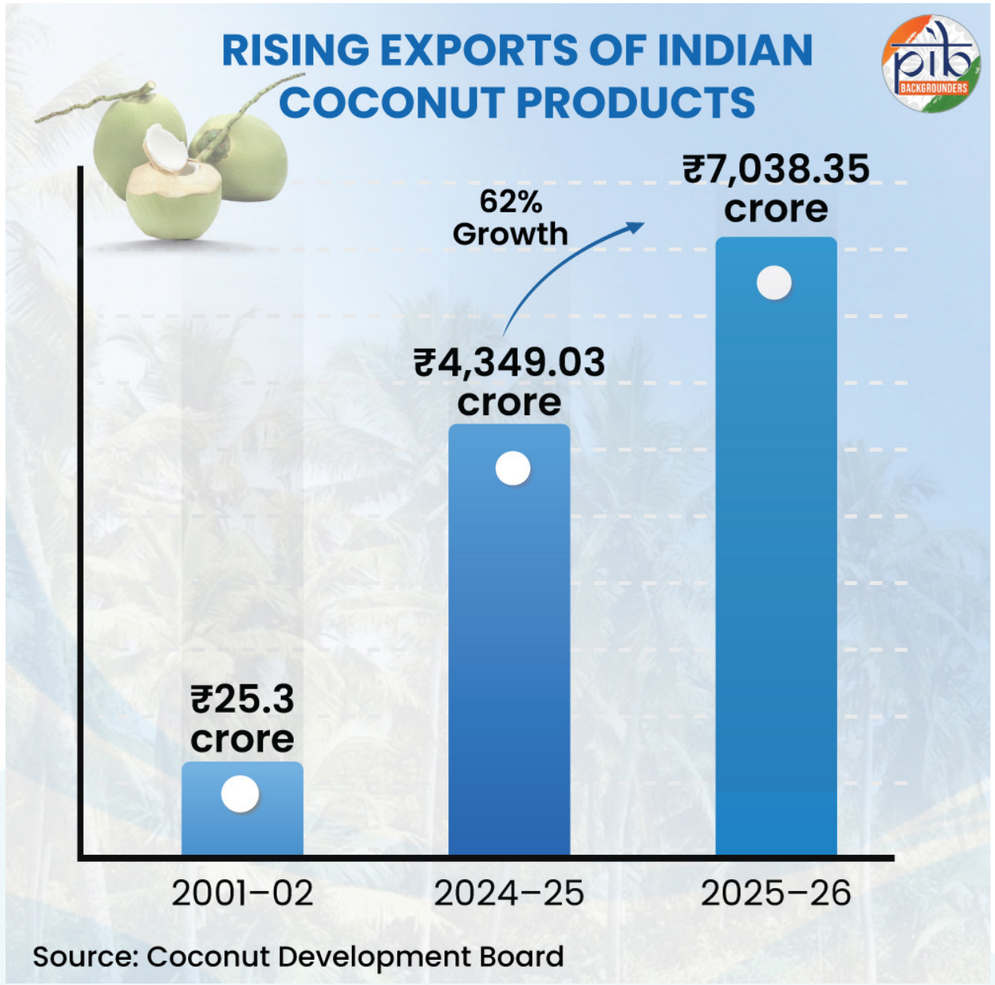
India holds a prominent place in the global coconut economy. The country **ranks first in production** and **third in cultivation area**, accounting for **31.24 percent** and **17.90 percent** of global totals, respectively. According to the DA&FW statistics, India produced about **20,301.22 million nuts of coconut** during 2024-25 from **2.19 million hectares**. Average productivity stood at **9,249 nuts per hectare**.



Within the country, Keralam has the largest area under coconut cultivation, covering nearly **7.54 lakh hectares** and producing about **5,149.87 million nuts.** Tamil Nadu leads coconut production, while Andhra Pradesh records the highest productivity, followed by West Bengal and Tamil Nadu.

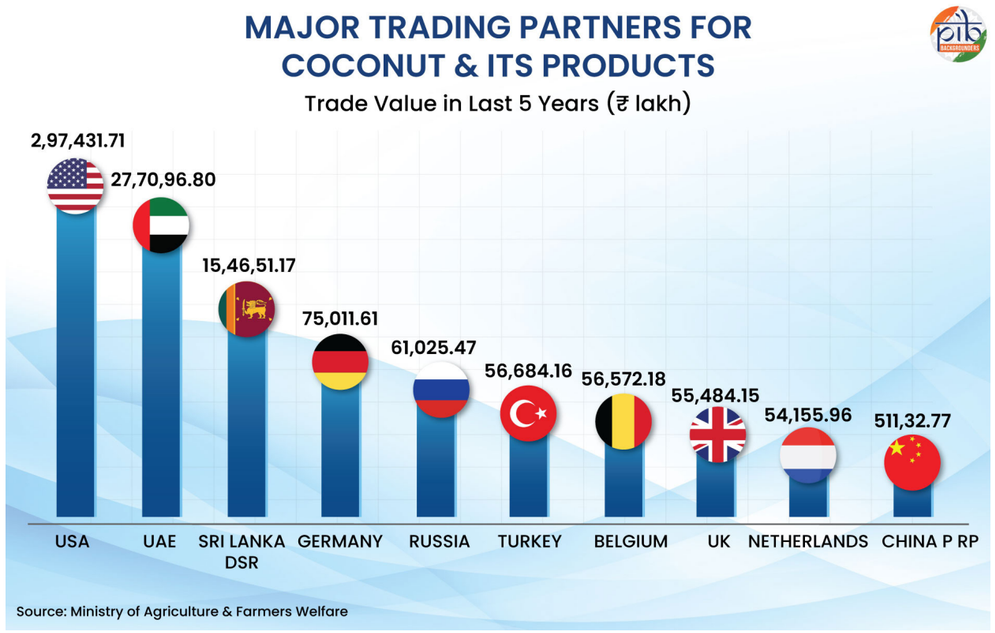
Beyond primary production, **the coconut sector** has emerged as an **important contributor** to **agricultural exports,** supporting India's export ambitions. The Government aims to **achieve USD 2 trillion in exports by 2030 and USD 21 trillion by 2047.**

Supporting these export ambitions, India's coconut exports have recorded sustained growth in recent years. **Coconut product exports reached ₹7,038.35 crores (USD 794.70 million)** in 2025-26. This marked a **62 percent increase over ₹4,349.03 crore** recorded in the previous year. This underscores the growing global demand for coconut products from India. The growth also highlights the significant progress made since **2001-02**, when exports were only **₹25.3 crore**. During that period, exports were largely restricted to traditional products such as coconut shell charcoal, coconut oil, coconut, desiccated coconut, etc.



Over time, India's coconut export basket has evolved from traditional commodities to a **diversified range** of value-added products. The sector now caters to global demand for virgin coconut oil, coconut milk, and coconut water. It also supplies other application-oriented products, strengthening India's competitiveness in international markets. Market outreach has expanded beyond the Middle East, once the primary destination. Exports

now reach markets across Europe, the Americas, and Australia.



Over the past five years, the USA, UAE, Sri Lanka, Germany, Russia, Turkey, Belgium, UK and Netherlands have emerged as major trading partners. Key export products include activated carbon, coconut oil, fresh/frozen/grated coconut, copra and desiccated coconut. Among these, activated carbon has consistently dominated export volumes.

Institutional Backbone: Role of Coconut Development Board

The **Coconut Development Board (CDB)**, established on 12 January 1981, functions under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. It oversees the integrated development of coconut cultivation and industry in India. Headquartered in Kochi, the board has been at the forefront of uplifting and transforming the sector across **22 States/UTs.** Its key thrust areas include:

- Increasing the production of quality planting material
- expanding the area under coconut
- improving productivity in existing coconut holdings
- managing major pests and diseases, and
- promoting product diversification and by-product utilization

During 2025-26, **₹147.21 crore** have been released for the implementation of activities under CDB.

Government Support Measures for the Coconut Sector

The Government has adopted **a multi-pronged policy approach** for the coconut sector. The approach **integrates minimum support price** for copra, **targeted development schemes, and focused initiatives** for skill development and enterprise creation across the value chain.

MSP for Copra 2025-26: Ensuring Remunerative Returns

Copra, the dried kernel of coconut, is among the **22 mandated agricultural crops** covered under the **Minimum Support Price regime.** India primarily produces two types of copra: **milling copra** and **ball copra**. Milling copra is primarily used for oil extraction and involves drying the coconut kernel after it is removed from the shell. Ball (edible) copra is consumed as a dry fruit and for religious purposes. It is prepared by drying whole mature coconuts until the kernel hardens inside the shell.



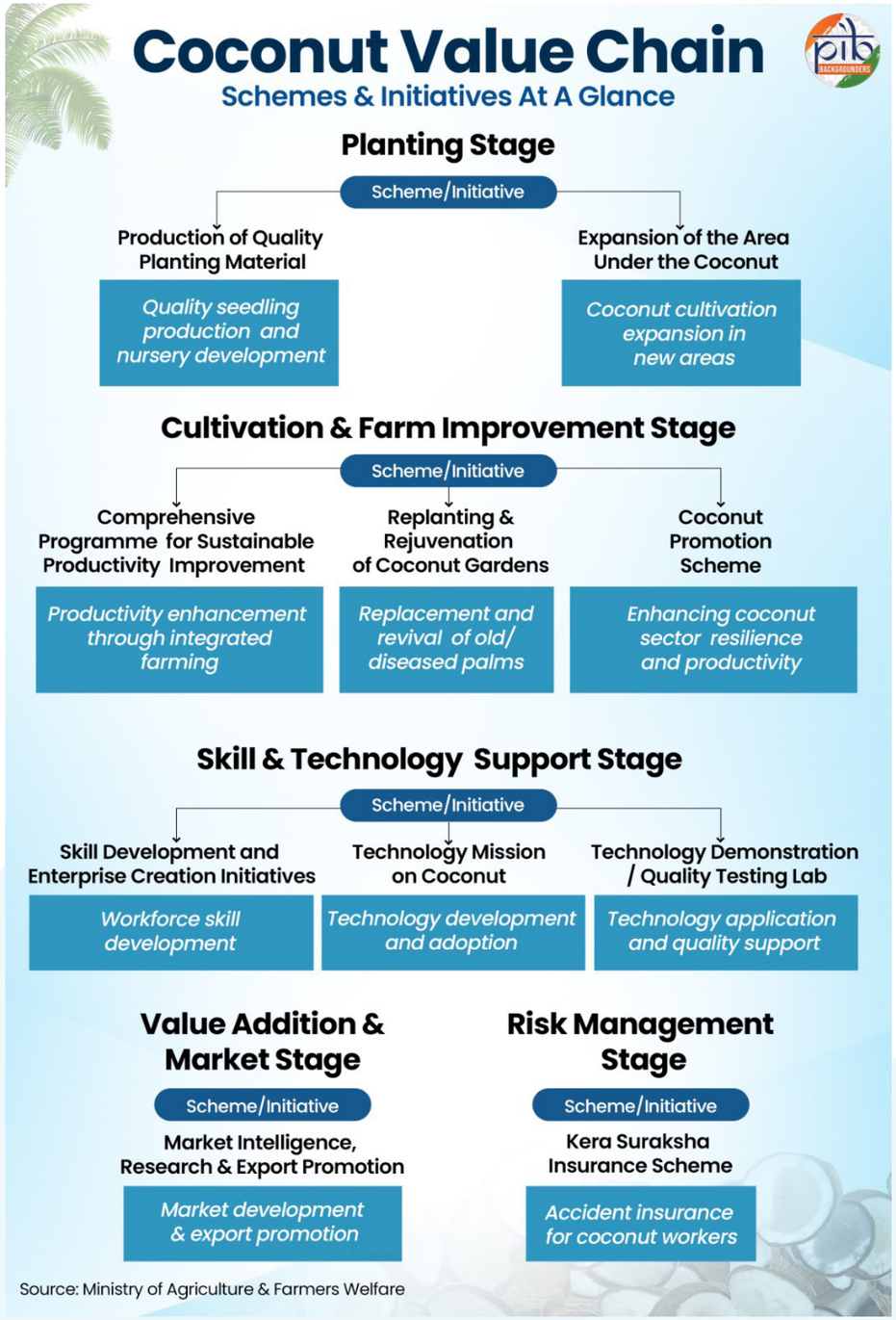
The **National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED)** and the **National Cooperative Consumers' Federation (NCCF)** are the **Central Nodal Agencies** for copra procurement. In addition, **State-level agencies** are suitably engaged to support procurement operations.

For the **2026 season**, the Union Cabinet has approved an **enhanced MSP for copra** to ensure remunerative prices for **coconut growers.** The **MSP for milling copra** is fixed at **₹12,027 per quintal,** while **ball copra** is fixed at **₹12,500 per quintal**. This marks a rise **of ₹445 per quintal for milling copra and ₹400 per quintal for ball copra** over 2025 MSP.

A higher MSP ensures more remunerative returns for coconut growers. It incentivizes farmers to increase copra production to meet the rising domestic and global demand for coconut products.

Key Initiatives for Coconut Cultivation and Productivity

The Government, primarily through the Coconut Development Board, **implements a range of schemes** to strengthen the coconut ecosystem. These improve access to quality planting material, expand cultivation, enhance productivity, promote technology adoption, and support market development.



Production of Quality Planting Material

The scheme strengthens the coconut value chain at the foundation stage by ensuring the **availability of quality planting material**. Key interventions under the scheme include establishing seed production farms, seed gardens, and nurseries, as well as quality certification systems.

Demonstration Cum Seed Production Farm (DSP)

Under the scheme, the **Coconut Development Board (CDB)** undertakes the establishment of new **Demonstration cum Seed Production Farms (DSPFs)** in various States. The DSPFs demonstrate scientific coconut cultivation practices and commercially produce quality coconut planting materials.

The financial assistance under the scheme is structured as follows:

- **Establishment of new DSPFs:** For newly established farms, **₹30 lakh** is allocated from the budget for the first two years.
- **Maintenance of existing DSPFs:** From the **third year onwards**, financial assistance of up to **₹1.00 lakh per hectare per year** is provided for farm maintenance. This support continues until yield stabilization (15–20 years).

During 2025-26, the Board produced **2.41 lakh quality coconut seedlings** in 11 DSPFs established across the country.

Other schemes supporting the production of quality planting material include:

- **Establishment of Nucleus Coconut Seed Garden:** Supports the establishment of coconut seed gardens to produce high-quality coconut seedlings and improved varieties. During 2025-26, **₹24 lakh** was **allocated** under the scheme, of which **₹20.29 lakh was utilized.**
- **Establishment of Small Coconut Nursery:** Promotes production of quality coconut seedlings through the establishment of public and private nurseries. During 2025-26, assistance was provided to establish **12 new nurseries** with a **combined annual production capacity of 1.06 lakh seedlings.** Assistance was also provided to maintain 6 existing nurseries.
- **Accreditation and Rating of Coconut Nurseries:** Ensures the availability of genuine, high-quality planting material through nursery accreditation and quality assessment.

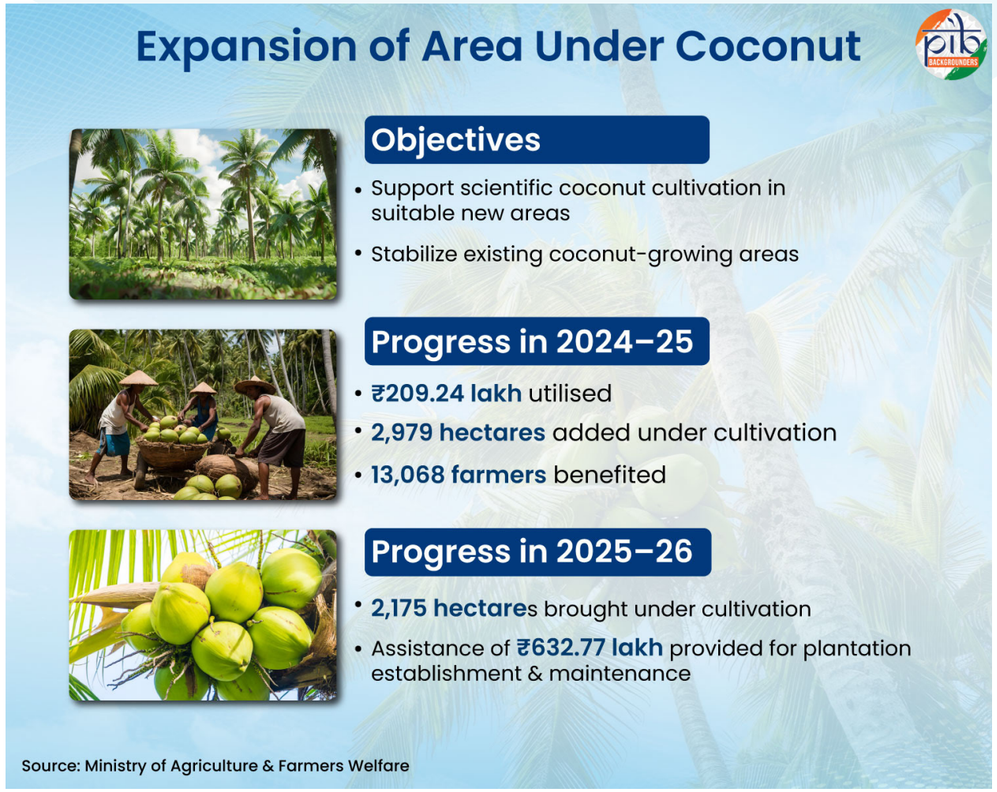
- **Assistance for Quality Planting Material Production in Public Sector Nurseries:** Supports coconut seedling production through financial assistance to eligible public sector nurseries. During 2025-26, **₹239.35 lakh** was provided to strengthen nurseries. Beneficiaries included **State Departments, State Agricultural Universities (SAUs), Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs),** and Demonstration Seed Production (DSP) Farms of the Coconut Development Board. The assistance supported the production of **11.97 lakh** quality planting materials, sufficient for new coconut planting over an estimated 6**,850-7,500 hectares**.

Expansion of the Area Under the Coconut

The programme focuses on providing **financial and incentive-based subsidies,** along with **technical support,** for scientific coconut cultivation in suitable new areas. It also stabilizes existing coconut-growing areas, enhancing overall coconut production.

Under the scheme, **financial assistance of ₹56,000 per hectare** is provided for **planting coconut seedlings in new areas.** The financial assistance is released in **two equal annual instalments.** The subsidy is available for a **maximum area of 2 hectares** and a **minimum area of 0.08 hectares (20 cents)** per beneficiary.

During 2024-25, **₹209.24 lakh** was utilized for bringing an **additional area of 2,979 hectares** under **new coconut cultivation.** The initiative **benefited 13,068 farmers** across various states in the country.
During 2025-26, major emphasis was placed on expanding the area under coconut cultivation. About **2,175 hectares of new area** were **brought under cultivation** across several states. These included Keralam, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal, Gujarat, Assam, and Arunachal Pradesh. **Financial assistance of ₹632.77 lakh** was provided for the establishment and maintenance of plantations, contributing to the enhancement of long-term production potential.



Comprehensive Programme for Sustainable Productivity Improvement in Existing Coconut Holdings

The scheme seeks to **improve the production and productivity of coconut holdings through integrated farming practices,** including **coconut-based cropping systems.**

Productivity Improvement Through Coconut-Based Cropping System **(PICCS)**is a major component under this comprehensive programme. It is implemented on a **cluster basis** through the Departments of Agriculture/ Horticulture of the concerned State Governments, as well as directly by the Coconut Development Board. Subsidy is provided at **100 percent of the cost**, amounting to **₹42,000 per hectare**, limited t**o 2 hectares per beneficiary.** It is released in **two equal annual installments.**

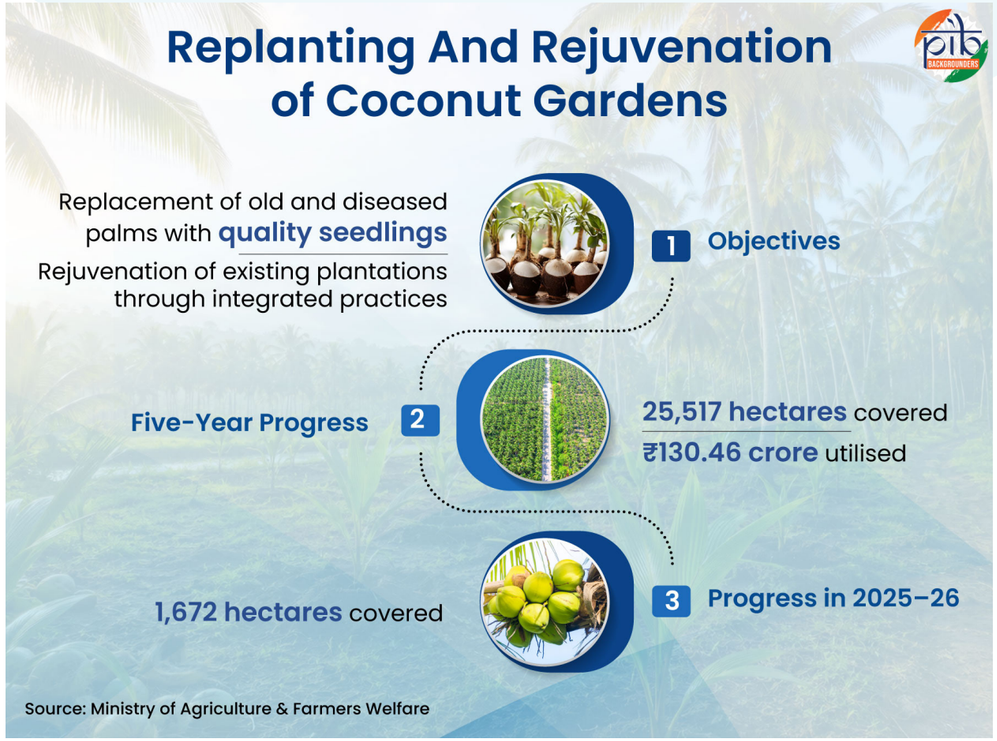
During 2025-26, the scheme **covered 18,800 hectares** across multiple States. It **benefited 48,696 farmers** organized into **266 clusters**, with **a financial outlay of ₹3,943 lakh**. In addition, State Government convergence covered another **5,935 hectares** in four States/Union Territories with **financial assistance of ₹1,246 lakh**. These included Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, **Keralam**, Assam, Goa, and Puducherry.
Keralam accounted for a significant share under PICCS, with over **8,089 hectares covered, benefiting 33,250 farmers** during 2025-26.
During the current year, the scheme is being implemented across the country over an area of **22,430 hectares**, covering major coconut-growing states.

Other than PICCS, the scheme includes the following other components as well:

- **Water Resource Creation:** Supports the development of community tanks, farm ponds, and reservoirs to provide irrigation facilities in coconut gardens.
- **Organic Farming Promotion:** Helps farmers adopt organic practices through support for production, certification, processing, and marketing.
- **Farm Mechanisation:** Promotes the use of agricultural machinery through training, demonstrations. Provides financial assistance for equipment purchase, post-harvest and processing technologies.

Replanting and Rejuvenation of Coconut Gardens

The scheme aims to enhance coconut production and productivity by **replacing disease-affected, unproductive, old, and senile palms** with quality seedlings. It also focuses on **rejuvenating the remaining palms** through an integrated package of practices. The scheme is implemented on a project-by-project basis, addressing state-specific problems. Assistance up to **₹54,000 per hectare is provided over two years.**



Over the last five years, the scheme has covered an area of **25,517 hectares** at a cost of **₹130.46 crore**. During 2025-26, **1,672 hectares** were covered under the scheme for rejuvenation. Activities included the removal of diseased palms, the replanting of new seedlings, and the rejuvenation of existing plantations.

Complementary Initiatives Strengthening the Coconut Ecosystem

Apart from major interventions, the Coconut Development Board (CDB) implements several complementary schemes to strengthen the coconut value chain:

- **Technology Demonstration/ Quality Testing Lab:** Provides technology demonstration, quality testing, training, incubation, and consultancy services for coconut-based enterprises and value-added products.
- **Market Intelligence, Research, and Export Promotion:** Facilitates market development, product promotion, quality improvement, and expansion of domestic and international markets for coconut products.

1. Coconut Development Board is the Export Promotion Council for all coconut products other than those from husk and fibre. The Board extends registration to coconut product exporters and has extended registration to **8,299 exporters**' up to 2025-26 and **8,700** up to 31st July 2026. **Export turn over** from coconut-based products has **enhanced** from **₹3,236.83 to 7,038.35 crores** during last 5 years (2021-22 to 2025-26).

2. The Board facilitates participation of entrepreneurs in domestic and international Trade Fairs. In last 5 years **Board has facilitated 72 entrepreneurs in 20 Domestic Trade Fairs** and also **224 exporters** in International Trade Fairs.

3. The Board collaborates with major industry players in facilitating participation in Buyer Seller Meets (BSM) by entrepreneurs. Board **facilitated 392 Domestic BSMs** for **215 entrepreneurs** during last 5 years. This includes Virtual Trade Fair (VTF) organized during 26th-28th April 2022 in which 53 coconut product manufactures and 347 buyers participated. During the VTF, 4 B2B sessions with leading players like Amazon, Flipkart, Lulu India, Lulu Dubai and Nesto group and 371 individual B2B meetings were organized. Board has also **facilitated 3 International BSMs for 6 entrepreneurs during last 5 years.**

4. With an objective to provide orientation to global trade, an International Conference on Trade and Marketing of Coconut Products was organised during 27th and 28th February 2023 at Hyderabad on the Theme: Global Coconut Industry- Cruising to the pinnacle with the participation of stakeholders across the globe. With an objective to conclusively establish the medical and health attributes of coconut products, an International Coco Health Conference was organised in collaboration with International Coconut Community (ICC) at Coimbatore from August 19-22, 2025. Also represented in the World Coconut Congress 2025 (WCC) from September 24-26, 2025 at Manila, Philippines.

5. The Board organizes **seminars and workshops** for exporters and entrepreneurs regarding processing technology, packaging, export procedures, foreign trade policies, market development etc in collaboration with various institutions.

6. Board is implementing schemes for Assistance for quality certification

with an objective to ensure quality of product, sustainability, worker health and welfare, environmental protection etc.

7. Board also provides Assistance for brand promotion to support entrepreneurs in brand building of their quality coconut products. **9 units have been supported** in last 5 years.

8. Board implements **Skill Development Training** as **on-the-job in-house training** to unemployed youth attached to coconut processing units with an objective of developing skilled labour and facilitating production of quality processed products from coconut. During last 5 years (2021-22 to 2025-26) **skill training has been assisted for 24 batches and thereby 240 participants.**

9. **Establishment of coconut kiosks or retail outlets** to promote processed products from coconut and create market awareness and market demand for the products **(15 kiosks assisted during last 5 years)**.

10. Board has also initiated schemes for:

(i) Establishment of procurement centres to encourage aggregation of produce and marketing of the same by the farmer collectives in a collective manner resulting in increased bargaining power, reduction of intermediaries and thereby realizing enhanced returns. **2 FPOs have been assisted**.

(ii) Establishment of primary processing centres for milling copra/ ball copra/ minimally processed tender nut with an objective to encourage and empower coconut farmers/ entrepreneurs/FPOs/Cooperatives for making good quality produce and ultimately leading.

11. Board also provides **recommendations on declaration of Minimum Support Price** for milling and ball copra for procurement under the Price Support Scheme (PSS), and other policy recommendations on import /export of coconut products etc.

12. CDB has been on boarded on the **Integrated Regulatory Assessment framework** with an objective to ensure product quality in the global market.

- **Technology Mission on Coconut (TMOC):** Supports development and adoption of technologies for pest and disease management, processing, product diversification, and other technology-driven interventions.

- **Kera Suraksha Insurance Scheme:** Provides accident insurance coverage to coconut tree climbers, Neera Technicians, Hybridization Workers, and coconut labourers engaged in the coconut sector.

Coconut Promotion Scheme: A New Push for the Sector

In order to address pest outbreaks, root wilt disease, and aging plantations, the **Coconut Promotion Scheme** was announced in the **Union Budget 2026-27**. The scheme seeks to enhance coconut production and productivity through targeted interventions, which include:

- large-scale production of quality coconut seedlings,

- expansion of coconut cultivation in potential areas,

- phased replanting, and rejuvenation of old and unproductive coconut gardens,

- adoption of holistic crop health management practices, and

- establishment of integrated coconut processing units to strengthen value addition and exports.

The initiative forms part of a broader **₹350 crore allocation for high-value agriculture,** including cashew and cocoa sectors. Through these measures, the scheme aims to strengthen sustainability and resilience in the coconut sector. It also **envisions** positioning I**ndia as a global leader in coconut and coir exports by the 2030s**, while improving incomes for coconut farmers.

Skill Development and Enterprise Creation Initiatives

The Coconut Development Board (CDB) implements **flagship skill development programmes for the coconut sector.** These programmes create a trained, self-reliant, and enterprise-ready workforce across harvesting, processing, and value addition.

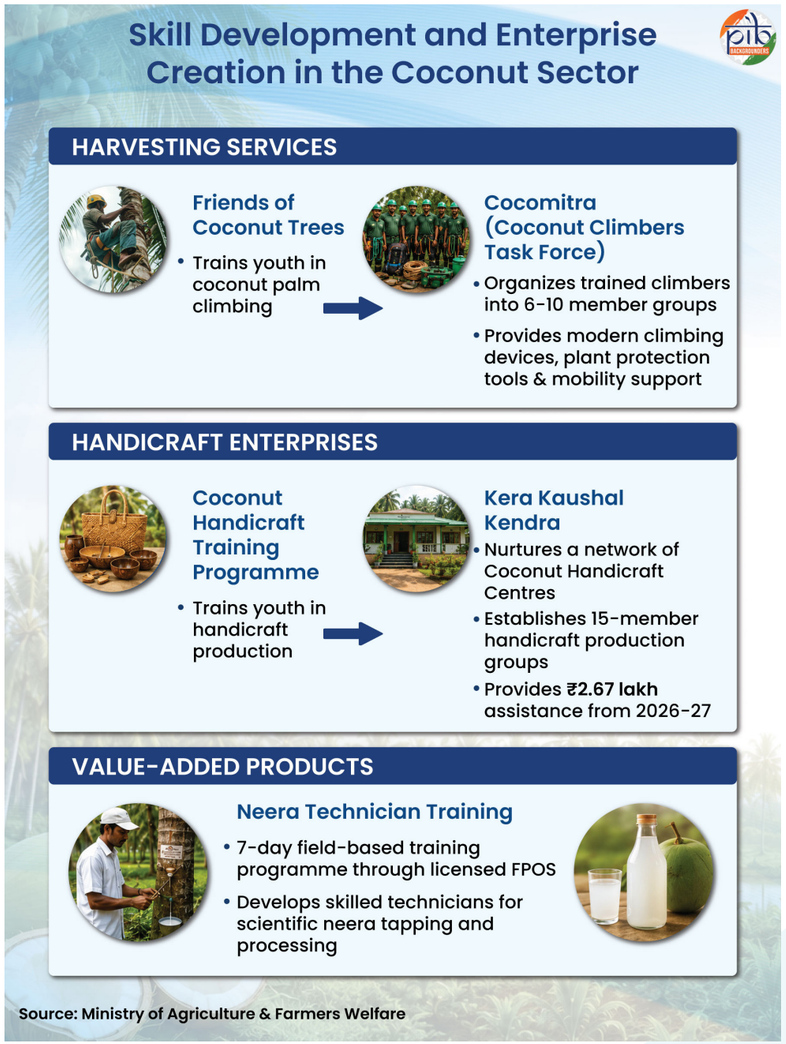
For over a decade, the Board has been implementing the **Friends of Coconut Tree (FoCT) programme**. The programme trains unemployed youth in coconut palm climbing using mechanical climbing devices, plant protection, entrepreneurship, and communication skills. During 2024-2025, **378 palm climbers were trained** under programmes conducted across various states of the country.

Additionally, the **Coconut Handicraft Training programme** equips unemployed youth with aesthetic skills to produce handicraft items using various parts of the coconut plant.

In 2025, CDB transitioned from stand-alone training programmes to organized enterprise development through new initiatives:

Cocomitra (Coconut Climbers Task Force): Organizes trained climbers into registered units of **6-10 members**. These groups are equipped with modern climbing devices, plant protection tools, and mobility support to deliver timely services to farmers.

Kera Kaushal Kendra: Seeks to nurture a **network of Coconut Handicraft Centres** across India specializing in products made from coconut shell, wood, and fibre. The initiative establishes **15-member handicraft production groups** registered as legal entities.



Each approved Kera Kaushal Kendra is eligible for **financial assistance of ₹2.67 lakh from 2026-27.** The assistance is provided for creating common facilities such as tools and equipment, furniture and fixtures, storage shelves and racks, utilities, and contingencies. The initiative also supports marketing activities for handicraft products. The programme promotes coconut-based micro-enterprises, rural entrepreneurship, and sustainable livelihoods.

Neera Tapping and Processing Technician Training Programme: Neera, a nutritious zero-percent-alcohol health drink, is the unfermented juice tapped from coconut palm inflorescences. The programme provides structured **7-day field-based training** to develop skilled technicians for **safe and scientific Neera tapping and processing.** The training is conducted through FPOs holding Neera licenses.

During 2025-26, the Board conducted **414 awareness training programmes**. The programmes covered CDB schemes, scientific cultivation technology, and coconut value addition.

Coconut Sector at the Crossroads of Tradition and Global Growth

Revered for generations as the **"Tree of Life,"** the coconut remains deeply woven into India's cultural and rural landscape. Over time, the sector has expanded far beyond traditional cultivation practices. **Strong policy support, farmer collectivization, and skill development initiatives** have strengthened the coconut value chain.

Efforts to **improve planting material, expand cultivation, and rejuvenate aging plantations** are creating new opportunities for farmers. At the same time, rising demand for value-added coconut products is expanding India's presence in global markets. With sustained institutional support, India's coconut sector **has evolved from a traditional cultural symbol to a globally prominent sector.**

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PIB Research





11

Beyond the Numbers: Decoding India’s School Education Progress

UDISE+ 2025–26 Report (NEP Structure)

Published on: August 17, 2026

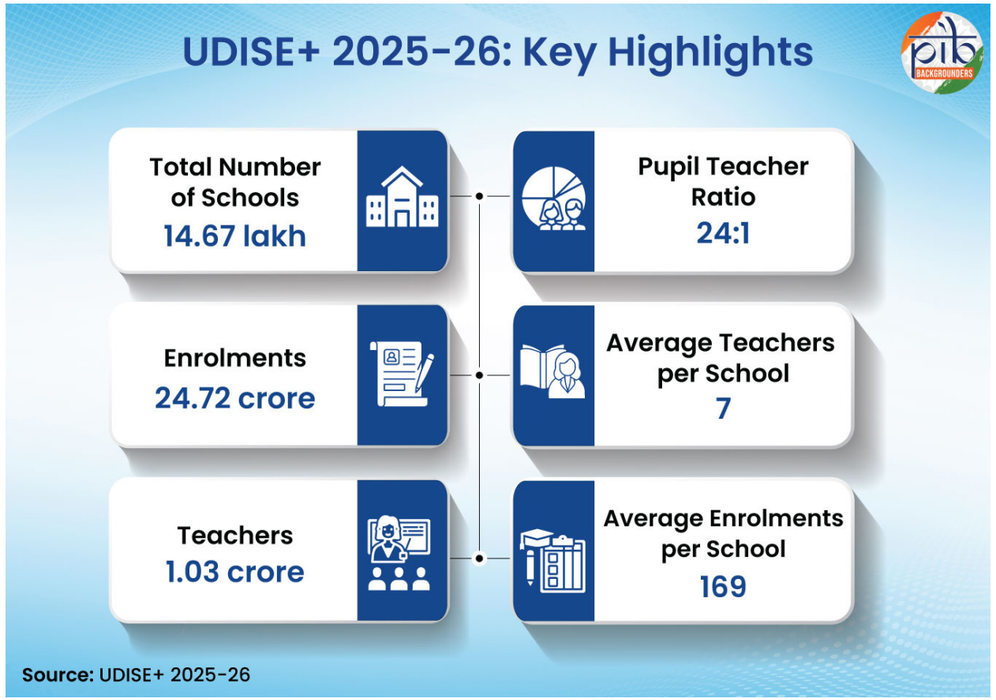
The UDISE+ Report 2025–26 presents a comprehensive assessment of school education in India, covering **14.67 lakh schools, 1.03 crore teachers,** and **24.72 crore students.** It highlights improvements in enrolment, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), teacher availability, pupil–teacher ratios, retention and transition rates, alongside reduced dropout rates. The report also records progress in digital and physical infrastructure, greater participation of women teachers, and continued advances in gender equity, social inclusion, and accessible education, reinforcing evidence-based planning under NEP 2020.

Data-Driven Governance in Education: Insights from UDISE+

The **Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+)** is a digital platform developed by the **Department of School Education & Literacy (DoSE&L)** to collect and manage comprehensive school education data across India. Since its launch in 2018–19, UDISE+ has facilitated evidence-based planning, policymaking, and monitoring of educational progress. It also serves as a key data repository for tracking the implementation of the **National Education Policy (NEP)** 2020, which seeks to ensure universal access, equity, quality learning, and improved student retention.

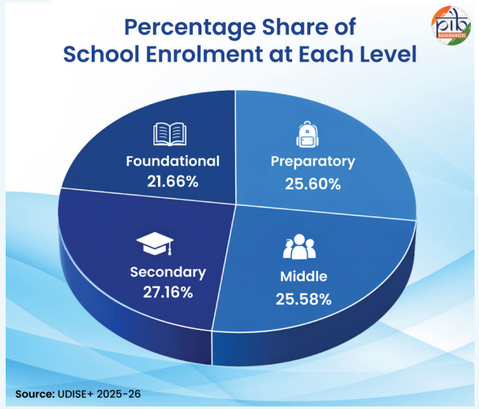
School Education Landscape

The UDISE+ 2025–26 report reflects a strengthening Indian school education system that comprises nearly **14.67 lakh schools, 1.03 crore teachers, and over 24.72 crore enrolled students.** This sustained enrolment and improved teacher availability translates to an average of **seven teachers and 169 students per school.** Consequently, the system maintains a highly favourable overall **Pupil–Teacher Ratio (PTR) of 24:1,** sitting comfortably well within the NEP 2020-recommended **benchmark of 30:1.**



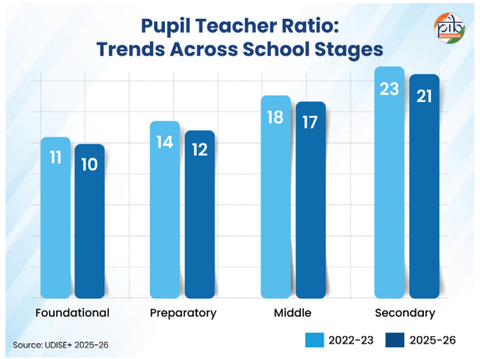
Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER): Expanding Access to School Education

The **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at the Secondary stage** improved **to 71.7%,** while the Middle stage GER stood at a consistently high 89.6%. Enrolment remained well distributed across all stages of school education, with the **Secondary stage accounting for 27.16%** of total enrolment, followed by the **Preparatory stage (25.60%), Middle stage (25.58%),** and **Foundational stage (21.66%).** Together, this balanced distribution and the rising secondary GER reflect India's continued progress in expanding educational access and sustaining student participation throughout the schooling continuum.



Favourable Pupil–Teacher Ratio: Improving Learning Outcomes

In 2025–26, the PTR across all stages of school education reflected continued improvements in teacher availability. The stage-wise PTR stood at **10:1** at the Foundational stage, **12:1** at the Preparatory stage, **17:1** at the Middle stage, and **21:1** at the Secondary stage. These highly favourable ratios enable greater individual attention, foster effective classroom engagement, and create an optimal environment for improved learning outcomes.



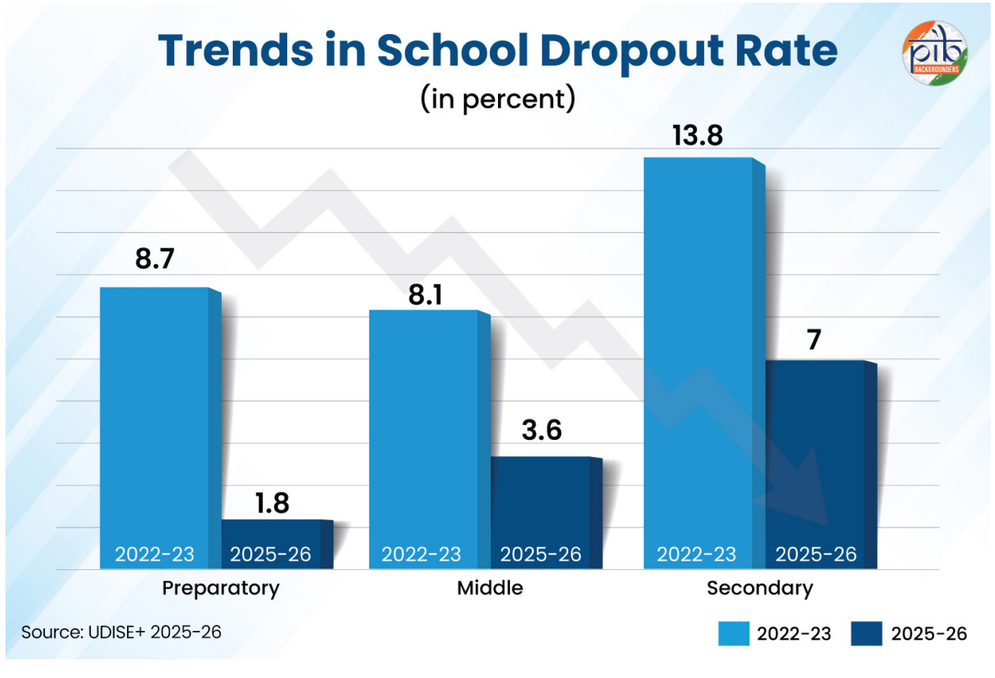
Improved Student Retention and Lower Dropout Rates

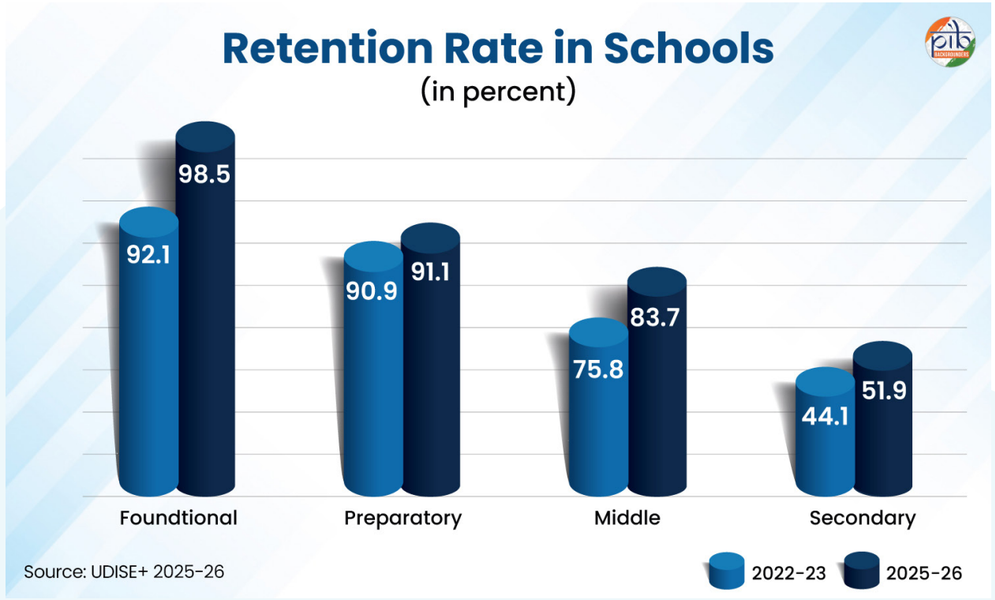
The UDISE+ 2025–26 report highlights sustained progress in keeping children within the Indian school system. The dropout rate notably declined to **1.8% at the Preparatory stage and 7.0% at the Secondary stage.** While the Middle stage saw a marginal increase to 3.6%, dropout rates across all three stages remain significantly lower than in 2022–23.

This positive trend is mirrored by strong student retention rates, which stood at **98.5% (Foundational), 91.1% (Preparatory), 83.7% (Middle), and 51.9% (Secondary).** Furthermore, transition rates between successive stages remained robust—with **99.2%** of students progressing from the Foundational to the Preparatory stage, **93.8%** moving to the Middle stage, and **88.3%** advancing to the Secondary

Pupil-Teacher Ratio

The **pupil–teacher ratio (PTR)** measures the number of students per teacher at a specific level of education. For example, a PTR of 10:1 means, on average, one teacher is available for 10 students at a particular stage. A **lower PTR** enables teachers to provide greater individual attention, develop stronger teacher–student interactions, and improve the quality of teaching and learning.

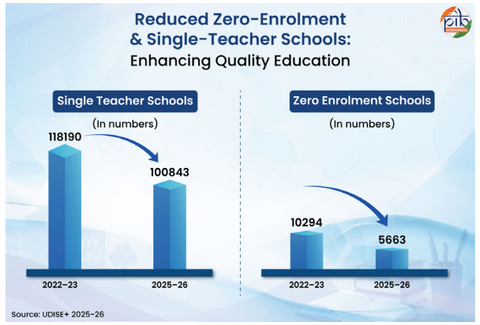




stage. Together, these metrics underscore a clear and improving continuum of educational access and student progression.

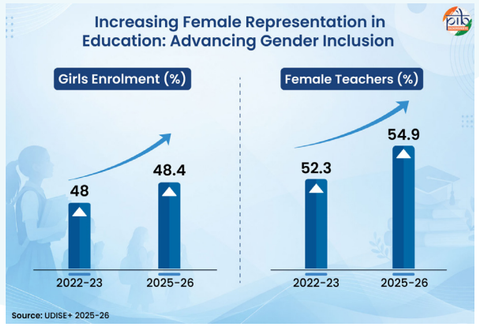
Decline in Single-Teacher and Zero-Enrolment Schools

In 2025–26, the number of schools operating with a single teacher decreased by approximately 3% to 1,00,843, while zero-enrolment schools saw a significant 29% decline compared to the previous year (2024-25), dropping to 5,663. These improvements reflect continued efforts to rationalise teacher allocation, optimise deployment, and ensure that educational resources are more effectively aligned with student needs across the country.



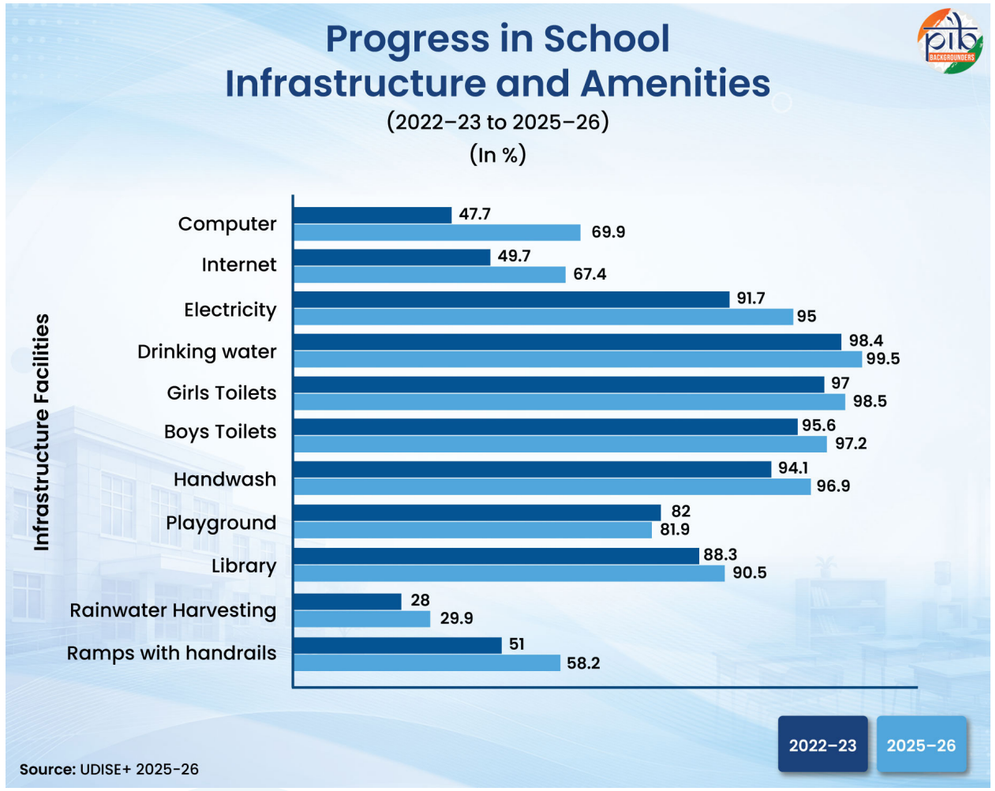
Gender and Social Inclusion

The UDISE+ 2025–26 report reflects continued progress towards a more inclusive school education system. Girls accounted for **48.4%** of total student enrolment, indicating a balanced gender



distribution across schools. Women also continued to play a significant role in the teaching workforce, constituting **54.9%** of all teachers.

The social composition of school enrolment remained broad-based and representative. Students from **Other Backward Classes (OBCs)** accounted for the largest share at **44.9%** of total enrolment, followed by the **General category (27.5%), Scheduled Castes (17.7%),** and **Scheduled Tribes (10%).** Together, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students comprised 27.7% of total enrolment, reflecting sustained efforts to promote equitable access to school education. This commitment to inclusivity also extends to **Children with Special Needs (CWSN),** a demographic comprising **57.16% boys and 42.84% girls.** Collectively, this data highlights India's dedication to advancing inclusive education through accessible infrastructure, specialised



support services, and equitable learning opportunities for all students.

Infrastructure Development

The **UDISE+ 2025–26** report highlights significant strides in modernising school infrastructure to create a more conducive environment for teaching and learning. On the digital front, the proportion of schools **equipped with computers** increased to **69.9%, and internet connectivity** rose to **67.4%,** expanding opportunities for technology-enabled education.

Basic infrastructure in schools also recorded steady gains with the availability of:

- Electricity in **95%** of schools
- Safe drinking water in **99.5%** of schools
- Girls' toilets in **98.5%** of schools
- Boys' toilets in **97.2%** of schools
- Handwashing facilities in **96.9%** of schools
- Libraries in **90.5%** of schools

- Rainwater harvesting in **29.9%** of schools
- Ramps with handrails in **58.2%** of schools.

Together, the expansion of these digital and physical facilities reflects a sustained commitment to improving accessibility, inclusivity, and the overall quality of India's educational landscape.

Decoding Progress: Key Takeaways from UDISE+ 2025–26

The UDISE+2025–26 report reflects continued progress in strengthening India's school education system through improved access, equity, quality, and infrastructure. The new report highlights key gains in teacher availability, favourable pupil–teacher ratios, student retention and transition, gender parity, social inclusion, digital readiness, and school infrastructure, underscoring sustained efforts to improve educational outcomes across the country.

As a comprehensive national database, UDISE+ continues to enable evidence-based planning, informed policymaking, and effective monitoring of the school education sector. Its findings reaffirm the steady progress towards the vision of the **NEP 2020** to create an equitable, inclusive, technology-enabled, and learner-centric education system.

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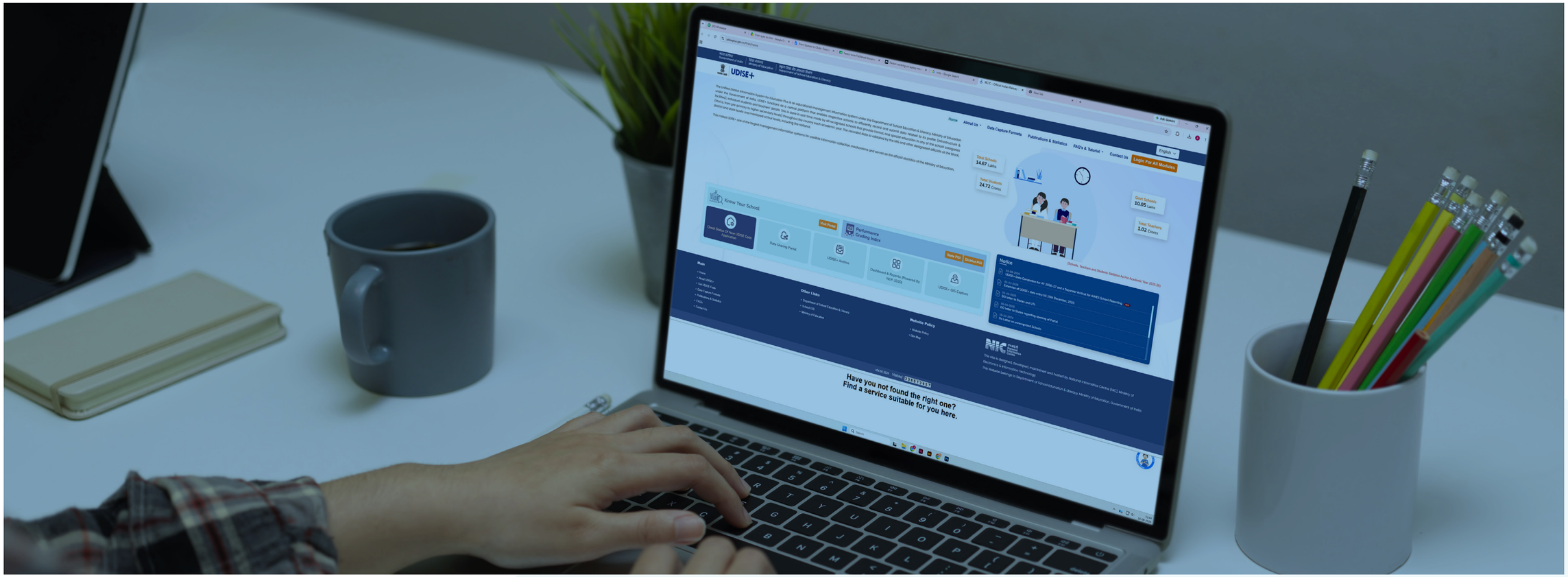




12

12 Years of PM Jan Dhan Yojana

Banking for All, Empowerment for All

Published on: August 27, 2026

PM Jan Dhan Yojana (PM-JDY) has emerged as a cornerstone of India's financial inclusion journey since its launch in 2014. Over 12 years, it has expanded access to formal banking, credit, insurance, pensions and digital payments, particularly for underserved communities. PM-JDY accounts have grown from 14.72 crore in 2015 to 59.09 crore as of 19th August 2026, with 32.92 crore female beneficiaries. Deposits have also risen consistently, reflecting deeper participation in the formal financial system. The scheme, India's national mission for financial inclusion, is translating financial access into greater security, opportunity and economic empowerment.

PM Jan Dhan Yojana: Driving India's Journey Towards Financial Inclusion



Financial inclusion is essential for broad-based economic growth and poverty reduction. Access to formal financial services helps people manage risks, invest in their future and build livelihoods. It also supports greater economic participation and reduces income inequalities. For women, access to finance strengthens financial independence and economic empowerment. The Government has therefore made financial inclusion a **key priority** through several targeted initiatives.

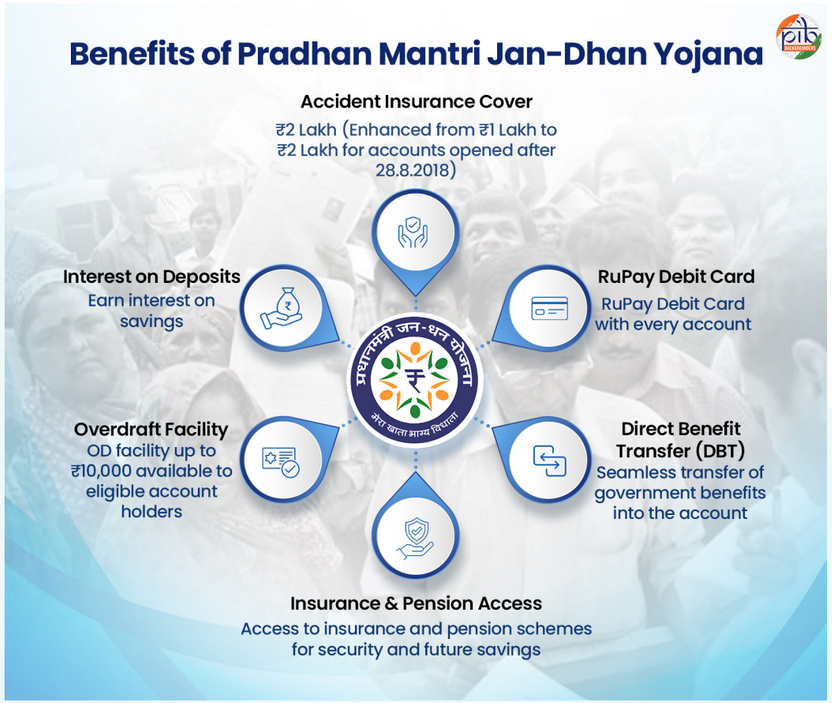
The PM Jan Dhan Yojana (PM-JDY), **India's national mission for financial inclusion**, was launched in 2014. As the scheme celebrates its 12th anniversary, it continues to bring more people into the **formal financial system** and ensure **inclusive growth**.

Breaking down PM-JDY: Access and Benefits

As the **world's largest financial inclusion initiative**, PM-JDY is redefining access to banking for millions of underprivileged citizens. The scheme initially focused on providing a bank account to "**every household.**" In 2018, its focus expanded to ensure that "**every unbanked adult**" had access to a bank account, thereby **widening the reach of financial inclusion. It provides basic banking services, need-based credit, remittances, insurance and pension to underserved and low-income groups**.

Did you know?

India's Financial Inclusion Index has risen from 53.9 in 2018 to 67 in 2026, showcasing deeper access to credit, insurance, savings and digital payments.
In January 2015, **Guinness World Records** recognized the scale of the financial inclusion drive under PMJDY. "1**8,096,130** bank accounts were opened in a single week" as part of the campaign led by the Department of Financial Services, Government of India.
PMJDY has also gained **international recognition** for its contribution to financial inclusion in India. The **IMF and World Bank** have highlighted the scheme's role in expanding access to formal banking services and bringing more people into the formal financial system.



Who is eligible to open the account?

- All citizens of **Indian nationality** are eligible to open PM-JDY accounts,with no upper age limit.
- One **basic savings bank account** is opened for unbanked person.
- There is **no requirement to maintain any minimum balance**.

Where can a PM-JDY account be opened, and can it be held jointly?

- Under PM-JDY, individuals can open an account by **visiting a bank branch** or Business Correspondent/ Bank Mitra outlet (an extended arm of the Bank Branch).
- The **account opening form** along with the required **KYC documents** has to be submitted. Upon verification, the account is activated by the bank.
- A **joint account can also be opened**.

What documents are required to open the account?

Documents required for opening a PM-JDY account include:

- Aadhaar card
- Government ID proof- voter ID, PAN card or ration card
- Permanent address proof- passport, driving licence, electricity, telephone or water bill
- Passport-size photograph
- Duly filled and signed PMJDY account opening form
- Any other document notified by the Government.

What is the interest income on savings in the account?

- The **interest rate applicable to savings bank accounts** is applicable to accounts opened under PMJDY scheme.

What is a RuPay debit card and inbuilt accident insurance?

- **RuPay Debit card** is provided to PM-JDY account holder. It is a **domestic debit card** and is accepted at all ATMs and most PoS machines.
- **Accident insurance cover of ₹1 lakh** (enhanced to ₹2 lakhs to new PMJDY accounts opened after August2018) is available.
- **No premium is charged** from the beneficiary and the premium is paid by the National Payments Corporation of India.

What overdraft facility is available?

- **Overdraft facility up to ₹10,000 is available** to one PM-JDY account holder per household.
- This can be availed after 6 months of satisfactory operation of the account, subject to fulfilling the eligibility criteria.

What are the social security schemes offered under PM-JDY?

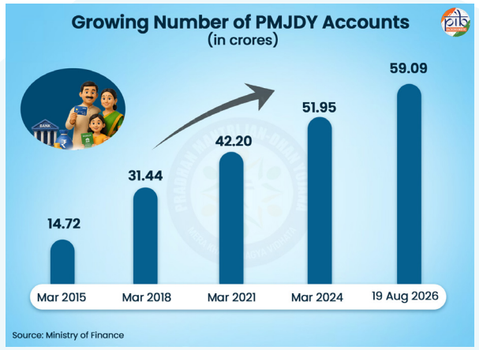
PM-JDY accounts are eligible for Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PM-JJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PM-SBY), Atal Pension Yojana (APY), Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency Bank (MUDRA) scheme.

The Jan Dhan Impact

Over the years, PMJDY has achieved several key milestones:

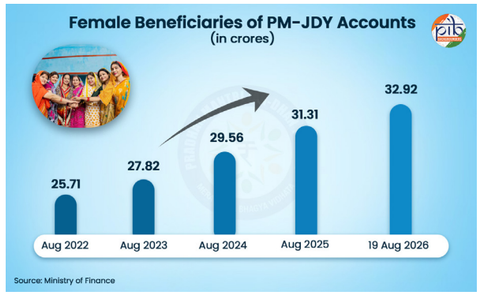
Accounts on the Rise

PM-JDY **accounts have grown 4x over the last 12 years. Accounts rose from 14.72 crore in 2015 to 59.09 crore** as of 19th August 2026. Of these, 45.95 crore accounts are in **rural and semi-urban areas**, while 13.14 crore are in u**rban and metropolitan areas.**



This reflects the scheme's wide reach and significant progress in bringing underserved and unbanked populations into the formal banking system.

Female Beneficiaries Increase

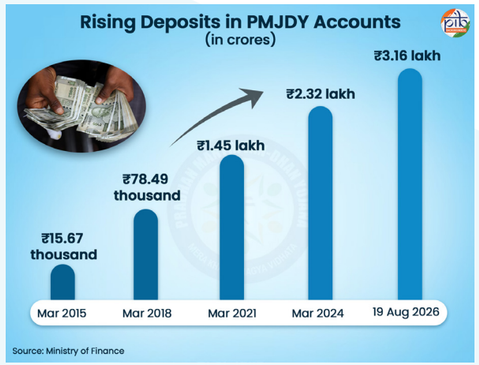


As on 19th August 2026, **there are 32.92 crore female beneficiaries of PM-JDY accounts.** This number has steadily risen over the years, highlighting the scheme's role in **promoting gender equality** in financial access.

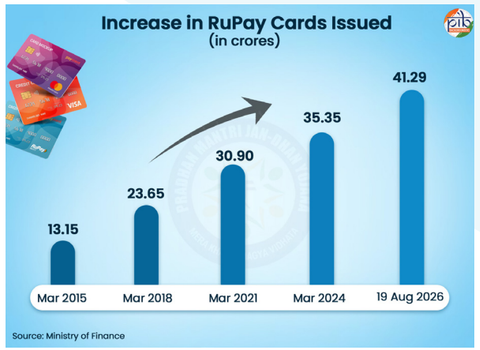
Deposits Multiplying over the Years

PM-JDY deposits have surged ~20x, rising from ₹15,670 crore in March 2015 to ₹3,16,514 crore as of 19th August 2026.

This rise reflects growing saving habit among low-income households, increasing trust in formal banking, and deeper participation in the financial system.



RuPay Cards Continue to be Issued



As of 19th August 2026, **41.29 crore RuPay debit cards have been issued** to PM-JDY account holders, reflecting a rise in digital transactions.

One Account, A World of Opportunities

PM-JDY has **transformed financial inclusion** from a policy objective into a lived reality for millions of Indians. It has **expanded access to banking, strengthened financial security, and connected underserved citizens** with credit, insurance, pensions and digital payments. Its impact extends beyond rising accounts and deposits, strengthening formal financial identities and fostering greater economic confidence among people.

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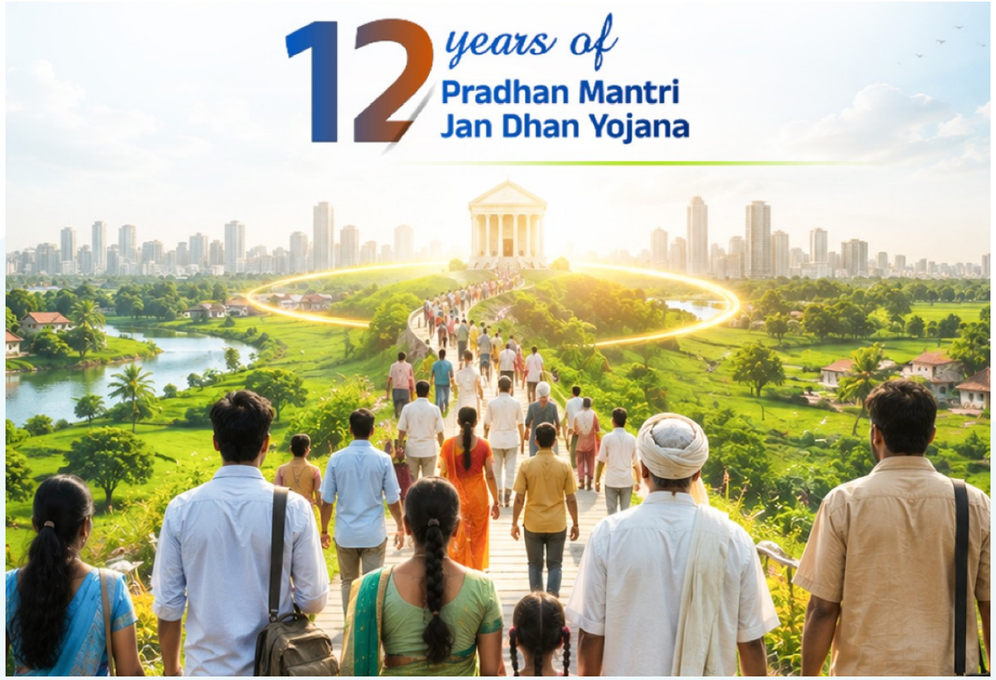




13

World Elephant Day

Celebrating Elephants, Ecosystems and Coexistence

August 12, 2026

World Elephant Day highlights the ecological and cultural importance of elephants. India hosts nearly 60% of the world's wild Asian elephant population and has strengthened conservation through Project Elephant, Elephant Reserves and protected corridors. Scientific monitoring, technology-driven conservation and community participation further support coexistence between people and elephants. These sustained efforts reflect the Government of India's commitment to safeguarding elephants, ecosystems and India's natural heritage.

The Gentle Giant of India's Forests

India is home to nearly **60% of the world's wild Asian elephants**, highlighting its vital role in global elephant conservation. Elephants hold deep cultural significance and play a vital role in healthy ecosystems. As a keystone species, they sustain forests, support biodiversity and maintain ecological balance. The **Synchronous All India Population Estimation of Elephants (SAIEE) 2021–25** estimates India's wild elephant population at **22,446**. These elephants are protected across **33 Elephant Reserves and 150 identified corridors**.



This rich elephant heritage also brings a responsibility to address growing conservation challenges. **World Elephant Day, observed annually on 12 August**, highlights the need for sustained global action. India's conservation efforts address habitat loss, fragmentation, poaching, illegal wildlife trade and human-elephant conflict. The country combines **legal protection, habitat conservation, scientific monitoring and community participation** as part of its conservation efforts. Technology-driven measures further strengthen these efforts and support the long-term survival of elephants in the wild.

The Enduring Significance of Elephants in India

Elephants are integral to India's natural and cultural heritage. Their significance spans ecosystem health, cultural traditions and community identities.

Ecological Importance

Elephants are **foundational species** that shape forest structure and ecosystem functioning. They are migratory in nature, with home ranges spanning **100–3,000 km²**. As they move long distances, they create pathways and water holes that benefit other wildlife. Their feeding habits support nutrient cycling, and bring about seed dispersal that aids forest regeneration. This helps in connecting fragmented forests and creating favourable conditions for thriving genetic diversity. Protecting elephants therefore strengthens ecological connectivity, forest health and wider biodiversity.

Cultural and Social Importance



Elephants have shaped India's religious traditions, cultural practices and community identities for centuries. Lord Ganesha represents wisdom and the removal of obstacles in **North Indian traditions**. Elephants historically symbolised authority and prestige as royal **emblems**. Temple elephants remain part of religious rituals and festivals in South India. Communities across the **Northeast** worship Lord Ganesha as a manifestation of their deities and regard elephants with deep respect. Some communities traditionally view elephants

as elders and symbols of wisdom. These traditions highlight the enduring place of elephants in India's cultural heritage and community life.


Members Of The Putu Menden Village Council Traditionally Wore Ivory Armlets As Symbols Of Authority.


The Ao Tribe's Tsüngkotepsü Shawl Carries An Elephant Motif Representing Strength And Honour.

Counting the Giants: Where India's Elephants Stand Today

India's elephant conservation story is best told through numbers. From reserve networks to corridor restoration, each figure reflects decades of sustained institutional effort.

Project Elephant: A Comprehensive Conservation Framework

Project Elephant is the Government of India's flagship initiative for elephant conservation. Implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), the programme provides financial and technical support to States for protecting elephant habitats, conserving captive elephants and mitigating human-elephant conflict. It also promotes science-driven conservation through AI-enabled monitoring, radio-collaring, genetic databases and early warning systems.

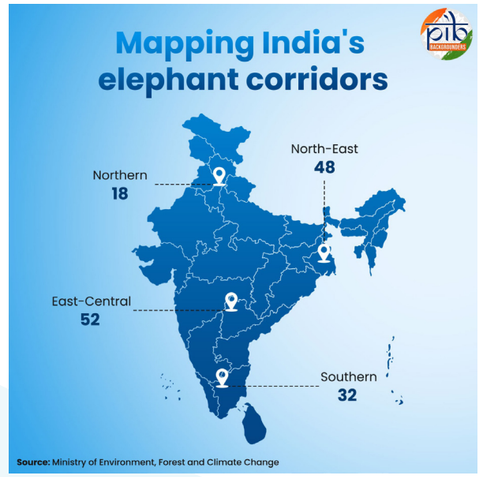
DNA-based Sampling

Scientific monitoring under Project Elephant has strengthened elephant population assessment. SAIEE 2021–25 used India's first DNA-based synchronised elephant census. Scientists analysed dung samples to identify individual elephants through unique genetic fingerprints. This helped detect repeat samples across landscapes and improve population estimates. SAIEE combined DNA profiling, block counts and line-transect surveys, strengthening the scientific rigour of elephant population assessment.

Securing India's Elephant Corridors

Elephant corridors play an important role in elephant conservation in India. They connect erstwhile natural habitats that have got fragmented due to human development or other reasons. The elephant corridors are habitats that have been developed to connect fragmented habitats. They are essential for maintaining healthy and genetically diverse elephant populations by enabling safe movement between fragmented habitats and helping reduce human-elephant conflict. They also support long-term population viability by maintaining ecological connectivity. Under **Project Elephant**, the Government has identified and validated elephant corridors across **14 elephant-range states**.

According to **Elephant Corridors of India**, 2023, prepared with technical support from the **Wildlife Institute of India**, these **corridors** span across four regions. The **East-Central region** has 52 corridors, followed by the **North-East (48)**, **Southern (32)** and **Northern (18)** regions. **West Bengal** has the highest number, with **26 corridors**. This accounts for more than **17% of the national total**. The network includes **19 inter-state corridors** and **six transboundary corridors** connecting India and Nepal.



Monitoring shows increased elephant use in **59 corridors (40%)**, stable use in **29 (19%)**, declining use in **29 (19%)**, and impaired conditions in **15 corridors**.

Protecting these corridors strengthens habitat connectivity, reduces conflict and supports the long-term conservation of India's elephant populations.

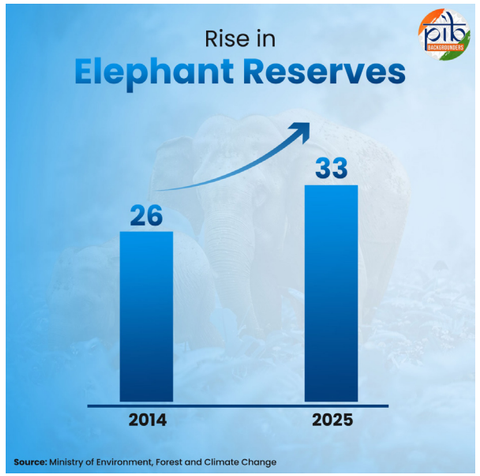
Sustained Corridor Conservation

The Government continues to strengthen these ecological lifelines through scientific monitoring, boundary delineation and integration into State working and management plans. Currently, 150 corridors support elephant movement. These sustained efforts are strengthening habitat connectivity and securing safer movement for elephants across India's forest landscapes.

Growing the Reserve Network

Elephant Reserves have expanded steadily **since 2014, now covering 80,777 km** across **14 major elephant-range states**. The expansion has brought an additional 8,610 km² under protection, securing critical habitats and strengthening ecological connectivity. It has also improved scientific management and created a stronger foundation for the long-term survival of India's wild elephant population.

Collectively, **Project Elephant**, scientific population estimation, protected reserves and connected corridors have transformed elephant conservation into an integrated landscape-level programme. These initiatives demonstrate the Government's commitment to combining traditional conservation values with modern science to secure the future of the Asian elephant.



Beyond the Count: Protecting Every Elephant

Estimating elephant populations is only one part of conservation. Long-term success depends on safer habitats, stronger legal safeguards and peaceful coexistence with communities. The Government of India has adopted a comprehensive conservation approach that combines science, technology, infrastructure and public welfare. These initiatives protect elephants both inside forests and across shared landscapes.

India has sought to improve how elephant landscapes are managed. The **Management Effectiveness Evaluation framework** for Elephant Reserves was launched in 2023 and tested in four representative reserves—Shivalik, Kaziranga–Karbi Anglong, Mayurbhanj and Nilgiri. Building on the pilot experience, the Government is taking this framework to Elephant Reserves across the country, supported through CAMPA funding. This institutionalises transparent assessment and adaptive management based on measurable conservation outcomes.

More recently, the Ministry has taken this landscape-based approach a step further by developing **Regional Action Plans** for all elephant-bearing regions of the country. These plans recognise that elephants range across State boundaries and that challenges relating to habitat connectivity, human-elephant conflict and landscape management require coordinated action across jurisdictions. The Regional Action Plans provide a common framework for States to undertake priority conservation and conflict-mitigation interventions at the landscape scale.

Making Railways Safer for Elephants

The Government has taken decisive steps to reduce elephant deaths along railway corridors. Joint surveys covered **127 sensitive railway stretches** spanning **3,452.4 km**. Further, Seventy-seven stretches across 14 States, covering 1,965.2 km, have been recommended for mitigation measures involving 705 structures, including underpasses, overpasses, ramps, level crossings and bridge modifications. These structural interventions are being complemented by technologies such as optical-fibre-based intrusion detection, seismic sensors and thermal cameras.

Also, AI-enabled **Distributed Acoustic Sensing** systems now provide real-time alerts to loco pilots, station masters and control rooms. Every train collision involving elephants is jointly investigated with the concerned State Forest Department. These sustained interventions reduced train-hit elephant deaths from **26 in 2013** to **12 in 2024**, a decline of more than 50 percent.

Guarding Captive Elephants Through Genetics

The Government has strengthened safeguards against the illegal trade and movement of captive elephants through science-based monitoring. Under the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**, cases related to sale, transport and procurement are referred to State Chief Wildlife Wardens for action. The

Gajah Suchana mobile application has created a national genetic database containing DNA profiles, morphological characteristics and ownership details of every registered captive elephant. The database verifies identity before movement and provides reliable forensic evidence during legal proceedings.

Captive Elephant (Transfer or Transport) Rules, 2024

To regulate the movement of captive elephants, the Government notified the Captive Elephant (Transfer or Transport) Rules, 2024. A High-Powered Committee examines interstate transfers of captive elephants. It was constituted under the Supreme Court's order dated March 3, 2023. Together, the application, the rules and the committee strengthen transparency and curb illegal transfer of captive elephants.

Supporting Communities for Peaceful Coexistence

Conservation succeeds when communities become equal partners in protecting wildlife. The Government provides ex-gratia assistance under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes **Project Tiger and Elephant** and **Development of Wildlife Habitats**. Assistance includes **₹10 lakh** for death or permanent incapacitation, **₹2 lakh** for grievous injury, treatment costs up to **₹25,000** for minor injuries, and compensation for crop and property losses as per State and UT norms.

The Government has further strengthened conflict management through the **Human-Wildlife Conflict Advisory**. It recommends hotspot mapping, rapid response teams, State and district-level review committees and faster compensation. **Elephant-specific conflict mitigation guidelines**, issued in **2023**, further improve coordination among stakeholders. Together, these measures protect both elephants and people, strengthening safe and sustainable coexistence across India's elephant landsca pes.

Reverence to Responsibility

India's relationship with elephants reflects a unique harmony between **civilisational values and modern conservation**. Revered for centuries, elephants continue to inspire India's commitment to protecting nature and maintaining ecological balance. This legacy is now strengthened through **scientific research, technology, strong institutions and community participation**.

The Government of India has developed a comprehensive framework for elephant conservation. Efforts include securing habitats, expanding Elephant Reserves, protecting corridors, improving railway safety and regulating captive elephant movement. Support for communities affected by human-elephant conflict further strengthens **coexistence between people and wildlife**.

As India observes **World Elephant Day 2026**, its commitment to elephant conservation remains steadfast. Every protected habitat, restored corridor and community partnership strengthens the future of the Asian elephant. Under **Viksit Bharat**, India continues to protect both its **natural heritage and civilisational legacy** for future generations.

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14

Bharat Taxi “India’s First Cooperative-Based Ride-Hailing Platform”

Published on: August 17, 2026

Bharat Taxi is India's first cooperative-led ride-hailing platform, established on 6 June 2025 under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002. Supported by eight national cooperative institutions, it combines digital mobility with **a member-owned model.** The platform follows a zero-commission model, enabling Sarathis to retain full fare earnings while participating as member owners. As of 25 July 2026, Bharat Taxi has nearly **8 lakh** registered drivers and around **41 lakh** registered customers across several cities. It offers transparent pricing, multiple ride categories, women-centric mobility initiatives, digital integration, and social security support. With institutional partnerships, nationwide expansion planned by 2029, and technology-enabled services, Bharat Taxi advances the vision of **Sahkar se Samriddhi** through inclusive and cooperative urban mobility.

Transforming Urban Mobility Through Cooperation

India's cities depend on diverse transport systems that keep people connected to workplaces, education, healthcare, and essential services. Public transport forms the backbone of urban mobility, while private vehicles, walking, and cycling provide additional travel options. In recent years, app-based ride-hailing services have become an important part of this ecosystem. They provide convenient, flexible, and last-mile connectivity, complementing existing transport networks and meeting the growing mobility needs of urban India.

As digital mobility services continue to expand, there is a growing emphasis on making them more inclusive, transparent, and beneficial for service providers. The **Ministry of Cooperation** is advancing this objective by promoting cooperative-based business models in urban mobility. This approach combines technology with democratic ownership, ensuring wider economic participation and equitable growth.

Cooperatives have long played an important role in India's economic and social development. They operate across agriculture, credit, banking, housing and women's welfare, and collectively account for more than **one-fourth** of the world's cooperatives. The Ministry of Cooperation continues to strengthen cooperatives as instruments of employment generation, social security and grassroots economic participation. Within this broader policy framework, **Bharat Taxi** has emerged as a landmark initiative. It is India's first cooperative led ride hailing platform and reflects the Government's vision of **"Sahkar se Samriddhi".**

Foundation of Bharat Taxi

Bharat Taxi was registered under the **Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002.** The act governs cooperative societies operating across more than one state. It enables voluntary formation, democratic functioning, and institutional autonomy while promoting self-help, mutual assistance, and economic and social welfare of members.

Bharat Taxi was formally established on **6 June 2025** by eight national-level cooperative institutions. Its founding members include:

- **National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC)**
- **Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO)**
- **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)**
- **Krishak Bharati Cooperative Limited (KRIBHCO)**
- **Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Limited (Amul)**
- **National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED)**
- **National Dairy Development Board (NDDB)**
- **National Cooperative Export Limited (NCEL)**

At its core, the platform places drivers, known as "Sarathis", within a cooperative framework as member owners. This initiative promotes transparent earnings, institutional representation, and ethical service standards. It also seeks to provide commuters with reliable and affordable transport services through a system based on accountability and shared value creation.

Against the backdrop of a rapidly expanding platform economy, it combines digital mobility services with cooperative ownership and driver participation. It reflects a new approach to urban transport that aligns technological innovation with the principles of cooperation.

The Cooperative Ownership Model

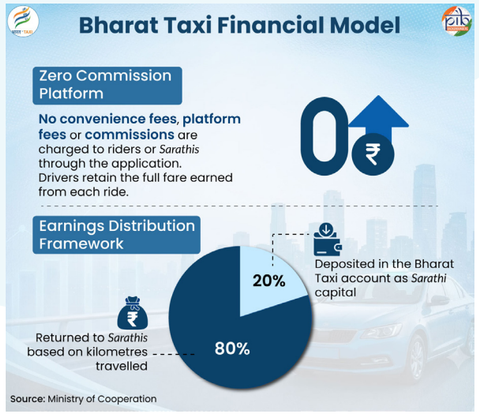
Bharat Taxi has been structured around a cooperative framework that integrates governance, ownership, and financial participation. The model places Sarathis at the centre of the platform, recognizing them not only as drivers but also as stakeholders in its functioning and growth.

Zero Commission Financial Model

Bharat Taxi operates on a zero-commission, surge-free pricing model. It has been designed as a cooperative alternative to conventional ride-hailing platforms. The cooperative follows a subscription-based model, enabling drivers to retain full fare earnings.

Riders pay only the applicable trip fare based on distance, time, and market conditions. No additional convenience fees, platform fees, or surge pricing are charged through the application.

Under the Bharat Taxi scheme, **20 percent** of the cooperative's earnings are credited to Bharat Taxi as Sarathis' capital. The remaining **80 percent** is distributed among Sarathis based on the kilometres travelled by their taxis. A **7 percent** service charge is levied only at Bharat Taxi-operated airport prepaid booths to cover operational expenses.

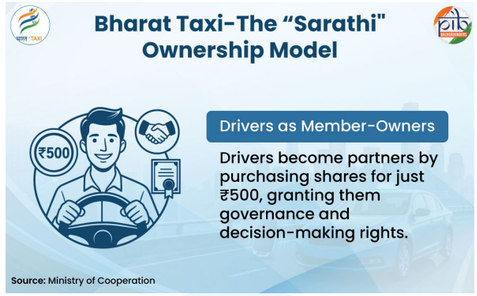


Sarathi Partners as Owners

Bharat Taxi is built on the cooperative principle that those who contribute labour should also share ownership and decision-making, reflecting the vision of **"Saarthi Hi Maalik".** The model enables Sarathis to participate in governance and benefit from the platform's growth. It promotes transparent participation and shared responsibility in decision-making. By placing Sarathis at the centre of ownership, Bharat Taxi seeks to build a fair, inclusive, and participatory urban mobility ecosystem.

Key features of the ownership and governance structure include:

- **Ownership through shareholding:** Sarathis become member owners by subscribing to the cooperative's share capital through shares valued at **Rs.100 each**. A Sarathi who wishes to become a partner can obtain ownership rights by purchasing shares worth **Rs.500**.
- **Driver-centred governance:** Shares are held by Sarathis, making them members who can participate in shaping policies and operational decisions.
- **Representation in leadership:** Reserved seats for Sarathi members in the Board of Directors ensure that drivers' interests are represented in governance.

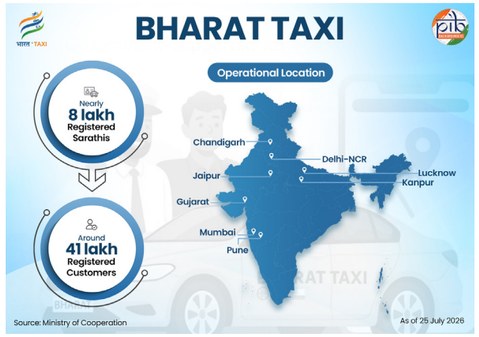


By aligning ownership, participation, and earnings, the initiative seeks to create a more equitable and participatory approach to ride-hailing services.

Growing Footprint Across India

As of 25 July 2026, Bharat Taxi has nearly **8 lakh registered sarathis** and around **41 lakh registered customers.** The service is operational in **Delhi-NCR, Gujarat, Lucknow, Chandigarh, Mumbai, Jaipur, and Kanpur and Pune.**

For instance, as of 25 July 2026, more than **30,000 Sarathis** and **nearly 7 lakh customers** have so far joined Bharat Taxi in Jaipur. Furthermore, operations are planned to be launched in **Ranchi, Patna, Guwahati, Bhopal, Kolkata, Indore, and Nagpur** in the next few months.



The platform is expected to expand progressively through a phase-wise rollout. Bharat Taxi aims to achieve a **nationwide presence by 2029**, extending cooperative-based ride-hailing services to cities across the country.

Mobility Services at a Glance

Bharat Taxi combines mobility services and social initiatives through a single digital platform. It promotes reliable, transparent, and inclusive transport services. The application offers multiple ride options and user-friendly features for convenient trip booking and management. The platform

also supports initiatives that expand participation in the mobility sector and enhance safety for women travellers.

Ride Options for Every Journey

The Bharat Taxi application provides several ride categories designed to cater to different travel requirements. Passengers can select from a range of vehicle types depending on distance, comfort, and passenger capacity.

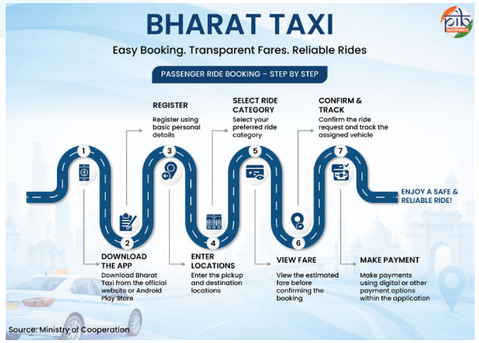
Available ride categories include:

- 2-Wheeler (Bike Taxi)
- Auto
- Economy Cab
- Premium Sedan
- XL Cab (SUV)
- Rentals
- Out-Station travel
- Scheduled Rides

These options allow users to access transport services for short urban trips, daily commuting, and longer intercity journeys.

Booking a Ride on Bharat Taxi

The Bharat Taxi platform allows passengers to book rides and drivers to register as Sarathis through a simple digital interface. The booking process is designed to be quick and user-friendly. In addition to **app-based bookings**, Bharat Taxi operates **prepaid booths** at selected airports for direct ride booking. Additionally, drivers who wish to join the platform as Sarathis can register via the app or website by submitting the required documents and completing onboarding.



Transparent Fare System

The platform follows a transparent pricing structure to ensure predictability and fairness for passengers. Fare estimates are displayed in advance, and the system operates without exploitative surge pricing. This approach seeks to maintain clarity in fare calculation while enabling riders to plan their journeys with greater confidence.

Empowering Women Through Mobility

Bharat Taxi has introduced the Sarathi Didi feature to enhance safety and accessibility for women commuters. It allows women passengers to choose rides operated **by women drivers** through the application.

To encourage greater participation of women in the transport sector, Bharat Taxi has also launched the **Bike Didi** initiative. As of February 2026, **more than 150 women drivers** had joined the platform under this initiative. These efforts aim to **expand livelihood opportunities for women** while strengthening their participation in the cooperative mobility ecosystem.



Safety and Secure Travel

Bharat Taxi incorporates safety-by-design into its platform architecture to ensure secure and reliable travel. The system includes police integration and control-room monitoring, enabling coordinated oversight and timely responses during emergencies.

Further, every driver undergoes **Know Your Customer (KYC) verification, periodic background checks, and safety training**. The app includes **live ride tracking, SOS support, and driver ratings.** Safety ratings are regularly reviewed to keep only trained and verified drivers active.

Building Partnerships and Digital Integration

Bharat Taxi has established collaborations to strengthen its digital infrastructure, service ecosystem, and social security support for Sarathis. Through Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with government agencies, financial institutions, and technology partners, the platform enhances operational efficiency. These partnerships also expand benefits for both Sarathis and passengers.

Digital Integration under Digital India

Under the MoU with the **National e-Governance Division (NeGD)**, Bharat Taxi receives advisory and technical support within the Digital India framework. This collaboration enables integration with national digital platforms such as **DigiLocker, UMANG, and API Setu.**

DigiLocker

DigiLocker is a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) under the Digital India programme. It provides citizens with a secure cloud-based platform to store, verify and share authenticated digital documents.

UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New Age Governance)

UMANG is a Digital India platform that provides citizens with a single mobile application. It gives access to a wide range of government services offered by central, state and local government bodies. These services are provided through different channels like Mobile Application (iOS, Android), Chatbot, Voice Bot and Website.

API Setu

API Setu is an open API platform of the Government of India that enables secure and interoperable sharing of data and services across e-governance systems. This supports seamless digital service delivery.

Key benefits of this integration include:

- Paperless onboarding of Sarathis through secure digital verification
- Unified access to government services through national digital platforms
- Secure and interoperable digital operations
- Support for cashless payment systems
- Improved operational efficiency across the platform

Partnerships with Key Institutions

Bharat Taxi has also entered into agreements with several institutions to expand service capabilities and improve rider convenience. These partnerships help integrate the platform with **transport infrastructure, financial services, and insurance support.**

Major partner institutions include:

- Delhi Traffic Police
- Delhi Metro Rail Corporation
- Airport Authority
- IFFCO Tokio Insurance
- State Bank of India
- Paytm

These collaborations allow institutions to access Bharat Taxi services while enabling passengers to benefit from additional facilities linked to transport infrastructure and digital payments.

Social Security for Sarathis

Sarathis associated with Bharat Taxi are facilitated to register on the **e-Shram portal**, enabling them to access a range of social security benefits. After registration, Sarathis and their families become eligible for free medical treatment up to **Rs.5 lakh** under the **Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY)**. It is the world's largest public healthcare scheme, launched in 2018.

e-Shram Portal

The e-Shram portal, launched by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, creates a national database of unorganised workers, verified and seeded with Aadhaar. This enables a targeted delivery of social security and welfare schemes to these workers.

Additional welfare measures include:

- Personal accident insurance of **Rs. 5 lakh** is provided through **IFFCO Tokio** at nominal rates.
- Advisory support for long-term driver welfare and insurance solutions.
- Group health insurance coverage for drivers and their families is supported through the Paytm partnership.

Airport Connectivity

Bharat Taxi has signed agreements with the Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation and Delhi Airport Parking Services. These agreements allow its white cab services to operate at multiple parking locations across Indira Gandhi International Airport terminals. This arrangement complements Bharat Taxi's Kaali Peeli services and is expected to improve the availability of airport rides.

Towards Cooperative Urban Mobility

GBharat Taxi represents a significant cooperative innovation in India's urban mobility sector. Built on driver ownership, the platform places Sarathis at the centre of governance, earnings, and service delivery. It offers commuters transparent, reliable, and affordable transport services through a cooperative model.

Supported by national cooperative institutions and digital public infrastructure, Bharat Taxi integrates technology with social security support. It also promotes inclusive mobility through partnerships and women-focused initiatives. With operations already underway in key cities, Bharat Taxi plans a phased national expansion by 2029. The initiative aims to strengthen cooperative participation in India's digital mobility ecosystem. It advances the broader vision of **"Sahkar se Samriddhi"**.

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PIB Research





15

UPI: Transforming India’s Payment Landscape

Published on: August 24, 2026

Towards a Unified Payment Ecosystem

India's digital payments ecosystem has undergone a remarkable transformation over the past decade. It is driven by the vision of creating a simple and secure payment system accessible to every citizen. **The Unified Payments Interface (UPI)**, developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), has emerged as a cornerstone of India's digital payments revolution. Today, **UPI is accepted in 11 countries**, with Greece and the Maldives being the latest to adopt India's real-time payment platform.

UPI and its Evolution

With **interoperable design and ease of use**, UPI has fundamentally changed the way individuals, businesses and government entities transact.

- **Real-time payment system** that powers multiple bank accounts through a single mobile application of any participating bank or payment service provider.
- Integrates multiple banking services, fund transfers and merchant payments on a single platform.
- Enables **round-the-clock** digital payments.
- Uses **two-factor authentication** and end-to-end encryption to enhance transaction security.

Over the past decade, **UPI** has evolved into the backbone of India's digital payments ecosystem. Following are some of the key milestones in the evolution of UPI:

2016

- **UPI was launched** on a pilot basis in April 2016 with 21 member banks.
- In August 2016, it was **rolled out to the public** as participating banks made their UPI-enabled mobile applications available on the Google Play Store.
- The **BHIM** application was launched in December 2016 to enable digital payments using UPI. It allows users to make direct bank-to-bank transactions through mobile devices

2017

- Dynamic QR, a retail merchant platform enabling UPI payments via dynamic QR codes was launched, which dynamically included transaction specifics like payee info and exact totals, removing manual amount entry.

2018

- **UPI 2.0** was introduced with enhanced features to make digital payments simpler, more secure and seamless.
  - **Invoice in the Inbox** allows users to view bills or invoices before authorising payments.
  - **Signed Intent and QR** enables simplifies payment authorisation while maintaining security.
  - **UPI Mandates** enables recurring payments through pre-authorised instructions.
  - **Overdraft account linking** allows users to make UPI transactions using their overdraft accounts.

2019

- SEBI allowed retail individual investors to use **UPI as an alternative payment mechanism** when applying for IPOs through designated intermediaries.
- UPI crossed the milestone of **one billion transactions in a month** in October 2019, reflecting rapid nationwide adoption.

2020-2022

- **UPI AutoPay** was launched to support recurring e-mandates for subscriptions, utility bills, insurance premiums, SIPs and EMIs.
- **Feature phone users** were brought into the digital payments' ecosystem through the launch of **UPI 123PAY.** It allows transactions through interactive voice response (IVR) number, app-based functionality, missed calls-based approach and proximity sound-based payments.
- **UPI Lite** was introduced to enable low-value transactions in a faster and PIN-less manner.
- The integration of **credit cards** with UPI further expanded digital payment options for users.
- During FY 2021-22, UPI processed transactions worth over US$1 trillion and crossed **5 billion monthly transactions** in March 2022.
- It also expanded internationally with its launch in **Bhutan**, marking its first cross-border deployment.

2023

- **Credit Line on UPI** was introduced, allowing pre-sanctioned bank credit lines to be linked as a funding account.
- UPI accounted for **~70% of India's digital payment transactions** during FY 2023–24.

2024

- **UPI Circle** was introduced, enabling primary users to authorise secondary users with predefined transaction limits on the primary user's bank account.
- RBI enhanced the **UPI transaction limit for tax payments** from **₹1 lakh to ₹5 lakh** per transaction. Higher limits also apply to select categories, including capital markets, IPO subscriptions, loan collections, insurance, healthcare and education.
- The per-transaction limit for **UPI 123Pay** was raised to **₹10,000**, expanding its range of use cases.
- The **UPI Lite** wallet limit was increased to **₹5,000**, with the per-transaction limit raised to **₹1,000**

2025

- **On-device authentication for UPI** was introduced, enabling payments through smartphone fingerprint or face unlock.
- **Aadhaar-basedFaceAuthentication** simplified UPI PIN onboarding, especially for first-time users, senior citizens and those without easy access to cards.

UPI Today

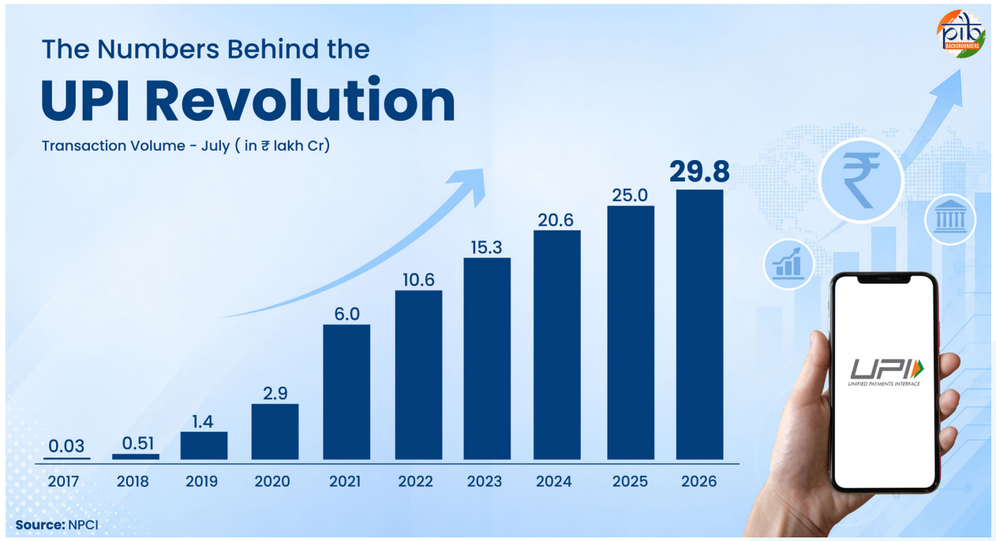
UPI has witnessed **unprecedented growth in both transaction volume and value**, reflecting its widespread adoption by individuals, businesses and financial institutions.

From FY 2016-17 to FY 2025-26:

- **Annual transaction volume** increased from **2 crore transactions** to **over 24,162 crore transactions**. It represents **~12,000-fold increase.**
- **Annual transaction** value grew from **₹0.07 lakh crore** to **~₹314 lakh crore**, recording more than **4,000-fold increase.**

UPI has transformed the scale and reach of digital payments in India. In July 2026:

- The UPI ecosystem comprises **741 live banks,** reflecting its widespread adoption across India's banking sector.
- **UPI processed 2,365.8 crore transactions**; and
- Total **transaction value stood at ₹29.87 lakh crore.**

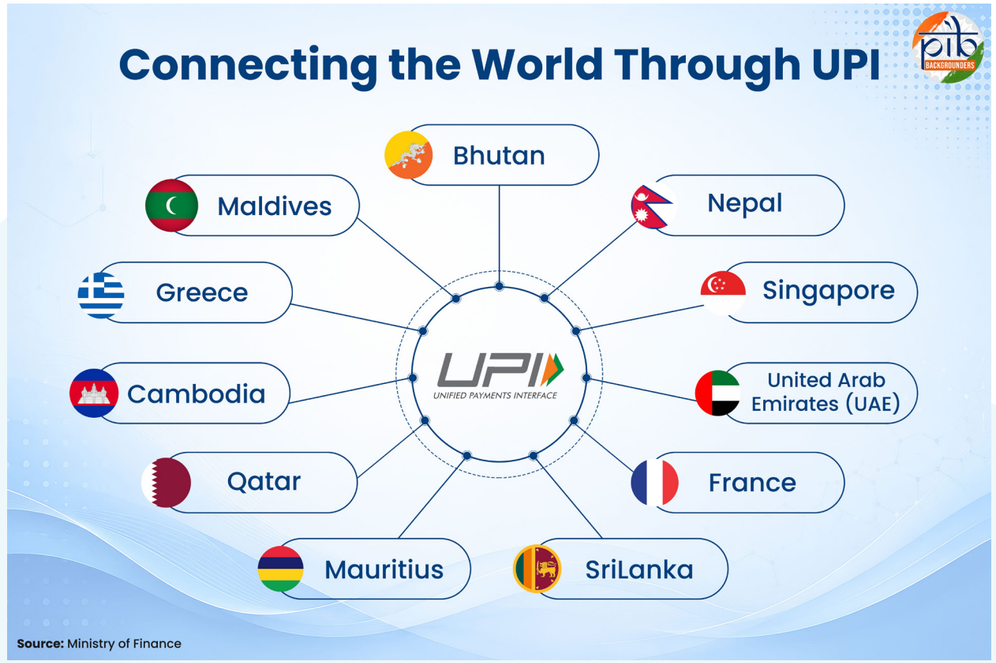


UPI's Global Footprint

UPI has emerged as a leading real-time payment system globally. As of 2024, UPI accounted for ~49% of global real-time payment transaction volume. This achievement was highlighted by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in its "Growing Retail Digital Payments: The Value of Interoperability" report, published in June 2025.

UPI's Global Footprint Continues to Expand

- UPI is operational in **Bhutan, Nepal, Singapore, the UAE, France,**



Sri Lanka, Mauritius and Qatar, enabling seamless cross-border digital payments.

- In **June 2026,** NPCI International Payments Limited partnered with **ACLEDA Bank Plc.** to launch **UPI acceptance in Cambodia**, further strengthening India's cross-border digital payment connectivity
- In June 2026, UPI went Live in **Greece** for Cross Border Remittances, where eligible customers can transfer money instantly, securely, and seamlessly between Greece – India (through Eurobank).
- On 30th July 2026, Cross Border Remittances between the **Maldives** Instant Payment System, 'Favara', and India's UPI went live, marking a transformative milestone in cross-border digital financial connectivity and bilateral economic cooperation between the Maldives and India.
- As on date, UPI is live in 11 foreign countries for UPI Acceptance and/or Cross Border Remittances.

A Decade of Digital Transformation

UPI has transformed the way India transacts by making digital payments simple, secure and interoperable. Its rapid adoption, continuous innovation and expanding global presence have made **UPI a key component of India's Digital Public Infrastructure.**

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16

Naxal-Free India

Integrated Strategies Defeated Left-Wing Extremism

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India has achieved the historic milestone of becoming effectively free from Left Wing Extremism (LWE), with no district in the country remaining LWE-affected. This transformation was driven by an integrated strategy combining security operations, infrastructure expansion, rehabilitation of surrendered cadres, tribal welfare, and improved governance. The coordinated approach sharply reduced violence, restored state presence in remote regions, and accelerated inclusive development, creating a lasting foundation for peace and prosperity.



New Era of Peace and Security

For nearly six decades, India grappled with Left-Wing Extremism (LWE). It was not a distant or abstract challenge, but a lived reality for millions of tribal families, villages cut off from roads, schools, and the broader promise of inclusive development. Violence was persistent, and uncertainty defined everyday life.

On 31 March 2026, this changed, marking a historic milestone in India's internal security journey as the country became effectively free from Naxalism. When the current government assumed office in May 2014, the Red Corridor remained one of the most serious internal security challenges. Earlier approaches were largely fragmented and incident-driven, managing symptoms rather than addressing the structural roots of the problem. A more comprehensive and integrated strategy was subsequently pursued to resolve it.



Over the last twelve years, the transformation was guided by three mutually reinforcing strands of action. **Restoring trust and faith** involved strengthened security operations, improved inter-agency coordination, structured surrender and rehabilitation frameworks, and sustained community outreach. **Expanding infrastructure** meant improving physical and digital connectivity, extending governance presence into remote areas, and creating durable economic opportunities. **Delivering welfare** focused on dignity, inclusive service delivery, cultural inclusion, and the mainstreaming of affected communities into the national development process.

Each of these strands reinforced the other. Security created space for development. Development deepened trust. Trust accelerated welfare delivery. It was not a sequence; it was an inseparable chain of progress.

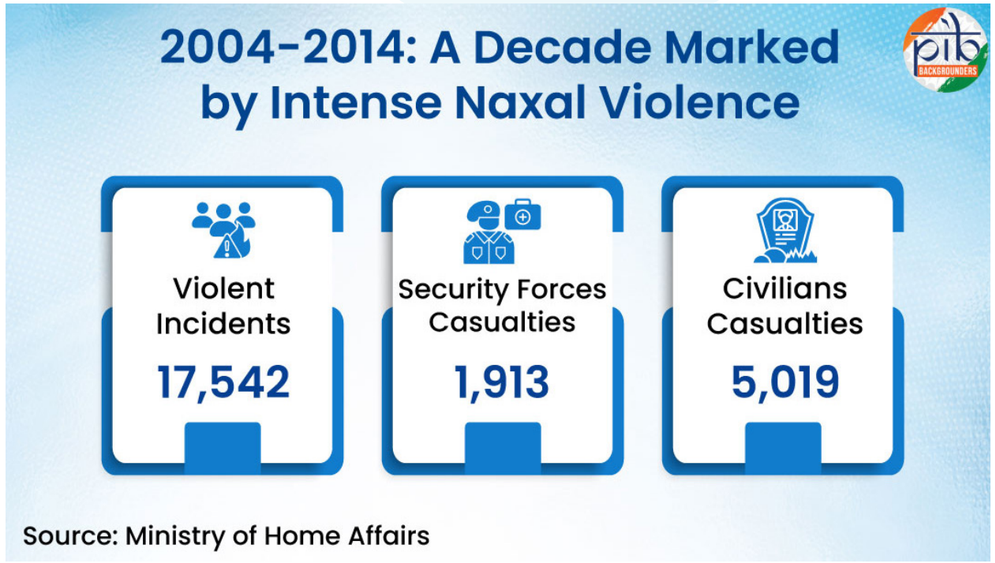
Restoring Faith in the State

This effort focused on rebuilding trust and faith through sustained state presence in vulnerable and remote regions. It strengthened coordination between security agencies and governance institutions to ensure effective responsiveness. The approach bridged long-standing gaps between communities and the state system.

Peak of Violence Before 2014

LWE grew from the Naxalbari uprising of West Bengal in 1967, inspired by Maoist

ideology and the doctrine of armed revolution. Its guiding principle was simple and violent: *power flows from the barrel of the gun*. Nearly 92 per cent of Naxalites' weapons were looted directly from police armouries. Over time, several extremist organisations merged under CPI (Maoist) in 2004, making it India's biggest internal security challenge.



Source: Ministry of Home Affairs

The decade from 2004 to 2014 was among the most violent in LWE history. Violence peaked in 2010 with 1,936 incidents and 720 civilian deaths in a single year. The full decade recorded 17,542 violent incidents, 1,913 security force deaths, and 5,019 civilian deaths.

There was no consistent national policy. State governments operated in silos. Even then the government publicly acknowledged in 2009 that **Naxalism was the biggest internal security challenge facing India**, one that exceeded even Kashmir and the Northeast in geographic spread.

Policy Shift: From Scattered Response to Unified Strategy

The first decisive action came in 2015 with the approval of the **National Policy and Action Plan** to address LWE. This replaced the earlier, ad hoc approach with a structured, whole-of-government framework. It deployed **Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF)**, provided specialised training, and allocated funds through the Security Related Expenditure, Special Infrastructure Scheme, and Special Central Assistance (SCA) schemes, while addressing socio-economic root causes alongside security. Till now, approximately ₹4,289.20 crore have been released since the inception of SCA Scheme in 2017.

Under the Special Infrastructure Scheme (SIS), projects worth ₹1,761 crore have been sanctioned for LWE-affected States to strengthen Special Forces, Special Intelligence Branches, District Police and the construction of Fortified Police Stations.

Since 2014-15, ₹3,805.04 crore has been released under the Security Related Expenditure (SRE) Scheme to support operational needs, capacity building and training of security forces, rehabilitation of surrendered Left Wing Extremism cadres, and ex gratia assistance to families of martyred security personnel and civilians.

For the first time, India implemented a structured and comprehensive approach based on three-pronged strategy against LWE- **Dialogue, Security, and Coordination**. The government's response was guided through a more **centrally coordinated framework** under the Ministry of Home Affairs, bringing greater coherence to policy implementation.

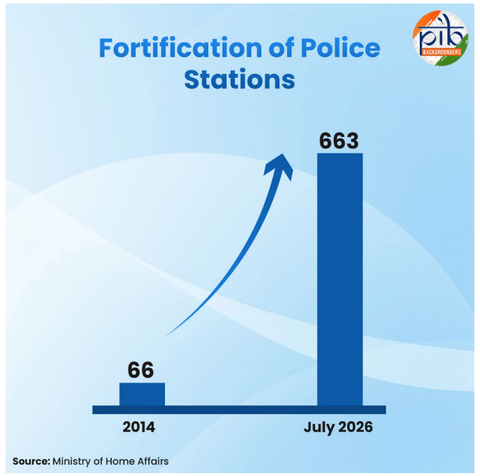


Source: Ministry of Home Affairs

The goal of making India free from the fear and violence of Naxalism was achieved through focused planning and coordinated action. On 24th August 2024, the Government of India set a target to make the country Naxal-free by 31 March 2026. The target was achieved on schedule through intensified security operations, stronger coordination, infrastructure expansion, and accelerated development outreach.

Building the Security Grid

The Government systematically filled the security vacuum in Naxal-affected areas, through infrastructure expansion, specialised forces, and improved operational coordination. This integrated approach enhanced state presence, mobility, intelligence sharing, and counter-insurgency capabilities across the Red Corridor.



663 fortified police stations were constructed, compared to just 66 before 2014. Additionally, over the past seven years, 408 new CAPF security camps were established to tighten the security grid, improve area domination, and sustain continuous operations in remote forest zones. (68 night-landing helipads) were built for rapid deployment in remote areas, enabling troop movement, casualty evacuation, and surveillance. Security forces received 400 bullet-proof and blast-proof vehicles, and 5 hospitals were constructed for their welfare and medical support.

Integration of Elite Forces: CoBRA, DRG, STF and Greyhounds

A layered, specialised security architecture was developed, bringing together **CoBRA (Commando Battalion for Resolute Action), CRPF, District Reserve Guard (DRG)**, and elite state units such as Jharkhand Jaguar, Chhattisgarh Police units, and Andhra Pradesh's Greyhounds. Joint training across DRG, STF, CRPF, and CoBRA created an integrated, interoperable force with a clear command structure.

Technology: The Game Changer

After 2014, the Central Government transformed counter-Naxal operations through the extensive use of modern technology. **Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), drones, satellite imagery, and AI-based data analysis enabled real-time monitoring and precise surveillance**. Advanced location-tracking systems, scientific call-log analysis, mobile data analytics, and social media monitoring were operationalised. The Ministry of Home Affairs used technology-driven inputs to track movements, analyse communication patterns, and sharpen operational efficiency.

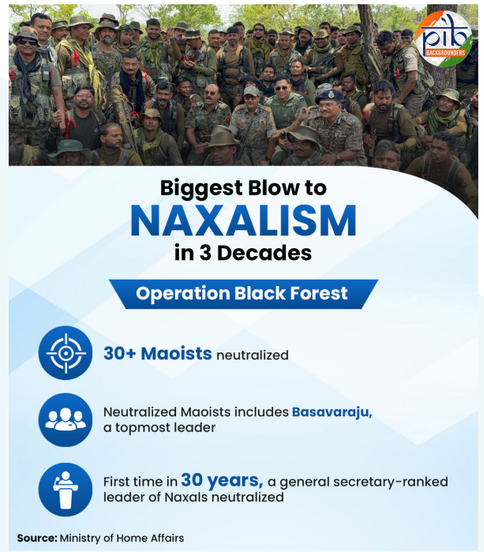


Landmark Operations to Trace, Target, Neutralise

The Government's **"Trace, Target, Neutralise"** doctrine delivered remarkable results. Through sustained security operations and focused intelligence-based strategies, the Government reclaimed areas that had been under LWE influence for over three decades.



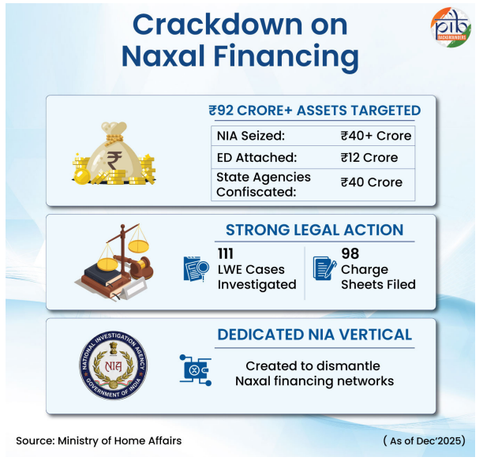
A series of coordinated operations, including **Operation Black Forest, Operation Octopus, Operation Double Bull, Operation Thunderstorm, Operation Bhimbarg, and Operation Chakrabandha**, significantly weakened Maoist networks across affected regions. Among them, Operation Black Forest emerged as a major breakthrough, dismantling a key Maoist stronghold, leading to the elimination of over 30 Maoists, and triggering a sharp rise in arrests and surrenders. Operation Double Bull resulted in Gumla, Lohardaga, and Latehar districts becoming Naxal-free. Collectively, these operations restored state presence in long-affected areas, reduced extremist influence, and created conditions for improved security, governance, and development outreach.



Choking the Support System

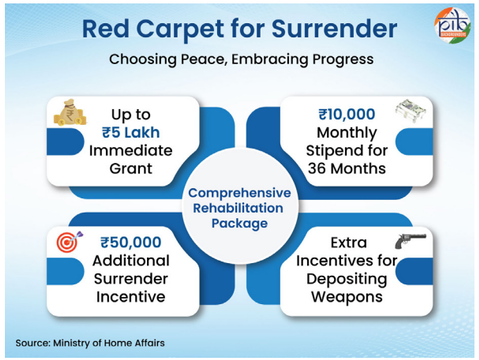
The Union Government adopted a comprehensive All-Agency approach, targeting not just armed cadres, but the entire ecosystem supporting them. For development, this meant a Whole-of-Government approach. For security operations, it meant a Whole-of-Agency strategy.

A dedicated vertical was established within the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to disrupt Naxal financing networks. As of December 2025, the **NIA had seized assets worth over ₹40 crore**. The **Enforcement Directorate (ED) attached assets worth ₹12 crore, while State agencies confiscated an additional ₹40 crore. By December 2025, 111 Left Wing Extremism (LWE) cases had been investigated and 98 charge sheets filed**. As of June 2026, the total number of NIA cases reached 112, with 100 charge sheets filed.



Red Carpet for Surrender

The Government's firm security response has been complemented by a rehabilitation-focused approach, with a clear message: **"For those who lay down their arms, there is a red carpet."** Surrendering cadres receive an immediate grant of **₹5 lakh** for higher-ranked cadres and **₹2.5 lakh** for others, along with a monthly stipend of **₹10,000** for **36 months**. An additional incentive of **₹50,000** is provided for surrender, which is doubled in cases of group surrenders, along with extra compensation for depositing weapons.



The rehabilitation policy has contributed to a steady rise in surrenders. **In 2025 alone, 2,337 Naxalites laid down their arms**, while **3,927 cadres surrendered between 2024** and **March 2026**. These efforts have been strengthened by civil society members, journalists, community leaders and public representatives, who have helped build confidence in rehabilitation measures and encouraged affected individuals to return to the mainstream.

Recent developments have further demonstrated the effectiveness of this combined strategy of sustained security operations and rehabilitation. On 28 July 2026, under **'Nayi Disha, Nayi Pahal'** anti-Naxal campaign, **16 active Maoists** from the Kolhan and Latehar regions surrendered in Ranchi. The surrendered cadres included **one Regional Commander, three Zonal Commanders, three Sub-Zonal Commanders, six Area Commanders and three cadre-level members**. They surrendered with **11 sophisticated firearms, 38 magazines and 1,562 rounds of ammunition**.

Additionally, on **29 July 2026, eight more Maoists** carrying a combined reward of **₹49 lakh** surrendered before the Bijapur Police, marking another significant success in the campaign against Left Wing Extremism. On the same day, security forces also arrested top Maoist leader and Politburo member, carrying a reward of **₹1 crore**, from the Dhanbad-Giridih border. During the intelligence-based joint operation, **Regional Committee Member** carrying a reward of **₹15 lakh**, one Maoist cadre, and two villagers were also apprehended.

These security achievements extended well beyond restoring order. They created the foundation for long-term development. Every fortified police station, every CAPF camp, and every surrendered cadre expanded the reach of governance into previously inaccessible areas. Security opened the door for roads, schools, healthcare facilities, banking services, and digital connectivity to reach tribal communities. It was this restoration of stability and trust that laid the groundwork for the infrastructure transformation that followed.

Building a New Future: Infrastructure and Connectivity

The resolve to end Naxalism was never merely about eliminating Naxalites. It was about ensuring that every facility available in big cities reaches the poor tribals of the region, so their children, too, can have a bright future. This Phase focused on expanding infrastructure, connectivity, and governance outreach in remote regions. It improved access to essential services, roads, and digital networks. These efforts helped integrate previously underserved areas with mainstream development and governance systems.

Road Connectivity: A total of 15,189 kilometres of roads have been constructed under the two LWE-specific schemes, the Road Requirement Plan (RRP) and the Road Connectivity Project for LWE Affected Areas (RCPLWEA), to

strengthen road connectivity in affected regions.

Digital & Mobile Connectivity: Telecom connectivity has emerged as the foundational bedrock of progress in modern societies. It's even more important in case of rural tribal communities as it acts as a crucial catalyst for socio-economic development, bridging the digital divide, providing access to education and health, and fostering economic opportunities. Keeping in this mind, **9,497 towers have been commissioned**. In the areas that were most LWE affected, 96% of villages (44,728 out of 46592 villages) now have mobile connectivity, opening doors to education, online delivery of services & economic growth.

Financial Inclusion: The Central Government significantly expanded financial inclusion in LWE-affected districts over the last twelve years. During April 2015 to March 2026, **1,804 bank branches opened, 1,321 ATMs installed, 74,720 banking correspondents appointed, and 6,025 post offices established.**

Education & Skill Development: During the last twelve years, **259 Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) has Sanctioned by the government of India. Also, 179 EMRS Schools have been made functional**. Additionally, **47 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), and 49 Skill Development Centres (SDCs)** were also developed in these areas. Altogether with an investment of nearly ₹800 crore. These expanded education, vocational training, and employment opportunities for tribal youth, helping integrate remote communities with the mainstream economy. Skill training was provided to over 90,000 youth and women.

Under the Tribal Youth Exchange Programme (TYEP), tribal youth from erstwhile LWE-affected areas are taken on exposure visits across the country to promote national integration, cultural awareness and developmental exposure. Since 2014, a total of 37,655 tribal youth have participated in the programme.

Civic Action Programmes: Under the Civic Action Programme, the Government of India provides financial assistance to the CAPFs to undertake welfare-oriented activities in their operational areas. These include organising medical camps, sports competitions and distributing essential items among local communities.

Since 2014, ₹221.88 crore has been released under the programme, helping strengthen trust and bridge the gap between the security forces and local communities.

This infrastructure, roads connecting villages, mobile towers enabling communication, banks facilitating economic participation, and schools opening doors for tribal youth, translated directly into welfare on the ground. It created the physical and institutional platform upon which genuine welfare, dignity, and cultural renaissance could finally be delivered.

Overall infrastructure development in the affected region strengthens regional integration through sustained infrastructure development. Improved connectivity drives economic opportunity and mobility. Long-term investments ensure durable and inclusive growth pathways.



Did you know

Presently, 37 districts in India have been categorised as Legacy and Thrust Districts, where continued security and developmental support is being provided. One district has been placed under the category of District of Concern to ensure sustained surveillance and consolidation of gains.

People's Welfare & Dignity

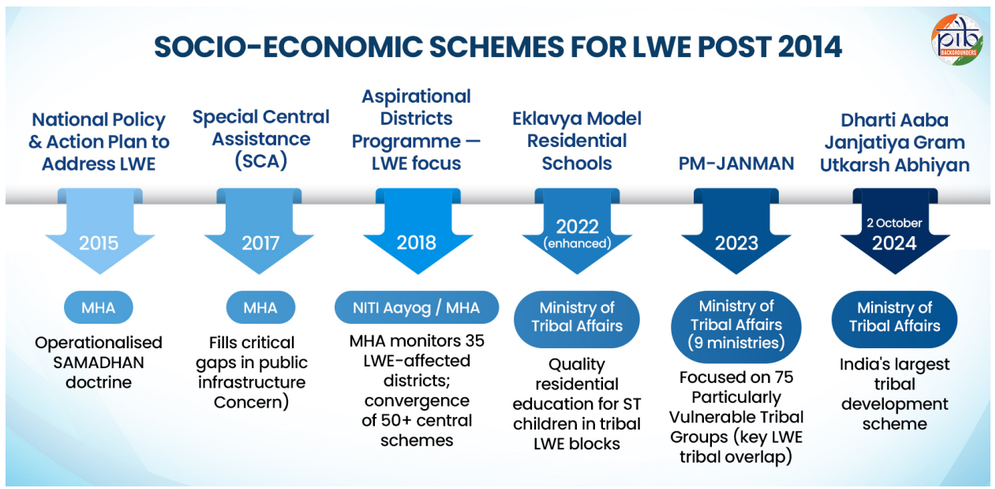
This final strand of the strategy emphasizes welfare delivery with dignity and inclusivity. It strengthens last-mile service delivery for marginalized communities. The approach ensures equitable access to essential public services.

Strengthening Tribal Livelihoods

A sustained focus on tribal welfare has played a vital role in reducing LWE's influence, by expanding development, improving access to opportunity, and strengthening the connection between tribal communities and democratic institutions. Alongside security measures, the Government has ensured that development reaches remote

tribal regions through better education, infrastructure, healthcare, housing, and livelihood support.

The **rehabilitation framework** for surrendered cadres has encouraged their integration into mainstream society through skill development, livelihood assistance, housing support under *Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana*, and financial assistance for self-employment. **Development grants** were provided to villages that eliminated Naxal influence and established democratically elected panchayats. Children of surrendered cadres received free education up to Class XII, helping families build a more secure future.



Several targeted initiatives accelerated this transformation. The **National Policy and Action Plan** combined security, development, and protection of community rights. **Special Central Assistance** built critical public infrastructure in the most affected districts. The **Aspirational Districts Programme** converged multiple welfare schemes to improve outcomes in health, education, financial inclusion, and connectivity.

Education emerged as a key pillar of transformation. Enhanced support for **Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)** expanded access to quality residential education for Scheduled Tribe children, including those in Left-Wing Extremism (LWE)-affected regions. The PM-JANMAN initiative further focused on **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)** by improving access to housing, safe drinking water, education, healthcare, and essential connectivity, helping bring underserved communities into the mainstream of development.

The launch of the **Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan** further strengthened efforts to bridge infrastructure gaps in tribal villages.

Through coordinated interventions by multiple ministries, these programme aims to improve living standards, expand economic opportunities, and ensure tribal communities participate fully in India's development journey.

Case Study: Chhattisgarh's Journey from Naxalism to Development

For decades, Bastar in Chhattisgarh remained one of the country's most Naxal-affected regions. Limited connectivity, weak administrative presence, and difficult terrain enabled extremist groups to establish a strong foothold. In the last 12 years, a coordinated strategy combining security, development, and tribal participation transformed the region's trajectory.

A key turning point came in 2017 with the formation of the **Bastariya Battalion**. The battalion recruited 1,143 personnel, including around 400 local youth from Bijapur, Sukma, and Dantewada. Local participation strengthened intelligence networks, improved trust between security forces and tribal communities, and helped restore confidence in state institutions.



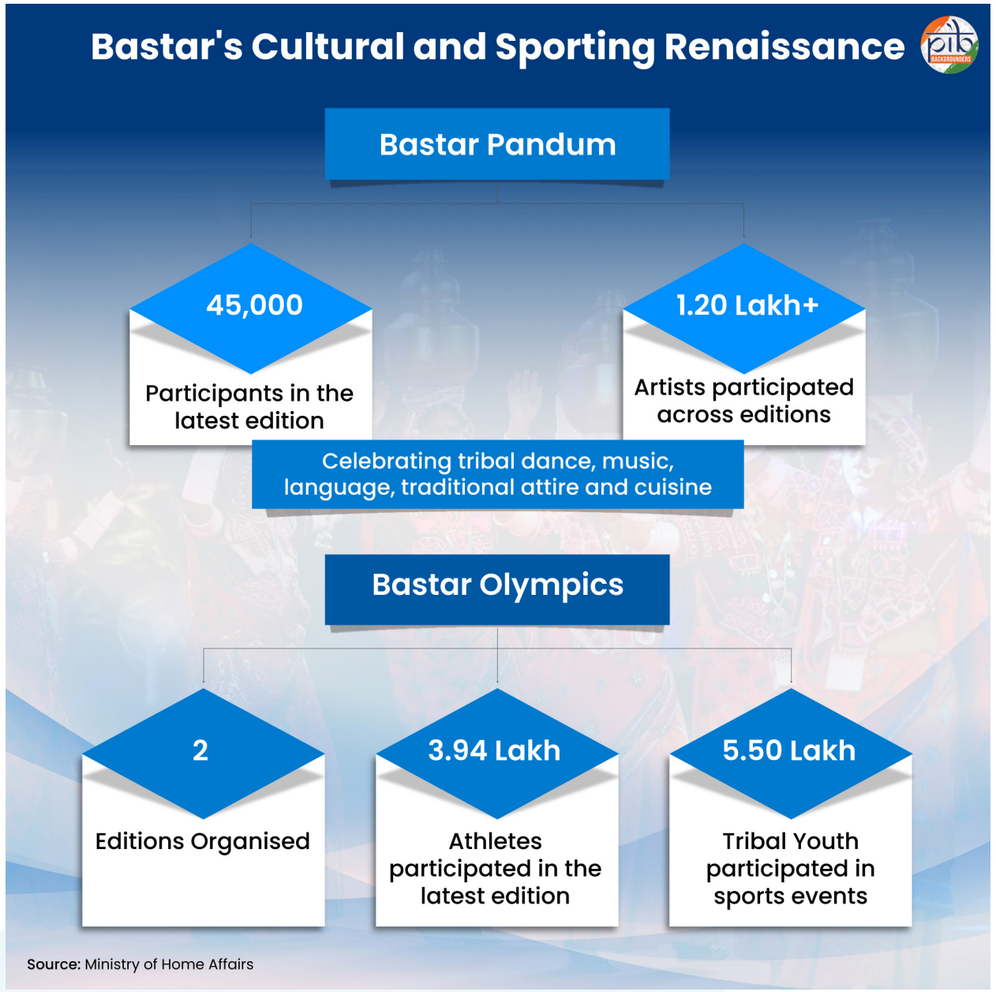
As security conditions improved, development gained momentum. More than 3,240 kilometres of roads were constructed across the Bastar region, covering Bastar, Bijapur, Dantewada, Sukma, Narayanpur, Kanker, and Kondagaon districts. Also 889 mobile towers were installed to improve digital connectivity. Villages that were once isolated became connected to markets, schools, healthcare facilities, banking services, and government programmes.

The Government also focused on rehabilitation and reintegration. A dedicated plan was prepared for around 3,000 surrendered cadres, supported by an initial **allocation of ₹20 crore for skill development, education, and livelihood opportunities**. The initiative aimed to replace the cycle of violence with pathways to economic empowerment.

In May 2026, the **Shaheed Veer Gunda Dhur Seva Dera** initiative was launched to convert security gains into lasting development. Around 70 CAPF camps are being transformed into service centres providing access to government schemes, healthcare, banking, agricultural support, skill development, and other citizen services. The establishment of a **Common Service Centre** in Netanar, the birthplace of Veer Gundadhur, symbolises the return of governance to areas once affected by extremism.

Alongside infrastructure and welfare, cultural initiatives such as **Bastar Pandum** and the **Bastar Olympics** strengthened community participation and tribal identity. These platforms brought together lakhs of tribal youth and artists, promoting social integration and creating new opportunities for engagement and leadership.



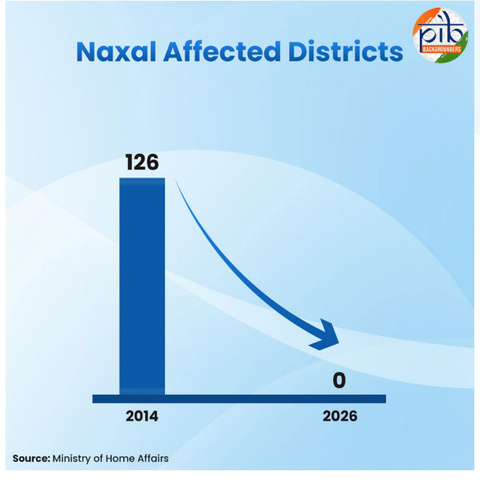


The transformation of Bastar demonstrates that lasting peace is achieved when security measures are followed by development, welfare delivery, and community empowerment. Chhattisgarh's experience shows how sustained government presence, local participation, and inclusive growth can turn a conflict-affected region into a pathway for development and prosperity.

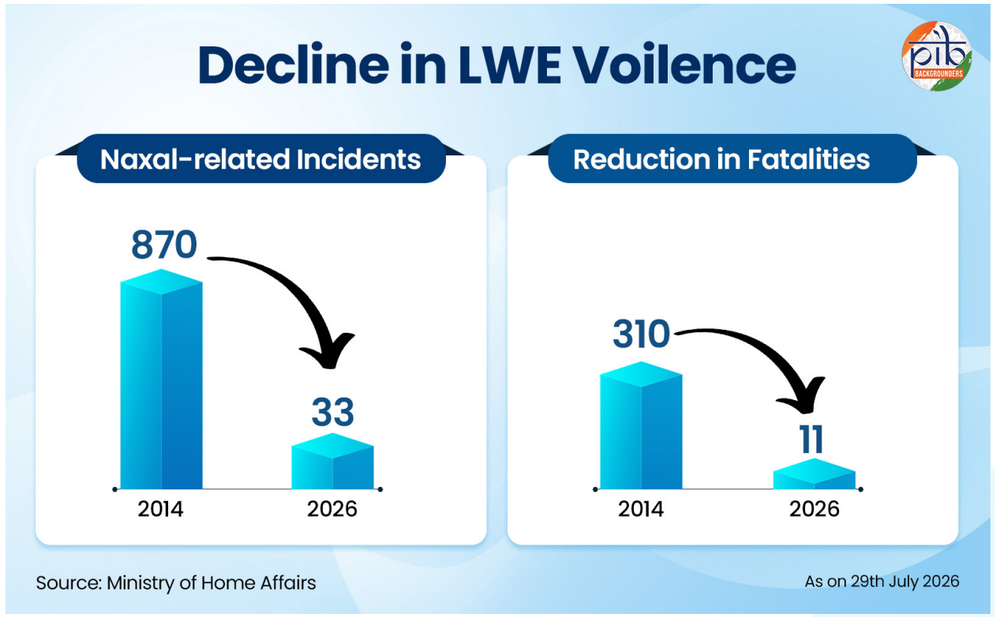
Results of a Decade of Transformation

The number of Left Wing Extremism-

affected districts declined from 126 in 2014 to zero by March-April 2026. Further, the count of the most affected district has also declined from 35 to zero, making a decisive shift in the security landscape.



The impact became visible across all major indicators of violence. The year 2010 marked one of the deadliest phases in the history of Naxalism, with 1,936 Naxal-related incidents and 1,005 fatalities reported. Since then, sustained security operations, development interventions, and improved governance significantly weakened Left Wing Extremism (LWE) networks. Naxal-related incidents declined sharply from **870 in 2014 to just 33** in 2026 (as on 29 July 2026). During the same period, **fatalities reduced from 310 to 11**.



The sustained fall in violence indicates the weakening operational capabilities of Naxal groups and the gradual restoration of security, connectivity, and public confidence in affected regions.

The trend reflects a significant improvement in the security environment. Areas once affected by frequent violence have witnessed a marked improvement in peace and public safety.

A Defining Chapter in India's Security and Development Story

India's achievement of a Naxal-Free India stands among the most important internal security successes in the country's independent history. It reflects the impact of decisive leadership, sustained policy implementation, and a multi-dimensional strategy combining security, development, and rehabilitation.

Over the last decade, India transformed its approach to Left-Wing Extremism, from reactive containment to proactive elimination. The next journey has already begun. The achievement of a Naxal-Free Bharat is not merely the end of an insurgency. It is the beginning of a new chapter of peace, inclusion, and progress for some of India's most vulnerable communities.

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National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP)

A Disease-Free Tomorrow for Indian Livestock

Published on: August 22, 2026

The National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP) launched in 2019, represents one of India's largest livestock health initiatives aimed at controlling and eradicating Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis through nationwide vaccination and surveillance. The programme has administered **147.16 crore FMD** vaccine doses, benefiting 8.04 crore farmers. Strengthened immunity has contributed to a significant reduction in disease incidence, with reported FMD outbreaks declining from **132 in 2019** to **40 by 2025** and Brucellosis outbreaks falling from **22 in 2019** to **15 in 2025**. The NSP antibody prevalence has declined from 20.8% in 2019 to 8.1% in 2025, indicating reduced circulation of FMD through evidence-based surveillance and sustained disease control efforts. There has been no outbreak of FMD caused by Serotype Asia-1 for the last three years in the country. The programme is supported by strengthened veterinary infrastructure, digital livestock databases, research institutions, and One Health initiatives. More than **39.00 crore livestock** have been registered on the Bharat Pashudhan Portal, and **4,019 Mobile Veterinary Units** have provided doorstep services to 136 lakh farmers and treated **276 lakh animals**. By integrating disease control, digital monitoring, and pandemic preparedness, the NADCP is contributing to a more disease-secure livestock sector in India.

Building a Disease-Free Livestock Sector

Livestock has long been a significant source of livelihood support in Indian agriculture and allied sectors in rural areas. As per the **20th Livestock Census 2019**, the total livestock population is **535.78 million**, including **302.79 million** bovines. The large livestock population underscores the importance of animal health and well-being. However, infectious diseases such as **Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)** and **Brucellosis** have historically caused substantial economic losses due to reduced milk yield, reproductive failure, and trade restrictions.

FMD is a highly contagious viral disease that affects cloven-hoofed animals, including cattle, buffalo, sheep, goats, and pigs. The **disease reduces milk production, slows growth, affects reproductive performance, and lowers the working capacity** of draft animals. It also limits access to international markets. Effective control of FMD depends on regular mass vaccination of all susceptible livestock.

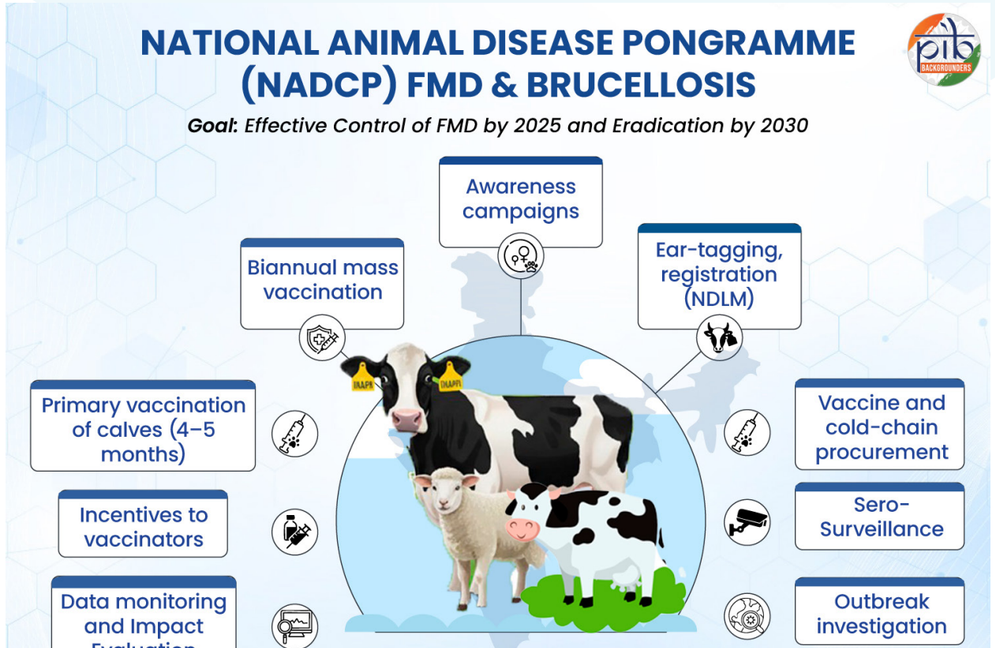


Brucellosis is a **reproductive disease** of cattle and buffaloes caused by bacteria Brucella abortus. It primarily affects the reproductive organs of animals, disrupting their normal reproductive function. It **disrupts fertility and lactation, which, in turn, affects milk and meat production.** As there is no curative treatment for bovines, vaccination is the most effective and sustainable control measure.

To strengthen animal health management, the Government launched the **National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP)** in September 2019 to control and eradicate FMD and Brucellosis through nationwide vaccination. The programme targets 100 % vaccination of all livestock against FMD twice a year and one time vaccination against Brucellosis in 4-8 months old female bovine calves in their lifetime.

Reducing Livestock Disease Burden through Integrated Action under NADCP

The programme aims to control Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) through biannual mass vaccination of all eligible livestock and Brucellosis through a one-time vaccination of female bovine calves aged 4–8 months during their lifetime. It also supports disease surveillance and the procurement of cold-chain logistics.



- Mass FMD vaccination of all susceptible bovines and small ruminants every six months.
- Public awareness campaigns and orientation of officials for effective programme implementation.
- Ear-tagging, registration, and uploading of animal data on the Bharat Pashudhan Portal (NDLM).
- Sero-surveillance and monitoring through pre- and post-vaccination sample testing.
- Procurement of vaccines and cold-chain equipment to ensure quality delivery.

Sero-surveillance & Sero-monitoring

Sero-surveillance involves population-level assessment of antibody prevalence to estimate disease exposure and immunity, sero-monitoring focuses on longitudinal tracking of antibody levels to understand immunity.



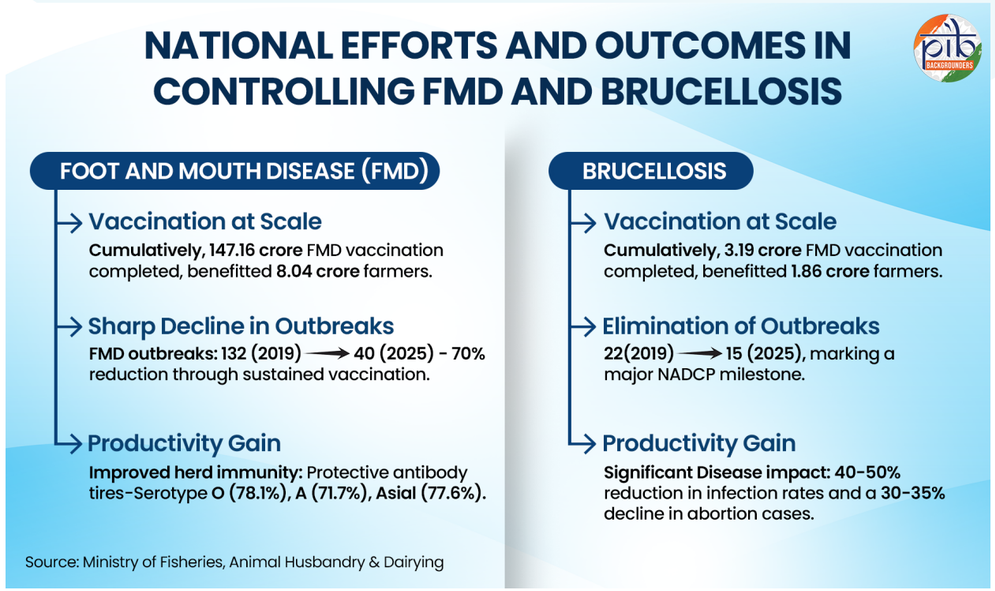
- Outbreak investigation, virus isolation and typing, and regulation of animal movement through quarantine and check-posts.
- Continuous data generation, monitoring, and impact evaluation.
- Remuneration to vaccinators, with a minimum of ₹3 per vaccination dose.

Financial Commitment to Livestock Health and Disease Control

Building on the success of NADCP, the Government has integrated disease control, veterinary services and animal healthcare under the Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme (LHDCP), enabling a more comprehensive and sustainable animal health framework. Under the revised LHDCP, NADCP, the Livestock Health and Disease Control (LH&DC) component, and the Pashu Aushadhi initiative have been subsumed into a single umbrella scheme to facilitate integrated implementation and effective management of livestock health interventions. The total budget outlay for the Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme (LHDCP) for the financial year 2026–27 is ₹2,010 crore.

National Efforts and Outcomes in Controlling FMD and Brucellosis

The scale of interventions undertaken and the measurable outcomes achieved under the National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP) through sustained vaccination, surveillance, and monitoring efforts across the country are as follows:



Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)

Cumulative FMD vaccination under the NADCP reached **147.16 crore FMD** vaccine doses, benefiting 8.04 crore farmers.

Reducing FMD Risk in Migratory Animal Population

Since 2024, FMD vaccination has been extended to pastoral sheep and goats. The programme covers migratory populations in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh to prevent the spread of disease along migratory routes.

Improved Immunity and Decline in Disease Outbreaks

Sero-monitoring conducted to assess post-vaccination antibody response indicates that the average protective immunity against Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) virus serotypes O, A, and Asia1 stands at **78.1%**, **71.7%**, and **77.6%**, respectively. These levels indicate strong herd immunity. The improved immunity has led to a sharp decline in disease incidence. The reported FMD outbreaks fell from **132 in 2019** to just **40 cases** by **2025**. This reflects the effectiveness of nationwide vaccination coverage.

- **FMD type O**: The most common and widespread serotype in India and many parts of the world. It causes frequent outbreaks.
- **FMD type A**: A highly variable serotype, meaning it changes easily and needs well-matched vaccines.
- **FMD type Asia1**-A serotype mainly found in South Asia, including India, but less widespread than type O

Brucellosis

Under the NADCP, female bovine calves **aged 4-8 months receive a one-time Brucellosis vaccination in their lifetime.**

Improved Immunity and Decline in Disease Outbreaks

In 2025, post-vaccination monitoring shows seroconversion rates (**percentage of vaccinated animals that develop antibodies**) of **75.63 % in cattle calves** and **67.17 % in buffalo calves**. The findings indicate effective immunity, which has contributed to a sharp decline in Brucellosis cases. The incidence of reported outbreaks reduced from **22 in 2019** to **15 in 2025**, demonstrating the positive impact of the programme's interventions.

Improvement in Bovine Productivity and Milk Production

Indigenous and Non-Descript Cattle Productivity: The productivity of indigenous (local) and non-descript (mixed-breed) cattle has increased from **927 kilograms per animal per year in 2014-15 to 1,343.2 kilograms in 2024-25**, representing a rise of **44.89%**.

Buffalo Productivity: Similarly, the productivity in buffalo has improved from **1,880 kilograms to 2,365.2 kilograms per animal per year** during the same period, representing a **25.80% increase**.

Bovine Productivity: Consequently, the average bovine productivity in India has risen from **1,640 kilograms per animal per year in 2014-15 to 2,250**

kilograms in 2024-25. This represents a 36.63 % increase and the highest productivity gain recorded by any country globally.

Milk Production Growth: India's milk production has increased from **146.31 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 247.87 million tonnes in 2024-25**. This represents a **69.4 % increase over the past decade**. The scheme aims to enhance bovine productivity further and achieve an average milk production of **3,000 kilograms per animal per year by 2030**.

Institutional and Infrastructure Support Systems for Disease Control

Research and Surveillance Support

Financial support is provided to key **ICAR institutions** to strengthen FMD and Brucellosis control. The support covers vaccine research, quality testing, surveillance, sero-surveillance, disease modelling, and state-wise sampling. These measures ensure the effective and science-based implementation of the programme.

Centralized Vaccine Procurement with Private Sector Engagement

States and UTs receive assistance for procuring vaccination accessories and strengthening cold-chain infrastructure. Through the Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund, financial assistance is provided to individual entrepreneurs, private companies, and other eligible entities. This supports the establishment of veterinary vaccine and drug manufacturing facilities.

Veterinary Infrastructure and Service Delivery

Veterinary facilities and **Mobile Veterinary Units (MVUs)** are being strengthened to ensure last-mile animal healthcare. A total of **4,019 MVUs** are operational across 29 States and UTs. They provide doorstep veterinary services through the toll-free number **1962**. So far, the initiative has benefited **136 lakh farmers** and treated **276 lakh animals**.

Digital Integration through Bharat Pashudhan Portal

The Bharat Pashudhan Portal integrates livestock registration, FMD, and Brucellosis vaccination data, with each animal assigned a unique **12-digit Tag ID**. By **July 2026**, over **39.00 crore** livestock had been registered on the portal. This has enabled real-time monitoring, improved traceability, and a more transparent, data-driven implementation of livestock development programmes.

AI-enabled analytics, vaccination traceability, real-time dashboards and evidence-based planning can further strengthen disease surveillance and resource allocation in future.

Awareness and Farmer Engagement

Farmer outreach is strengthened through Multi-Purpose Artificial Insemination Technicians in Rural India (MAITRIs), who provide doorstep veterinary services. So far, **39,810 technicians** have been trained with financial support.

National One Health Mission

The **One Health** approach recognizes the intrinsic interdependence of human, animal, and environmental health. By strengthening the early detection, surveillance, and control of animal diseases, the National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP) contributes to reducing the risk of zoonotic disease transmission, promotes the prudent use of antimicrobials, and enhances India's preparedness and resilience against emerging and future public health threats, including pandemics.

The Prime Minister's Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC) in its 21st meeting held on 7th July, 2022, approved setting up a National One Health Mission with a cross-ministerial effort, which will serve to coordinate, support, and integrate all the existing One Health activities in the country and fill gaps where it is appropriate.



NDDB's brucellosis control model reinforces this by stressing the importance of vaccination, safe waste disposal, strong biosecurity, public awareness, and coordination between departments, especially since human brucellosis often goes undetected.

One Health ultimately offers a practical, holistic approach to protecting people, animals, and ecosystems amid rising disease threats and rapid environmental change.

Strengthening Animal Health Security for Pandemic Preparedness: Pandemic Fund Project

In **2024**, the Government launched the **Pandemic Fund Project on "Animal Health Security Strengthening in India for Pandemic Preparedness and Response."** It is a **US$25 million** initiative supported by the G20 Pandemic Fund. The project is implemented in partnership with the **Asian Development Bank (ADB)**, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the **World Bank**.

The project complements the **NADCP by** strengthening animal health systems to improve pandemic preparedness. It enhances disease surveillance, including **genomic and environmental surveillance**. It also upgrades laboratory infrastructure and promotes cross-border collaboration. These measures improve early detection and timely response to zoonotic and transboundary animal diseases.

As part of the initiative, the Government released two important documents aimed at strengthening animal health management in India:

- **Standard Veterinary Treatment Guidelines (SVTG)**: A comprehensive framework that promotes scientific veterinary practices, rational use of medicines, and antimicrobial stewardship. It also supports the National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance.
- `: A national framework to strengthen preparedness and guide rapid response during disease outbreaks. It supports timely containment and effective recovery measures.

These documents will serve as important tools for veterinarians, policymakers, and field officials. They will support timely and effective responses to animal health crises and strengthen disease management protocols.

Safeguarding India's Livestock Wealth

The NADCP has emerged as one of India's most comprehensive and data-driven livestock health interventions. Through sustained nationwide vaccination, strong surveillance systems, digital integration, and targeted financial and infrastructure support, the programme has delivered measurable reductions in FMD and Brucellosis. The sharp decline in outbreaks, improved herd immunity, and clear gains in bovine productivity demonstrate that disease control is directly translating into economic, nutritional, and livelihood benefits for farmers. Early detection of animal diseases reduces the risk of spillover infections, strengthens antimicrobial stewardship and improves national preparedness against future zoonotic pandemics.

Future priorities include progressive alignment with international standards for FMD freedom, expansion of laboratory accreditation, genomic surveillance, AI-enabled disease intelligence, climate-resilient surveillance systems and strengthened One Health coordination.

From one of the world's largest livestock vaccination campaigns to a digitally enabled disease surveillance ecosystem, NADCP has laid the foundation for a healthier, more productive and globally competitive livestock sector. As India advances towards Viksit Bharat 2047, sustained investments in animal health will remain central to ensuring food security, farmer prosperity and pandemic resilience.

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PIB Research





18

Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS)

Published on: August 09, 2026

The Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) has transformed public grievance redressal in India through digital innovation, institutional reforms and citizen-centric service delivery. Connecting all Central Ministries, Departments, States and Union Territories through a single platform, CPGRAMS enables timely grievance resolution, promotes accountability, and strengthens transparent governance while ensuring that every citizen's voice is heard and addressed.

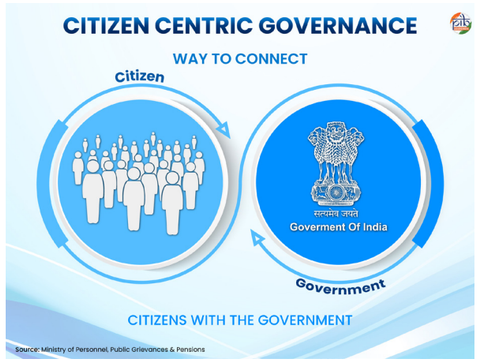
CPGRAMS: Empowering Citizens Through Responsive Governance

An effective public grievance redressal mechanism is the cornerstone of responsive governance. It gives the citizens a platform to voice concerns about public service delivery while ensuring that government institutions remain accountable, transparent, and accessible.

The **Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS)** is the Government's flagship digital grievance redressal platform. Available to citizens 24×7, CPGRAMS provides a single portal connected to all Central Ministries, Departments, State Governments, and Union Territories.

Citizens can lodge grievances related to public service delivery and track their resolution through a transparent and technology-enabled process.

Over the past decade, CPGRAMS has evolved from a grievance registration portal into a comprehensive governance platform. It leverages digital innovation, AI-driven monitoring and citizen feedback to strengthen and continuously improve public service delivery across the country.



The Evolution of CPGRAMS

Since 2014, India's public grievance redressal system has witnessed a major transformation. It has evolved from a fragmented and largely manual process into a technology-driven platform focused on efficiency, transparency and citizen satisfaction.

The number of grievances handled annually increased nearly nine-fold, from about 3.01 lakh in 2014 to around 27 lakhs in 2024. This reflects growing public trust.

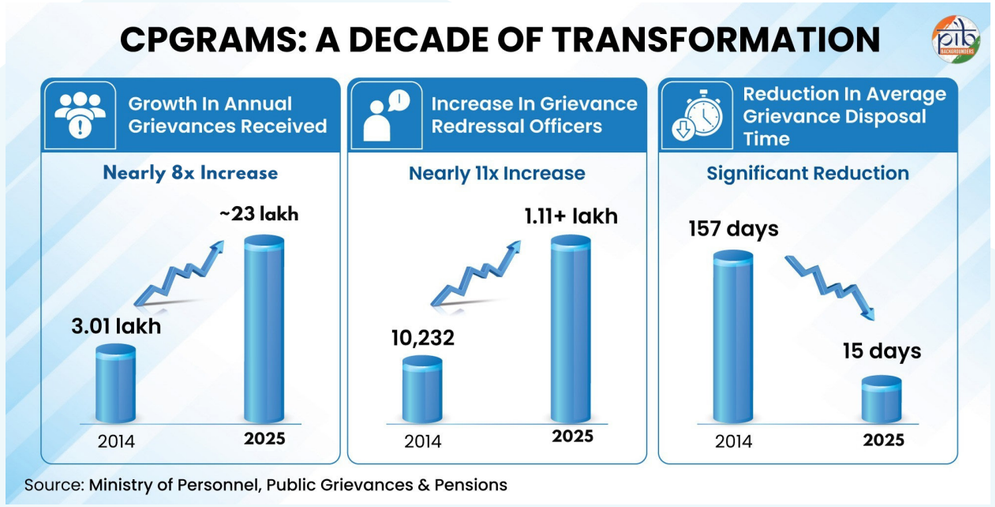
The grievance redressal network has also expanded significantly. The number of Grievance Redressal Officers rose from 10,232 in 2014 to more than 1.11 lakh by 2025.

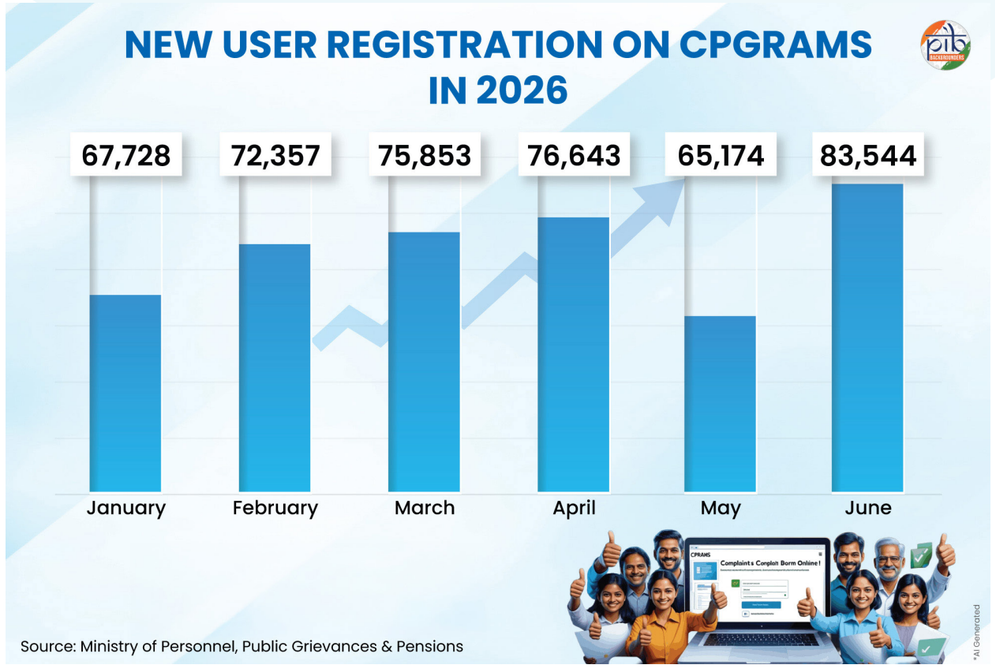
These reforms have improved service delivery and reduced delays. The average grievance disposal time in Central Ministries and Departments fell from 157 days in 2014 to just 15 days in 2025.

How CPGRAMS Works

Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) functions as a comprehensive digital ecosystem that combines technology, accountability, and citizen participation to ensure effective and accessible grievance redressal.

- **Registration:** Citizens can make a one-time registration and can lodge a complaint online at https://pgportal.gov.in/.They can also lodge complaints via the CPGRAMS mobile app (also integrated with UMANG), or at any of the **5 lakh+ Common Service Centres (CSCs)** associated with **2.5 lakh Village Level Entrepreneurs** across the country. Offline grievances received by post are digitised and uploaded to the system.



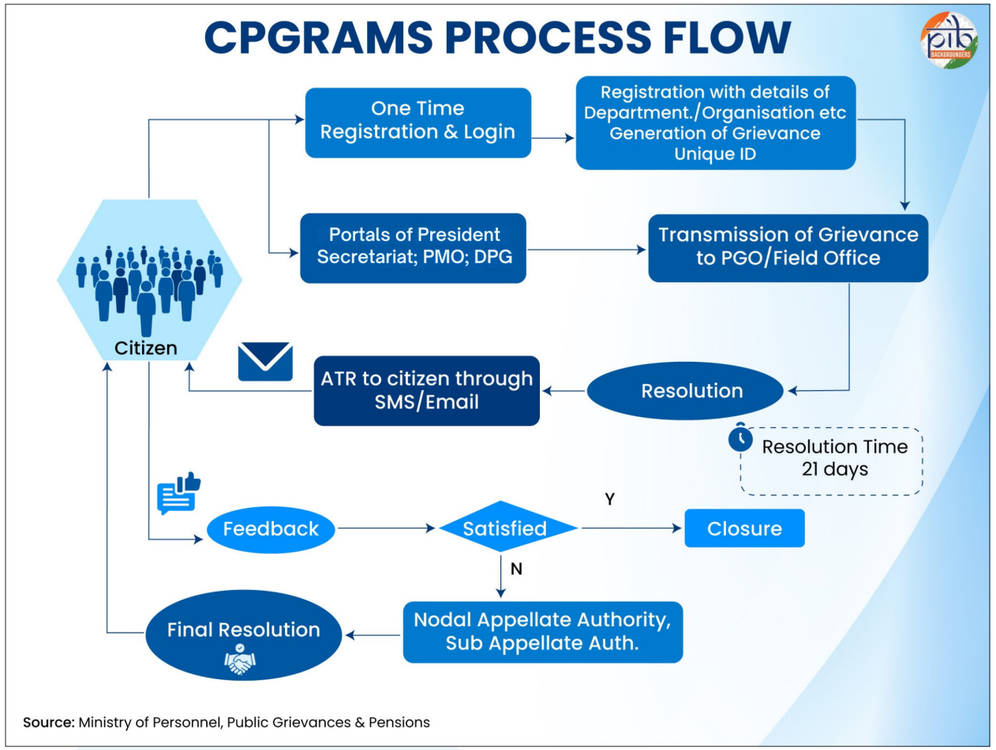


- **Auto-Routing and Categorisation:** The system facilitates mapping of last mile GRO for auto-routing of complaints to the appropriate authority. The status of the grievance filed in CPGRAMS can be tracked with the grievance unique registration ID provided at the time of registration of the complainant.
- **Resolve within 21 Days:** Comprehensive Guidelines for Effective Redressal of Public Grievances, issued in August 2024, rationalised the timeline from 30 days to 21 days. It has mandated dedicated grievance cells, root cause analysis, and strengthened escalation mechanisms. The average grievance disposal time in Central Ministries/ Departments reduced from 157 days in 2014 to 15 days in 2025.
- **Feedback & Appeal:** After resolution, a dedicated Feedback Call Centre contacts citizens directly to assess their satisfaction. If unsatisfied, citizens may escalate through an appellate mechanism — with the Nodal Appellate Authority, who must resolve the appeal within 30 days.

The following issues are not taken up for redress:

- RTI Matters
- Court related / Subjudice matters
- Religious matters

- Grievances of Government employees concerning their service matters including disciplinary proceedings etc.



CPGRAMS in Action: Enhancing Road Safety in Gujarat

Mr. Harsh raised a grievance regarding unsafe road conditions, poor maintenance, and lack of safety measures on a busy highway stretch on the Ashapuri Chowkdi bridge in Rajkot, Gujarat. The issue was escalated through CPGRAMS. Upon review, construction activities were streamlined, underpasses were opened for public use, and pending works were expedited. Additionally, safety arrangements such as barricades, reflectors, warning signs, and traffic marshals were strengthened. The grievance was fully addressed within 4 days.

Performance At a Glance

Indicator	Figure
Grievances redressed (June 2026)	1,99,968
Consecutive months of 1 lakh+ monthly disposal	46 months
Average disposal time (2026)	14 days
Citizen satisfaction rate (Jan- June 2026)	76%
New user registrations (June 2026)	83,544
Grievance Redressal Officers mapped on CPGRAMS (till June 2026)	1,09,125

Transforming Public Grievance Redressal: The 10-Step Reform Programme



A major turning point in the evolution of CPGRAMS came with the introduction of the 10-Step Reform Programme in 2022, following a review by the Prime Minister. Since then, continuous monitoring and targeted reforms have strengthened the grievance redressal framework, making it more efficient, accessible and citizen-centric.

The reform framework comprises ten key interventions:

Universalisation of CPGRAMS 7.0

The universalisation of CPGRAMS 7.0 enabled automatic routing of grievances to the appropriate authority, replacing the earlier manual forwarding process. By 2022, all Central Ministries and Departments had been onboarded onto the platform, ensuring faster and more efficient grievance redressal.

Technological Enhancements

The integration of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning has strengthened grievance management through real-time analysis, pattern recognition and identification of systemic issues. Advanced dashboards and data analytics support evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement in public service delivery. By identifying root causes and implementing policy changes, the system ensures efficient grievance redressal and continuous governance improvement.

Language Inclusivity

To make grievance redressal more accessible, CPGRAMS supports submissions in 22 scheduled languages, in addition to English. Integration with BHASHINI enables Grievance Redressal Officers to respond in the language used by the citizen.

Grievance Redressal Assessment and Index (GRAI)

Introduced as a performance benchmarking framework, GRAI evaluates Ministries and Departments on the effectiveness of grievance redressal and promotes greater efficiency, accountability and healthy competition.

Feedback Call Centre

The Feedback Call Centre collects citizen feedback on resolved grievances, helping assess service quality and identify areas for improvement in grievance resolution.

One Nation–One Portal

Integration of State grievance portals and other Government platforms with CPGRAMS has created a unified and streamlined grievance redressal ecosystem across the country.

Inclusivity and Outreach

CPGRAMS has expanded access to grievance redressal services through its integration with Common Service Centres (CSCs), enabling citizens in rural and remote areas to register their grievances.

Training and Capacity Building

Regular training programmes under the Sevottam framework strengthen the capacity of grievance officers and enhance the quality of grievance redressal.

Monitoring and Review

Monthly performance reports, review meetings and continuous engagement with Nodal Grievance Officers and Appellate Authorities ensure transparency, accountability and timely resolution of grievances.

Data Strategy Unit

A dedicated Data Strategy Unit within DARPG leverages advanced analytics to identify trends, support policy

improvements and optimise grievance redressal processes.

Samadhan Didi: Democratising Grievance Redressal Through Artificial Intelligence

In a major technological advancement, the Government launched the AI-enabled CPGRAMS voice chatbot, **"Samadhan Didi"**, on 30th May 2026.



The initiative represents a significant step towards democratising public grievance redressal by making the system more accessible and inclusive. Citizens can register grievances simply by speaking in their preferred language, without navigating complex forms or administrative categories.

The chatbot integrates advanced Artificial Intelligence with BHASHINI's speech-to-text, text-to-speech, translation, and transliteration capabilities. By analysing the citizen's concern, the system automatically identifies the relevant Ministry, Department, category and sub-category while seeking intelligent follow-up inputs where required.

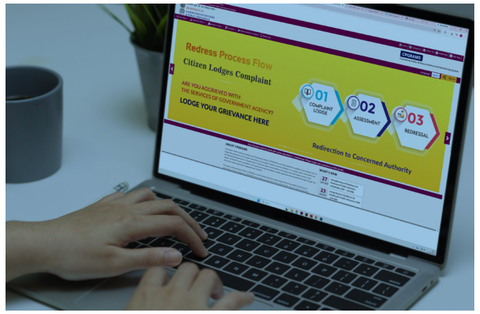
Beyond the 22 languages currently supported through BHASHINI, efforts are underway to extend support to several other regional and indigenous languages. This ensures that language is no longer a barrier to accessing government services.

Development of NextGen CPGRAMS

DARPG is advancing the Next Generation CPGRAMS initiative, a flagship project aimed at modernising India's public grievance redressal ecosystem through cutting-edge digital technologies. Designed to enhance accessibility, efficiency and transparency, the platform seeks to deliver a more seamless and citizen-centric grievance redressal experience.

Significant progress has already been achieved in the development process. Once operational, NextGen CPGRAMS will incorporate several advanced features, including:

- Voice-enabled grievance registration and chatbot support



- AI-based grievance categorisation and intelligent routing
- Integration of State grievance categories into a unified platform
- Multilingual support across 22 scheduled languages, besides English
- Omni-channel grievance registration through email, social media and mobile applications
- Automated escalation mechanisms for timely grievance resolution
- Accessibility features for persons with disabilities
- Real-time analytics and reporting dashboards
- AI-enabled validation of grievance redressal to assess resolution quality and identify cases involving disposal through transfer or closure without effective resolution

NextGen CPGRAMS is expected to make grievance redressal more accessible, responsive and transparent while strengthening citizen-centric governance.

Strengthening Citizen-Centric Governance

Over the past decade, CPGRAMS has emerged as one of the world's largest digital public grievance redressal platforms. Through sustained reforms, technological innovation and a strong focus on citizen satisfaction, the platform has transformed the way citizens engage with government institutions.

By enabling timely grievance resolution, promoting accountability and continuously improving service delivery through citizen feedback, CPGRAMS has strengthened the foundations of responsive and citizen-centric governance. As India advances towards the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047, CPGRAMS continues to play an important role in ensuring that every citizen's voice is heard and acted upon through an efficient, transparent, and accessible grievance redressal system.

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PIB Research



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The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026

Reforms for a Growing MSME Sector

Published on: August 11, 2026

The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026, was passed by the Parliament in August 2026. It updates the existing MSMED Act, 2006 to align its provisions with the requirements of the MSME sector. The amendments seek to reduce payment-related constraints, make dispute resolution more time-bound and simplify compliance. Their broader objective is to facilitate the growth, development and competitiveness of MSMEs while promoting Ease of Doing Business.

Introduction

The **MSME Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026** was passed by the Parliament in August 2026. The importance of this amendment stems from the sector's growing role in India's economy. The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Act (MSMED Act) was notified in 2006. Since then, the MSME ecosystem has expanded in scale, diversity and digital reach.



According to the Economic Survey 2025-26, **MSMEs account for 31.1% of GDP, 35.4% of manufacturing output and 48.58% of exports. As on August 2026, 9.16 crore MSMEs are registered on the Udyam platform, employing more than 40 crore people**. Technological advances and IT-enabled systems have further transformed the MSME landscape. These enterprises now operate across rural, semi-urban and urban areas and participate more actively in formal supply chains.



The MSME Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026 builds on this foundation. It aims to **align the legal framework with the sector's changing needs and its growing economic significance**.

Changes introduced in the Bill

The 2026 Bill revises certain specific provisions under the MSMED Act, 2006. Details of key areas of reform are highlighted below:

Areas of Reform	The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Act, 2006	The Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026
MSME Classification	MSMEs are classified on the basis of prescribed **investment thresholds** for: a. plant and machinery in manufacturing; and b. equipment in services.	MSMEs are classified on the basis of: **a. investment** in plant and machinery or equipment; and **b. turnover**.
MSME Registration	**Medium enterprises engaged in manufacturing are required** to file a memorandum with specified authority. Filing of memorandum is voluntary for other MSMEs.	The Bill makes filing of the memorandum **free and voluntary for all MSMEs.** The Central Government shall notify a national platform for the purpose. State governments may also notify State digital platforms. State scheme benefits may be extended to MSMEs registered on the national and state-level platform.
Payments through Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS)	Addressed through introduction of a new provision in the Bill.	All Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) are required to **settle invoices** for goods and services procured from MSMEs **through the TReDS platform**. This aims to **address payment-related issues** faced by MSMEs. States may mandate their Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs), authorities, or entities to use TReDS for invoice settlement.
Micro and Small Enterprises Facilitation Councils (MSEFCs) Framework	State Governments may establish **one or more** MSE Facilitation Councils.	**State Governments can establish multiple MSEFCs** to enable faster resolution of payment-related disputes. They are also **empowered to provide adequate infrastructure and resources**, including physical infrastructure, digital systems and trained manpower, as may be necessary.
Mediation and Arbitration	The MSEFCs or referred mediation service providers are authorised to settle payment disputes by mediation. Where a mediation is not successful, the dispute may be **referred for arbitration**.	Central Government may **establish an online mechanism** for conducting online mediation or arbitration. **Specific timelines** have been introduced for mediation and arbitration: a. The MSEFC or mediation service provider **must complete mediation within 90 days** from the date fixed for the first appearance. b. If mediation is terminated, the MSEFC are required to **refer the matter for arbitration within 30 days**. c. The MSEFC or an institution or centre providing alternative dispute resolution services **must make the arbitral award within 90 days** from the completion of pleadings.
Dispute Resolution	Application to set aside a Council's order/ award may be filed in court after depositing **75%** of the awarded amount.	The Bill also allows such applications. While the application is pending, the **court may direct that a reasonable portion of the deposited amount be paid** to the MSME supplier. Courts shall direct payment to MSE suppliers when an application to set aside a decree, award or order remains pending for more than six months. The payment must be **at least 50%** of the awarded amount.

Recovery of Dues	Addressed through introduction of a new provision in the Bill.	Mediated settlement agreement or arbitral award can be recovered as **'arrears of land revenue'**. This applies to agreements or awards made under Section 18 by the Facilitation Council, a mediation service provider or an alternative dispute resolution institution. Recovery may be undertaken through the **District Collector, Deputy Commissioner or another notified authority**. The notified authority must have jurisdiction over the location of the buyer's assets.
Decriminalisation of Offences	Wilfully providing false registration information attracts a **fine of up to ₹1,000 for the first conviction and ₹1,000-₹10,000 for subsequent convictions**. Failure to report unpaid dues to MSME suppliers in annual accounts attracts a **fine of at least ₹10,000**.	**Non-filing of registration or non-supply of information:** Earlier, these violations attracted conviction and a fine. The penal provisions have now been decriminalised. **Furnishing incorrect information:** A warning will be issued for the first instance, followed by a penalty for the second and subsequent instances. **Non-disclosure of unpaid dues by buyers:** It now attracts a warning for the first instance, a penalty for the second and a fine for the third and subsequent instances.

Digital and Institutional Support

The reforms introduced by the Bill are supported by digital platforms and institutional mechanisms established across the MSME ecosystem.

Expanding Formal Recognition: The Udyam Registration Portal gives MSMEs official recognition through a free, paperless and self-declaration-based online process. The Udyam Assist Platform complements this initiative by formally recognising informal micro enterprises. This includes enterprises without GST registration or coverage under the Income Tax system, based on data verified by authorised partners.

Improving Access to Financing: TReDS is an electronic platform that enables MSMEs to finance or discount trade receivables. It operates in accordance with guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India. The value of invoices discounted through the platform rose from ₹40,000 crore in 2022-23 to ₹3.47 lakh crore in 2025-26.

Enabling Online Dispute Resolution (ODR): The ODR Portal was launched in June 2025. It offers MSEs a low-cost, end-to-end digital mechanism for resolving delayed payment disputes, including small-value claims.

Strengthening the MSEFC Network: 161 MSEFCs have been established across States and Union Territories. MSEFCs are set up to adjudicate disputes arising from payment delays faced by Micro and Small Enterprises.

Conclusion

The MSME Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026 seeks to strengthen the foundations of an MSME's journey from a small enterprise to a growing business. It provides for a stronger regulatory framework to help MSMEs operate and expand in an evolving business environment.

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Cyber-Physical Systems

Foundation for a Technology-Driven Future

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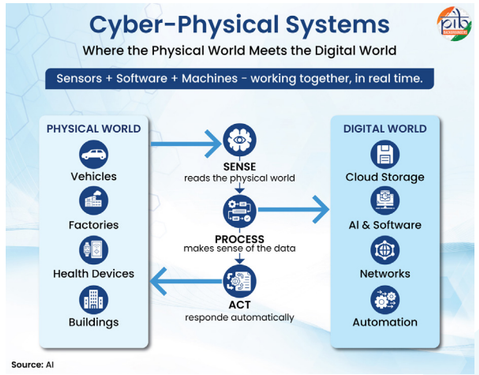
Cyber-Physical Systems connect the digital and physical worlds, enabling machines to sense, analyse and respond intelligently. India is developing a strong CPS ecosystem through the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS). The Mission links research institutions, industry, Government and global partners to advance indigenous CPS capabilities. Its Technology Innovation Hubs and Translation Research Parks are converting research into applications across critical sectors. These efforts are supporting India's journey towards a technology-driven, innovative and self-reliant Viksit Bharat.

Understanding Cyber-Physical Systems

The world is moving from machines that simply perform tasks to systems that can sense, think and respond. This convergence of the physical and digital worlds is giving rise to a new generation of intelligent systems called Cyber-Physical Systems (CPS).

A CPS connects computing technologies with physical systems through sensors, software and communication networks. It enables machines to sense their surroundings, process information and respond to changing conditions in real time. For example, driverless cars can navigate roads with limited human intervention. Smart factories can monitor production processes and adjust operations automatically. Medical devices can continuously track patients and support timely interventions. Smart buildings can regulate lighting, temperature and energy use based on real-time conditions. Even everyday devices, such as cleaning robots and fitness trackers, use similar capabilities.

At its core, CPS brings together computation, communication and physical processes. This integration is creating a new generation of intelligent, connected and responsive systems.



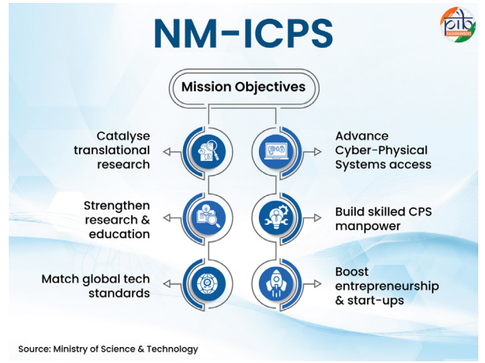
Government of India`s CPS Initiatives

As CPS increasingly shapes critical infrastructure and emerging technologies, indigenous capabilities in this domain are becoming strategically important for India. Recognising this importance, the Department of Science and Technology (DST) is implementing the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS). The Union Cabinet approved the Mission in 2018, with an outlay of ₹3,660 crore for nine years. NM-ICPS provides a national framework for advancing CPS research, innovation and applications across priority sectors.

The mission brings academia, industry, Government and international organisations onto a common platform. This convergence connects scientific research with national priorities, industrial capabilities and emerging market opportunities. It covers the complete innovation journey, from R&D and translational research to product development and start-up incubation.

NM-ICPS is developing national-priority technologies, core competencies and specialised talent in emerging CPS domains. It is also establishing world-class interdisciplinary Centres of Excellence across the country. These centres serve as focal points for advanced research, technology development, expertise and policy inputs.

Through this coordinated approach, NM-ICPS is building India's capacity to develop indigenous CPS solutions for critical national challenges. It is laying the



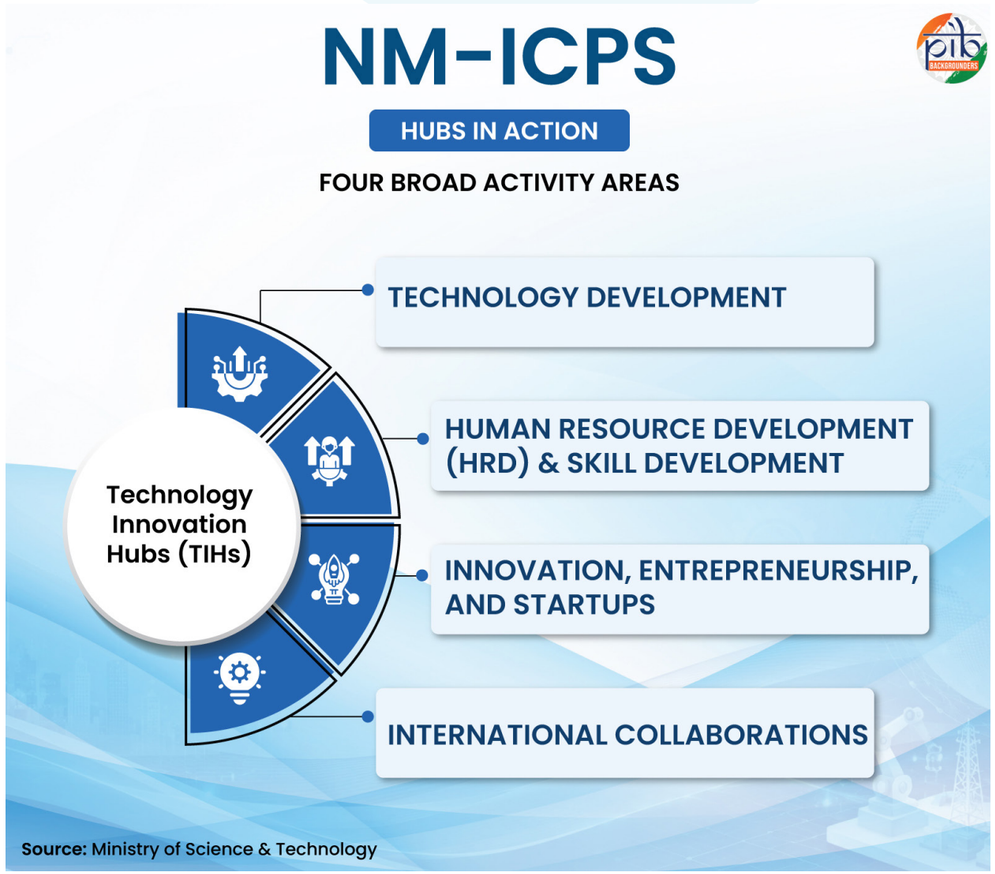
institutional foundation for a technology-driven future shaped by Indian research, innovation and entrepreneurship.

India's Leap Towards a Cyber-Physical Future

India is building a national ecosystem to take CPS from research laboratories to practical applications. NM-ICPS is developing this ecosystem through specialised institutions, skilled talent and industry partnership.

Under the mission, the Government has established **25 Technology Innovation Hubs (TIHs)** as **Section 8 companies**. These hubs are hosted by premier academic institutions across the country. The TIHs work across four

broad areas: **Technology Development; Human Resource Development and Skill Development; Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Start-up Development; and International Collaborations.**



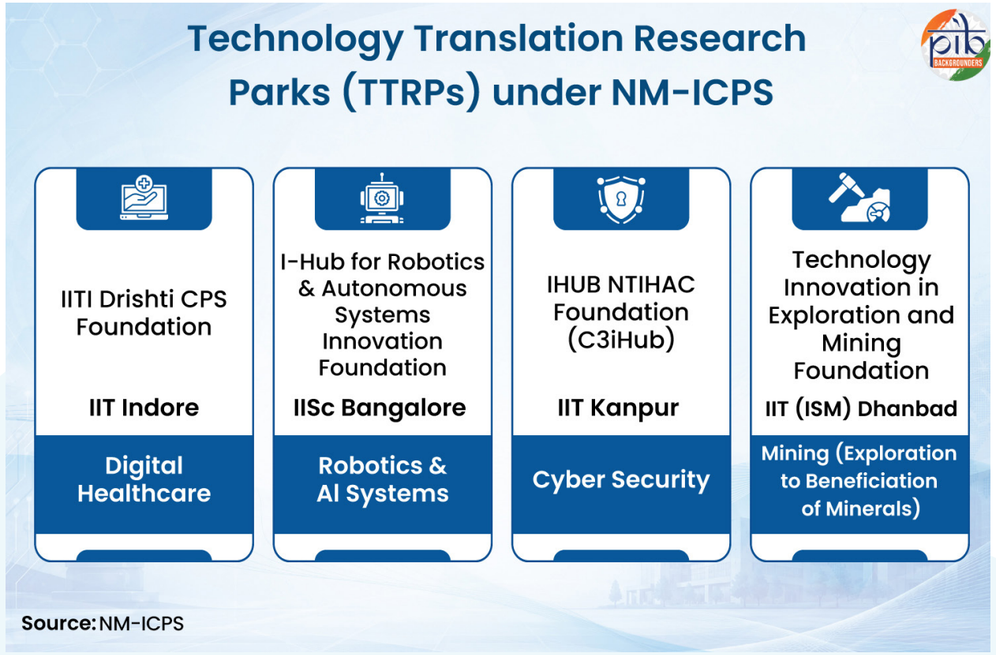
The hubs go beyond conventional research activities. They develop technology platforms, translate research into products and nurture technology-based start-ups. They also engage with Government Ministries to identify national challenges and develop practical solutions. This approach connects scientific capabilities with the needs of society and the economy.

From Technology Development to Technology Translation

The mission is now placing greater emphasis on taking promising technologies towards deployment and commercialisation. **In 2025, four high-performing TIHs were selected and supported as Technology Translation Research Parks (TTRPs)**. These parks were established at **IIT Kanpur**, **IISc Bengaluru**, **IIT (ISM) Dhanbad** and **IIT Indore**. Each TTRP focuses on a strategic technology domain. IIT Kanpur focuses on Cybersecurity, while IISc Bengaluru focuses on Robotics and AI Systems. IIT (ISM) Dhanbad focuses on Mining Technologies, covering exploration to mineral beneficiation. IIT Indore focuses on Digital Healthcare. The four TTRPs are designed to accelerate technology translation and commercialisation.

NM-ICPS is building an integrated ecosystem that connects **technology, talent and enterprise** through its TIHs and TTRPs. As of August 2026, the Mission has enabled **1,146 technologies** and supported intellectual property creation and licensing. It has also contributed to **1,329 technology products** across agriculture, healthcare, mining, cybersecurity, advanced communication and positioning, among other domains.

Human resource development and skill enhancement remain key pillars



Building Technology, Talent and Enterprise

of this ecosystem. The **CHANAKYA (Comprehensive and Holistic Advancement of National Knowledge**

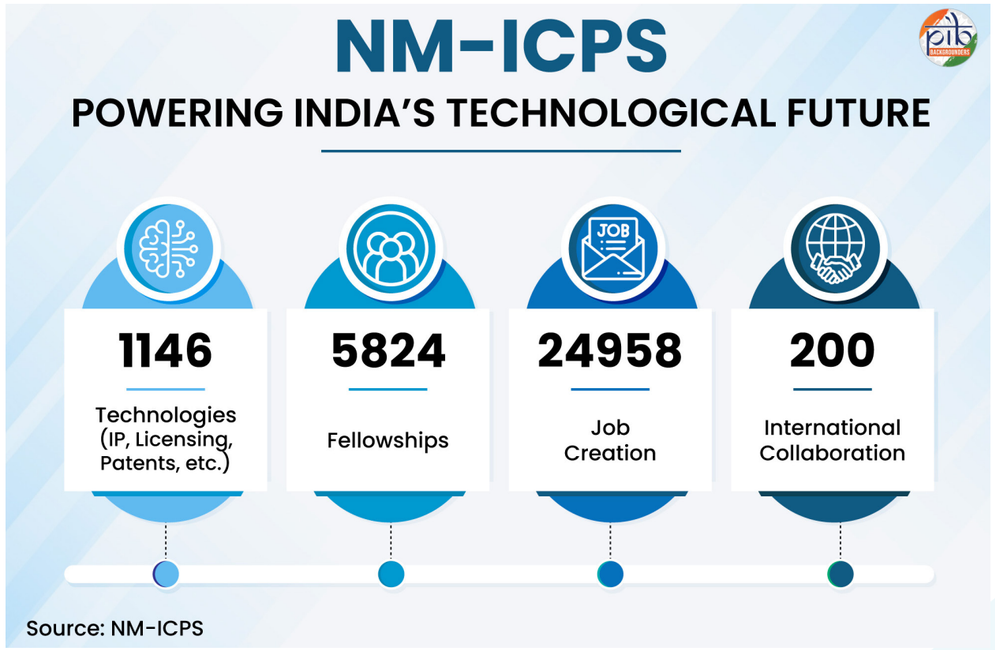
Yield and Analytics) Fellowship Programme supports undergraduate, postgraduate, PhD and postdoctoral researchers. It funds projects addressing real-world CPS challenges through specialised Technology Innovation Hubs. As of August 2026, the mission has awarded **5,824 fellowships**.

These efforts are complemented by wider skill development initiatives that strengthen India's specialised CPS talent pool. The Mission has provided skills development training to **more than 2.46 lakh professionals**.

commercialisation. It has **incubated 1,136 start-ups and spin-offs,** contributing to more than **24,000 jobs**.

International partnerships have further expanded India's CPS capabilities. The Mission has established **200 international collaborations**, strengthening India's engagement in this emerging technology domain.

The growing network of TIHs and TTRPs is strengthening India's CPS ecosystem across research, skills, entrepreneurship and industry. NM-ICPS is accelerating the journey from innovation to deployment



Source: NM-ICPS

The Mission is also nurturing entrepreneurship by helping research-based innovations move towards and building indigenous solutions for national priorities.

BharatGen: Strengthening the Intelligence Layer of Cyber-Physical Systems

As CPS becomes more intelligent, AI is emerging as an important layer connecting machines, people and physical environments. In this direction, **BharatGen**, supported under NM-ICPS, is developing sovereign AI capabilities tailored to Indian languages and contexts.

Led by **IIT Bombay** with a consortium of academic institutions, BharatGen spans text, speech and vision-language technologies. Its latest **Param-2** foundation model has **17 billion parameters** and supports all **22 Scheduled Indian languages**.

BharatGen has also developed **Shrutam** speech-to-text and **Sooktam** text-to-speech models supporting **12 Indian languages. Patram,** developed under the **DocBodh framework**, enables multilingual access to complex Indian documents.

Domain-specific models include **Ayur Param** for Ayurveda, **Agri Param** for agriculture and **Legal Param** for the Indian legal domain. These capabilities can make CPS more responsive to India's linguistic diversity and sector-specific requirements.

By combining indigenous AI with connected physical systems, BharatGen can enable more accessible human-machine interaction. It can also support locally relevant decision-making across healthcare, agriculture, governance and other public-interest applications. BharatGen thus complements India's CPS ecosystem by adding a **sovereign, multilingual and multimodal intelligence layer**.

NM-ICPS: Translating Innovation into Real-World Impact

The strength of CPS lies in its ability to solve problems beyond the laboratory. NM-ICPS-supported technologies are now addressing challenges across healthcare, agriculture, mining, communications, cybersecurity and mobility.

Healthcare

CPS is transforming continuous monitoring, simulation-based treatment and earlier disease detection. The Drishti CPS Foundation at IIT Indore has developed CharakDT, a digital twin of the

human body. It simulates the lungs, eyes and heart to study disease progression and test treatments virtually.

Digital Twin

A digital twin is a live, virtual copy of a real-world physical object, process, or system. It uses real-time data from smart sensors to mirror, track, and study how the real thing works and behaves.

Agriculture

CPS is helping farmers make decisions using real-time data on crops and field conditions. Researchers at IIT Bombay developed the **Agri-IoT Farm Management System** to monitor soil, weather and micro-climate conditions. The technology supports efficient use of water and fertilisers while improving farm productivity.

Mining

Mining operations often involve hazardous and remote locations. CPS is improving safety through drones, robotics and remote monitoring. The TEXMiN hub at IIT (ISM) Dhanbad has developed **drones capable of transmitting data up to 50 km**. This enables real-time monitoring while reducing exposure to hazardous locations.

Advanced Communication & Positioning

CPS technologies are supporting reliable and affordable connectivity in underserved regions. A key achievement is the 5G-Advanced **ORAN Massive MIMO Radio Unit (32TR RU)** developed at IIIT Bengaluru. The indigenous technology enables high-speed, reliable and cost-effective 5G connectivity. It is particularly relevant for extending advanced communication infrastructure to remote areas.

Cybersecurity

As physical infrastructure becomes digitally connected, protecting CPS from cyber threats becomes increasingly important. The IHUB NTIHAC Foundation at IIT Kanpur is developing solutions to secure critical infrastructure and CPS. Its **IT-OT Security Operations Centre** continuously monitors Information Technology and Operational Technology environments. The hub has also developed **Crypto-Forensic Tools** to support Law Enforcement Agencies in investigating cryptocurrency-related crimes.

Mobility, Robotics & Autonomous Systems

CPS is enabling safer deployment of autonomous vehicles and drones through controlled testing and intelligent systems. The TiHAN Foundation at IIT Hyderabad has established **India's first dedicated proving ground for autonomous navigation.** The testbed validates aerial and terrestrial autonomous vehicles before their real-world deployment. At IISc Bengaluru, the I-Hub for Robotics and Autonomous Systems is advancing **intelligent mobility solutions**. Its **iRASTE application** identifies accident-prone locations and provides real-time alerts to drivers. The system is currently being piloted in Nagpur, with plans for expansion to other cities.

These applications demonstrate how NM-ICPS is translating advanced research into practical solutions for critical sectors. By enabling indigenous technologies, skills and innovation, the mission is enabling safer, smarter and more efficient systems. These efforts are advancing India's capabilities towards a technology-driven and self-reliant Viksit Bharat.

Towards a Technology-Driven and Self-Reliant Viksit Bharat

Cyber-Physical Systems are opening new possibilities for intelligent infrastructure and advanced public services. Through NM-ICPS, India is building capabilities that connect scientific research with national development priorities.

The mission is nurturing indigenous solutions across healthcare, agriculture, mining, communications, cybersecurity and mobility. Its TIHs and TTRPs are accelerating the journey from research to validation, deployment and commercialisation.

BharatGen like initiative is adding sovereign, multilingual AI capabilities to this emerging technology landscape. Together, these efforts can make connected systems more intelligent, secure, accessible and responsive to Indian needs. Stronger academia-industry partnerships will further accelerate innovation and technology adoption. Skilled talent, start-ups and global collaborations will expand India's capabilities across emerging technology domains.

The wider deployment of indigenous CPS can support smarter infrastructure, efficient services and new economic opportunities. NM-ICPS is therefore contributing to a **technology-driven, innovation-led and self-reliant Viksit Bharat.**

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PIB Research





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Water-Smart Farming with Per Drop More Crop

Transforming Indian Agriculture through Water Efficiency

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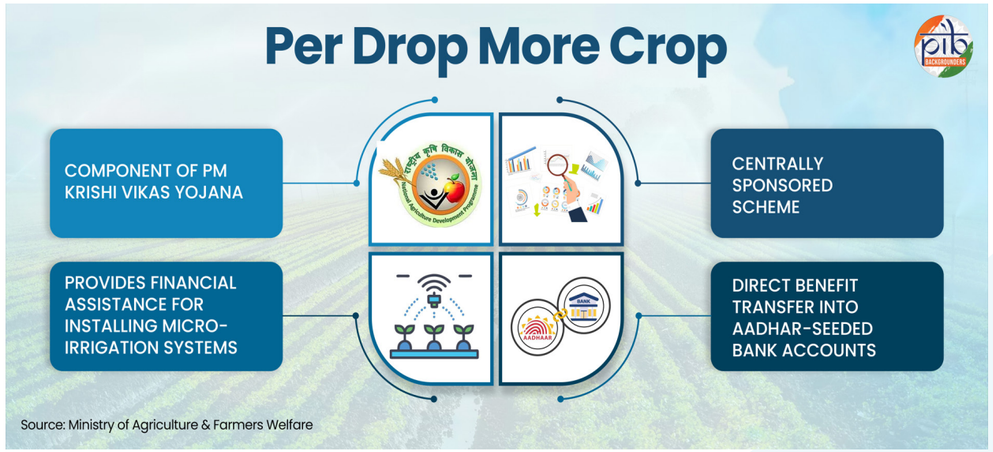
Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) promotes micro-irrigation to improve water use efficiency and enhance agricultural productivity. The scheme has brought over **115 lakh hectares** under micro irrigation as of **July 2026.** Financial assistance through direct benefit transfer and digital implementation has improved transparency and farmer access to affordable micro-irrigation facilities. Independent studies report higher yields, significant water savings, lower cultivation costs, and increased farmers' incomes. PDMC is strengthening resource-efficient, sustainable agriculture by using every drop of water efficiently.

The Imperative for Regenerative Agriculture

More than 80% of India's available water resources are used for agricultural irrigation. However, only about 50% of the net sown area has irrigation facilities. Improving water use efficiency has therefore become a national priority.

Micro irrigation is an important solution for improving water use efficiency in agriculture. This is because it delivers water directly to crops with minimum losses. The government is implementing the Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) scheme to promote efficient water use at the farm level. It is a centrally sponsored scheme. It supports micro-irrigation systems: drip irrigation and sprinkler irrigation.



Under this scheme, the government provides financial assistance of up to five hectares per beneficiary to install micro irrigation systems. Small and marginal farmers receive 55%, and other farmers receive 45% financial assistance. Central assistance of ₹8,123.24 crore has been released in the last three years. Some state governments also provide additional subsidies from their own budgets. Farmers can receive assistance again for the same land after seven years.

The initiative originally began in January 2006 as the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for Micro Irrigation. It was later upgraded to the National Mission on Micro Irrigation (NMMI) in 2010-11. During FY 2014-15, it became part of the National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) under the "On Farm Water Management" (OFWM) component. From FY 2015-16 to FY 2021-22, it was officially named Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) and implemented as a core component of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY). Since 2022-23, PDMC has been implemented under the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY).

Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY)

Launched in 2007–08, the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana promotes the holistic development of agriculture and allied sectors. The scheme was restructured as the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY) in October 2024 to promote sustainable agriculture, acting as an umbrella scheme that merges nine schemes. It includes components such as Per Drop More Crop (PDMC), agricultural mechanization, soil health management, crop diversification, and an accelerator fund for agri-startups. A key feature of the restructured scheme is that it gives state governments the flexibility to re-allocate funds from one component to another based on their specific, local agricultural requirements. It aims to tackle emerging issues like climate resilience, improve crop productivity, and advance value chain development. During 2025-26, a total of ₹8,957.72 crore has been released/sanctioned for PM-RKVY, which includes ₹3,226.36 crore specifically dedicated to the PDMC scheme.

Strategic Focus Areas of PDMC

The PDMC scheme promotes precision water management to enhance crop

productivity and increase farmers' incomes. The scheme also promotes fertigation to improve nutrient application efficiency and prioritizes water-scarce and groundwater-stressed regions. Fertigation is the process of applying fertilizers with irrigation water directly to the region where most of the plant's roots develop.Further, PDMC supports the integration of micro irrigation with tube wells, river-lift irrigation, and solar-powered irrigation systems. It encourages convergence with other government programmes to maximize the utilization of water resources. The scheme also promotes scientific advancements in micro-irrigation for agriculture and horticulture.



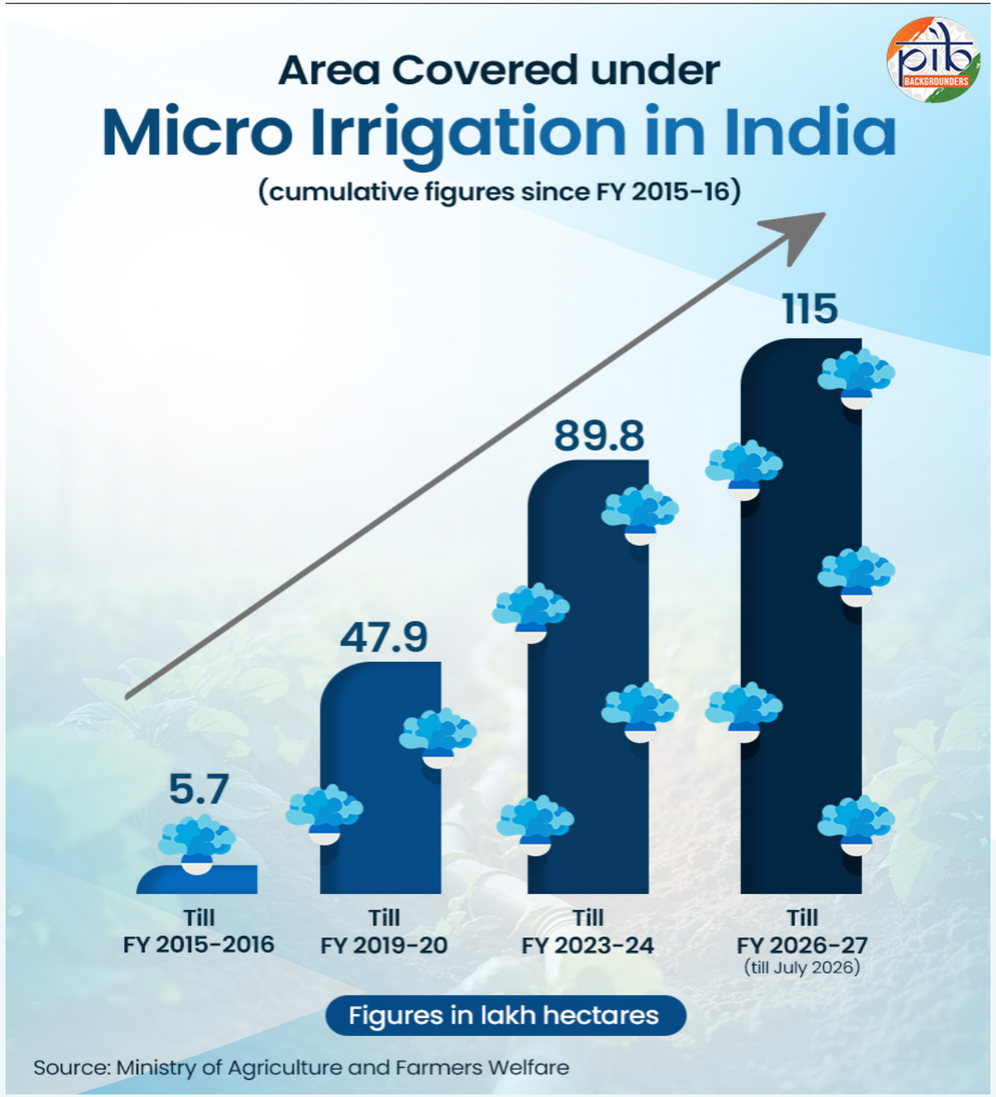
Benefits of Micro-Irrigation

Micro-irrigation enables efficient use of water by delivering it directly to the plant root zone, reducing wastage and improving irrigation efficiency. It lowers the use of water, energy, fertilizers, and labour while supporting better crop growth and higher productivity through the precise application of water and nutrients. The technology also encourages the cultivation of horticultural crops, improves cropping intensity, and brings marginal lands under productive use. By reducing input costs and enhancing farm returns, micro-irrigation contributes to sustainable agriculture, strengthens farmers' livelihoods, and promotes long-term food and nutritional security.

Progress in Scaling Micro Irrigation across India through PDMC

Since its inception, PDMC has brought 115 lakh hectares under micro-irrigation, as of July 2026. This accounts for about 8.11% of India's net sown area. In 2025-26:

- Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, and Rajasthan recorded the highest



areas covered by micro-irrigation under PDMC.

- 12.30 lakh farmers were benefitted by the scheme.
- Around 20% of the beneficiaries were women.

From Flood Irrigation to Drip Irrigation

LAM Srinivasa Rao, a farmer from Palnadu, Andhra Pradesh, adopted drip irrigation under the state Micro Irrigation Project and the PDMC scheme. He installed the system in his two-acre acid lime orchard, replacing traditional flood irrigation. The new system ensured precise application of water and nutrients through fertigation. As a result, yield increased from 90 to 105 quintals per acre. The cost of cultivation declined from ₹3.0 lakh to ₹2.4 lakh. With stable market prices, his net income increased from ₹1.5 lakh to ₹2.85 lakh. He earned an additional ₹1.35 lakh, demonstrating the benefits of micro irrigation in improving productivity and farmers' incomes.

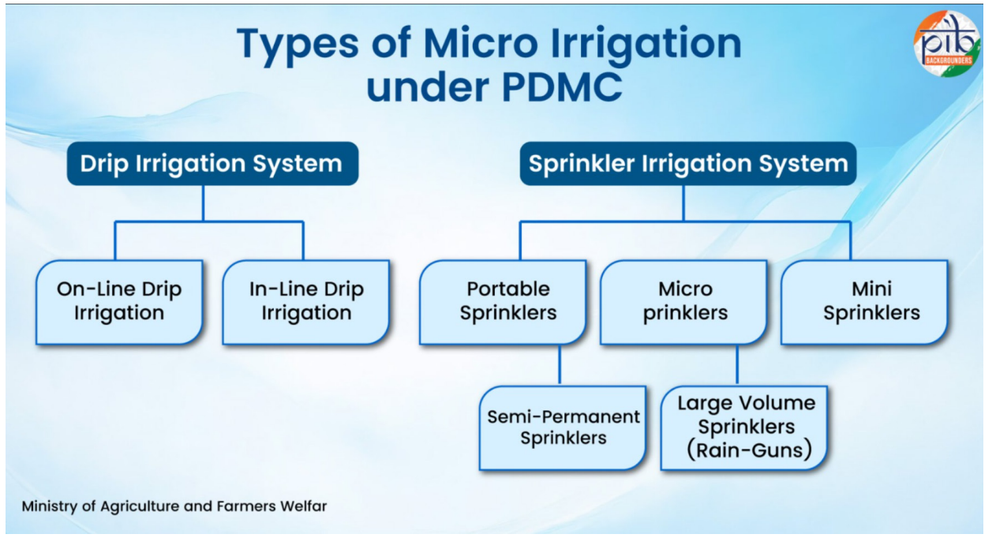


To further promote efficient water use and boost farmer income, the government has introduced new flexibilities under the PDMC scheme. The initiative empowers states and UTs to undertake micro-level water storage and conservation activities. such as the construction of diggis (large water storage tanks or farm ponds) and water harvesting systems, under the "Other Interventions" component. Because these systems can be developed for both individual and community use based on local needs, they help ensure reliable, sustainable water availability for micro-irrigation.

Crucially, the revised guidelines eliminate previous funding restrictions for these conservation projects. Earlier, funds for such activities were strictly capped at **20% of the total allocation** for general states/UTs. It was **40%** for North Eastern States, Himalayan States, and the UTs of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. Now,



States and UTs have the **flexibility to exceed these limits** based entirely on their specific local requirements.



Types of Micro Irrigation Systems under PDMC

There are two major micro-irrigation systems under PDMC:

Drip Irrigation System

Drip Irrigation technology involves irrigating the root zone through emitters fitted to a lateral tube or inserted within the tubing. In simpler terms, it is a method of watering crops in which water is delivered **slowly and directly to the roots of plants** through small outlets (called **emitters**) mounted on thin pipes or tubes. This ensures that only the required area around the plant gets water, reducing wastage and improving efficiency.

There are two types of drip irrigation systems:

- **On-line drip irrigation:** Water is given to each plant through small drippers installed along the pipe wherever a plant is located. This makes it suitable for crops with uneven spacing.
- **In-line drip irrigation:** Water comes out of drippers built into the pipe at fixed intervals. In this system, all plants get water evenly.

Sprinkler Irrigation System

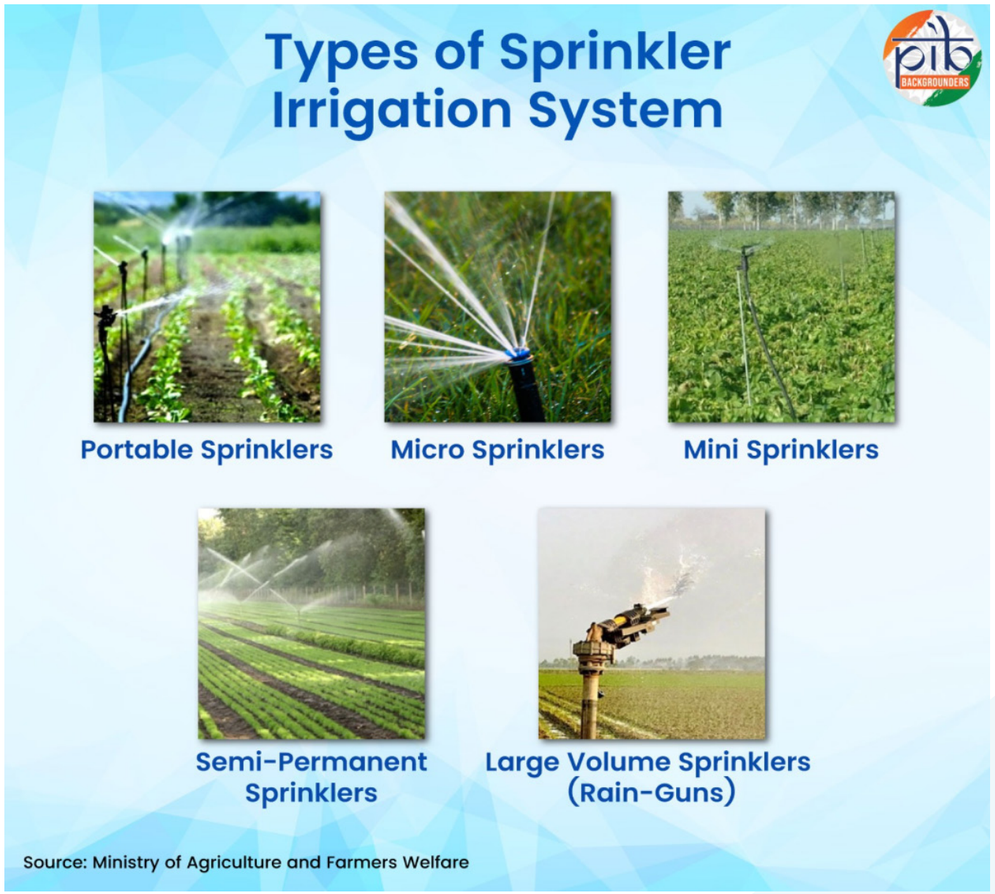
In sprinkler irrigation, water is **discharged**

under pressure in the air through a set of nozzles attached to a network of pipes. This system simulates a rainfall and waters the crops evenly. Sprinkler irrigation systems are suitable for irrigating crops where the **plant density is very high.** It is widely used for cereals, pulses, seeds, spices and field crops.

The sprinkler irrigation system is further classified into the following types:

diversifies livelihood opportunities, and enhances resilience to climate extremes such as floods and droughts.

- **Portable Sprinklers:** In this system, the main and sub-main pipes can be shifted to different parts of the field as required. This allows irrigation according to the crop's water needs. These can be used in both, plains as well as in undulating terrains.
- **Micro Sprinklers:** Micro sprinklers are low radius sprinklers. They are mostly used for irrigating leafy vegetables, nurseries and hardening of seedlings. Apart from providing irrigation, the micro sprinkler also helps in changing the micro climatic conditions near the plant.
- **Mini Sprinklers:** They are commonly used for close growing crops like groundnut, potato, onion, ginger, short statured fodder crops, etc. Mini sprinklers are also suitable for frost protection. Their radius is larger than micro sprinklers.
- **Semi-Permanent Sprinklers:** In this system, the main and lateral pipes are permanently installed below the ground. Sprinkler nozzles attached to riser pipes can be moved to different locations. This allows irrigation of different parts of the field according to the crop's water requirement.
- **Large Volume Sprinklers (Rain-Guns):** They are used where larger areas are to be covered with one or two sprinklers. These sprinklers have a discharge ranging from 10,000 litres per hour to 32,000 litres per hour and radius of throw from 24 m to 36 m. These systems require high pressure and high discharge pipes & pumps to operate them. These are preferred for irrigating crops spread over large areas in short time.



Implementation Framework of PDMC

Since PDMC is implemented under the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY), it adopts the scheme's overall institutional architecture. At the national level, the **National Stewardship Council (NSC)** provides strategic direction for guidance and planning.

At the state level, the framework operates through a three-tier structure.

Impact Assessment Studies

Independent studies have highlighted the positive impact of the PDMC scheme. An evaluation by NITI Aayog during 2020-21 found the scheme aligned with national priorities. These include improving water use efficiency, increasing crop productivity, generating employment, and enhancing farmers' incomes. The study reported income gains ranging from 10% to 69%. Water use efficiency improved by 30%-70%. The scheme also created direct and indirect employment opportunities.

Furthermore, the Economic Survey 2020-21 quantified massive resource benefits from micro-irrigation. The survey reported water savings of 20% to 48%, energy savings of 10% to 17%, labour cost reductions of 30% to 40%, and fertilizer savings of 11% to 19%. The crop yield increase of 20% to 38% was also reported. A separate 2023 study conducted by the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) across six states assessed the scheme's implementation. The study confirmed that farmers predominantly adopt micro-irrigation to address declining groundwater levels, suit their specific crop requirements, and achieve long-term agricultural benefits.

At the top, the **State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC)** approves the plans. The **Inter-Departmental Working Group (IDWG)** coordinates planning and implementation across departments.

At the **district level, the District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC)** oversees execution and ensures inter-departmental coordination.

Building a Water-Efficient Future for Agriculture

Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) has transformed India's irrigation approach by promoting efficient water use through micro irrigation technologies. The scheme has expanded access to modern irrigation while improving water use efficiency, crop productivity, and farmers' incomes.

Supported by robust institutional mechanisms, digital implementation, and convergence with other government programmes, PDMC has strengthened sustainable irrigation practices nationwide. As India faces increasing pressure on its water resources, PDMC plays an important role in advancing resource-efficient, sustainable agriculture.

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Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission

Unlocking India’s Tribal Forest Economy

Published on: August 18, 2026

Many of India's 10.4 crore Scheduled Tribes derive 20–40% of their annual income from Minor Forest Produce (MFP). Historically, tribals sold this produce to middlemen at distress prices, earning below the cost of their own labour. To address this, the government runs the Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission (PMJVM). The mission organises tribals into community-owned Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs), moving them from raw produce sellers to value-adding entrepreneurs. So far, 4,172 VDVKs have been sanctioned, linking 12.48 lakh tribal members to the scheme. The government also buys MFP at a pre-determined Minimum Support Price (MSP). PMJVM provides enterprise funding and helps tribals access markets through fairs, e-commerce platforms, and exhibitions.

Protecting Tribal Forest Economies

For millions of forest-dwelling tribal families, Minor Forest Produce (MFP)—such as **honey, tendu leaves, mahua flowers, tamarind, lac, bamboo and wild herbs**—is not merely a forest resource. It is a primary source of livelihood. About **20% to 40% of their annual income** is from selling MFP. Yet, despite directly procuring and selling MFP, tribals receive only a fraction of its market value. This is because they often sell MFP to intermediaries at low prices.

The **Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission (PMJVM)** seeks to change this equation. Launched in 2021-22, the Mission provides a systematic way for them to improve MFP's value by **skilling the tribals in newer technology and practices**. The scheme links the communities to the larger **national and digital markets** to help them get more exposure and sell more products. It also guarantees **Minimum Support Prices (MSP)** to tribals by directly procuring the produce from them.

These efforts are helping forest gatherers become owners of their community enterprises while strengthening India's **tribal economy** at the grassroots level.

Minor Forest Products & Minimum Support Price

While the government manages most of India's forests to preserve ecology and wildlife, tribals and other traditional forest-dwelling communities are given access to these areas for the preservation of their livelihoods.



In 2006, the government enacted the **Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act** — also called **the Forest Rights Act.** The Act defines minor forest produce as "all non-timber forest produce of plant origin including bamboo, brush wood, stumps, cane, tussar, cocoons, honey, wax, lac, tendu or kendu leaves, medicinal plants and herbs, roots, tubers and the like." The government has **notified Minimum Support Price for 87 MFP items under PMJVM.**

The Forest Rights Act recognises that forest-dwelling communities have historically depended on forest products for sustenance and livelihood. The Act gives tribals **rights to procure and sell non-timber minor forest produce**. Separately, the Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act (1996) grants tribal Gram Panchayats ownership rights over minor forest produce.

The **Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED)**, mandated with the marketing and development of tribal products, purchases non-timber forest produce at the pre-determined price (MSP) regardless of the market price of the product. It does so through a network of state implementing agencies — including tribal development cooperatives and forest development corporations. Since 2013–14, state governments have **procured 2,67,954 metric tonnes of MFPs** worth **Rs. 693.98 crore** under the scheme.



How Does PMJVM Support Tribals?

Beyond MSP procurement, the PVJVM scheme also provides skilling, technological, marketing, and infrastructural support to tribals.

Organising Tribals into Van Dhan Vikas Kendras

The Mission mobilises tribal gatherers into self-help groups (SHGs). A **group of 15 SHGs, comprising about 300 tribals**, are clustered together into one Van Dhan Vikas Kendra (VDVK). At least 60% of VDVK members must be from Scheduled Tribe communities.

The **Van Dhan Yojana**, launched on April 14, 2018, is a part of PMJVM. It forms the foundation of the VDVK model and powers its implementation across tribal communities.

Skilling, Funding and Technological Support

The Government organises skilling and other training programmes for MFP gatherers, including trainings on scientific harvesting practices, at Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs).

The SHGs are also provided with:

- **Infrastructural support**, established in a beneficiary's home or a government or gram panchayat building
- **Primary processing equipment** — cutting and sieving tools, decorticators, dryers, and packaging tools — based on locally available MFPs
- **Training** for 30 members on sustainable harvesting and value addition, with raw materials and trainee kits provided
- **Working capital,** facilitated through tie-ups with financial institutions, banks, and the National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC)
- **Storage and transportation** support on a rental basis.

Marketing and Business Support

Apart from value addition, VDVKs are also **centres for market linkages** – both local and distant – for the final products.



- **VDVKs are established around local Haat Bazaars**, the primary MFP procurement points, to make it easier for tribals to sell products they produce.

VDVKs Help in Tribal Women Empowerment

Most collections and sales are carried out by women, making PMJVM a key instrument of tribal women's financial empowerment.

The **Nyigamane, Ho Yorbe, Medumhagdum VDVK** in **Arunachal Pradesh's** Leparada district was established in October 2021 with **300 women SHG members and farmers.**

This VDVK converts locally available non-timber forest and agricultural produce into processed, marketable goods. The products created are:

- King Chilli Pickle from King Chillis (Bhut Jolokia — a north eastern Indian specialty)
- Bamboo Shoot Pickle from bamboo shoots (a common MFP in north-eastern India)
- Turmeric Powder from locally grown turmeric
- Ginger Powder from locally grown ginger
- Pineapple Jam from Pineapples (abundant in Arunachal Pradesh)
- Pineapple Squash from Pineapples
- Orange Squash from Oranges

The VDVK has **sold Rs. 11 lakh worth of these products from 2022-23** onwards. It has empowered the women, who no longer need to depend on only seasonable agriculture for income throughout the year. The women jointly own the business – they are not mere workers but also have a stake in the brand and the enterprise.

1. There are over 5,000 Haats in tribal areas.
2. Haats are being modernised in a phased manner— with permanent structures, storage, drinking water, shade, and weighing equipment.

- **VDVKs** may partner with private entities or non-profits for value addition or marketing of their products.
- **TRIFED** disseminates market intelligence — including daily rates and e-commerce avenues —to VDVKs to improve their decision-making on business deals.

- PMJVM also provides:

1. Branding, promotion, and advertisement of tribal products through festivals, exhibitions, and artisan melas
2. Geo-tagging of VDVKs and other scheme assets
3. Geographical Indicators for tribal produce (GI is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin)
4. Building and upgrading IT and e-commerce platforms
5. Research and development support

Under the PMJVM scheme:

- **4,172 VDVKs have been sanctioned and 2,911 VDVKs are functional**, with reported **sales of around Rs. 168 crores** (as on July 31, 2026).
- **12.48 lakh tribal members** have been linked to the VDVKs.

Towards A Sustainable Forest Economy

Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission (PMJVM) provides livelihood opportunities to forest-dwelling tribals, offering a systematic way to produce and market non-timber forest produce. These products are locally sourced and rooted in traditional practices — representing a forest-based economy **balancing community ownership with market competitiveness.**

In a world increasingly driven by mass-manufactured and plastic-packaged goods, they are India's distinctive offering: **natural, community-owned, and forest-born**. PMJVM embodies **Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas**- ensuring India's growth story reaches its most remote forests and the communities who call them home. This will eventually contribute to India's vision of a **Viksit Bharat@2047**.

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Signed, Sealed and Exporting India’s Trade Agreements in Action

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India's FTA journey is moving from expanding its network of agreements to making fuller use of the market access. Recent export performance shows the growing commercial importance of FTA partners. A shift is visible in early export gains, rising preferential CoO issuance and a wider range of exports to these markets. This indicates that more businesses are beginning to engage with opportunities created by the agreements. The transition is also being supported by government initiatives that help exporters access preferential benefits and enter new markets.

India's FTA Export Landscape

Over the past decade, India has pursued a more confident and forward-looking trade strategy, **expanding its network of Free Trade Agreements (FTA).** Each agreement reflects the scale of the Indian market, the country's economic potential and growing international confidence in the capabilities of its 1.4 billion people.

The recent trade agreements span major global markets, widening trade partnerships and creating diverse opportunities for exporters.



Beyond newer engagements, India is also focusing on their **effective utilisation.** The emphasis is on translating market access into **wider export participation**, investment and employment while safeguarding domestic priorities. This **balanced approach aims to strengthen the contribution of FTAs to India's journey towards Viksit Bharat by 2047.**

Export Performance across FTA Markets

India's expanding trade-agreement network connects exporters with several markets. This expansion is supported by the country's growing export base. In **FY 2025-26**, combined merchandise and services exports reached **a record US$ 863.1 billion**, including **merchandise exports of US$ 441.8 billion**. The momentum has continued in FY 2026-27.

- During April-June 2026, combined exports were estimated at **US$ 232.73 billion**, increasing by **11.37%** from the corresponding period last year.

Within this overall export performance, India's FTA partners constitute important markets for merchandise exports.

Table 1: India's Merchandise Exports to FTA Partners (2025-26)

FTA market	Exports (US$ million)
FTA Groups	
ASEAN	38,416.33
SAFTA	25,774.68
FTA Countries	
UAE	38,416.33
United Kingdom	25,774.68
Singapor	11,863.66
Nepal	7,447.11
Australia	7,284.17
Malaysia	6,825.55
Japan	6,039.50
Republic of Korea	6,012.03
Sri Lanka	5,516.83
Thailand	5,058.60

FTA Countries	
Oman	4,021.48
Bhutan	1,252.86
New Zealand*	566.51
Mauritius	473.64

Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry

*Signed, yet to be effective

Among these markets, the UAE and Australia illustrate the early progress under India's recent trade agreements.

India's New-Generation FTAs: Early Success Stories

India-UAE CEPA: Delivering Early Trade Gains

The India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) came into force on 1 May 2022. It was India's first full free trade agreement in a decade, with negotiations **completed in record 88 days.**

Largest individual FTA export market: India exported merchandise worth **US$ 37,359.11 million** to the UAE in FY 2025-26. Among India's trade agreements, the **UAE was India's largest export destination.**

Bilateral Trade Crosses US$ 100 Billion: Bilateral trade crossed **US$ 100.06 billion** in FY 2024-25, recording a 19.6% growth. This milestone was achieved within three years after the agreement came into force.

Success driving a wider partnership: Following bilateral trade success, India and the UAE set a **new target of doubling trade to US$ 200 billion by 2032**.

India-Australia ECTA: Expanding a Successful Trade Partnership

The India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) came into force on 29 December 2022. The ECTA is India's first trade agreement with a developed economy in more than a decade.

Strong export performance: Total bilateral trade reached US$ 24.1 billion in FY 2024-25. India's exports to Australia have increased from US$ 4 billion in FY 2020-21 to **US$ 7.28 billion in FY 2025-26**, recording **80%+ growth.**

Complete duty-free market access: Australia provided immediate zero-duty access across 98.3% of its tariff lines. From 2026 onwards, all **Indian exports are now eligible for zero-duty access** to the Australian market.

Success taken forward through new initiatives: The ECTA provides the foundation for a **more ambitious Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)** , currently under negotiation. It aims to cover goods, services, mobility, digital trade, rules of origin and emerging areas of cooperation.

Early gains are also reflected in the growing use of tariff concessions and the wider range of products exported. They show how businesses are increasingly using the opportunities created by these agreements.

Export Facilitation and Product Diversification under Recent FTAs

Facilitating Exporters' Access to FTA Benefits

A trade agreement opens preferential market access, while its practical use depends on exporters claiming the available benefits. Under an FTA, exporters generally need to provide proof of origin for their goods. This establishes their eligibility for the preferential tariff treatment available under the agreement.

A **preferential Certificate of Origin (CoO)** confirms that the goods meet the prescribed rules of origin. This allows qualifying goods to receive reduced or zero customs duties.

Preferential access is being used across agreements at different stages of

implementation.

- The UAE CEPA and Australia ECTA, operational since 2022, have generated a **large volume of origin certification,** indicating robust utilisation of tariff concessions.
- Early uptake has also been noticed under newer agreements. The EFTA TEPA generated **7,885 CoOs** after becoming operational in October 2025. **783 CoOs** have been issued under the Oman CEPA following its implementation in June 2026.

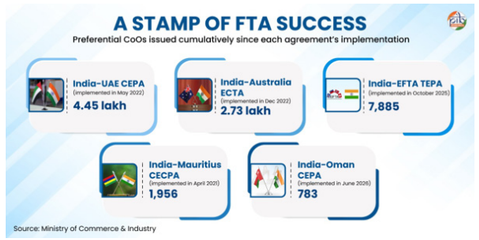
The increase in preferential CoO issuance is supported by government measures that simplify procedures for exporters.

- **e-CoO 2.0:** The system provides **end-to-end digital issuance of preferential and non-preferential CoOs**, bringing exporters, issuing agencies and chambers of commerce onto a common platform. Aadhaar-based electronic signatures and QR-code verification support secure authentication and faster service delivery.
- **Simplified Rules under FTAs:** Documentation requirements have also been simplified under newer agreements.

1. The **India-EFTA TEPA** and India-UK CETA allow exporters to **establish origin through self-declaration.**
2. The UK agreement also permits importer's knowledge and **waives origin documentation for consignments below £1,000.** The provisions support e-commerce shipments and small businesses.
3. The **India-Australia ECTA** allows multiple qualifying products to be included in a single CoO.

- **Support through Trade Connect:** The platform complements above measures by helping exporters identify and use FTA benefits. Its Tariff Explorer provides access to tariff schedules across markets.





Exporters, including MSMEs, can obtain trade information, seek guidance and raise CoO-related concerns, reducing effort in navigating export procedures.

A Wider Range of Products Reaching FTA Markets

The reach of an FTA is also reflected in the range of products entering partner markets. This product-level expansion is visible across several of India's recent agreements.

FTAs Connecting Indian Goods and Skills to Global Markets

Table-2: Expansion in Exported Tariff Lines under Recent FTAs

Market	Initial tariff-line coverage	Latest tariff-line coverage (2025-26)	Increase
UAE	7,546 (2021-22)	8,053	6.7%
Australia	5,396 (2020-21)	5,668	5.0%
Mauritius	3,593 (2021-22)	4,345	20.9%
Oman	2,879 (May 2026)	3,371 (June 2026)	17.08%

Increased Market Access for Merchandise Goods

Recent FTAs provide preferential access to a substantial share of partner-country tariff lines.

1. **Agreements already in force**

- **India-UK CETA:** Nearly 99% of Indian exports can enter the UK duty-free
- **India-Oman CEPA:** Concessions cover 98% of Oman's tariff lines
- **India-EFTA TEPA:** 92.2% of tariff lines, representing 99.6% of India's exports
- **India-Mauritius CECPA:** Preference market access covers 310 Indian product lines
- **India-UAE CEPA:** 97% of UAE tariff lines, covering 99% of Indian exports
- **India-Australia ECTA:** Duty-free access across 100% of Australian tariff lines for Indian exports

2. **Agreements awaiting implementation**

- **India-EU FTA:** Preferential treatment across 97% of EU tariff lines, covering ~99.5% of bilateral trade value
- **India-New Zealand FTA:** Duty-free access for **100% of Indian exports** from entry into force

These agreements expand **market access across several labour-intensive sectors.** This includes **textiles, agriculture and processed food, leather and footwear, marine**

products, gems and jewellery, carpets and handicrafts. Wider opportunities in these sectors enable smaller producers and local enterprises to participate more actively in international trade.

Further, calibrated tariff liberalisation and transition arrangements preserve policy space to safeguard farmers and sensitive domestic sectors.

New Opportunities for Indian Services

Alongside goods, India's recent FTAs have expanded opportunities for service providers and professionals. This is particularly significant given the sector's growing contribution to employment, exports and overall economic activityKey

> **Services account for nearly 30% of India's employment.** Further, services **exports stood at US$ 421.3 billion in FY 2025-26**. Given its scale, the sector forms an important part of India's FTAs.

commitments covering market access, professional mobility and related support measures are highlighted below.

- **For Indian professionals, the India-New Zealand FTA** provides a dedicated pathway for up to **5,000 skilled Indians to stay for up to three years.** These cover fields such as IT, engineering, healthcare, education, construction, AYUSH, yoga, culinary arts and music. Other key provisions include **commitments across 118 services sectors and MFN treatment across 139 sectors**.

For detailed information please refer to: India – New Zealand Free Trade Agreement Signed

- Under the **India-EU FTA**, commitments span **144 services sub-sectors,** including IT/ITeS, professional, business, education, financial, tourism and construction services. Other provisions include facilitating the movement of business visitors and intra-corporate transferees, **entry and work rights for dependants**. It also provides a **five-year framework for Social Security Agreements**, student mobility and post-study work opportunities.

For detailed information please refer to: India–EU Partnership: India's Growing Engagement with European Union

- **Mobility provisions** under the **India-UK CETA** cover professionals in IT, healthcare, finance and education. They allow smoother entry for business visitors, intra-corporate transferees, contractual suppliers and independent professionals. The associated **Double Contribution Convention** also prevents dual social-security payments, with estimated savings exceeding ₹4,000 crore.

For detailed information please refer to: India–UK CETA Comes into Effect

- Under the **India-EFTA TEPA**, Indian service providers receive **enhanced access to 128 sub-sectors in Switzerland, 114 in Norway, 110 in Iceland and 107 in Liechtenstein.** The opportunities span IT and business, professional, education, media and cultural services. The agreement also includes **Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs)** in nursing, chartered accountancy and architecture.

For detailed information please refer to: India-EFTA Trade Pact: Boosting $100 Billion Investment and 1 Million Jobs

- The **India-Oman CEPA** provides for the **temporary entry and stay of intra-corporate transferees**, contractual suppliers, business visitors and independent professionals.

For detailed information please refer to: India–Oman CEPA

- Under the **India-Australia ECTA,** Australia made **commitments across around 135 services sub-sectors.** MFN treatment is also extended in **120 sub-sectors**, covering IT, business services, healthcare, education and audio-visual services.
- Under the **India-UAE CEPA**, Indian service providers gain access to **~111 sub-sectors across 11 broad areas.** These include business, communication, construction, education, financial, health, tourism, transport, environmental and cultural services.
- The **India-Mauritius CECPA** provides **access to around 115 sub-sectors across 11 broad areas.** This includes professional, computer, telecommunications, financial, education, tourism, transport, audio-visual and yoga services.

Taking India's FTA Journey Forward

India's recent FTAs are entering a deeper phase of implementation. As businesses make greater use of the access secured under these agreements, their impact will extend. This will widen export participation, diversify trade and strengthen commercial relationships with partner markets.

As recent agreements enter a deeper phase of implementation, India is also widening its future trade agenda. **Around ten trade agreements are under discussion** including **new negotiations** with the **Eurasian Economic Union, Peru, Chile, Israel, Canada and Maldives.** Further, existing agreements such as the **India-Korea CEPA** and **India-Sri Lanka ETCA** are being upgraded.

At the heart of this expanding network lies a larger promise: taking the enterprise and aspirations of Indians to more markets worldwide.

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From Queues to Clicks: Four Decades of Passenger Reservation in Indian Railways

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From queues to clicks, Indian Railways has transformed passenger reservations. Today, technology powers one of the world's largest public reservation systems. Continuous modernisation has made bookings faster and more reliable. The modernised Passenger Reservation System is creating a smarter and more seamless travel experience.

The Backbone of Railway Reservations

Every day, Indian Railways (IR) connects millions of travellers across one of the world's largest rail networks. Whether travelling for work, education, healthcare, business or family, passengers depend on a reliable reservation ecosystem to plan their journeys. Behind every reserved ticket is the **Passenger Reservation System (PRS),** the technology-enabled backbone of railway bookings for nearly four decades. Introduced in 1986, PRS has evolved from replacing manual reservation counters to supporting online and mobile ticket booking.

As user volumes and online adoption have grown, so have expectations for faster, more reliable and seamless booking facilities. Peak booking periods, particularly during tatkal reservations, witness massive demand, increasing pressure on infrastructure originally designed for a different era. To meet these changing needs, Indian Railways is undertaking a comprehensive modernisation of the PRS. The new PRS will enhance booking capacity, introduce passenger-centric features and create a resilient online Infrastructure.

Four Decades of Passenger Reservation System

The PRS is the computerised platform that manages reserved ticketing across the Indian Railways network. It enables **commuters to book, modify and cancel reserved tickets.** It also manages seat allocation, waitlists, Reservation Against Cancellation (RAC), reservation charts and passenger enquiries. By connecting reservation centres and online booking channels, the PRS has made railway reservations more efficient, transparent and accessible.



PRS replaced manual reservation registers and counter-based booking with an electronic setup. As the railway network expanded, the PRS evolved into a nationwide reservation platform. It enabled commuters to book tickets for trains across the country from a single location. The PRS now supports reservations through counters, websites and mobile applications. **For online reservations, passengers access PRS through** the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation's **(IRCTC) website and mobile application.** This enables passengers to book reserved tickets from anywhere through a seamless digital platform.

PRS replaced manual reservation registers and counter-based booking with an electronic system. As the railway network expanded, PRS evolved into a nationwide reservation platform through the Country-wide Network for Computerised Enhanced Reservation and Ticketing (CONCERT). This enabled passengers to book tickets for trains across the country from any connected reservation centre, irrespective of the train's origin or destination. Over time, booking channels expanded beyond reservation counters to websites and mobile applications. Today, passengers access PRS online through the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation's (IRCTC) website and mobile application, enabling reserved ticket booking from anywhere.

Key Milestones in the Evolution of PRS

Year	Milestone
1986	PRS introduced, marking the beginning of computerised railway reservations in India.
1990s	PRS network expanded across railway zones, enabling reservations through an interconnected nationwide network.
2002	Internet-based ticket booking introduced, extending reservation services beyond physical counters.
2014	Next Generation e-Ticketing (NGeT) system launched to improve online booking capacity and passenger experience.

Year	Milestone
2025	RailOne app launched. Government announces the development of a next-generation PRS with significantly enhanced booking and enquiry capacity.
Aug 2026	Phased migration of trains to the upgraded PRS, marking a new phase in the digital transformation of railway reservations.

These initiatives improved transparency and operational efficiency.

PRS: A Digital Platform at Scale

During June 2025 and June 2026, passengers booked 65.08 crore reserved tickets through PRS. Of these, 57.90 crore tickets (89%) were booked online. This reflects the rapid adoption of digital services by rail travellers.

At present, the PRS is one of the world's largest online railways booking platforms. It was developed and is maintained by the Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS). It serves over **20.5 lakh passengers every day** through multiple booking channels. Around **73% of PRS transactions are cashless.** PRS has evolved into one of India's largest public-facing online platforms.



Meeting the Needs of Digital India

To meet growing demand, Indian Railways requires a booking system capable of handling higher transaction volumes while delivering faster, more reliable, and more secure services.

To strengthen the reservation ecosystem, Indian Railways introduced several passenger-centric reforms:

- **Advance Reservation Period (ARP)** reduced from **120 days to 60 days** to better align with passenger booking patterns.
- **Aadhaar-authenticated Tatkal booking** introduced in **July 2025** to improve fairness and transparency.
- **OTP-based verification** added later to curb misuse by automated bots and unauthorised agents. The existing PRS, deployed in **2010** on **Itanium servers** and the **OpenVMS** platform, was designed for a different scale of digital demand. It is now being upgraded to a cloud-enabled, next-generation reservation system.



The upgraded PRS will deliver:

- **Over 1.5 lakh ticket bookings per minute,** compared to **32,000** under the existing setup.
- **Over 40 lakh enquiries per minute,** up from **4 lakh** currently.
- A **multilingual, user-friendly** interface for booking and enquiries.
- Greater scalability, flexibility and reliability to support future passenger demand.



Passenger facilities are also being strengthened through a redesigned IRCTC website. The beta version, launched in **July 2026,** features a simplified interface, fewer booking steps and seat availability across all classes. The new portal will be integrated with the next-generation PRS, creating a smoother booking experience.

Beyond railway ticketing, IRCTC also offers travel-related services through its tourism platform, including hotel bookings, retiring rooms, lounge bookings, tour packages, flight tickets and bus tickets.

CRIS: Institution Driving Railway Technology

Established in **1986, Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS)** designs, develops and maintains the IT infrastructure for Indian Railways. Over nearly four decades, CRIS has expanded from computerising railway bookings to developing integrated digital platforms. Currently, its solutions support millions of passengers and railway personnel every day.

Passenger-Centric Digital Services

CRIS has developed several platforms, including PRS, that have transformed how passengers interact with Indian Railways.

- **Unreserved Ticketing System (UTS):** Supports paperless and mobile ticketing for unreserved travel.
- **National Train Enquiry System (NTES):** Provides real-time train running status, schedules and arrival or departure information.
- **RailConnect:** Introduced in 2017, the RailConnect mobile application brought PRS services to smartphones. It enabled online ticket booking, ticket cancellation and PNR enquiries.
- **RailOne:** Launched in July 2025, RailOne is an integrated mobile application. RailOne combines multiple functions into a unified interface, simplifying access to railway services. The application has recorded **over 4.55 crore downloads** across Android and iOS devices (till 22nd July). It is currently facilitating around 9.65 lakh ticket bookings every day. One of its latest features is **AI-based waitlist confirmation prediction.** It estimates the likelihood of a waitlisted ticket being confirmed before the journey, even at the time of booking tickets. The prediction accuracy has improved from **53% to 94%,** helping passengers make more informed travel decisions.
- **RailMadad:** Provides an integrated platform for passenger grievances, feedback and service requests. Passengers can seek assistance through the RailMadad website, mobile application, SMS and Railway Helpline 139. The platform uses automated complaint assignment and auto-escalation for timely grievance redressal. Details of grievances resolved during last three years:

Year	Percentages of Grievances Resolved
2023-2024	99.98%
2024-2025	99.99%
2025-2026	99.98%

- **CoachMitra:** Helps passengers request onboard facilities such as housekeeping and assistance during their journey.
- **Rail Sugam:** Provides information on railway services, freight and passenger-related facilities.
- **Rail Rajbhasha:** Supports the use of Hindi in railway administration through digital tools.

Technology Supporting Railway Operations

Beyond passenger services, CRIS has developed digital systems that improve railway efficiency.

- **Freight Operations Information System (FOIS):** Digitises freight movement, wagon management and logistics planning.
- **Crew Management System (CMS):** Streamlines crew scheduling, deployment and monitoring.
- **eDrishti:** Provides dashboards for monitoring railway performance and operational indicators.
- **Aapoorti:** Digitises procurement and tender management processes.
- **Chalak Dal and Hand-Held Terminals:** Support field operations, inspections and real-time monitoring.

Adopting Emerging Technologies



CRIS continues to modernise railway technology through advanced digital solutions. It is adopting **Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Big Data Analytics** and **Cloud Computing.** It is also adopting **Blockchain, the Internet of Things (IoT)** and **Augmented/Virtual Reality (AR/VR)** across railway applications. These technologies are being used to:

- Predict train delays and waitlist confirmation.
- Optimise train routes and timetables.
- Forecast energy consumption.
- Enable predictive maintenance of railway assets.
- Improve planning and operational decision-making.

The next-generation PRS builds on this technological foundation. It combines cloud-enabled infrastructure with advanced digital technologies to create a faster, smarter and more scalable reservation platform.

A Future Ready Reservation Ecosystem

The Passenger Reservation System reflects the digital transformation of Indian Railways over nearly four decades. Today, it is a trusted reservation platform used by millions of travellers across the country. The next-generation PRS builds on this strong foundation. Together, these will deliver faster, more reliable and more seamless railway offerings. As passenger needs continue to evolve, Indian Railways is building a future-ready reservation ecosystem.

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PIB Research





25

Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)

Strengthening MSP-Based Price Support to empower farmers

Published on: August 14, 2026

Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) is the Government's flagship price-support framework for remunerative prices for farmers. It includes various schemes to strengthen the implementation of the Minimum Support Price (MSP) and reduce distress sales. Procurement of pulses, oilseeds, and copra is undertaken by the Central and State Governments through agencies such as NAFED and NCCF. With a **₹7,200 crore Budget allocation for 2026–27,** PM-AASHA strengthens effective price-support interventions. Digital reforms, including **Aadhaar-enabled authentication, e-NAM**, **e-Samriddhi,** and **e-Samyukti,** have improved transparency and procurement efficiency. Support from the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund and expanded procurement coverage have further strengthened the scheme.

Ensuring Remunerative Prices to Farmers

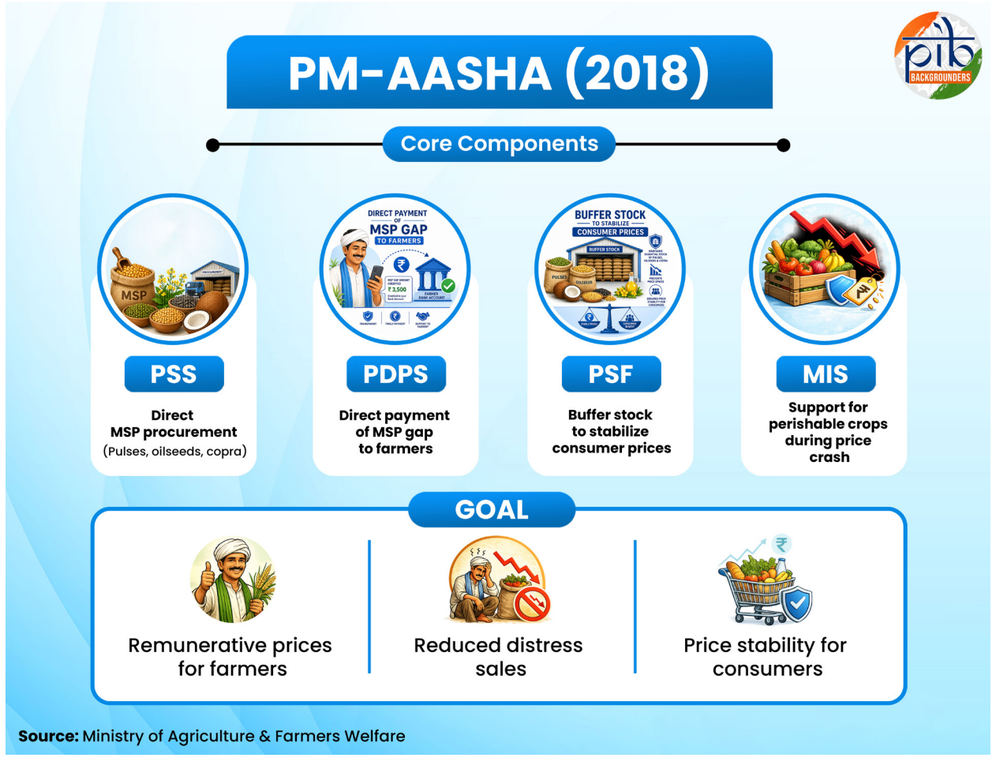
The government has taken several initiatives to ensure that the benefits of the Minimum Support Price (MSP) reach all farmers, including small and marginal farmers. One major initiative is the **Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM AASHA).** The Government launched the scheme in September 2018. It was designed to ensure remunerative prices for farmers while maintaining price stability for consumers.

PM AASHA brings together multiple price support mechanisms under a unified framework. Each mechanism is implemented according to the crop and market conditions. The scheme strengthens MSP implementation and reduces distress sales among farmers. It also stabilises farm incomes while ensuring food price stability for consumers.

Under PM AASHA, procurement arrangements begin before each marketing season. Central nodal agencies and state governments prepare procurement infrastructure before crops reach the markets. This coordinated approach ensures timely procurement operations and strengthens effective MSP implementation across the country.

Policy design and institutional framework

PM AASHA broadly consists of four key components: Price Support Scheme (PSS), Price Stabilization Funds (PSF), Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS), and Market Intervention Scheme (MIS).



Source: Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare

1. Price Support Scheme (PSS)

This scheme ensures procurement of crop at MSP when market prices fall below MSP during harvest. It mainly covers pulses, oilseeds, and copra. Procurement is carried out through agencies such as the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) and the National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India Limited (NCCF) at the request of state governments. Only registered farmers with valid land records are eligible, which ensures direct benefit without intermediaries. This helps prevent distress selling and ensures income stability for farmers during price crashes.

From the 2024–25 procurement year, under the Price Support Scheme (PSS), procurement of pulses, oilseeds, and copra is initially allowed up to 25% of a State/UT's production. Additional procurement beyond this limit may be approved by the Committee of

Secretaries up to 25% of national production. However, to boost domestic pulse output and reduce imports, procurement of Tur, Urad, and Masur is permitted up to 100% of State production.

2. Price Stabilization Fund (PSF)

The Price Stabilization Fund (PSF) protects consumers from price volatility by maintaining buffer stocks of essential commodities like pulses, onions, and potatoes. It was set up to stabilize the prices of key agri-horticultural products. Commodities are procured during harvest and released in lean seasons to control price spikes and ensure affordability. PSF is now merged with PM-AASHA but continues to be managed by the Department of Consumer Affairs.

3. Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS)

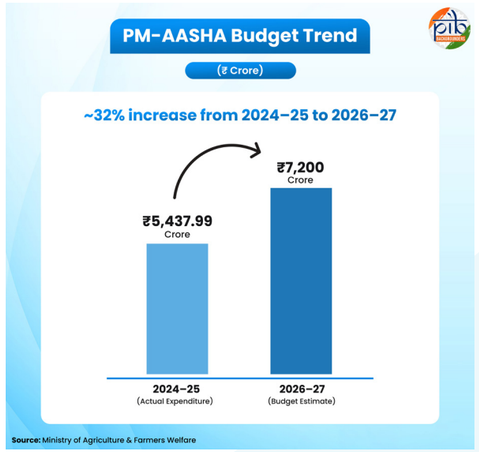
Under PDPS, farmers' produce is not physically procured. Instead, they are paid the price difference between the MSP and the actual market price in the notified market, up to 15% of the MSP value, directly into their bank accounts. This scheme is mainly used for oilseeds and reduces the need for large procurement infrastructure. It promotes market-based selling while still ensuring MSP protection to farmers.

4. Market Intervention Scheme (MIS)

The Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) is designed to procure a range of perishable agricultural and horticultural commodities. It targets products such as tomatoes, onions, and potatoes for which a Minimum Support Price does not apply. The scheme activates when market prices drop by at least 10% over the previous normal season's rates. It operates through cost-sharing between the Centre and State governments for the operations undertaken by Central Nodal Agencies like NAFED and NCCF. This scheme is especially useful during glut situations when supply exceeds demand.

Enhanced Financial Support Under PM-AASHA

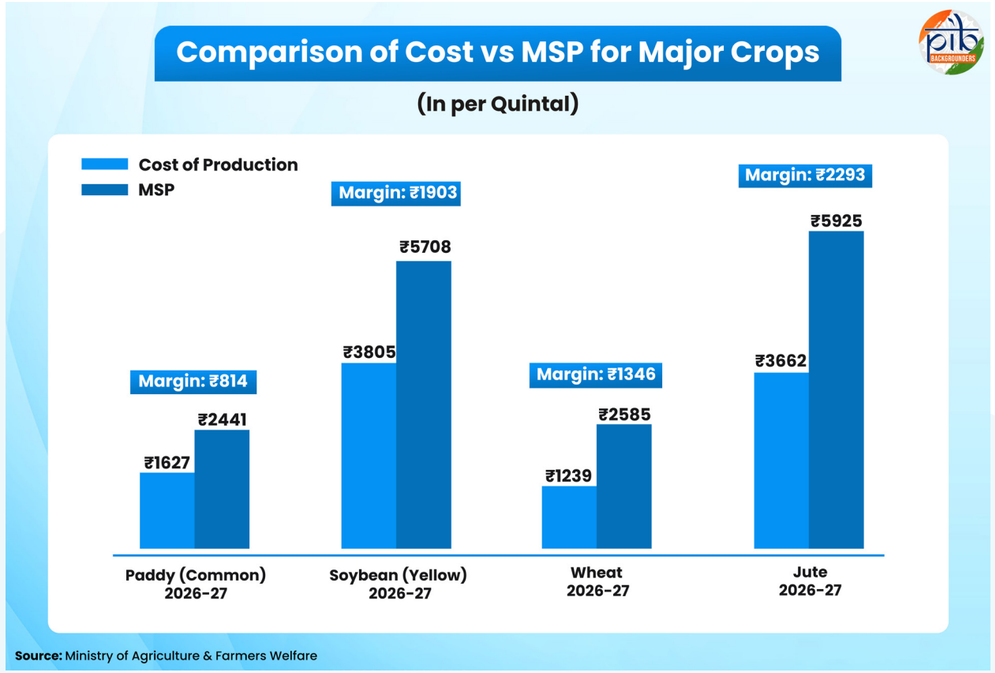
Under the Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Yojana (PM-AASHA), the budget allocation has steadily increased over the years. In 2024–25, the actual expenditure under the scheme was **₹5437.99 crore.** The budget increased to ₹6,941.36 crore in 2025–26 and was further raised to ₹7,200.00 crore in 2026-27. This reflects the government's focus on ensuring income support for farmers and strengthening price assurance mechanisms.



From Cost to Confidence: Strengthening Farmer Remunerative Returns

Higher Minimum Support Prices over production costs strengthen farmers' income security while encouraging sustained cultivation of key crops, supported by schemes under PM-AASHA. In **2026–27,** paddy (common) cost **₹1,627 per quintal,** while its MSP was ₹2,441 per quintal, yielding a margin of ₹814. Soybean (yellow) cost **₹3,805 per quintal,** while its MSP was **₹5,708 per quintal,** yielding a margin of **₹1,903.**

In 2026–27, wheat has a production cost of **₹1,239 per quintal** and an MSP of **₹2,585 per quintal,** ensuring a **₹1,346** margin. **Meanwhile, jute** has a production cost of **₹3,662 per quintal** and an MSP of **₹5,925 per quintal,** providing the highest margin of **₹2,293.** These remunerative MSP margins reinforce the objectives of PM-AASHA by strengthening price



assurance and improving farmers' confidence in agricultural markets.

Overall, MSP consistently exceeds the cost of production across crops and years, and PM-AASHA further strengthens this system by ensuring better price realization for farmers. This highlights a supportive framework that promotes stable income and growth in the agricultural sector.

Strengthening Farm-to-Market Connectivity

The Government has undertaken several initiatives to strengthen agricultural marketing and post-harvest infrastructure, such as AIF and e-NAM. The Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) has sanctioned loans worth **₹96,426 crore** for 2,14,437 projects, mobilizing investments exceeding ₹1,66,179 lakh crore. The e-NAM platform has integrated 1,656 mandis across 23 States and 4 Union Territories, facilitating trade worth **₹4,94,847 crore.** It has registered 4,776 FPOs on e-NAM and onboarded 7,334 FPOs onto Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC). The government has also sanctioned **50,249 warehouses** with **992.6 lakh metric tonnes** storage capacity alongside 25,081 agricultural marketing infrastructure projects.

Recent PM-AASHA reforms introduced biometric farmer authentication, direct procurement from pre-registered farmers, transportation support for Tomato, Onion, and Potato (TOP) crops, and price differential payments under the Market Intervention Scheme.

Bihar and Chhattisgarh: Advancing PM-AASHA Implementation

In **Bihar,** organized **procurement of masoor (lentil) has been initiated for the first time** through the National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India (NCCF). This marks a significant step towards strengthening pulse procurement under PM-AASHA to facilitate procurement, **48 Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs).** As on 10th August, 2026, NCCF **1042.65 MT of masoor** has been **procured it registered 358 farmers and benefited 285. During the same period, NAFED has also procured 1,814.13 MT of masoor It registered 495 farmers and benefited 455 farmers have been benefitted.**

In Chhattisgarh, procurement operations under PM-AASHA have been strengthened through a network of **200 operational PACS and 12 FPOs.** As on 10th August, 2026, NCCF has procured 18392.228 MT of chana, 22.231 MT of masoor, 1035.0205 MT of Mustard. It registered 21,721 farmers and benefited 13,790 farmers. During the same period, **NAFED** has procured **17,020.65 MT of chana** and **355.05 MT of masoor.** It registered **46,146 farmers** and benefited **13,673 farmers.** These initiatives have strengthened MSP procurement, improved market access, and supported region-specific pulse self-sufficiency goals.

Securing Farmer Incomes, Strengthening Markets

PM-AASHA has emerged as a strong and structured mechanism to support farmers through assured procurement, price stabilization, and effective market interventions. This enables the timely procurement of key crops like pulses, oilseeds, and copra through agencies such as NAFED and NCCF. The establishment of additional procurement centres has further strengthened market access and collective empowerment of farmers.

Digital reforms and infrastructure support have improved transparency, efficiency, and reach of procurement operations across states. Collectively, these efforts **ensure better price realization** for farmers, **reduce distress sales,** and **promote a stable and resilient agricultural economy** in the country.

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26

Turning the Wheel of Heritage

Sarnath’s Path to the World Heritage List

Published on: August 26, 2026

India's rich cultural heritage has gained another global recognition with the inscription of the Ancient Buddhist Site of Sarnath on the UNESCO World Heritage List at the 48th Session of the World Heritage Committee in Busan, South Korea. As the place where Lord Buddha delivered his first sermon, Sarnath is one of the four principal Buddhist pilgrimage sites associated with his life. The inscription takes India's tally to 45 UNESCO World Heritage properties, placing the country sixth globally and second in the Asia Pacific region. It also reinforces India's identity as the birthplace of Buddhism and its commitment to preserving heritage of Outstanding Universal Value.

A Milestone for India's Heritage

Heritage is more than a reminder of the past. It shapes the present and guides the future. It reflects the stories, traditions, and values that communities preserve and pass on across generations. Cultural and natural heritage are irreplaceable sources of identity, knowledge and inspiration.

On the evening of **25 July 2026**, at the **48th Session** of the **World Heritage Committee** in **Busan**, **South Korea,** the **Ancient Buddhist Site of Sarnath** was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. With this inscription, India now has **45** World Heritage properties recognised by UNESCO.

This recognition is more than a new entry on the World Heritage List. It celebrates India's rich cultural legacy, shaped by diverse traditions, remarkable architecture and a long history. It also reinforces the spirit of the World Heritage Convention, which seeks to protect places of Outstanding Universal Value for the benefit of present and future generations across 196 States Parties.



The **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**, better known as UNESCO, promotes the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage that holds exceptional value for humanity. This commitment is rooted in the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by UNESCO in 1972.

As of July 2026, UNESCO's World Heritage List carried **1,273 properties** across **173 countries**, comprising **991 cultural**, **240 natural** and **42 mixed sites**. As of October 2024, 1**96 States Parties** have ratified the **World Heritage Convention** making it one of the most celebrated and acknowledged conventions by any United Nations Agency.

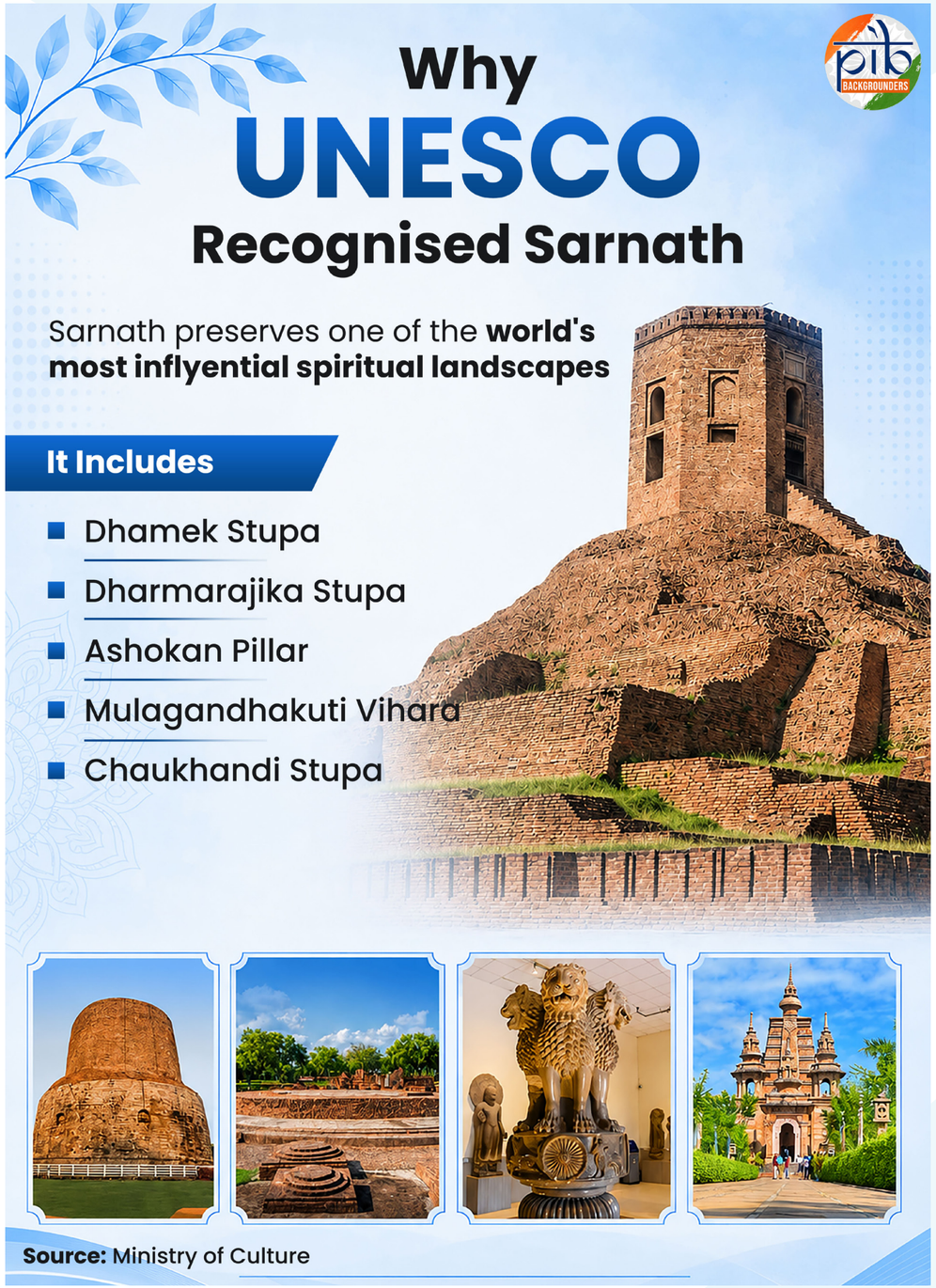
The idea of World Heritage is unique because it extends beyond national boundaries. While these sites remain within the territories of individual countries, their significance belongs to all humanity. They are recognised as a shared legacy that deserves collective care and protection for generations to come.

The Sarnath Story

Sarnath holds a special place in Buddhist tradition. Located in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, it is one of the four key sites of Buddhist pilgrimage. The UNESCO World Heritage inscription covers two connected components: the Chaukhandi Stupa and the Archaeological Remains of Sarnath. The archaeological complex includes the Dhamek Stupa, Dharmarajika Stupa, Mulagandhakuti Vihara, the Ashokan Pillar and several other ancient remains. Together, they preserve the historic landscape of this ancient site.

Known in Buddhist tradition as Rishipatana, Ishipatana and Mrigadava, Sarnath is the place where Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermon in the 6th century BCE. This sermon, known as **Dharmachakra Pravartana** or the "Turning of the Wheel of the Law", marked the beginning of the Buddhist Sangha and the establishment of the principles of the Noble Eightfold Path.

Over the centuries, Sarnath developed through royal, monastic and lay patronage. Numerous stupas, temples and viharas were constructed around the place associated with Buddha's first sermon and his meeting with his first five disciples. The site reflects nearly



sixteen centuries of continuous development. Its monuments date from the pre Mauryan period of the 4th-3rd centuries BCE to the 12th century CE, when Sarnath declined and was destroyed. The site remained obscure until its rediscovery in the 18th century.

The Road to Recognition

Sarnath's journey to World Heritage recognition has been a long and careful process. The ancient site was included in India's Tentative List of World Heritage in **1998**.



The proposal for its inscription was submitted for consideration by the World Heritage Committee in **January 2025**. This was followed by an eighteen-month long process involving technical meetings with UNESCO's advisory bodies and an evaluation mission by **ICOMOS** to review the worthiness of the proposed property. ICOMOS, acting as one of the advisory bodies of UNESCO, provides evaluations of cultural and mixed properties proposed for inscription. The process culminated in the historic decision taken at the **48th Session of the World Heritage Committee in Busan, South Korea**.

The **Ancient Buddhist Site of Sarnath** was nominated under **criteria (iii) and (vi)** of the **UNESCO World Heritage List** (under the framework of the **World Heritage Convention**).

Criterion (iii) recognizes Sarnath's enduring spiritual significance as one of the four principal destinations of Buddhist pilgrimage. This is reflected in the many religious buildings and monuments constructed and rebuilt at the site over the centuries.

Criterion (vi) recognizes Sarnath's direct and tangible association with events in the life of the Buddha that hold outstanding significance for the Buddhist community. These include his first sermon and his meeting with his first disciples after attaining of the Sambodhi (enlightenment) at Bodh Gaya. The numerous structures built at Sarnath over the centuries reflect the continuing importance of these events, the Buddha's teachings and the concept of Triratna.

The inscription also reflects the wider purpose of the World Heritage Convention. UNESCO seeks to preserve and promote heritage of Outstanding Universal Value for present and future generations.

Sarnath: A Global Legacy of Peace

Sarnath is far more than an archaeological site. It remains a global pilgrimage destination for Buddhists from Japan, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Vietnam, South Korea, Cambodia, Mongolia and many other countries. As one of the world's most revered Buddhist pilgrimage centres, it reinforces India's identity as the birthplace of Buddhism and serves as a bridge for cultural ties and international engagement with Buddhist nations.

With Sarnath's inscription, three of the four principal Buddhist pilgrimage sites associated with the life of the Buddha are now included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. These are Lumbini in Nepal, the Mahabodhi Temple at Bodh Gaya in Bihar and Sarnath in Uttar Pradesh. They join other important Buddhist World Heritage sites, including Sanchi, Nalanda and Ajanta in India, Anuradhapura in Sri Lanka, Paharpur in Bangladesh, and Taxila and Takht-i-Bahi in present day Pakistan.

The recognition also reaffirms India's commitment to protect Sarnath's Outstanding Universal Value. The Government will manage tourism sustainably and prevent unplanned development within the buffer zone to preserve the site's authenticity and integrity for future generations.

Enabling India's Heritage Success

Behind every successful nomination lies years of institutional groundwork. India's approach to World Heritage properties rests on close coordination between central agencies, State Governments, and international bodies.

Ministry of Culture

The Ministry of Culture leads India's engagement with UNESCO on cultural matters. It implements India's commitments under UNESCO's cultural conventions and coordinates nominations for World Heritage Sites and Intangible Cultural Heritage elements. The Ministry also promotes international heritage protection standards and strengthens cultural diplomacy through UNESCO and international cultural cooperation.

Archaeological Survey of India

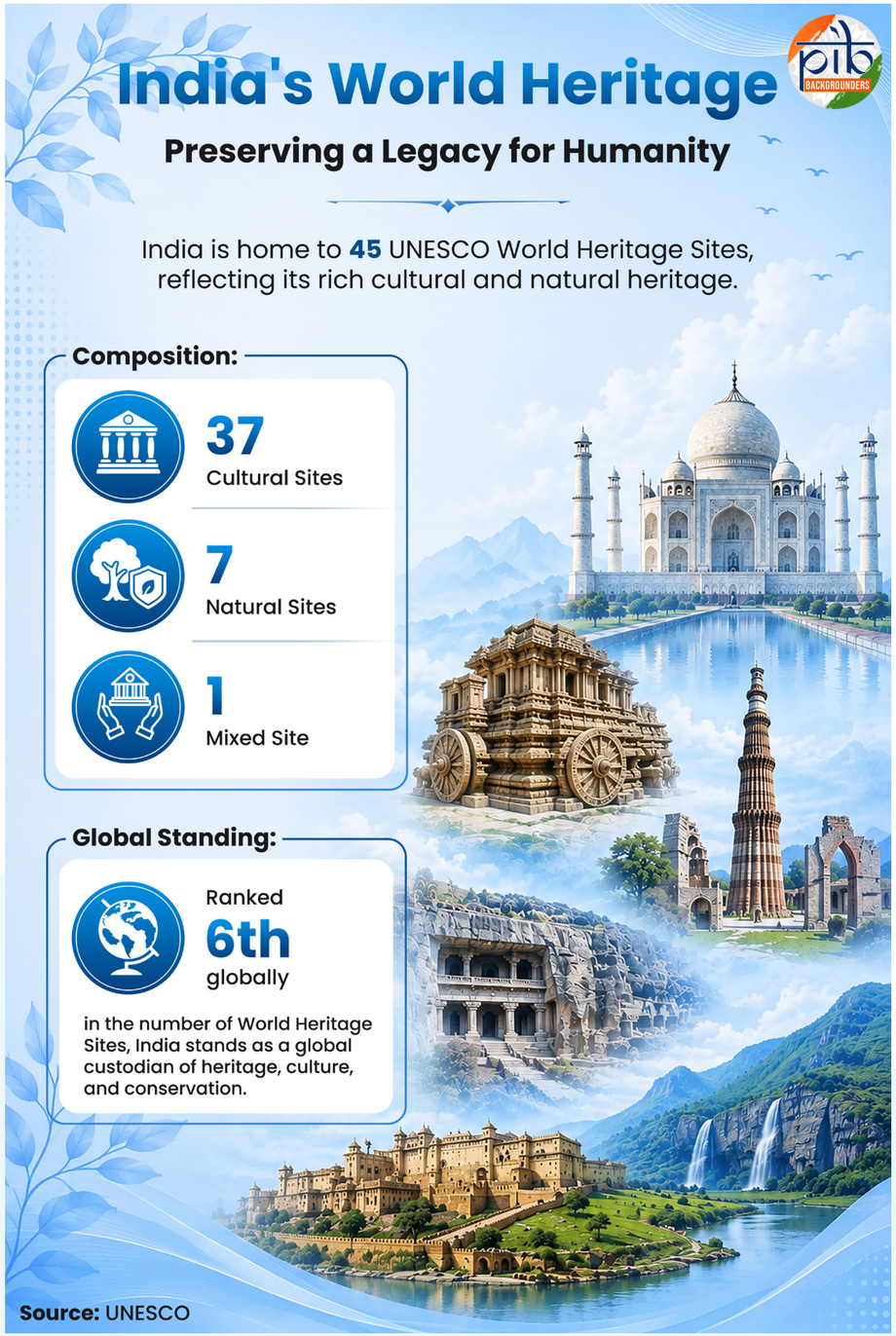
The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is the nodal agency for World Heritage related matters on behalf of the Government of India. It undertakes the conservation and maintenance of 3688 centrally protected monuments, including **28 World Heritage** properties. Its work also includes enforcement of two legislations, namely, the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 and the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972 apart from providing visitor facilities such as drinking water, toilets, pathways and landscaping. Conservation and maintenance are carried out regularly, based on the needs of each monument and the availability of resources.

India's Growing World Heritage List

Our heritage is not just built of stones, scripts or ruins. It lives in every whisper of a temple wall, every carving on ancient forts and every folk song passed down through generations. It tells the story of India's civilisation and reflects the country's rich cultural and natural legacy.

Country	World Heritage Sites (as of July 2026)
Italy	62
China	61
France	56
Germany	55
Spain	50
India	**45**
Mexico	36
United Kingdom	35
Russia	33





Today, India is home to **45 UNESCO World Heritage properties**, comprising **37 cultural, 7 natural and 1 mixed site**. This places the country **sixth globally** and **second in the Asia Pacific region**.

India's first entries came in a single year. Agra Fort, along with the Taj Mahal, Ellora Caves and Ajanta Caves, was inscribed in 1983, opening a list that has since grown to cover forts, temples, caves, railways, stepwells, planned cities and national parks.

Last year, the **Maratha Military Landscapes** of India were inscribed at the **47th** Session of the World Heritage Committee, held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. With Sarnath's inscription this year at the 48th Session in Busan, India's tally now stands at 45 properties, keeping the country in sixth place globally and second within the Asia Pacific region. India's Tentative List has also grown, now standing at **69 properties**, the mandatory first step for any future World Heritage nomination.

List of UNESCO World Heritage sites in India

Year	Site	State / UT	Category
1983	Agra Fort	Uttar Pradesh	Cultural
1983	Ajanta Caves	Maharashtra	Cultural
1983	Ellora Caves	Maharashtra	Cultural
1983	Taj Mahal	Uttar Pradesh	Cultural
1984	Sun Temple, Konarak	Odisha	Cultural
1984	Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram	Tamil Nadu	Cultural
1985	Kaziranga National Park	Assam	Natural
1985	Keoladeo National Park	Rajasthan	Natural
1985	Manas Wildlife Sanctuary	Assam	Natural
1986	Khajuraho Group of Monuments	Madhya Pradesh	Cultural
1986	Fatehpur Sikri	Uttar Pradesh	Cultural
1986	Churches and Convents of Goa	Goa	Cultural
1986	Group of Monuments at Hampi	Karnataka	Cultural
1987	Sundarbans National Park	West Bengal	Natural
1987	Elephanta Caves	Maharashtra	Cultural
1987	Group of Monuments at Pattadakal	Karnataka	Cultural
1987, 2004	Great Living Chola Temples	Tamil Nadu	Cultural
1988, 2005	Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks	Uttarakhand	Natural
1989	Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi	Madhya Pradesh	Cultural
1993	Humayun's Tomb, Delhi	Delhi	Cultural

1993	Qutb Minar and its Monuments, Delhi	Delhi	Cultural
1999, 2005, 2008	Mountain Railways of India	WB, Tamil Nadu, HP	Cultural
2002	Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya	Bihar	Cultural
2003	Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka	Madhya Pradesh	Cultural
2004	Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park	Gujarat	Cultural
2004	Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus	Maharashtra	Cultural
2007	Red Fort Complex	Delhi	Cultural
2010	The Jantar Mantar, Jaipur	Rajasthan	Cultural
2012	Western Ghats	Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu	Natural
2013	Hill Forts of Rajasthan	Rajasthan	Cultural
2014	Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area	Himachal Pradesh	Natural
2014	Rani-ki-Vav (the Queen's Stepwell) at Patan	Gujarat	Cultural
2016	Archaeological Site of Nalanda Mahavihara	Bihar	Cultural
2016	Khangchendzonga National Park	Sikkim	Mixed
2016	The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier	Chandigarh	Cultural
2017	Historic City of Ahmedabad	Gujarat	Cultural
2018	Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai	Maharashtra	Cultural
2019	Jaipur City	Rajasthan	Cultural
2021	Dholavira: a Harappan City	Gujarat	Cultural
2021	Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple	Telangana	Cultural
2023	Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas	Karnataka	Cultural
2023	Santiniketan	West Bengal	Cultural
2024	Moidams – the Mound-Burial System of the Ahom Dynasty	Assam	Cultural

2025	Maratha Military Landscapes of India	Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu	Cultural
2026	**Ancient Buddhist Site of Sarnath**	**Uttar Pradesh**	**Cultural**

Government's Initiatives to Promote India's Rich Cultural Heritage

India has taken several meaningful steps to protect, restore, and promote its vast cultural and natural heritage. These initiatives reflect the government's commitment to safeguarding the country's timeless traditions and historical treasures. India's rich heritage is being protected through focused efforts in conservation, digitisation, international cooperation, and public participation.

Retrieval of Antiquities

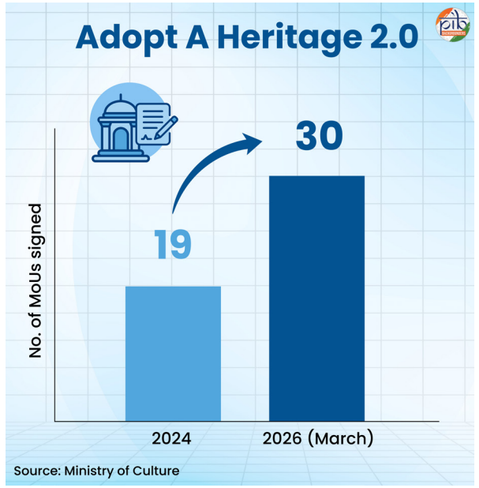
India has repatriated **669 antiquities**, including **656 since 2014**. The effort involves the Ministry of Culture, ASI, Indian Missions and enforcement agencies. Recently, **657 Indian art objects** were handed over by US law enforcement agencies to the Embassy of India. Key returns include the **Chola-period Shiva Nataraja, Saint Sundarar with Paravai,** and **Somaskanda**.

Adopt a Heritage

Launched in September 2017 and revamped in September 2023, the **Adopt a Heritage 2.0** programme creates a framework for collaboration with private companies, public sector units, NGOs, trusts, and societies.

It focuses on developing and maintaining visitor-friendly amenities at **Protected Monuments of National Importance**. Support is provided through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and other contributions. The aim is to improve the visitor experience.

As on March 2026, a total of 30 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) have been signed under the Adopt a Heritage 2.0 programme.



The programme is already demonstrating visible outcomes in terms of improved site management and enhanced public engagement. This is reflected in strong visitor participation at adopted monuments, which collectively recorded a **total footfall of 13.59 million visitors during FY 2024–25**.

These figures indicate strong visitor interest and suggest that improved amenities, services, and on-site facilitation under the programme are contributing to better visitor experience and higher engagement at adopted heritage sites.

Gyan Bharatam Mission

The **Gyan Bharatam Mission**, launched in 2025, is the government's flagship initiative aimed at preserving, digitising, and disseminating India's vast manuscript heritage. It focuses on preserving ancient knowledge systems recorded in manuscripts. It also makes them accessible for research and public engagement through digital repositories and conservation networks.

The initiative further integrates modern technologies to safeguard these fragile manuscripts and ensure they are globally accessible.

Additionally, the **National Manuscript Survey** was also launched in **March 2026** for identifying, documenting and creating a comprehensive national database of manuscripts. During the survey, more than 1.19 crore manuscripts have been reported. The total number of digitized manuscripts available across the country is over 8 lakh, out of which, more than 4.40 lakh manuscripts are available on Gyan Bharatam portal at present for public access, in view mode which is accessible state-wise.

The National Archives of India is also digitising archival records through **Abhilekh Patal**. As of February 2026, the portal hosted **18.23 crore pages, 0.73 crore reference media and 0.38 crore digitised records**.

National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities

The National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities is implemented under ASI. It plays a crucial role in supporting conservation by building a reliable

national database of India's built heritage and antiquities. The Mission aims to document and create an inventory of all monuments and antiquities in the country, information that directly informs planning, prioritisation and monitoring of conservation work.

As of March 2026, NMMA has documented **1.84 lakh monuments**, including built heritage and sites. It also documented **17.20 lakh** antiquities across India.

Preserving the Past, Shaping the Future

India's cultural heritage is a living legacy that continues to inspire, educate, and connect people across generations. The inscription of Sarnath reflects the country's sustained commitment to conserving places of exceptional value while strengthening their role in education, cultural exchange, and sustainable development. As India moves forward, protecting its heritage will remain central to preserving its civilisational legacy and sharing it with the world.

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Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojana (PM-VBRY)

Expanding Formal Employment, Securing India's Workforce

Published on: August 01, 2026

India's workforce is a catalyst of its journey towards Viksit Bharat 2047. Quality employment is central to inclusive growth. The Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojana (PM-VBRY) supports this vision by encouraging first-time employment and incentivising employers to create new formal jobs. Through an EPFO-linked, technology-driven framework, the scheme promotes workforce formalisation, expands social security coverage and strengthens financial security for workers. By combining employment generation, financial inclusion, transparent implementation, PM-VBRY is building a skilled, secure, future-ready workforce to support India's long-term economic growth.

The Promise of India's Demographic Dividend

India's young and dynamic workforce is one of its greatest strengths. It offers a unique opportunity to drive economic growth and deliver the vision of **Viksit Bharat 2047.** Millions of young people enter the labour market each year. Expanding formal employment with social security is essential to transform this demographic advantage into sustained and inclusive development.

The **Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojana (PM-VBRY)** reinforces the national priority by encouraging first-time employment and supporting job creation. Through a transparent, **Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)- administrated framework,** it strengthens workforce formalisation while creating opportunities for both employees and employers.

Turning Opportunity into Employment

Announced in August 2025, PM-VBRY is being implemented over a two-year period from **1 August 2025 to 31 July 2027,** with an outlay of **₹99,446 crore.** On **1 August 2026,** the scheme completes one year of implementation, **marking an important milestone in India's efforts to expand formal employment and social security coverage.**

PM-VBRY aims to generate employment for over **3.5 crore people,** including **1.92 crore first-time employees.** The scheme encourages young people to enter the organised workforce through EPFO registration. It also expands social security coverage across various sectors, particularly labour-intensive manufacturing. It **complements the National Manufacturing Mission by promoting employment in new and expanding industries.**



A Win-Win for Employees and Employers

At the heart of PM-VBRY is a **two-part incentive framework,** with distinct provisions for employees and employers.

Part A: Incentive to First-Time Employees

- First-time employees earning up to **₹1,00,000 per month** are eligible for this part.
- They receive a **one-time incentive** equivalent to one month's EPF wage, capped at **₹15,000.**
- The incentive is paid in **two instalments.** The first is paid after **six months** of service and the second after **twelve months** of continuous service, following completion of a financial literacy programme.
- A portion of the incentive is invested in a designated savings instrument, encouraging financial security and savings. It can be withdrawn by the employee at a later date.

Part B: Support to Employers

- Employers are **eligible for incentives for employees** with salaries of up to ₹1,00,000 per month.
- Employers receive up to **₹3,000 per month** for **two years** for every eligible additional employee retained for at least **six months.**



- The support lowers hiring costs and encourages sustained employment generation.
- For the manufacturing sector, incentives are **extended to the third and fourth years as well,** owing to high employment generation potential.

PMVBRY's IMPACT

Within its first year, PM-VBRY has strengthened workforce formalisation by encouraging first-time hiring and expanding social security coverage. The scheme is helping bring more workers into the organised sector while



Source: Ministry of Labour and Employment

encouraging employers to create new jobs across industries.

- **Over 72 lakh first-time employees** have joined the formal workforce since August 2025.
- Nearly 30**% of beneficiaries are women,** promoting greater female participation in formal employment.
- **More than 15 lakh beneficiaries** have already received employment-linked incentives under the scheme.
- By linking employment with EPFO registration and direct benefit transfers, PM-VBRY is strengthening India's organised labour market and creating a more secure talent pool.

PM-VBRY's Digital Governance and Efficient Delivery

PM-VBRY leverages digital technologies to ensure transparent, efficient and accountable implementation. The scheme enables seamless verification, benefits transfer and real-time monitoring.

- The scheme is implemented through a **fully digital, EPFO-linked platform,** ensuring seamless verification and efficient benefit delivery.
- It uses Aadhaar-based authentication, **Universal Account Numbers (UANs),** and regular **Electronic Challan-cum-Return (ECR)** filings. Incentives are available only after the UAN is authenticated through Face Authentication Technology on the UMANG App. This ensures compliance while expanding social security coverage.
- Incentives are transferred directly to Aadhaar-linked bank accounts through **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT),** enhancing transparency and accountability.
- **A PM-VBRY portal** facilitates end-to-end scheme implementation and provides real-time monitoring of beneficiaries and sector-wise progress.

Awareness about the scheme and its provisions is promoted through extensive outreach efforts across the country. **Cross-Functional Teams** comprising officials from EPFO, **Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC),** and the **Chief Labour Commissioner (CLC)** support these efforts **by increasing participation at the grassroots level.**

Empowering India's Workforce

As India advances towards sustained and inclusive growth, quality employment will remain central to improving livelihoods and economic resilience. **By encouraging first-time employment and supporting job creation, PM-VBRY is strengthening India's formal employment ecosystem and expanding social security coverage.** As the scheme completes its first year, it reaffirms the Government's commitment to unlocking the full potential of India's demographic dividend.

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PAIMANA: Strengthening Data-Driven Infrastructure Governance

Published on: August 10, 2026

PAIMANA – An Overview

Efficient monitoring of infrastructure projects is essential for timely implementation, transparency and governance. To support this, **PAIMANA (Project Assessment, Infrastructure Monitoring and Analytics for Nation-Building)** was launched on 25 September 2025 as a web-based platform for monitoring Central Sector infrastructure projects in India. The platform replaces the earlier OCMS-2006 (Online Computerized Monitoring System). Developed by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), PAIMANA is used for monitoring ongoing Central Sector infrastructure **projects costing ₹150 crore** or more.

MoSPI has launched a module called PAIMANA-CRIP on 08th July 2026, replacing DPIIT's Integrated Project Monitoring Portal (IPMP), envisioned to evolve as Central Repository of Infrastructure Projects. The project-related data for PRAGATI (Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation), PMG and other review mechanisms would subsequently be sourced and updated through the same.

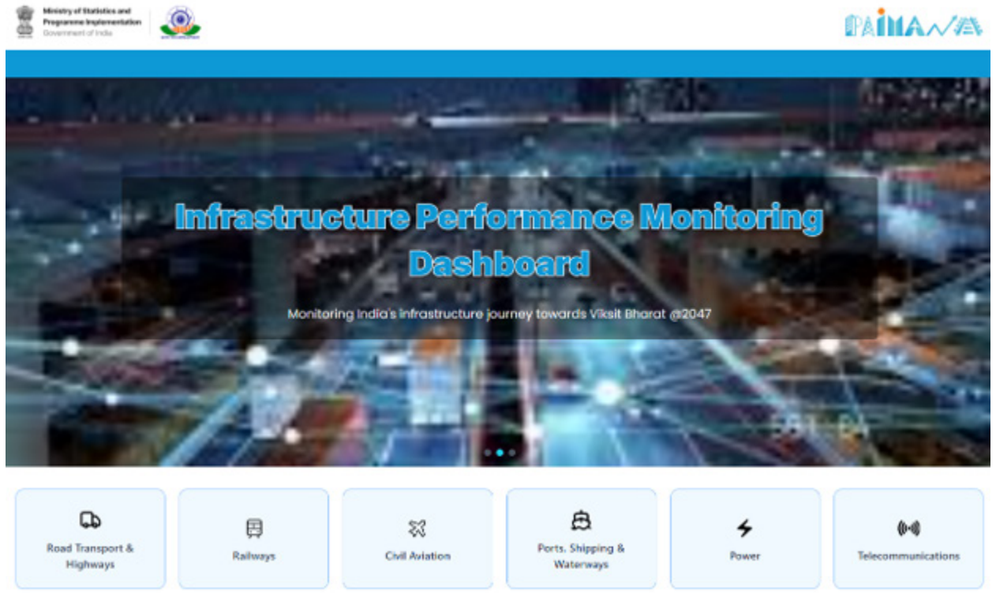
Over 20+ Ministries/Departments/ Implementing Agencies regularly update the information of projects on PAIMANA-CRIP through data entry or via API (Application Programming Interfaces) modes.

Currently, the Project Monitoring vertical of the PAIMANA portal is integrated with DPIIT's IPMP/ IIG through API-based data exchange. Over 60 per cent of projects on PAIMANA are being updated automatically through APIs from the MIS or web platforms of respective Ministries/ Departments.

In addition to strengthening project monitoring, PAIMANA has expanded its role to support infrastructure performance monitoring through a dedicated Performance Monitoring Dashboard. Launched on 16th April, 2026, the dashboard tracks infrastructure performance across major sub-sectors through a comprehensive set of indicators. It marks a significant advancement towards data-driven governance and evidence-based policymaking.

Performance Monitoring Dashboard at a Glance

The Performance Monitoring Dashboard brings together performance indicators across key infrastructure sectors in a unified digital platform. The indicators are compiled from official data provided/published by the concerned Ministries and Departments and are updated periodically based on the latest available information. The dashboard presents these data through interactive visualizations and analytical tools, enabling users to monitor trends and assess sectoral performance over time.



Key Features of the Performance Monitoring Dashboard

- The Performance Monitoring Dashboard is built on a comprehensive indicator framework developed in consultation with the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP). The framework aligns with the **Harmonized Master List (HML) of Infrastructure (2022)**, issued by the **Department of Economic Affairs (DEA)**, which serves as the national classification framework for infrastructure sectors eligible for policy support, investment planning and financing-related benefits.
- Indicators have been streamlined to prevent overlap with established indices. Examples include the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) and the Eight Core Industries.
- A detailed indicator framework spans **six infrastructure sub-sectors**. These are Power, Civil Aviation, Telecommunications, Railways, Roads, and Ports, Shipping & Waterways.

- The Performance Monitoring Dashboard has now been expanded to 165 indicators. This expansion includes the addition of 54 new indicators, significantly enhancing the comprehensiveness of infrastructure performance monitoring.
- A **single digital interface** allows monitoring of performance sector by sector. It offers interactive visualisation and time-series analysis for policymakers, researchers and stakeholders.
- A **centralised dashboard** delivers one cross-sector view of infrastructure sectors. This capability deepens inter-sectoral analysis.
- The current framework gauges sectoral performance through growth rates. It reviews year-on-year, month-on-month and cumulative growth, targets and capacity utilisation in chosen sectors.

Distribution of Performance Indicators Across Sub-sectors (as on 16th July, 2026)

S. No.	Infrastructure Sub-sector	Total Number of Indicators
1	Civil Aviation	31
2	Roads	8
3	Power	14
4	Ports, Shipping & Waterways	62
5	Telecommunications	13
6	Railways	37
Total		**165**

The Revamped Monitoring Approach

The revamped approach marks a shift from measuring sectoral outputs (production) to assessing multi-dimensional infrastructure performance across the dimensions of **access:** which measure how widely infrastructure is available; **quality:** which assess its usefulness and reliability; **fiscal cost & revenue:** which assess allocation and use of financial resources for infrastructure; **utilization:** evaluate how efficiently infrastructure is used for its defined purpose; **affordability:** determine whether it is economically accessible to people. The above categorisation of indicators improves analysis by moving beyond simple output tracking to a more holistic evaluation of infrastructure performance across multiple dimensions, enabling informed policy decisions and targeted interventions.

Engaging Stakeholders

Stakeholders, including concerned Ministries and Departments, receive regular updates on their project execution. These updates draw on the data analytics generated within PAIMANA. Such analytics help them act wherever project execution needs attention.

- Ongoing coordination takes place through monthly review meetings and other exchanges. This practice reinforces **evidence-based monitoring** by providing timely updates on performance indicators.
- Login credentials for tailored dashboards are available with every Line Ministry and Department. Consequently, they can directly access the portal to review project progress.

Infrastructure Projects Monitored (Data as of June 2026)

- As of June 2026, 1,847 ongoing projects were under watch across 17 Central Ministries and Departments. Together they carry a revised cost of ₹ 40.54 lakh crore.
- Spending on these projects has so far reached ₹ 21.97 lakh crore. This equals about 54.18 per cent of the revised cost, reflecting steady advancement.
- Many projects have reached advanced stages of completion. Around 709 projects (~39%) exceed 80% physical progress. About 337 projects (~19%) have passed 80% financial completion.

- The Transport & Logistics sector leads in the number of ongoing projects. It holds 1,341 projects worth ₹22.32 lakh crore, reflecting the focus on connectivity.
- The ongoing infrastructure projects include 769 mega projects, each costing ₹1,000 crore or more, worth ₹30.51 lakh crore.
- They also include 1,078 major projects, each costing ₹150–1,000 crore, worth ₹5.10 lakh crore.

Ministry / Department-wise Progress of Infrastructure Projects

- The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways records the largest project count. It manages **1,022 projects** (55%) with a revised cost share of **Rs. 9.89 lakh crore** (24%).
- The Ministry of Railways is carrying out **255 projects** (14%). These carry a combined revised cost of **Rs. 8.69 lakh crore** (21%).
- The Ministry of Coal is running **121 projects** (7%). Their combined revised cost stands at **Rs. 2.22 lakh crore** (6%).
- Four other ministries/departments are also implementing a significant number of projects.
- The Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas is managing **105 projects** with a revised cost of **₹4.33 lakh crore**.
- The Ministry of Power is handling **98 projects** with a revised cost of **₹5.71 lakh crore**.
- The Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs is implementing **50 projects** with a revised cost of **₹3.65 lakh crore**.
- The Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation is managing **40 projects** with a revised cost of **₹2.04 lakh crore**.
- The other **156 projects** (8%) carry a combined revised cost of **Rs. 4.02 lakh crore** (10%). They span across several Ministries and Departments, such as Higher Education, Civil Aviation, Steel, Telecommunications, Labour & Employment, Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Health & Family Welfare, Mines, DPIIT, and Sports.

Towards Data-Driven Governance

The PAIMANA portal encapsulating modules of the Central repository of infrastructure projects along with outcomes as Reports/ dashboard on overview of Central sector projects costing ₹150 crores & above and the Performance monitoring dashboard would play significant stride towards transparency, efficiency and accountability. Their regular updates keep strengthening infrastructure oversight. They aid evidence-based policymaking and enable well-informed decisions. Overall, the effort promotes sustainable and inclusive infrastructure growth nationwide.

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GOBARdhan: Fuelling Clean Energy and Rural Growth

Published on: August 6, 2026

The Union Cabinet has approved GOBARdhan, India's National Unified Scheme for Compressed Biogas (CBG). The scheme has an outlay of ₹23,731 crore. The landmark national initiative aims to transform India's organic wealth into clean energy, rural prosperity and economic growth. Through an integrated framework it promotes CBG production by ensuring assured offtake, stable pricing, capital assistance, pipeline connectivity and improved access to finance. The scheme is designed to achieve nearly ten-fold growth in domestic CBG production. It will strengthen India's energy security, and provide a major boost to farmers, rural entrepreneurs, private investment, waste-to-wealth enterprises and the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

GOBARdhan: Turning Waste into the Engine of India's Growth

India currently meets nearly 50 per cent of its natural gas requirement through imports, making energy security a strategic priority. Recent geopolitical developments and disruptions along the Strait of Hormuz, a route that carries nearly 55 to 60 per cent of India's Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) imports, have underscored the importance of strengthening domestic energy production. In this context, the Union Cabinet approved GOBARdhan, the National Circular Bioenergy Scheme, with a total outlay of **₹23,731 crore** on **06 August 2026**.

Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan (GOBARdhan) was originally launched under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) in 2018 as an integral component of Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SWM), converting bio-waste - animal waste, kitchen leftovers, crop residue and market waste, into biogas and bio-slurry, thereby ensuring cleanliness in villages and improving rural lives.

Earlier, the Compressed Biogas (CBG) ecosystem was spread across four different ministries. To ensure better coordination and accelerate the sector's growth, the Government has consolidated the entire scheme under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. This reform enables a unified approach to policy, implementation and sectoral development.

The Scheme will be implemented from **FY 2026-27** to **FY 2035-36** and will establish Compressed Biogas as a major pillar of India's future energy mix.

Through assured demand, remunerative and stable pricing, capital assistance, pipeline infrastructure, credit guarantee and technology development, GOBARdhan will be providing the strong framework to scale up India's CBG sector nationwide.

Aim:

- To increase nearly ten-fold domestic CBG production
- mobilize large-scale private investment
- create a vibrant circular bioeconomy across the country.

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG)

Implementation Period: FY 2026-27 to FY 2035-36

Total Outlay: ₹23,731 crore

Vision:

- India's waste will fuel India's growth.
- India's villages will become centres of clean energy production.
- India's farmers will become partners in the nation's energy security.

From a Strong Foundation to National Scale

Over the past several years, the Government of India has systematically built the foundations of the CBG sector through:

- Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) initiative
- Market Development Assistance (MDA) Scheme for organic manure
- Biomass Aggregation Machinery (BAM) Scheme
- Development of Pipeline Infrastructure (DPI) Scheme
- Central Financial Assistance (CFA) for CBG plants under the National Bioenergy Programme



The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) is implementing the Biomass Aggregation Machinery (BAM) Scheme to support Compressed Biogas producers in procuring biomass aggregation equipment. The scheme has a total outlay of **₹564.75 crore**. As on 16 March 2026, **37 proposals** have been approved, with financial assistance of nearly **₹248 crore.**

To strengthen CBG evacuation and market access, MoPNG is also

implementing the Development of Pipeline Infrastructure (DPI) Scheme with a total outlay of **₹994.5 crore** for the period FY 2024-25 to FY 2028-29. So far, **₹56.31 crore** has been sanctioned under the scheme.

The Department of Fertilizers was implementing the MDA Scheme to promote organic fertilizers produced from GOBARdhan and CBG plants by providing **₹1,500 per metric tonne** for Fermented Organic Manure, Liquid Fermented Organic Manure and Phosphate Rich Organic Manure.

As on 4 March 2026, **120 CBG/Biogas plants** were registered on the Integrated Fertilizer Management System portal, and **44 MoUs** had been signed between Fertilizer Marketing Companies and Compressed Biogas operators. Between February 2025 and January 2026, 24 Fertilizer Marketing Companies organised **15,690 Kisan Sangoshthis** and awareness camps.

A two-year Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) project worth **₹11.79 crore** is supporting field demonstrations, while NITI Aayog is evaluating the scheme's overall impact. Under the scheme, **₹111.72 crore** has been released as Market Development Assistance up to 28 February 2026, including ₹28 crore in 2024-25 and ₹83.72 crore in 2025-26.

GOBARdhan now takes this progress to the next level. Administered by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, the Scheme creates one integrated platform across the entire CBG value chain.

A Strategic Opportunity for India

India's demand for natural gas is expanding across transport, households, industry and commercial sectors. CBG can meet a growing share of this demand through domestic renewable production. It will further strengthen energy resilience and reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels. Reduced energy import dependence will save over **₹40,000 Crore in forex.**

CBG is chemically equivalent to natural gas and can be seamlessly integrated into the existing gas ecosystem, combining the benefits of a renewable fuel with the reach and utility of India's expanding gas infrastructure.

Each CBG plant also creates a local circular economy around agricultural residue, cattle dung and other organic resources, generating opportunities in feedstock supply, transportation, plant operations and organic manure production, while supporting cleaner waste management and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

Six Growth Engines under GOBARdhan

To translate the vision of GOBARdhan into measurable outcomes on the ground, the scheme has been structured around six integrated components.

Component 1: Assured CBG Offtake

GOBARdhan establishes a dedicated CBG Offtake Assurance framework to provide a reliable and predictable market for producers. Procurement by City Gas Distribution (CGD) entities will support achievement of the notified CBG Obligation trajectory:

- 3% in FY 2026-27
- 4% in FY 2027-28
- 5% from FY 2028-29 onwards in CNG (Transport) and PNG (Domestic) segments.

The framework converts the blending obligation into a clear, long-term demand signal for the industry. Consistent implementation across CGD networks will improve project bankability, support capacity utilization and encourage long-term private investment.

Component 2: Stable CBG Pricing Framework

GOBARdhan introduces a government-backed administered price of ₹2,110 per Metric Million British Thermal Unit (MMBTU), equivalent to **₹105 per kilogram** of CBG, ensuring stable and remunerative pricing.

The framework provides long-term revenue visibility while protecting consumer affordability through a combination of Government support and a market-based cost-sharing mechanism.

With a minimum ten-year horizon, the pricing framework will provide producers with durable revenue certainty, commercially attractive returns and a stronger business case for investment and capacity expansion.



Component 3: Capital Assistance

Eligible greenfield CBG projects will receive capital assistance of up to ₹2 crore per ton per day (TPD) of installed CBG capacity.

The support extends beyond core plant machinery to critical value-chain assets for feedstock aggregation, organic manure processing and value addition. Brownfield projects expanding their production capacity will also be eligible.

This component will lower the initial capital burden, accelerate financial closure and expand participation by private developers, MSMEs, cooperatives and rural entrepreneurs.

Component 4: Development of Pipeline Infrastructure

The Scheme supports both cluster-based and standalone pipeline infrastructure connecting CBG plants with trunk pipelines and City Gas Distribution networks. Greater pipeline connectivity will reduce evacuation costs, improve reliability, expand market reach and enable higher utilization of domestically produced CBG.

Component 5: Credit Guarantee Support

A dedicated Credit Guarantee Mechanism will enhance lender confidence and facilitate greater access to institutional finance for eligible MSME based compressed biogas projects. The mechanism will provide credit guarantee coverage of up to **85 per cent** on eligible loans for such projects.

By sharing a portion of lending risk, the mechanism will improve access to affordable finance, reduce collateral requirements and support faster project development, widening participation by MSMEs, women entrepreneurs and first-time developers, and helping build a broad, competitive and entrepreneurial CBG industry.

Component 6: CBG Ecosystem Challenge Fund

GOBARdhan establishes a dedicated CBG Ecosystem Challenge Fund to accelerate district-level implementation and strengthen local value chains across the CBG ecosystem.

The Fund will support:

- Feedstock resource assessment and mapping
- Feedstock aggregation infrastructure
- District-level CBG development planning
- Technology adoption and process improvement
- Value addition of organic manure
- Capacity building and stakeholder awareness

Expected Outcomes of GOBARdhan

GOBARdhan builds on the strong foundation laid in recent years to scale up CBG production across the country.

The scheme is expected to deliver:

- Nearly ten-fold growth in domestic CBG production, creating a new pillar of India's clean gas economy.
- Greater energy security through increased domestic production of renewable gaseous fuel and lower dependence on imported fossil fuels.
- A new wave of private investment supported by stronger project viability, stable pricing and improved access to institutional finance.
- Stronger rural livelihoods through new income opportunities for farmers, feedstock aggregators, cooperatives and rural entrepreneurs.
- Scientific waste management through productive use of agricultural residue, cattle dung, municipal organic waste and other biomass resources.
- Lower greenhouse gas emissions through replacement of fossil fuels and productive utilization of organic waste.
- A larger organic manure economy through greater production, value addition and utilization of FOM and LFOM.
- Faster and easier project implementation through one national framework, digital governance and simplified institutional arrangements.

Benefit Over a Decade

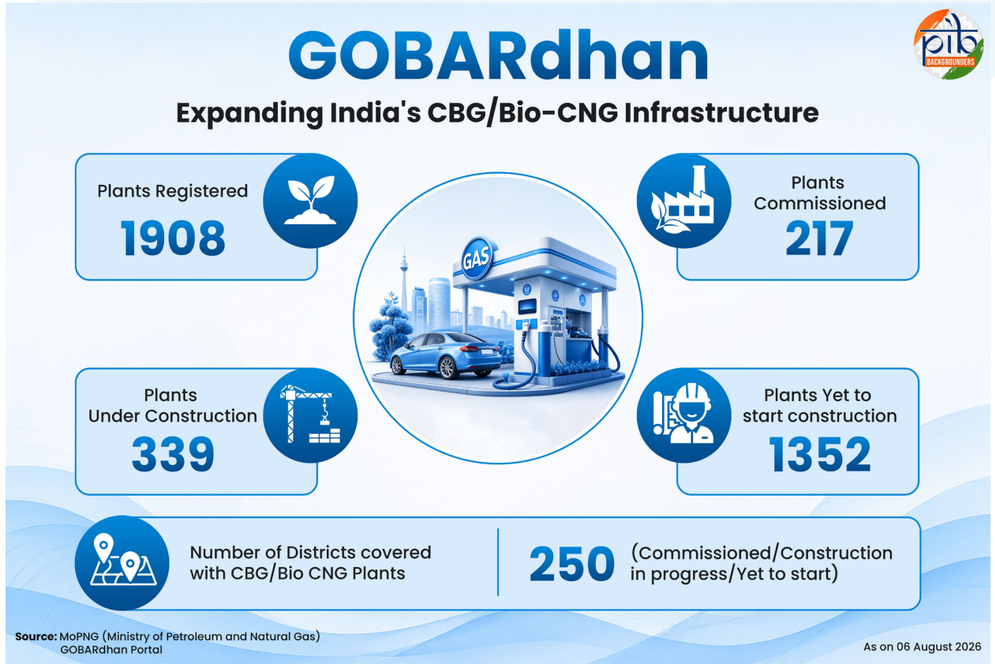
GOBARdhan will deliver measurable gains, tracked across a full ten-year horizon.

- CBG production will grow ten-fold over the decade, attracting strong private investment.
- Reduced import dependence will save over **₹40,000 crore in forex.**
- Clean, home-grown gas will displace **10 MMT of fossil fuel use.**
- This industry will add more than **₹75,000 crore to national GDP.**
- Over **1.5 lakh jobs** will be generated across the value chain.
- Diverting waste from landfills will cut more than **40 MT of CO_2 emissions.**
- **Production of 250 MMT** of organic fertilizer.

GOBARdhan Unified Registration Portal

Anyone operating or intending to set up a CBG/Bio-CNG plant in India can obtain a registration number through the GOBARdhan Unified Registration Portal (gobardhan.eil.co.in). The registration number is required to avail benefits and support from MoPNG.

According to the GOBARdhan Unified Registration Portal, as on 06 August 2026, a total of **1,908** Compressed Biogas (CBG)/Bio-CNG plants have been registered across the country. Of these, **217** plants have already been



commissioned producing **0.4 Million Standard Cubic Meters per Day** (MMSCMD), while **339 plants** are under construction.

GOBARdhan: Taking India's Circular Bioeconomy to Scale

GOBARdhan marks a decisive step in transforming India's abundant organic resources into clean energy, rural prosperity and economic value. By bringing assured demand, stable pricing, capital assistance, pipeline connectivity, credit support and ecosystem development under one national framework, the Scheme creates the conditions for CBG to grow at scale.

Building on the progress already achieved, GOBARdhan will take India's CBG journey from a strong foundation to a nationally scaled clean energy industry, reflecting the Government's commitment to energy security, farmers and rural enterprises, waste-to-wealth, Atmanirbhar Bharat and the vision of Viksit Bharat.

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Reforming India’s Tribunal System

Tribunal Reforms Bill, 2026

Published on: July 1, 2026

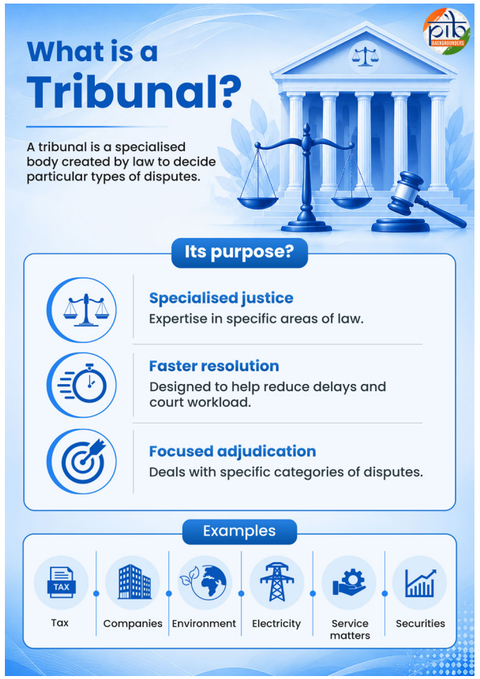
The Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026 seeks to create a more independent, transparent and professionally administered tribunal system. The Bill provides for setting up of a judiciary-led National Tribunals Commission that will make selections to the tribunals and exercise oversight on their functioning. The aim is to reduce executive discretion while strengthening accountability. By creating a common institutional framework for tribunal administration, the Bill seeks to address longstanding concerns over appointments, tenure and functioning, while giving effect to the principles laid down by the Supreme Court in its Madras Bar Association judgments

Strengthening India's Tribunal System

The Tribunal Reforms Bill, 2026 passed by the Parliament in August 2026, aims to reform the tribunal system to make it more **efficient, independent of the executive, transparent and uniform.**

The Bill follows various Supreme Court judgements on the independence of tribunals. In **Madras Bar Association v. Union of India** [(2026) 2 SCC 1], the Supreme Court struck down provisions of the Tribunals Reforms Act, 2021. The Court also directed the establishment of an independent National Tribunals Commission.

The **2026 Bill proposes to repeal the Tribunal Reforms Act, 2021.** It introduces a new structure to ensure that the system is independent yet accountable to the people it serves.



Covered Tribunals & Governing Acts

The Bill lists all the **Tribunals, Appellate Tribunals, and Authorities** governed by the bill, alongside their corresponding **Enactments**. The changes proposed by the Bill shall apply to these tribunals.

Sl. No.	Tribunal / Appellate Tribunal / Authority	Enactments
1	Customs, Excise and Service Tax Appellate Tribunal	The Customs Act, 1962 (52 of 1962)
2	Appellate Tribunal	The Smugglers and Foreign Exchange Manipulators (Forfeiture of Property) Act, 1976 (13 of 1976)
3	Central Administrative Tribunal	The Administrative Tribunals Act, 1985 (13 of 1985)
4	State Administrative Tribunals	The Administrative Tribunals Act, 1985 (13 of 1985)
5	Railway Claims Tribunal	The Railway Claims Tribunal Act, 1987 (54 of 1987)
6	Securities Appellate Tribunal	The Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992 (15 of 1992)
7	Debts Recovery Tribunal	The Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act, 1993 (51 of 1993)

Sl. No.	Tribunal / Appellate Tribunal / Authority	Enactments
8	Debts Recovery Appellate Tribunal	The Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act, 1993 (51 of 1993)
9	Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal	The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997 (24 of 1997)
10	Appellate Tribunal for Electricity	The Electricity Act, 2003 (36 of 2003)
11	Armed Forces Tribunal	The Armed Forces Tribunal Act, 2007 (55 of 2007)
12	National Green Tribunal	The National Green Tribunal Act, 2010 (19 of 2010)
13	National Company Law Appellate Tribunal	The Companies Act, 2013 (18 of 2013)
14	National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission	The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 (35 of 2019)
15	Industrial Tribunal constituted by the Central Government	The Industrial Relations Code, 2020 (35 of 2020)
16	Income-tax Appellate Tribunal	The Income-tax Act, 2025 (30 of 2025)

A New National Tribunals Commission

The 2026 Bill aims at protecting the independence of the tribunals system through the establishment of a new **National Tribunals Commission (NTC).** This commission, which will be **dominated by the high-ranking members of the judiciary,** replaces the Central Government, which was given the charge of making key appointments and services conditions according to the Tribunal Reforms Act, 2021.

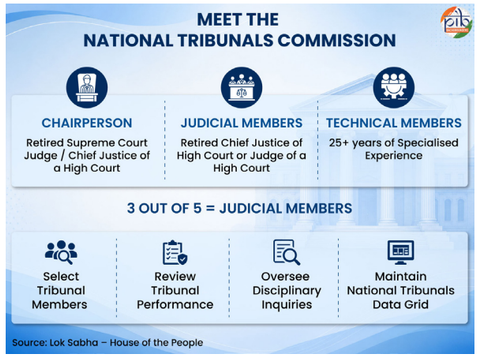
Composition of the Commission

The Commission would consist of:

- A Chairperson who has been a Judge of the Supreme Court or a Chief Justice of a High Court, and
- Four Members:

1. Two shall be Judicial Members who have been Chief Justice or Judge of a High Court
2. Two shall be Technical Members with at least 25 years of experience in the fields of public administration, finance, law, accountancy, banking, management, or technology.

The Central Government will formally appoint the Chairperson and the Judicial Members of the Commission. However, it must consult the Chief Justice of India before appointing the Chairperson and Judicial Members.



Functions of the Commission

Under the Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026, the National Tribunals Commission (NTC) has several important roles:

- **Conduct selections:** Conduct the selection process for filling up the vacancies of Chairpersons and Members of the Tribunals through Search-cum-Selection Committees.
- **Review performance:** Monitor tribunal performance and prepares annual reports to be submitted to the Central Government.
- **Oversee inquiries:** Supervise inquiries into complaints against tribunal members.
- **Maintain data:** Develops and maintains the National Tribunals Data Grid, which is a portal containing the repository of all case-related information pertaining to the 16 tribunals.

Term of Service

- The Chairperson of the Commission or a Member of the Commission shall hold office for a term of five years or till he attains the age of seventy years, whichever is earlier
- A Member of a Tribunal shall hold office for a term of five years or till he attains the age of sixty-seven years, whichever is earlier.

The framework also allows reappointment, with previous service and performance considered during the selection process.

New Secretariat

The **Secretariat** serves as the administrative support system for the National Tribunals Commission. The Secretariat will be headed by a Secretary to the Government of India. Its other officers and employees, including their number and service conditions, will be prescribed by rules. It will function under the general and administrative oversight of the Commission's Chairperson. It:

- **Empanels experts:** Identifies and empanels experts from relevant fields to assess candidates.
- **Communicates recommendations:** Sends the Search-cum-Selection Committee's recommendations to the Central Government within three days.
- **Provides administrative support:** Supports the Commission and carries out functions prescribed.
- **Prepares annual reports:** Prepares an annual report yearly giving full and true account of the activities of the Commission and forward the report to the Central government.

Search-cum-Selection Committees

The selection of Chairpersons and Members to various tribunals will be done through Search-cum-Selection Committees. These committees will be responsible for evaluating candidates and recommending appointments to tribunal posts.

Under **Section 13 of the Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026**, the Search-cum-Selection Committee comprises:

For selecting a Tribunal Chairperson

- **Chairperson of the National Tribunals Commission**
- **Technical Member of the Commission**
- **Retired Chief Justice of a High Court,** nominated by the Commission Chairperson
- **Secretary to the Government of India**, nominated by the Central Government. In case of appointment to the post of Chairperson of the State Administrative Tribunals, the Chief Secretary to the State Government concerned shall be the Member
- **Two empanelled experts** who assessed the candidates
- **Secretary of the Commission —** Member Secretary

For selecting a Tribunal Member:

- **Judicial Member of the National Tribunals Commission** — Committee Chair
- **Technical Member of the Commission**
- **Retired High Court Judge**, nominated by the Commission Chairperson
- **Secretary to the Government of India,** nominated by the Central Government. In case of appointment to the post of Member of the State Administrative Tribunals, the Chief Secretary to the State Government concerned shall be the Member
- **Two empanelled experts** who assessed the candidates
- **Secretary of the Commission** — Member Secretary

The Committee Chair has the **casting vote**, while the **Member Secretary and expert Members do not have voting rights.** The Committee:

- **Selects candidates:** Conducts the selection process for Chairpersons and Members.
- **Recommends candidates:** The Committee recommends **one suitable candidate for each vacancy** and one additional candidate for the waiting list.
- **Considers past performance:** For candidates seeking reappointment, the Committee considers their previous service and performance.
- **Facilitates timely appointments:** Recommendations are sent to the Central Government through the Secretariat, which must communicate them within **three days.** The Government must process the recommendation and make the appointment within three months.

The proposed National Tribunals Commission has a judicial majority. Its Search-cum-Selection Committees are also judicially chaired. The judicial Chairperson has the casting vote. The Committee recommends a single candidate rather than a panel of names. This strengthens judicial influence over the selection process while limiting executive discretion.

Financial and Administrative Independence

The Bill seeks to give tribunals greater financial and administrative autonomy. Under this framework, individual tribunals will identify their requirements for funds, staff, and premises. The Commission's Secretariat will

consolidate these projections, and the Commission will evaluate them using an objective framework to determine overall allocation needs.

The Central Government will continue to allocate the necessary grants following parliamentary appropriation. To ensure financial accountability and transparency, the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India (CAG) will audit the accounts of the Commission and forward the audit report to the Central Government, which will then lay it before both Houses of Parliament.



Towards a More Independent Tribunal System

The **Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026** seeks to establish judicial independence and transparency in the tribunals system. While the Bill reinforces judicial independence, it balances this by keeping the system accountable to the public through parliamentary oversight.

The proposed National Tribunals Commission creates a permanent institutional mechanism for appointments, performance review and disciplinary oversight. Judicially led selection committees strengthen the judicial element in appointments. Expert assessment places greater emphasis on professional competence. Five-year tenure provides greater stability.

The Bill marks a shift from fragmented, executive-driven tribunal rules to a structured institutional framework. Its core goal is to establish a more independent, transparent, and professionally managed system that aligns with the Supreme Court's Madras Bar Association jurisprudence.

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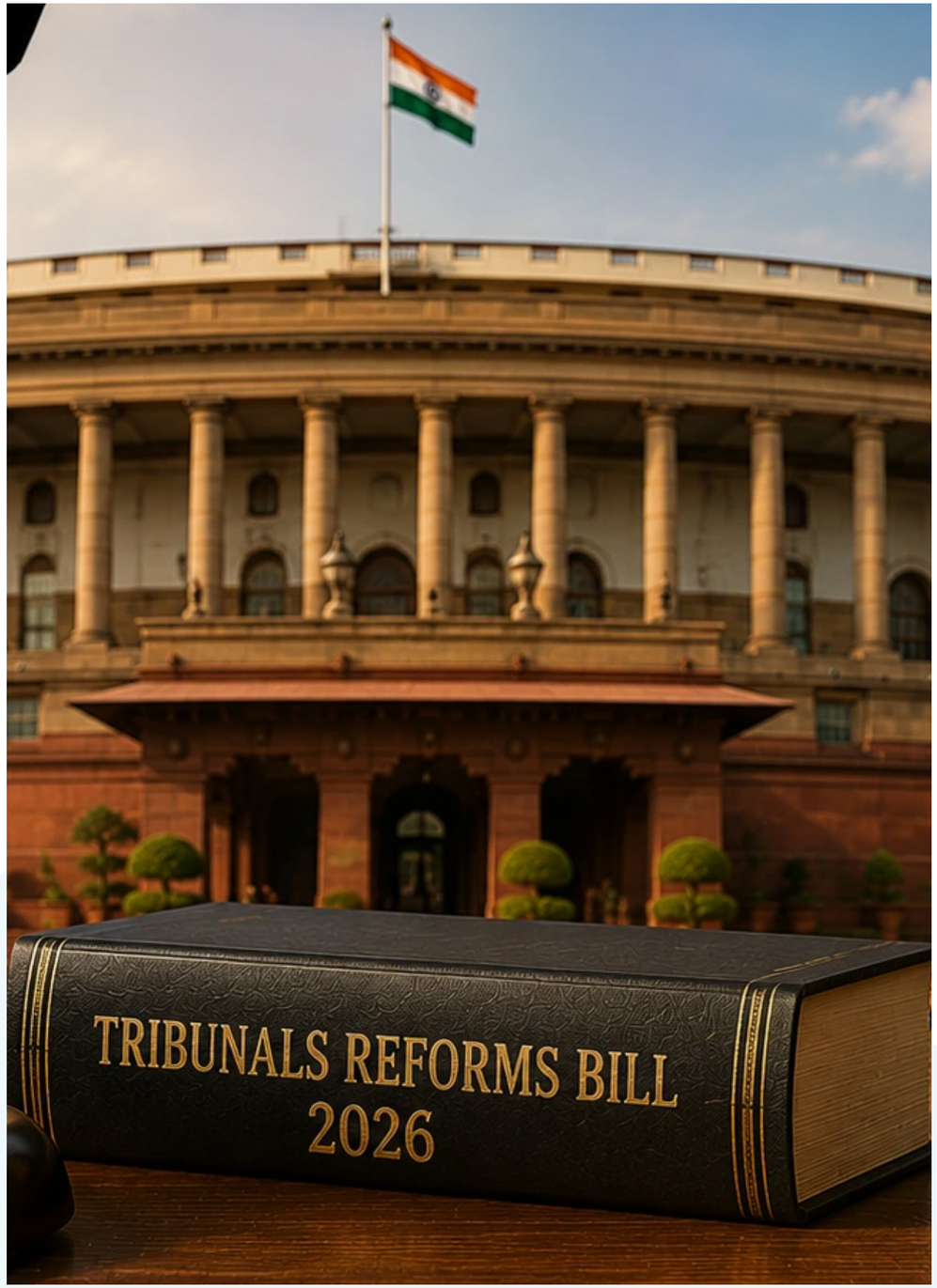



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Roads Reimagined: The Rise of India’s Electric Vehicles Ecosystem

Published on: August 5, 2026

India is **rapidly shifting to electric vehicles** (EVs). eMobility is now turning into a key driver of economic growth, energy security, and a cleaner future. **EV sales have grown ~46**x since 2016, showing strong consumer shift. **Exports have surged from USD 1.2 million in 2020 to USD 84 million in 2024**. This is positioning India as an emerging EV hub. Government schemes like National Mission on Manufacturing, PLI Scheme for Automobile & Auto Components Industry and PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement Scheme (PM E-DRIVE) are strengthening a more self-reliant eMobility ecosystem.

India's Move Towards Electric Mobility

Daily commutes in crowded cities and last-mile connectivity in small towns are being fundamentally reimagined across India. At the core of this transition is electric mobility. This technological shift is becoming central to the country's climate strategy and sustainable transportation vision. Propelled by Government incentives, rising environmental awareness, rapid technological progress, EVs have become a national priority shaping the future of the automobile industry.

India's mobility transition is not just an environmental imperative but also an economic opportunity. It is reshaping one of its largest and most influential industries. This shift is emerging as a strategic lever to strengthen energy security. Further, it is reducing dependence on fossil fuel imports, and driving an efficient, low-carbon growth pathway for the economy.

What is an Electric Vehicle (EV)?

An EV is a vehicle powered by an electric motor that uses energy stored in a battery. It can be recharged from an external power source.

There are **four types of EVs**:

-**Battery EVs** (BEVs), that are fully electric.

-**Hybrid EVs** (HEVs) & **Plug-in HEVs**, that combine an internal combustion engine and an electric motor to power the vehicle. PHEVs additionally have externally rechargeable battery packs for extended electric-only operation.

-**Fuel Cell EVs** (FCEV), in which electric energy is produced from chemical energy.



Source: The National Institution for Transforming India

India's EV Revolution: The Last Decade

India's journey towards electric mobility began in 2015. It was marked by the launch of the **National Electric Mobility Mission Plan** and **FAME scheme** to incentivize the adoption of EVs. This move was driven by clear strategic priorities. These included reducing the rising import bill on petroleum fuels and tackling worsening urban air pollution. It also aimed to lower greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector, which accounts for ~9% of India's total emissions.

National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP 2020)

The NEMMP 2020 outlines a strategic roadmap to accelerate the adoption and domestic manufacturing of EVs in India. It has the twin objective of strengthening energy security and promoting clean, sustainable mobility.

Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) EVs in India (FAME India)

Under the NEMMP 2020 framework, the FAME India scheme was launched in 2015 to drive EV adoption. The scheme offered incentives to buyers, supports creation of charging infrastructure, and manufacturing. Phase I continued until March 2019, followed by Phase II, implemented over five years until April 2024.

A **decisive turning point came in the post-COVID period, in FY22**. Supported by targeted policy incentives, enhanced subsidies, and improved vehicle availability, EV adoption entered a phase of accelerated growth. This period also marked a structural shift in the market. While early adoption during FY20–FY21 was dominated by e-rickshaws, **electric two-wheelers soon gained significant traction**. By FY25, they were a leading segment, signaling a broader transition from informal, shared mobility to mainstream private, commercial adoption.

DID YOU KNOW?

EV adoption has seen a multifold surge, growing from 0.08% in FY15-16 to 8.26% in FY25-26.

India in the Fast Lane: Scaling EV Growth Amid Global Expansion

Worldwide, consumer adoption of EVs is rising. Many competitively priced models with improved driving ranges are entering the market. Along with this, there is rapid expansion of public charging infrastructure. **In India, this momentum is mirrored by strong policy support, rising sales and registrations. It is further backed by a growing ecosystem of domestic manufacturing, charging networks- leading to an increase in EV adoption.**

India's EV Scorecard- Rising Sales, Registrations and Exports

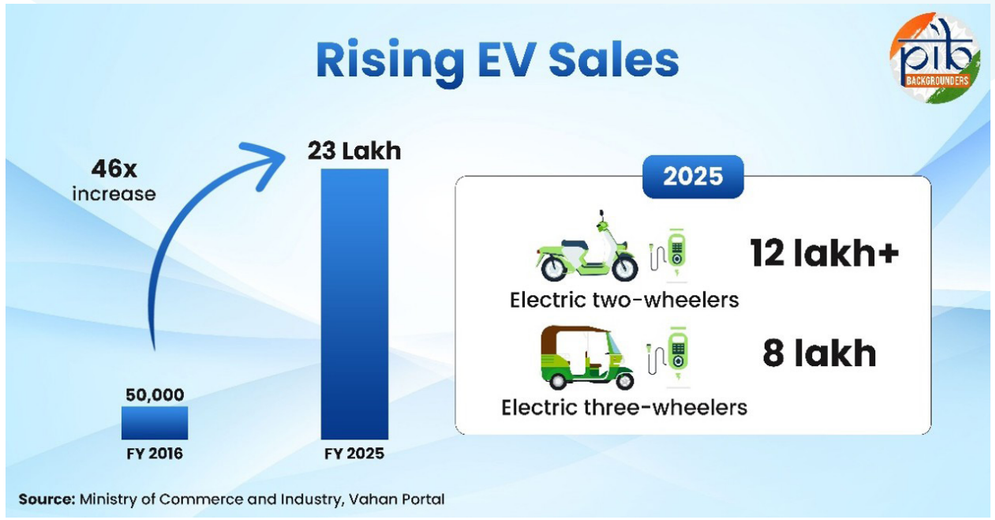
From a relatively small base of **~50,000 EVs sold in 2016**, **2.3 million units have been sold in 2025**. This reflects 46 times **growth** in India's EV market. India's growth has outpaced global trends, where EV sales increased ~20 times- from 918,000 in 2016 to 18.78 million in 2024.

India's EV penetration was merely one-fifth of the global penetration in 2020. It ramped up to over two-fifth of the global penetration in 2024. Much of this progress was **driven by motorised two-wheelers** (12.8 lakh units) and three-wheelers (8 lakh units) sold in 2025.

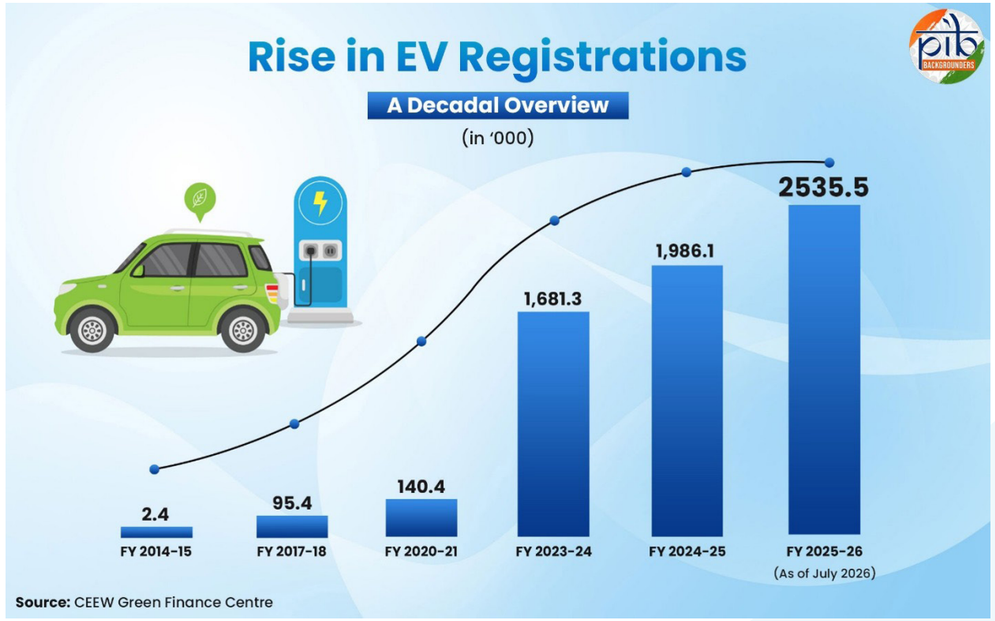
DID YOU KNOW?

In 2025, Uttar Pradesh emerged as the largest EV market. With 4 lakh+ units, it represented 18% of national EV sales. It was followed by Maharashtra with 2.66 lakh units (12%) & Karnataka with 2 lakh units (9% of total sales).





There has been a **significant growth in EV registrations** in the past decade, at a CAGR of over 62%. This indicates rapid acceleration in EV adoption. Policy support, technological advancements, and growing consumer confidence in electric mobility are major driving forces.



After considerable domestic uptake in recent years, Indian EVs have begun making strong headway in international markets. **Exports** have risen from USD 1.2 million in 2020 to USD 84 million in 2024. Top **export destinations** included Nepal, Indonesia and Japan.

Expanding infrastructure

On the infrastructure side, India's public EV charging network is expanding rapidly. According to Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), 16,561 of the 52,718 public charging stations available as of July 2026 are equipped with fast EV charging facilities.

The **e-Amrit tool** helps locate charging station based on one's location. Major industry players are actively enhancing charging infrastructure. For instance, in 2024, **Hyundai Motor India** expanded its ultra-fast network with 11 new stations in key cities. These included Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Gurugram, and Bangalore, and along major highways.

India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI)

In a significant push towards a cleaner transport future, NITI Aayog launched the IEMI in August 2025. A first-of-its-kind framework, it tracks and compares the progress of States and Union Territories in advancing electric mobility. The index evaluates performance across 16 indicators across three pillars-**transport electrification, charging infrastructure readiness, and EV research & innovation**. This offers a clear snapshot of each region's ecosystem strength.

Based on scores, regions are classified as **Frontrunners** (leading with robust ecosystems), **performers** (making progress) and **aspirants** (requiring intervention). **Delhi, Maharashtra, and Chandigarh have emerged as Frontrunners**, showcasing strong and mature EV ecosystems.

Domestic Manufacturing at Speed: Powered by Startups and AI

India is transitioning from an assembly-led market to a comprehensive EV manufacturing hub. Supported by a growing supplier ecosystem, domestic production now covers battery packs, motors, drivetrains, power electronics, wiring, and charging equipment. Leading Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) like Tata Motors, Mahindra, TVS, Bajaj Auto are expanding capacity through investments in R&D, gigafactories, dedicated EV platforms. Simultaneously, global players like VinFast, Tesla, and major Korean and Japanese battery firms are exploring large-scale manufacturing in India. This expansion is strengthening localization, enhancing cost competitiveness, and positioning India as an integral part of global EV supply chains.

Indian startups are witnessing the potential of EVs. They are catalyzing the availability of charging infrastructure, improving battery-level innovation, promoting low-cost manufacturing and offering data-driven solutions. With ~400 EV startups currently operating in India, they are emerging as central players in shaping India's evolving EV ecosystem. Besides, the advancing **EV ecosystem is leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI)** to enhance the overall driving experience. Features such as voice-enabled navigation, real-time traffic insights, and intelligent route planning are central to this. AI is also contributing to safer and more inclusive mobility by enabling voice-based controls, connected features, and accessibility-focused functionalities.

"e VITARA", Suzuki's first Made-in-India global strategic Battery EV

A historic milestone was achieved in August 2025 in India's green mobility journey. This was marked by the inauguration of Suzuki's first global strategic **Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV)**, the "e VITARA". The Made-in-India BEVs are aimed to be exported to 100+ countries, including advanced markets such as Europe and Japan. With this milestone, India became Suzuki's global manufacturing hub for EVs.

Rising Investment Momentum

Investment activity in the sector has remained strong. **India's EV ecosystem raised over USD1.4 billion in FY 2025**, ~27% higher than 2024.EV manufacturers attracted the bulk of this funding, securing around USD 1.2 billion. In this, Delhi emerged as the top city for EV investments.

Strategic Policy Interventions for India's EVs

The Government has been driving electric mobility since 2015 with multiple schemes for the auto industry. It has adopted a strategic approach to accelerate EV adoption through **targeted policy interventions, financial incentives, and mission-driven initiatives**. Key initiatives like FAME, PLI scheme for Advanced Chemistry Cells, battery localization aim to build a strong, future-ready mobility ecosystem.

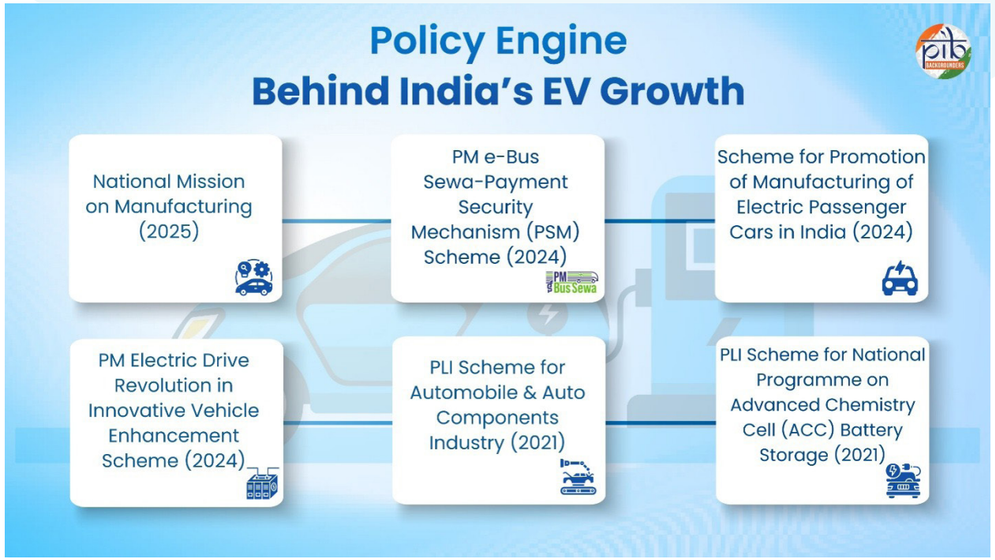
States are emerging as key drivers of India's EV transition through progressive policies, charging infrastructure expansion, strong investment support.

- As of December 2025, **29 states and UTs had notified EV policies, with 4 more in draft stages**.
- Incentives like 15–25% capital subsidies, preferential land allotment, stamp duty waivers, and up to 100% SGST reimbursement reduce investor costs.
- **Leading states like Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh have become major EV hubs, anchoring robust manufacturing ecosystems.**

Delhi's EV Policy

The Delhi EV Policy is one of the most progressive EV policies in India. It aims to reduce vehicular emissions and improve air quality in the city.

In June 2026, the Government approved a comprehensive scheme to replace old, high-emission trucks and buses in Delhi-NCR. The initiative aims to improve air quality and promote cleaner mobility. With an outlay of ₹9,585 crore, the two-year scheme will support the replacement of around 2.07 lakh commercial vehicles, including 1.91 lakh trucks and 16,329 buses in Delhi-NCR (Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh).



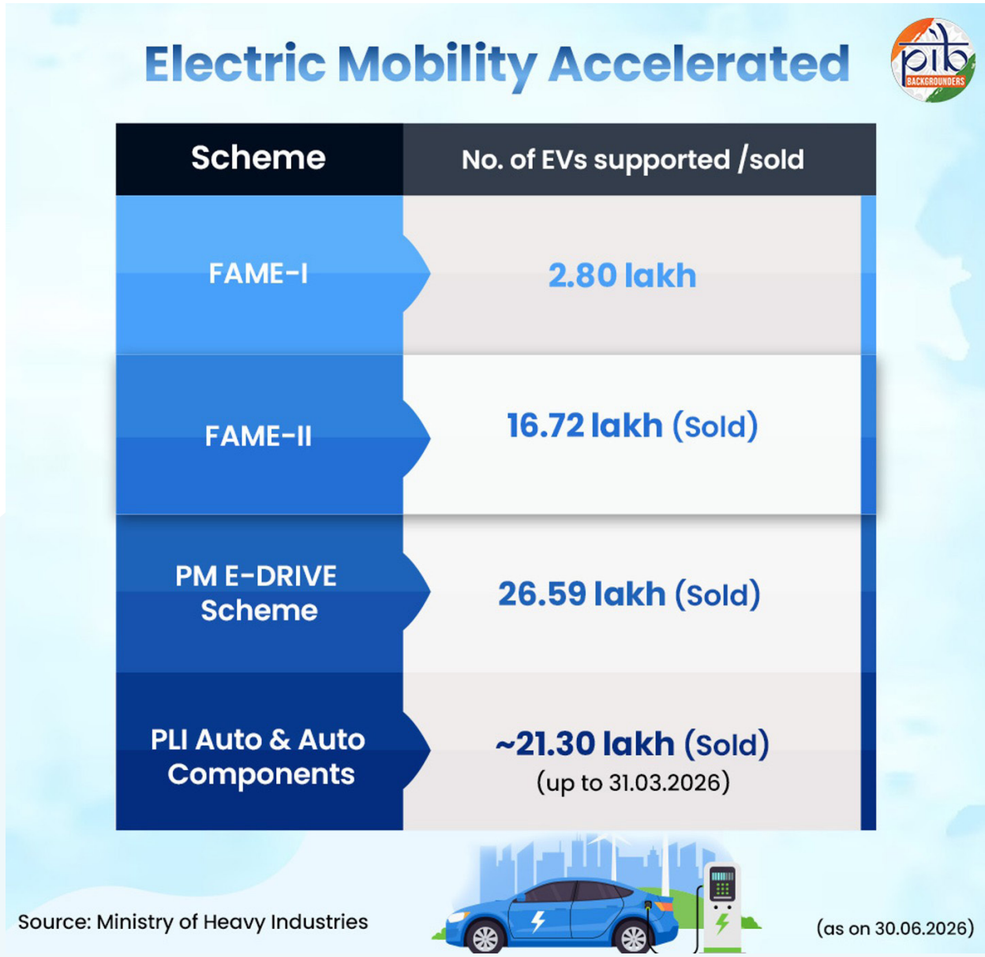
National Mission on Manufacturing (NMM)

The NMM (2025) **identifies EVs as a key "seed" sector for innovation-led growth**. The Mission has ambitious targets for 2035. It aims **to double the manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP from 12.9% (2023) to 25%**. Further, NMM intends to **create 143 million jobs**, whilst boosting merchandise exports to **USD1.2 trillion**. It strengthens India's EV ecosystem by **promoting advanced manufacturing, fostering technology development, integrating EV production into global value chains**. Through targeted cluster-based interventions and policy support, NMM seeks to accelerate domestic EV manufacturing capacity.

PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement Scheme (PM E-DRIVE Scheme)

The PM E-DRIVE Scheme, notified in 2024, is a key initiative of the Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI). It aims to accelerate EV adoption through **targeted demand incentives, support for domestic manufacturing, and expansion of charging infrastructure**. The scheme has an outlay of ₹10,900 crore and **covers multiple segments** including e-2Ws, e-3Ws, e-trucks, e-buses, and e-ambulances. Under the Scheme, the Phased Manufacturing Programme (PMP) mandates domestic manufacturing of specified EV components.

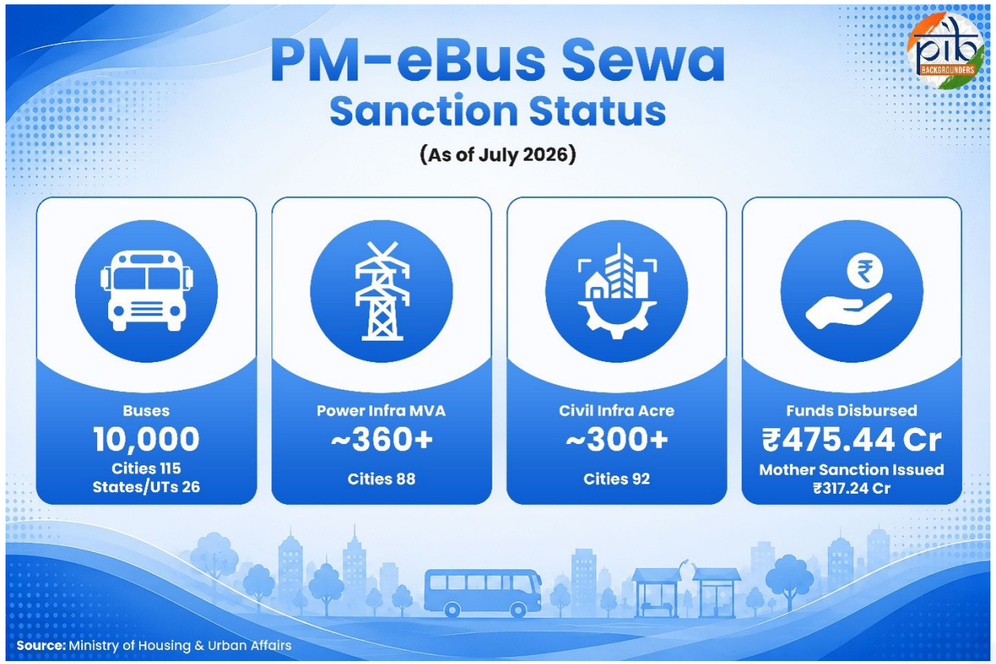
The PM E-DRIVE Scheme **aims to support over 28 lakh EVs**. Out of this, 22.12 lakh have already been sold as of January 2026. This has been driven by upfront incentives that reduce purchase costs for consumers. The scheme prioritizes public transport electrification. ₹4,391 crore has been allocated for 14,028 e-buses in the country. Out of this, 13,800 buses have been allocated to seven major cities, including Bengaluru, Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Pune and Surat. Tenders for 10,900 e-buses allocated in Phase I, have already been concluded. **₹2,000 crore** has been earmarked for nationwide **EV charging EV Public Charging Stations (EVPCS)** across the country.Furthermore, ₹780 crore has been allocated for modernization and upgradation of vehicle testing agencies under MHI.



The scheme is set to address critical challenges related to environmental pollution and fuel security while advancing sustainable transportation solutions. It represents a crucial step toward a cleaner, more sustainable future for transportation in India.

PM e-Bus Sewa-Payment Security Mechanism (PSM) Scheme

The **PM e-Bus Sewa–PSM Scheme** (2024) provides **payment security coverage to each bus deployed for up to 12 years**. These buses are typically deployed within two years of contract signing.A total of **10,000 electric buses** are to be deployed via Public Private Partnership (PPP) model (Government–private sector collaboration). This aims to strengthen city bus operations in urban areas. Encompassing a range of interventions, the scheme provides **government support** including **bus operations, depot infrastructure, charging networks, green mobility initiatives**.



In February 2026, 50 electric buses were flagged off in Bhavnagar, Gujarat. Other cities like Nagpur in Maharashtra, Chandigarh, and Guwahati in Assam have also been included in the initial rollout.

Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electric Passenger Cars in India (SPMEPCI)

SPMEPCI scheme (2024) **promotes electric car manufacturing. It mandates a minimum investment** of ₹4,150 crore. They must also achieve at least 25% Domestic Value Addition (DVA) by year three and 50% by year five. The MHI launched the scheme with the vision of a cleaner, greener, and more self-reliant India. By promoting EVs, it aims to cut air pollution, reduce oil imports and trade deficit, driving innovation, jobs, economic growth.

PLI Scheme for Automobile & Auto Components Industry (PLI-Auto Scheme)

The PLI-Auto Scheme (2021) aims to strengthen India's manufacturing capabilities in Advanced Automotive Technology (AAT), including EVs. The scheme provides **financial incentives to promote domestic manufacturing with a minimum 50% domestic value addition**. It also aims to **attract investments across the automotive value chain**. Underscoring its strong **electric mobility focus**, a **cumulative incentive of ₹2,377.56 crore** has been disbursed to approved applicants. Out of this, **₹2,319.88 crore** has been allocated to **EV manufacturers** across segments, including e-2Ws, **e-3Ws, e-4Ws, e-buses** (January 2026).

The **PLI scheme**, aligned with the **Aatmanirbhar Bharat vision**, has emerged as a key driver of industrial growth across 14 sectors, boosting competitiveness in **electronics, pharmaceuticals**, and **automobiles**.

PLI scheme for National Programme on Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage (PLI ACC Scheme)

The PLI ACC Scheme (2021) has an outlay of ₹18,100 crore and aims to promote domestic battery manufacturing. It intends to **establish a cumulative ACC capacity of 50 GWh in India**. The **scheme also supports development of advanced, long-range EV batteries** through incentives linked to sales. Post **gestation period**, the scheme has entered its **performance phase**, spanning **1 January 2025 to 31 December 2029**.

ACCs are new-gen advance energy storage technologies. They can store electric energy as electrochemical or chemical energy and convert it back to electric energy as/when needed.

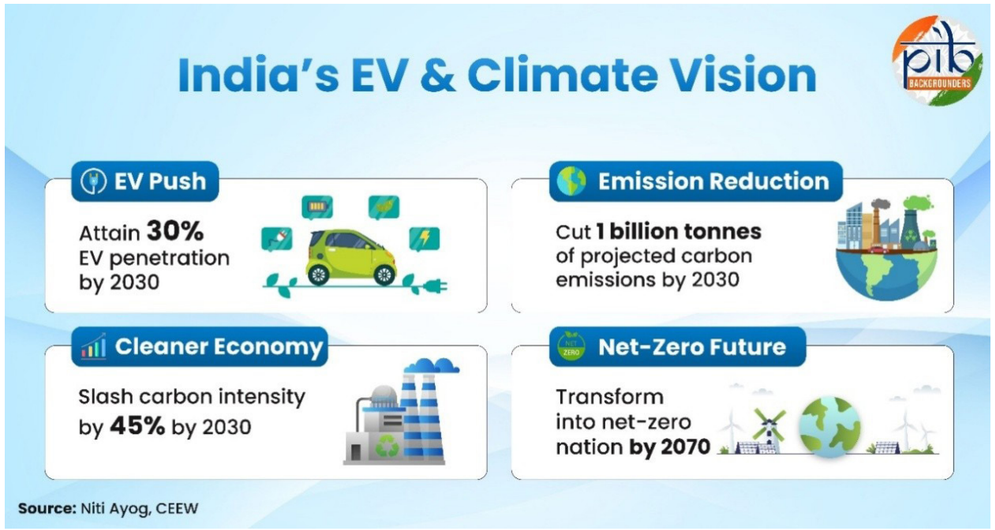
Batteries account for 35-40% of an EV's total cost-the largest single component. Hence, scaling up domestic ACC manufacturing is critical to **reducing vehicle prices, enhancing energy security, creating jobs, boosting global competitiveness**.

Low GST on EVs

EVs in India attract a **concessional GST rate of 5%**, which applies to all electric cars, two-wheelers, and three-wheelers. This makes them significantly cheaper to tax than conventional vehicles.

Driving Forward: India's EV Growth Outlook

India is reshaping itself from an import-dependent market into a globally competitive hub for EV production. This is aligned with its strategic priorities of energy security, reduced oil imports, and achieving the **2070 net-zero vision**.



The focus is on complete domestic EV production through the 'Make in India' initiative.

- India's EV market, valued at USD 3.71 billion in 2025, is projected to grow to USD 191.04 billion by 2034, at a CAGR of 54.94%.
- The Indian EV battery market is likely to grow from USD 2.71 billion in 2025 to USD 15.90 billion by 2034, at a CAGR of 21.70%.
- **India aims for 30% of all vehicle sales to be electric by 2030**, aligning with the global EV30@30 initiative.
- The EV ecosystem is strengthened with the establishment of **1.32 million charging stations** across India by 2030.

With demand and production incentives, localization policies, early charging infrastructure, India has entered a decisive phase of scale. As global supply chains realign, India is expected to be one of the most attractive destinations for EV manufacturing investment.

As domestic capabilities strengthen, India is poised to emerge as **an export hub**. This applies to various variants-electric two wheelers, compact EVs, battery packs, and key drivetrain components. This is supported by R&D investment and global partnerships.

Looking ahead, the Government is developing the next phases of Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency (CAFE) norms, **CAFE III (2027–2032)** and **CAFE IV (2033–2037)**. These propose **stricter CO_2 emission targets** based on the **Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicle Test Procedure (WLTP)**. The proposed limits stand at **91.7 g CO_2/km for CAFE III** and **70 g CO_2/km for CAFE IV**. These standards are expected to be implemented alongside a **super-credit mechanism**. This is poised to enable OEMs to more easily meet **compliance targets through increased EV sales** rather than through sales of conventional cars and non-plug-in hybrids.

India's **Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency (CAFE) norms** were **introduced in 2017**. They are designed to steer **OEMs** towards producing more **fuel-efficient**, **lower-emission passenger vehicles**, including **EVs**. By incentivizing **efficiency improvements across vehicle segments**, these norms play a critical role in advancing **EV adoption**. **They also** reduce **overall fuel consumption and CO_2 emissions at scale**.

At The Threshold of Transformation

India stands at the cusp of a defining mobility transformation. **Demand is surging, manufacturing is scaling up, and technological capabilities are advancing**. Consequently, the country is fast emerging as a global hub for R&D and EV manufacturing. Key drivers like better **finance access, rising awareness, tech advances, reliable charging, a skilled workforce** are accelerating India's EV transition. A **reform-driven policy environment** further provides compelling and durable

advantage at scale.

The road ahead will be shaped by deeper supply chain integration, accelerated localization of batteries and a robust charging infrastructure. Together, these pillars are poised to define **India's leadership in the global EV landscape**.

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MMDR Amendment Act, 2026

A Stronger Push for Mining-Led Development

Published on: August 18, 2026

Aspects of Mineral Regulations

The world today competes for access to minerals as much as for capital or technology. Steel, cement, power, electronics, transport and defence all begin with what is drawn from the ground. A steady and fairly distributed supply of these resources therefore shapes both national security and everyday livelihoods.

Mining in India is regulated under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957. The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2026 amends this Act to establish a uniform and balanced fiscal framework for the sector. As per the Amendment Act, State Governments cannot levy fresh taxes on mineral rights and mineral-bearing lands, except within conditions prescribed by the Central Government.

The Need for Reform: Addressing Key Issues

India's mineral wealth lies in a few States but supports the entire national economy, making its taxation a question of national importance. Unregulated and varying State levies are steadily eroding the viability of mining, raising costs across industry and households alike. The MMDR Amendment Act, 2026 seeks to address these concerns by bringing predictability, uniformity and rationality to the taxation of minerals.

- **Mining Viability is Central to Energy Security**

Growing global uncertainty makes a resilient domestic mining sector essential. The Government has given special push to critical minerals to shield supply from external shocks. The coal sector is simultaneously being made more competitive and technologically advanced to reduce import dependence. A viable and predictable tax regime is a precondition for both.

- **Multiplicity of Levies on a Single Activity**

States currently impose around 14 taxes, charges and fees on mining. These include royalty, auction premium, dead rent, DMF payments, GST and transit fee. Some States have additionally begun taxing mineral-bearing lands, in certain cases at rates as high as 20 percent. The Act addresses this cumulative and open-ended burden on the sector.

- **Levies on Strategically Important Minerals**

Taxes extend even to critical minerals such as graphite and atomic minerals such as uranium. High levies make the extraction of these strategic minerals uneconomical. Differing rates across States also create disparity within the sector. Rationalisation is necessary to keep strategic mineral projects commercially workable.

- **Dual Burden on Foreign Exchange**

When Indian minerals cost more than imported ones, user industries such as steel source raw material abroad. India imported minerals worth ₹10,12,529 crore in FY 2025-26. At the same time, outpriced domestic minerals lose ground in export markets, where iron ore alone earned ₹15,136 crore in FY 2025-26. Curbing this cost escalation is essential to the Atmanirbhar goal in the mineral sector.

- **Fragmentation of the National Mineral Market**

Widely differing State levies cause mineral costs to vary sharply across regions. Such variation obstructs supply chains and pushes up transport and logistics costs. A unified national mineral market cannot function under fragmented tax rates. The Act seeks to ensure greater uniformity.

- **The Cost Ultimately Reaches the Household**

A levy at the mining stage is added directly to the mineral's price. It then passes through steel, cement, electricity and construction. Ordinary families finally pay more for housing, power and essential goods. Rational mining taxation is therefore a matter of everyday affordability.

- **Threat to Employment, Including in Tribal Areas**

The coal sector employs over 5 lakh people directly and indirectly while the non-coal sector supports more than 1 crore workers. High levies have already forced some mines to close and left other projects unopened. Small and medium operators work on thin margins and shut down first, taking local jobs with them.

- **Deterrence to Long-Term Investment**

Investors commit capital to mining only where the tax structure is stable and foreseeable. Sudden changes discourage such commitment and slow technological and infrastructural expansion. Manufacturing, defence, shipping, construction and renewable energy all depend on this mineral base. A stable regime under the Act is intended to secure that confidence.

Major Provisions of the Act

The Act makes focused amendments to the MMDR Act, 1957. Its key provisions are as follows:

- **New Section 9D — limits on State levies:** No tax, cess or other levy, by whatever name called, shall be imposed by a State Government on mineral rights or mineral-bearing lands. This covers levies based on mineral quantity, mineral value, royalty or any other basis. Such levies may be imposed only as per conditions or restrictions prescribed by the Central Government.
- **Treatment of past levies:** Any levy not paid or collected by the State before the amendment applies will be treated as invalid. However, amounts already deposited or recovered before such commencement shall not be liable to be refunded.
- **Rule-making power under Section 13:** Section 13 of the MMDR Act is amended to empower the Central Government to make rules. These rules will prescribe the conditions or restrictions for imposition of such levies by State Governments.

State's Revenue and Interests Remain Fully Protected

Mineral revenue accruing to States has risen sharply since 2014 under a transparent, auction-based regime. The MMDR Amendment Act, 2026 does not disturb this position, and States will continue to receive the overwhelming share of mining revenue.

- **A Decade of Rising Revenue, With the Larger Share Staying With States**

Before 2014, the sector was marked by discretionary and non-transparent grant and renewal of concessions. Litigation was frequent, production was low, and State revenues remained modest. Since then, revenue to States from mineral production has grown by 354 percent, and States have received more than ₹7 lakh crore, including coal.

Nearly 90 percent of mining-sector revenue now accrues to the States. Their share in total mineral revenue, coal and non-coal, has risen by about 28 percentage points in a decade, reaching around ₹1,14,549.28 crore in 2025-26. The coal sector shows this shift clearly. States received ₹11,947.97 crore in 2014-15, or 55.6 percent of the total, rising to ₹32,183.09 crore, or 89.5 percent, in 2025-26. The Centre's share fell over the same period from ₹9,534.24 crore to ₹3,771.82 crore, that is from 22.97 percent to 10.5 percent.

Major mineral States received ₹13,586.16 crore in FY 2013-14, which rose to ₹82,366.19 crore in FY 2025-26. This is a compound annual growth rate of 16.20 percent over twelve years. Between FY 2015-16 and FY 2025-26, over ₹5 lakh crore accrued to these States, against only about ₹82,000 crore to the Centre. The Act leaves this position unchanged.

- **Auction Premium as an Added Stream, and Its Share at the Transaction Level**

The auction regime introduced in 2015 gave States auction premium as an entirely new source of income. Since 2015, States have collected ₹2.32 lakh crore as royalty from 1,200 working mines. From only 100 auctioned mines, they have collected ₹96,000 crore as auction premium. Odisha, having operationalised 35 of its 79 auctioned blocks, earned about ₹87,000 crore in premium between 2020-21 and 2025-26.

The resulting distribution is visible in a single consignment. At an average sale price of ₹3,000 per tonne of iron ore, the mining company pays ₹3,150, of which ₹3,016 goes to the State. This pattern continues under the Act.

- **Minor Minerals Remain Entirely Under State Control**

Nearly 50 minor minerals are completely controlled by the State Governments. The Act has no bearing on these, including sand, gravel, clay, silica, granite, marble, gypsum and laterite. State authority over this category continues exactly as before.

Mineral Sector Reforms Since 2014: Key Milestones

The rise in State revenue follows a decade of regulatory, fiscal and institutional reform. These measures have made the mineral sector transparent, competitive and better prepared for future demand.

- **Competitive E-Auction and a Record Year of Mine Opening**

The 2015 amendment to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act ended discretionary allocation of concessions. Since then, 723 major mineral blocks have been auctioned across 17 States, led by Rajasthan with 140, Madhya Pradesh with 127 and Odisha with 76. FY 2025-26 was the best year yet, with a record 212 blocks auctioned and 36 operationalised. In coal, 141 mines have been auctioned and 23 operationalised.

- **Growth in Production and Global Standing**

The value of major mineral production rose by 26.8 percent in FY 2025-26. Iron ore reached a record 313 million tonnes and limestone 484 million tonnes. Coal output has crossed one billion tonnes in each of the last two years, and non-coal production has nearly tripled since 2014. India now ranks second globally in limestone, third in zinc, fourth in iron ore

and fifth in bauxite.

- **National Critical Mineral Mission and Overseas Sourcing**

The National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) was approved on 29 January 2025 with an outlay of ₹16,300 crore, including ₹2,600 crore of budgetary support, up to FY 2030-31. The Geological Survey of India (GSI) and the National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust (NMEDT) are working towards 1,200 critical mineral projects. Of 777 projects sanctioned by NMEDT at ₹3,828.52 crore, 255 relate to critical minerals. The 2025 amendment now allows NMEDT to support exploration abroad, and Khanij Bidesh India Limited (KABIL) has secured exclusive lithium exploration rights in Argentina.

- **Processing, Recycling and Research Capacity**

A ₹1,500 crore incentive scheme for critical mineral recycling was launched on 2 October 2025. It has drawn 58 entities pledging 850 thousand tonnes per annum of capacity, against a target of 270. Critical Mineral Processing Parks (CMPPs) are being supported in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Odisha and Maharashtra with ₹500 crore. Basic customs duty has been removed on critical minerals, lithium-ion battery scrap and processing capital goods in three successive Budgets. Nine institutes have been named Centres of Excellence (CoEs) with ₹210 crore under the MAHA mission.

- **A Wider and Better Funded Exploration Ecosystem**

Exploration activity has grown nearly 200 times since 2014, with 51 private agencies now notified for the work. The NMEDT contribution has been raised to 3 percent, and half of direct exploration costs are reimbursed. The ceiling is ₹20 crore for exploration licence holders and ₹8 crore for composite licence holders. GSI completed 457 projects in Field Season 2025-26, including 230 on critical and strategic minerals, while NMEDT funded 62 such projects in 2024-25 and 84 in 2025-26.

- **Simpler Operations and Digital Monitoring**

Mining leases may now take a one-time area extension of up to 10 percent, and composite licences up to 30 percent. The cap on mineral sales from captive mines has been removed, along with extra payment for adding critical, strategic or deep-seated minerals to a lease. The Unified Mining Portal (UMP), built with the States, tracks the entire block lifecycle from auction to operationalisation. Coal and Mineral Exchanges further support fair price discovery.

- **Direct Benefits for Mining-Affected Communities**

The Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY) and 656 District Mineral Foundations (DMFs) were set up for local welfare, including 106 in aspirational districts. The full DMF amount goes to local projects, and the district administration decides what to fund. It supports roads, hospitals, schools, drinking water and better living conditions. These collections will continue unchanged under the new Act.

The Act's Impact

The MMDR Amendment Act, 2026 strives to provide certainty, stability and predictability in the fiscal regime of the mineral sector. This is expected to give impetus to national economic growth.

BEFORE	AFTER
Mining was taxed differently in every State.	A single, Centre-directed tax framework will apply under New Section 9D.
New levies could be introduced even after mining operations started.	States cannot impose new levies except under conditions set by the Central Government.
Retrospective tax demands could be raised at any time.	All pending retrospective dues are now declared invalid.
The maximum burden fell on small and medium miners.	Every miner now benefits from a fair and equal framework.

Key Benefits of the Act

The MMDR Amendment Act, 2026 strengthens the mining sector and supports inclusive national development.

- **Benefits the Common Man:** Competitive coal prices help reduce electricity costs and benefit households in their daily lives. Lower mineral costs strengthen industries, infrastructure, economic growth and employment.

- **Strengthens Manufacturing, Infrastructure and the Economy:** Coal provides energy, while iron ore, limestone and bauxite support steel, cement and aluminium production. Copper also supports modern industry, electricity and defence. The Act therefore benefits power, manufacturing, railways, roads, housing, transport and development programmes.
- **The Act is for Viksit Bharat:** The Act creates a more competitive, transparent, predictable and investor-friendly mining sector. It strengthens investment, production, employment, energy security, national security and self-reliance.

The Way Forward

The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2026 marks an important step in modernising India's mineral governance. By ensuring a stable and uniform fiscal regime, it aims to strengthen mineral exploration, critical mineral security and sustainable resource development. These efforts will help advance India's journey towards Viksit Bharat.

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Container Manufacturing Assistance Scheme: Building India’s Maritime Future

Published on: August 11, 2026

India's growing trade and manufacturing ambitions have increased the need for a strong domestic container manufacturing base. The proposed Container Manufacturing Assistance Scheme (CMAS), backed by a ₹10,000 crore outlay, seeks to promote manufacturing, investment and technology development across the container ecosystem. With broader reforms in shipping, ports and logistics, the initiative is expected to strengthen India's maritime capabilities, generate employment and support India's long-term trade competitiveness.

The Need for Domestic Container Manufacturing

Global trade today is increasingly driven by containerised logistics. According to the **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development** (UNCTAD), around **80% of global merchandise trade by volume is transported by sea.** Maritime transport forms the backbone of international commerce. Meanwhile, containerised cargo accounts for nearly two-thirds of the value of international trade. These trends highlight the strategic importance of efficient container logistics in supporting global supply chains.

In recent years, geopolitical tensions, supply-chain disruptions and changing shipping routes have exposed vulnerabilities in the global movement of goods. UNCTAD has observed that these disruptions have contributed to freight-rate volatility and increased pressure on maritime transport networks. As a result, many countries are placing greater emphasis on enhancing domestic manufacturing capabilities for critical logistics assets, including shipping containers.

India's growing role in global manufacturing and international trade has significantly increased the demand for containerized cargo movement. However, despite expanding export-import (EXIM) trade and rapid logistics development, India has largely depended on imported empty containers. India imports nearly 2 million empty containers every year to meet domestic demand and for repositioning purposes. This has made container availability vulnerable to global market fluctuations, freight volatility and supply-chain disruptions.

Recognizing these emerging challenges, the **Government announced the Container Manufacturing Assistance Scheme (CMAS)**. It aims to establish a globally competitive container manufacturing ecosystem in India by promoting domestic manufacturing and encouraging investment across the value chain. The initiative also seeks to reduce import dependence and strengthen supply-chain resilience. Further, it complements the Government's initiatives under Make in India, **Maritime Amrit Kaal** Vision 2047 and multimodal logistics development, contributing to India's long-term maritime and trade ambitions.

What is Container Manufacturing Assistance Scheme (CMAS)?

CMAS was announced in the Union Budget 2026–27. It is a targeted initiative to establish a competitive domestic container manufacturing industry through financial and institutional support.



With an outlay of ₹10,000 crore over five years, the proposed scheme supports establishment of new manufacturing facilities and expansion of existing units. It also aims to enhance manufacturing capacity to meet India's growing demand for shipping containers.

The initiative targets an annual domestic manufacturing capacity of around 10 times the existing container production capacity upto 7.5 lakh

What are Containers?

Shipping containers are standardized steel freight containers used to transport cargo across ships, railways and road vehicles without unloading and repacking the goods during transit. Built to internationally recognised ISO (International Organization for Standardization) specifications, they enable seamless intermodal transport and efficient global trade. The most common sizes are 20-foot and 40-foot containers, measured in Twenty-foot Equivalent Units (TEUs), the standard unit used to measure container capacity.

Twenty-foot Equivalent Units (TEUs). It is expected to **generate a market opportunity of nearly ₹80000 lakh crore** while positioning India as a reliable producer of internationally competitive shipping containers.

To strengthen the container manufacturing value chain, the scheme provides:

- **Capital assistance** for establishing **new Greenfield manufacturing facilities.**
- Support for **expansion of existing Brownfield manufacturing units**.
- **Operational support to improve the competitiveness** of domestic container manufacturing.
- Support for testing infrastructure, skilling initiatives and capacity building.

Building an Integrated Maritime Ecosystem

CMAS is one element of a broader strategy to build an integrated, domestically anchored container ecosystem. In February 2026, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways signed an MoU to establish the Bharat Container Shipping Line (BCSL). This brings together the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI), the Container Corporation of India (CONCOR), the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority, V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority (VOCPA) and the Sagarmala Finance Corporation Limited (SFMCL). The initiative envisages **investments of around ₹99,149 crore in fleet development of 51 container vessels of various sizes and domestic container procurement.**

This coordinated approach complements the Government's wider logistics initiatives. These include:

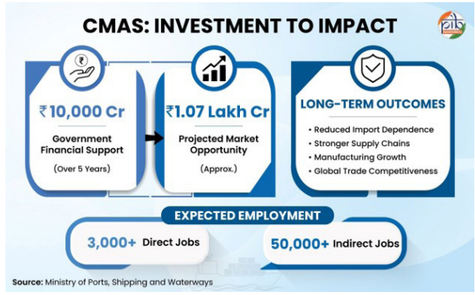
- **PM Gati Shakti,** enhancing connectivity between ports, railways, highways and industrial centres;
- **The National Logistics Policy,** supporting operational efficiency; and
- **The Sagarmala Programme,** promoting port-led development.

These initiatives support a resilient and integrated logistics network for India's growing trade volumes.

Employment and Manufacturing Opportunities

Beyond improving logistics resilience, CMAS is expected to generate substantial employment and stimulate industrial development.

It has the potential to generate around 3,000 direct jobs and more than 50,000 indirect jobs across container manufacturing and allied industries.



The initiative is also expected to catalyse growth across several ancillary industries, including:

- Corner castings
- Wooden frames
- Corten steel

Recent Progress and Industry Response

In July 2026, India achieved a significant milestone in maritime manufacturing with the **rollout of its first India-manufactured export-import (EXIM) shipping container** for global shipping company, A.P. Moller–Maersk. The container was unveiled at the Maersk–CONCOR Inland Container Depot in Dadri, Uttar Pradesh.

The container has been manufactured in accordance with **internationally recognised ISO standards and the International Convention for Safe Containers (CSC)**. This makes it suitable for deployment across global shipping networks. **The rollout demonstrates India's capability to manufacture globally compliant shipping containers.**

Another notable milestone was Maersk's order for **1,000 additional Made-in-India shipping containers** with DCM Shriram Group. The order represents an early **commercial endorsement** of India's emerging manufacturing capability. It also signals **growing confidence among global shipping companies in India's ability** to produce high-quality shipping containers.

These developments indicate that the Government's policy interventions are beginning to translate into commercial outcomes. **They also reinforce India's ambition to emerge as an important manufacturing hub within the global maritime value chain.**

Part of Wider Maritime Transformation

CMAS is part of a broader set of reforms strengthening India's maritime sector. Alongside promoting domestic container production, the Government has introduced a series of legislative, institutional and infrastructure initiatives. Together, these measures seek to modernise India's maritime ecosystem

while improving ease of doing business.

These include the enactment of the **Merchant Shipping Act, 2025, Coastal Shipping Act, 2025** and **Indian Ports Act, 2025.** These legislations provide an updated legal framework for shipping, coastal trade and port governance. Complementing these reforms are digital initiatives such as the One Nation **One Port Process (ONOP)**, the **Maritime Single Window** and **e-Samudra.** These initiatives simplify regulatory procedures, reduce documentation and improve operational efficiency across ports and shipping services.

The Government has also announced a **₹70,000 crore Shipbuilding Financial Assistance Package.** The package aims to boost domestic shipbuilding capabilities and encourage greater investments in the maritime manufacturing sector. Along with the proposed Bharat Container Shipping Line (BCSL), these measures seek to build an integrated maritime ecosystem that spans shipbuilding, container manufacturing, shipping services, ports and multimodal logistics.

Major infrastructure projects, including **Vadhavan Port,** the **International Container Transshipment Port** at Galathea Bay, the T**una Tekra Container Terminal** and the **Outer Harbour Container Terminal at V.O. Chidambaranar Port**, are progressing rapidly. These projects are aimed at expanding India's maritime infrastructure and enhance cargo-handling capacity.

Three Indian ports are now ranked among the world's top 30 in the Container Port Performance Index (CPPI) 2025, reflecting continued improvements in port efficiency and reinforcing India's position in global maritime trade.

Way Forward

CMAS marks a significant step towards building a globally competitive maritime manufacturing ecosystem. By promoting container production and reducing dependence on imports, the scheme is expected to strengthen supply-chain resilience, generate employment and enhance India's competitiveness in global trade. **Complemented by broader maritime reforms, CMAS has the potential to position India as a leading maritime manufacturing and logistics hub.**

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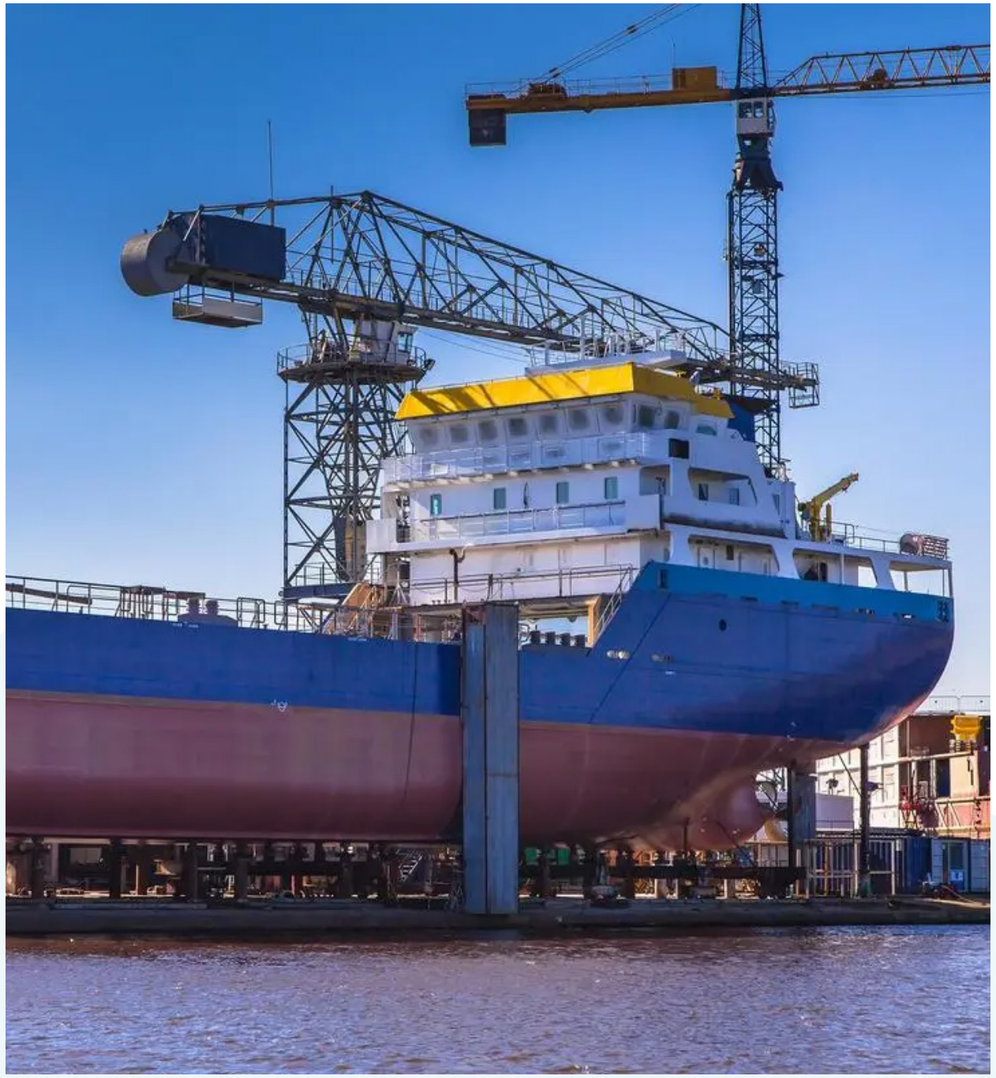



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Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2026

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Published on: August 19, 2026

What are the categories/kinds of revenue collected by the State governments from mines?

The States are presently getting around 14 types of taxes, charges, fees and other levies, including royalty, auction premium, dead rent, payments to District Mineral Foundations (DMFs), GST and transit fees. Further, some States have also introduced taxes on mineral-bearing lands, resulting in an additional financial burden on Government companies. In certain cases, such taxes are as high as 20%.

How is the mining revenue allocated between State and Centre?

Presently, approximately 90% of the revenue generated from the mining sector is accruing to the States. Over the past decade, the States' share in the total mineral revenue (coal & non-coal) has, in fact, increased by approximately 28 percentage points, reaching around ₹1,14,549.28 crore in 2025-26. With the passage of the Act, there will be no reduction in the revenue accruing to the States. States will continue to receive approximately 90% of the revenue generated from Mineral Production.

What key reforms have been done in the mineral sector since 2015?

The following measures have been brought since 2015 in the mining sector, making it transparent, competitive and better prepared for future demand:

- **Competitive E-Auction and a Record Year of Mine Opening**

The 2015 amendment to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act ended discretionary allocation of concessions. Since then, 723 major mineral blocks have been auctioned across 17 States, led by Rajasthan with 140, Madhya Pradesh with 127 and Odisha with 76. FY 2025-26 was the best year yet, with a record 212 blocks auctioned and 36 operationalised. In coal, 141 mines have been auctioned and 23 operationalised.

- **Growth in Production and Global Standing**

The value of major mineral production rose by 26.8 percent in FY 2025-26. Iron ore reached a record 313 million tonnes and limestone 484 million tonnes. Coal output has crossed one billion tonnes in each of the last two years, and non-coal production has nearly tripled since 2014. India now ranks second globally in limestone, third in zinc, fourth in iron ore and fifth in bauxite.

- **National Critical Mineral Mission and Overseas Sourcing**

The National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) was approved on 29 January 2025 with an outlay of ₹16,300 crore, including ₹2,600 crore of budgetary support, up to FY 2030-31. The Geological Survey of India (GSI) and the National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust (NMEDT) are working towards 1,200 critical mineral projects. Of 777 projects sanctioned by NMEDT at ₹3,828.52 crore, 255 relate to critical minerals. The 2025 amendment allows NMEDT to support exploration abroad. Khanij Bidesh India Limited (KABIL) has secured exclusive lithium exploration rights in Argentina.

- **Processing, Recycling and Research Capacity**

A ₹1,500 crore incentive scheme for critical mineral recycling was launched on 2 October 2025. It has drawn 58 entities pledging 850 thousand tonnes per annum of capacity, against a target of 270Kt. Critical Mineral Processing Parks (CMPPs) are being supported in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Odisha and Maharashtra with ₹500 crore. Basic customs duty has been removed on critical minerals, lithium-ion battery scrap and processing capital goods in three successive Budgets. Nine institutes have been named Centres of Excellence (CoEs) with ₹210 crore under the MAHA mission.

- **A Wider and Better Funded Exploration Ecosystem**

Exploration activity has grown nearly 200 times since 2014, with 51 private agencies now notified for the work. The NMEDT contribution has been raised to 3 percent, and half of direct exploration costs are reimbursed. The ceiling for reimbursement of exploration expenditure is ₹20 crore for exploration licence holders and ₹8 crore for composite licence holders. GSI completed 457 projects in Field Season 2025-26, including 230 on critical and strategic minerals, while NMEDT funded 62 such projects in 2024-25 and 84 in 2025-26.

- **Simpler Operations and Digital Monitoring**

Mining leases may now take a one-time area extension of up to 10 percent, and composite licences up to 30 percent. The cap on mineral sales from captive mines has been removed, along with extra payment for adding critical, strategic or deep-seated minerals to a lease. The Unified Mining Portal (UMP), built with the States, tracks the entire block lifecycle from auction to operationalisation. Coal and Mineral Exchanges further support fair price discovery.

How has the 2015 amendment contributed to the sharing of the benefit of mining affected people?

In 2015, the Central Government introduced the concept of District Mineral Foundation (DMF) for sharing

the benefit of mining with the people affected by mining. The Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY) and 656 District Mineral Foundations (DMFs) were set up for local welfare, including 106 in aspirational districts. The entire amount collected under DMF is utilised for local development projects, with the district administration determining the areas and projects to be funded. These initiatives support essential infrastructure and services such as roads, hospitals, schools, drinking water and improved living conditions.

How does the 2026 Amendment Act address the issue of import dependency on minerals?

The Act provides for a stable and rational tax structure for both domestic economic growth or regional growth, and national strategic interests as well. This stability will attract investment, boost production of critical minerals, and reduce reliance on imports of minerals.

Will the Amendment Act 2026 affect the source of revenue for mineral-rich states?

The States are currently levying around 14 types of taxes, charges, fees and other levies on mining operations.

At present, out of the total taxes and statutory payments in the mining sector, around 90% goes to States and this situation will continue even after the amendment. Therefore, the State will not have any revenue loss by virtue of the present amendment in the MMDR Act.

The Act establishes long-term fiscal certainty, as mining requires massive upfront capital for years together for mining projects. This Act will lead to an increase in the production and revenue of the State Government.

Does the Act impact the revenue accrued to the States?

The Act does not reduce the revenue accrued to States. States will continue to receive Royalty, Auction Premium, DMF and their share of GST. Since the auction regime began in 2015, States have received more than ₹ 7 lakh crore from the mining sector, including coal. Today, approximately 96% of mining-sector revenue accrues to States, while the Centre receives around 4% through GST. The Act instead seeks to keep mining projects economically viable, so that higher production, investment, and continued mining activity generate more sustainable revenue for States. In fact, State mineral revenue has increased by approximately 354 % over the last decade, reaching around ₹82,366 crore in 2025-26.

How does this Act help the economy?

By creating a predictable fiscal regime, long term policy vision will attract more industry participation and foreign investment in the country. Investors need to know their tax liability upfront. This stability will attract investment, boost production of critical minerals, reduce reliance on imports and facilitate the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

How do mineral taxes imposed by the State hurt the common citizen?

Minerals are primary raw materials for steel, power, cement, and infrastructure. When states impose heavy taxes at the extraction stage, it creates a cascading tax effect that inflates the input cost of mineral thereby increasing manufacturing costs and ultimately raises the cost of living for ordinary citizens.

Does the Act only benefit a handful of corporations?

This Act is not meant to benefit any particular corporation. It is meant to bring clarity, regulation, and statutory correction to the tax structure in the Mining Sector. Today, mineral blocks are not allocated at anyone's discretion. All blocks are allocated through 100% transparent e-auctions, based on competitive bidding. The system that existed before 2014 no longer exists. Today, allocation is based on the highest bid, not personal discretion or influence. Around 725 mineral blocks have been auctioned and 105 are operational. Similarly, 141 coal mines have been successfully auctioned, of which 23 are operational.

The auction process gives equal opportunity to PSUs, MSMEs, startups, Indian companies, and global companies. Out of the 725 major mineral blocks auctioned, there are 300 unique bidders. And, out of the total working mines in the country, there are 337 unique companies having mining leases. If old and uncertain tax demands are imposed retrospectively or all at once, it could seriously affect sectors such as steel, cement, aluminium, and power. The impact would ultimately reach the common citizen through higher costs of infrastructure, housing, electricity and other essential goods and services. The Act does not transfer money from the State treasury to any corporate and does not waive anyone's outstanding dues. It only provides a clear legal framework to regulate levies that can adversely affect the Mining Sector and the wider economy. The objective is to reduce litigation, provide policy certainty and create a stable and competitive Mining Sector, so that both industry and the country can grow.

- **Is the change made through the Amendment Act also applicable to minor minerals?**

No. The MMDR Amendment Act, 2026 does not affect the minor minerals that are exclusively regulated and controlled by State Governments. Nearly 50 minor minerals fall under this category, including sand, gravel, clay, silica, granite, marble, gypsum, laterite, and others. The Act does not alter the powers of State Governments to regulate, administer, or levy taxes on these minor minerals. Therefore, the existing regulatory and fiscal powers of States over such minor minerals remain unaffected by the Act.

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PIB Research





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Celebrating Grassroots Innovation at the Micro Food Processing Bazaar

Where India's Flavours Find New Horizons

Published on: August 26, 2026

At the **India Habitat Centre**, a national showcase of India's culinary diversity welcomed visitors. The stalls presented an impressive array of unique, ethnic, and traditional foods, each telling a story of **grassroots entrepreneurship and regional heritage**.

Against this vibrant backdrop, the **Ministry of Food Processing Industries** hosted the **PMFME** (Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises) **Bazaar** on **24–25 August 2026.** Bringing together exhibitors from **25 States and Union Territories**, the **Bazaar celebrated India's rich culinary diversity**. The event offered micro food



enterprises, SHGs, FPOs, cooperatives, and entrepreneurs a platform to showcase their products, connect with buyers, and explore new markets. Featuring everything from millets and spices to pickles, snacks, beverages, and other value-added foods, the Bazaar demonstrated how local ingredients and traditional knowledge can be transformed into promising brands with broader reach. **Launched on 29 June 2020, the PMFME Scheme** supports micro food enterprises through financial, technical, and business assistance, enabling entrepreneurs to establish new units or strengthen existing ones.



Faraz's story is part of a larger transformation now underway across India's micro food processing sector. Standing at the PMFME Bazaar, **Faraz** watched visitors pause at the **SHHE Foods stall**, as his team proudly shared their **journey from Bihar**. For Faraz, this was more than just a marketplace moment, it was a reminder of just how far their small enterprise had travelled.

SHHE Foods Private Limited began in 2021 with a simple idea: giving Bihar's **beloved makhana a more modern identity.** The team started experimenting with value-added products, including makhana-infused cookies and smaller, more convenient makhana packs designed for easy consumption.



Association with the PMFME scheme in 2021 gave the enterprise a meaningful boost, strengthening its visibility, supporting brand building, and opening doors to new business opportunities. The PMFME Bazaar itself is becoming a valuable source of customer and business connections.

The scheme's impact went further, helping SHHE Foods upgrade its processing unit. Under **PMFME's credit-linked capital subsidy**, which offers 35 percent of the total project cost up to ₹10 lakh per unit, the company received over **₹3 lakh in subsidy** against its **₹10 lakh loan.** This support helped it become more competitive, formalise operations, and unlock new avenues for growth. With this support, they invested in better machinery and increased their production capacity, raising the output from processing just 100 kilograms a day to **at least 1,000 kilograms a day**. That growth is mirrored in their sales trajectory too: from ₹2.5–3 lakh in 2021, SHHE Foods has now crossed **₹14 crore in sales**. For Faraz, these numbers tell a story of **ambition, support, and a dream rapidly taking shape.** As the scheme reaches deeper into India's diverse food landscape, its impact takes on a different flavour in every region it touches.

In Udaipur, that impact is shaped by **tradition, nature, and purpose**.



Since 2017, **Tribalveda** has brought two worlds together, **tribal wisdom and Ayurveda,** a fusion beautifully captured in its very name. Every jamun season breathes new energy into this journey, as **3,000–5,000 tribal women** head into the forests to collect the fruit, then transform it into distinctive, preservative-free products such as jamun vinegar, cubes, and strips. For these women, the venture offers far more than income: it **creates employment, strengthens livelihoods, and opens new possibilities** for their communities.

PMFME gave this journey a further push. Improved machinery strengthened operations, while wider market access helped Tribalveda's products travel farther than ever before. Today, orders arrive through **Amazon, Flipkart, and the brand's own website**, and the journey has even crossed Indian shores, reaching customers in **Dubai and the USA**. What began with a modest customer base now extends well beyond the forests of Rajasthan, carrying forward a simple idea: **when tradition finds opportunity, both can flourish.**

In Maharashtra, Mayur Hande's journey began with far less: a small setup and a big ambition. Started 13 years ago, **Soya Rich** works with soya and tofu, grinding soya into milk that is then fermented into tofu, and flavoured with variants like mint and smoked to create new products. But innovation demands the right machinery, and machinery demands investment; before PMFME, funding remained a persistent hurdle, with loan delays further slowing expansion.



Soya Rich joined the PMFME scheme in 2021, and the support helped bring several pieces together at once. For a project costing ₹20 lakh, the enterprise secured a bank loan backed by a capital subsidy of **35 percent of the project cost under the Scheme**. The support extended beyond machinery to strengthen branding, expand reach, and connect the business with government portals. The results speak for themselves: from a single small setup, Soya Rich now operates **across eight cities**, with monthly sales rising from around ₹2 lakh to **nearly ₹35 lakh**. It's a journey that carries a simple message: **with the right support, small beginnings can travel much farther**. While this story began small and grew wider, another began decades ago and continues to find new horizons.

For **Piyush Mohanty**, food processing is not just a business but a legacy that began in **Odisha in 1995**. At **Malati Food Products**, different varieties of millets undergo careful cleaning, grinding, processing, and packaging. For years,



a lack of reliable machinery made it difficult to achieve the quality the enterprise envisioned. Its association with **PMFME in 2024** opened up a new possibility: upgrading their facility through a capital subsidy of over **₹9 lakh,** enabling investment in better processing machinery.

The difference showed quickly. Improved machinery **lifted product quality, and sales grew by around 40 percent**. Malati Food Products expanded its marketing to **Amazon and Flipkart,** while participation in trade fairs opened new doors, bringing **exposure, knowledge, and valuable market connections.** Perhaps the most meaningful change, though, isn't captured in sales figures or machinery upgrades: it's the **confidence to look beyond** what once seemed possible. With stronger capabilities and a growing market presence, **Malati Food Products** now plans to explore exports starting next year, a nearly three-decade-old legacy preparing to travel beyond Indian shores.

That is what these stories are really about, not simply businesses growing, but dreams finding the courage to grow bigger. Beyond its colours, aromas, and flavours, the Bazaar left behind something more enduring: **the quiet reminder that a dream, once given a chance, can change a life**.

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GI Tags: Scaling Traditional Wealth into Global Brands

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Geographical Indication (GI) tags have emerged as a powerful tool for protecting India's cultural heritage, while creating economic opportunities for local communities. By linking products to their place of origin, GI tags preserve traditional knowledge, prevent misuse, and enhance consumer trust. They help artisans, weavers, farmers, and producer groups secure better market recognition and gain access to premium markets. India's GI ecosystem has expanded significantly over the years, supported by a robust legal framework and growing public awareness. Government initiatives are further strengthening this ecosystem through financial assistance, export promotion, tourism integration, and dedicated marketing platforms. Together, these efforts are transforming GI products into drivers of rural development, cultural preservation, and export-led growth.

GI Tag- Safeguarding India's Unique Products

A weaver in Banaras spends weeks crafting a single Banarasi saree. Every thread of intricate zari work is woven with exceptional precision and skill. These techniques are not learned overnight. They are passed down through generations, preserving a centuries-old tradition.

Yet, despite the effort and craftsmanship involved, many authentic Banarasi sarees are often sold at prices far below their true value. Buyers may not always be able to distinguish a genuine handwoven saree from other imitations. This is where two words make all the difference- **GI Tag (Geographical Indication)**.

THE GI LOGO

The symbol of authenticity, origin, cultural value of GI registered goods from India



Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry

A GI tag certifies that the saree is genuinely made in Banaras using traditional methods. It assures buyers of its authenticity, quality, and cultural heritage. As a result, the authentic Banarasi saree can command a significantly higher price in domestic and international markets. This ensures that the weaver receives greater recognition and better economic returns for their craftsmanship.

Significance of GI goods in Indian tradition, economy, sustainability

A GI tag serves as a seal of authenticity for artisanal crafts, safeguarding them against imitation, misuse, and unauthorized commercialization. Its significance, however, extends far beyond legal protection. For instance, the Channapatna toys received GI recognition in 2006. This recognition applies only to wooden toys made in Karnataka's Channapatna region. The toys must be produced using the region's distinctive lacquerware art. Although it may appear to be a simple certification, the tag can deliver far-reaching benefits.

- By certifying a product's origin and unique heritage, GI tags instil confidence among buyers and enhance the product's market appeal.
- As consumers increasingly seek authenticity, tradition, and craftsmanship, GI recognition serves as a powerful symbol of quality and cultural distinctiveness.

A GI tag is more than a label. As per the Ministry of Textiles, it can raise rural artisans' incomes by 20–30%!

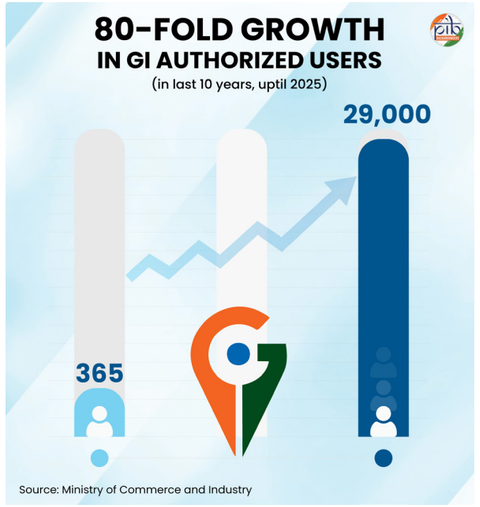
- Growing demand for GI-tagged products enables artisans to gain greater visibility, access premium markets, strengthen their bargaining power, and capture a larger share of the value generated by their work.
- The recognition creates sustainable livelihood opportunities. They also play a vital role in preserving and promoting India's rich cultural heritage and indigenous craftsmanship for future generations.



Success Story of Muzaffarnagar Jaggery: From Local Specialty to Global Markets

The GI tag for Muzaffarnagar Jaggery has helped strengthen its identity as a premium product with distinct quality and origin. Leveraging this recognition, Brijnandan Agro Farmer Producer Company successfully exported 30 metric tons of jaggery to Bangladesh in 2025. The GI certification enhanced buyer confidence and improved the product's marketability in international markets. As a result, the farmer-led company gained access to export opportunities. It increased income prospects for its 545 members, and created greater value for locally produced jaggery.

History, Status & Regulation of GI Tags



Darjeeling Tea from West Bengal was the first product in India to receive a GI tag, with protection extended to both the product and its logo. Other early registrations included **Aranmula Kannadi**, a traditional handicraft from Kerala, and **Pochampalli Ikat**, a renowned textile craft from Telangana.

In the last 10 years, authorized users for GI tags increased from 365 to 29,000 (as of January 2025.

Did you know?

India is home to over 800 registered GI products and 607 GIs have been granted since 2014.

Regulation of GI

As a form of intellectual property, GIs are recognised internationally under the **Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property** and the **World Trade Organization's (WTO) Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).** In India, their registration and protection are overseen by the **Geographical Indications Registry under the 1999 Act**.

Leading export destinations for Indian GI products include the UK, Italy, UAE, Bahrain, Qatar, the USA, South Korea.

India established a legal framework for protecting products linked to specific regions through the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 and the accompanying Rules notified in 2002. The framework became operational in 2003, and GI registrations commenced in 2004–05. The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Rules, 2002, were amended in 2025.

Through the 2025 amendment, the fee for filing GI applications and related processes has been reduced by 80%. The renewal fee for the tag has also been cut from ₹3,000 down to just ₹500!

Key Sectors & States with GI Tagged products

India is home to GI-tagged products across categories such as handicraft products, agricultural products, manufactured goods, food products and natural products.

- **Handicraft products-** 445 handicraft products and 27 product logos have been registered under the Act (as of December 2025). Examples include Pashmina from Jammu & Kashmir, Baluchari Saree from West Bengal and Banaras Gulabi Meenakari Craft from Uttar Pradesh.
- **Agricultural products-** 251 products have been registered, spanning a diverse range of crops, including cereals, fruits, vegetables, spices, and non-basmati rice.
- **Manufacturing products-** 64 manufactured products have been registered, such as Nashik Valley Wine and Kannauj Perfume.
- **Food products-** 66 food products, encompassing prepared, cooked, or processed delicacies are GI tagged. For eg. West Bengal's Bardhaman Mihidana and Sitabhog, Odisha's Kendrapara Rasabali, and Andhra Pradesh's famous Tirupathi Laddu.
- **Natural products-** 5 natural products- Makrana Marble (Rajasthan), Chunar Balua Patthar (Uttar Pradesh), Lac of Purulia (West Bengal), Panna Diamond (Madhya Pradesh) and

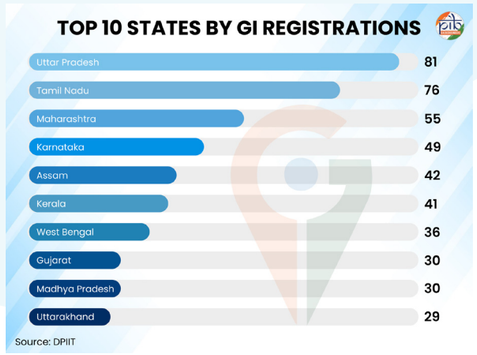
Ambaji White Marble (Gujarat) are GI-tagged in India. While these are strictly "Natural" products, hundreds of other natural-origin goods fall under the Agricultural Products category.

Several **Indian states** are driving India's GI legacy. As of December 2025, Uttar Pradesh is the leading state with 81 GI-tagged products. It is followed by Tamil Nadu (76 GI-tagged products) and Maharashtra (55 GI-tagged products).



Behind the GI Tag: Registration, Protection and Renewal

Before a product can receive the certification, it must meet specific legal and procedural requirements. India's GI registration system defines who can apply, how long protection lasts, and the circumstances under which a GI may be revoked.



GI Registration Framework

Any association of producers, organisation, or authority established under law can apply for GI registration. The applicant must be a legal entity and represent the interests of the producers of the concerned product. If the applicant is not a producers' association, it must prove that it represents the producers' interests. Similarly, an authority applying for registration must also demonstrate that it represents the producers of the product.

Application or any other document may be filed directly in the GI Registry. It may also be sent by post, registered post, speed post or courier services. The GI Registry is located at Geographical Indications Registry, Chennai, which has all-India Jurisdiction.

The **registration of a GI is valid for ten years**, but may be renewed from time to time.

Can a GI tag be revoked?

The revocation, cancellation, or variation of a GI registration is governed by Section 27 of the Act. Any aggrieved person may apply to the Registrar or the competent authority for cancellation or variation of a registered GI. The Registrar or the Appellate Board may also initiate such action on their own if necessary.

GI Exclusions: What Cannot Be Registered

- Generic product names no longer protected in their country of origin.
- ndications that mislead consumers or falsely suggest a different geographical origin.
- Indications that offend religious sentiments or contain scandalous, offensive, or obscene matter.
- Indications not eligible for legal protection or that violate any law in force

A GI registration may be revoked or cancelled if:

- It was obtained through fraud or misrepresentation.
- It is no longer protected in its country of origin or has fallen into disuse.
- Its use is likely to deceive consumers, violates any law, or contains scandalous or obscene matter.

Schemes & Policies Bolstering GI Tag

The Government is promoting GI products through initiatives aimed at improving awareness, market access, exports, and legal protection. Aligned with the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Vocal for Local, these efforts are empowering artisans, farmers, and producer communities. They are also enhancing the domestic and global recognition of India's unique regional products.

Dedicated Retail & Infrastructure Spaces

Certain platforms have been introduced to enhance product visibility, strengthen access to buyers, and create new opportunities for traditional producers.

- **PM Ekta Mall (Unity Mall):** PM Ekta Malls promote and sell One District One Product (ODOP) items, GI-tagged products, and other handicrafts. An allocation of ₹5,000 crore was made for establishing these malls across all States (FY 2023-24).

- **One Station One Product (OSOP):** Railway GI booths under the OSOP initiative provide dedicated stalls for showcasing and selling GI-tagged products. They enhance the outreach of regional crafts, textiles, handlooms and food products. OSOPs offer direct market access to artisans, weavers, farmers and producer groups.

GI Trails

GI clusters are being integrated into mainstream tourism itineraries. Much like wine tours in France, India is experimenting with GI Trails (like a Pochampally Ikkat weaving village tour or a Darjeeling tea estate trail). This blends experiential tourism with direct-to-consumer rural retail.

In June 2026, Muga Silk Trail was announced in Assam, along with a Silk Tourism Park and Muga Utsav festivals. This positions Assam as a premier destination for silk heritage tourism.

MSME Innovative Scheme

Support is provided under the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) component of the MSME Innovative Scheme for IP protection and commercialization, including GIs. Under the scheme, eligible applicants can receive reimbursement of the actual cost incurred for GI registration. The reimbursement covers up to 100% of the cost, subject to a maximum limit of ₹2 lakh per registered GI.

Financial assistance

The Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), under the Ministry of Textiles, provides financial support for GI protection. Eligible applicants can receive up to ₹1.5 lakh for enforcing GI rights and covering legal expenses related to protection of GIs. Besides, the Government promotes products under the National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP) & National Handicrafts Development Programme (NHDP). Financial assistance is offered for meeting the expenses in registering the designs/products, training personnel of implementing agencies and effective enforcement of GI registration.

104 GI-registered handloom products and 53 registrations are supported under Handloom Marketing Assistance, a component of NHDP (June 2026)

APEDA's Export Drives

The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) is strengthening the global presence of India's GI-tagged agricultural products. It supports farmers and exporters through quality improvement, capacity building, infrastructure support, and market promotion.

In 2026, APEDA accelerated exports of GI-tagged products by opening new international markets for farmers and producer groups. From fresh fruits to traditional rice and processed foods, these first-time shipments strengthened the global presence of India's regional specialties while improving returns for producers.

The EU-India FTA Connection

Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) enhance the value of GIs by expanding market access for distinctive regional products. GI tags certify authenticity and origin, while FTAs reduce trade barriers and improve export opportunities. Reflecting their growing importance, GIs have become a key issue in India's trade negotiations-

Market	GI Product	Key Impact
Maldives	Karnataka GI fruits	40–50% higher returns for farmers
Canada	Salem Sago	Expanded demand, better incomes
UK & Italy	Joha Rice	New export markets & better price realization
Dubai	Tezpur Litchi	~10% higher prices for growers



- After the India–Oman CEPA was signed, 3 metric tonnes of Indi Lime from Karnataka were exported to Oman in December 2025. The export of GI-tagged Indi Lime to Oman demonstrates the value addition offered by GI certification.
- New Zealand has also committed to enabling the registration of Indian GI products, a privilege currently accorded only to the European Union. The move will secure formal GI protection for Indian products such as Darjeeling Tea, Basmati Rice, and region-specific handicrafts in the New Zealand market.
- In the India–EU FTA talks, both sides continue negotiations on a dedicated GI agreement.

Promotional Events

Exhibitions, awareness programmes, and international trade events are organised to showcase GI-tagged products, widen markets, and support the livelihoods of artisans and weavers.

- **Exhibitions** include craft fairs, Dilli Haat events, and dedicated GI promotion programmes. Summits, seminars, and workshops are also organised for weavers and artisans.
- **Events** such as GI & Beyond: Virasat se Vikas Tak showcase the heritage, authenticity, and craftsmanship of GI handloom products. They also help increase awareness among domestic and international audiences.
- Recently, GI products were promoted at World Food India, 2025, Tribal Business Conclave, 2025 and India AI Impact Summit, 2026. They are also encouraged through screens, display boards, conveyor belts etc. at Varanasi, Delhi, Mumbai Airport and even Delhi Metro.
- Besides domestic events, live demonstrations and exhibitions of India's GI products are organized overseas as well. Examples include the Autumn Fair International 2024 in Birmingham, UK and the Bazaar Berlin 2024, Germany.

The Road Ahead: Scaling India's GI Success Story

India's GI ecosystem is evolving into a bridge between tradition and opportunity. Protecting heritage and empowering local producers, GI tags create lasting economic value. They also expand access to domestic and global markets. These efforts ensure India's unique regional products continue to thrive for generations. With a target of 10,000 GI registrations by 2030, India is well positioned to strengthen its heritage economy and enhance the global presence of its unique regional products.

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Ken-Betwa Link Project

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Published on: August 21, 2026

About the Project

1. What is the Ken-Betwa Link Project?

The Ken–Betwa Link Project (KBLP) is a major water-resources development project intended to address the long-standing water scarcity and irrigation challenges of the Bundelkhand region of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

The project envisages transfer of water from the Ken basin to the Betwa basin through a system comprising the Daudhan Dam, link canal and associated works. KBLP is the first priority project under the National Perspective Plan for Interlinking of Rivers to enter the implementation stage.



2. What is the scheme of the project?

This project involves transfer of water from the Ken to the Betwa River through construction of the 96.7 m high Daudhan Dam on the Ken River in Panna and Chhatarpur districts of Madhya Pradesh, about 40 km from Khajuraho. A 216.465 km-long Ken–Betwa Link Canal will take off near the Daudhan Dam and merge into Barua Sagar near Jhansi. Other components include the Lower Orr Project, Kotha Barrage, and Bina Complex Multipurpose Project.

The Project also includes various irrigation and water infrastructure works to be implemented by the Governments of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, including modernization and strengthening of existing canal systems, renovation of tanks and weirs, construction of barrages, development of pumping and pressurized pipe/micro-irrigation systems, stabilization and development of new command areas, and implementation of associated water supply and irrigation projects.

3. What is the total cost of the project

The total cost of the project is ₹44,605 crore.

4. What is the status of this project

The foundation stone of the project was laid by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 25th December 2024. The dam is under construction, while work on the canal is yet to begin. The Lower Orr Project, Kotha Barrage, and Bina Complex Multipurpose Project are under construction. Preparation of DPR of other state-specific projects of MP and UP is also under finalisation stage. The Project is scheduled for completion in 2030.

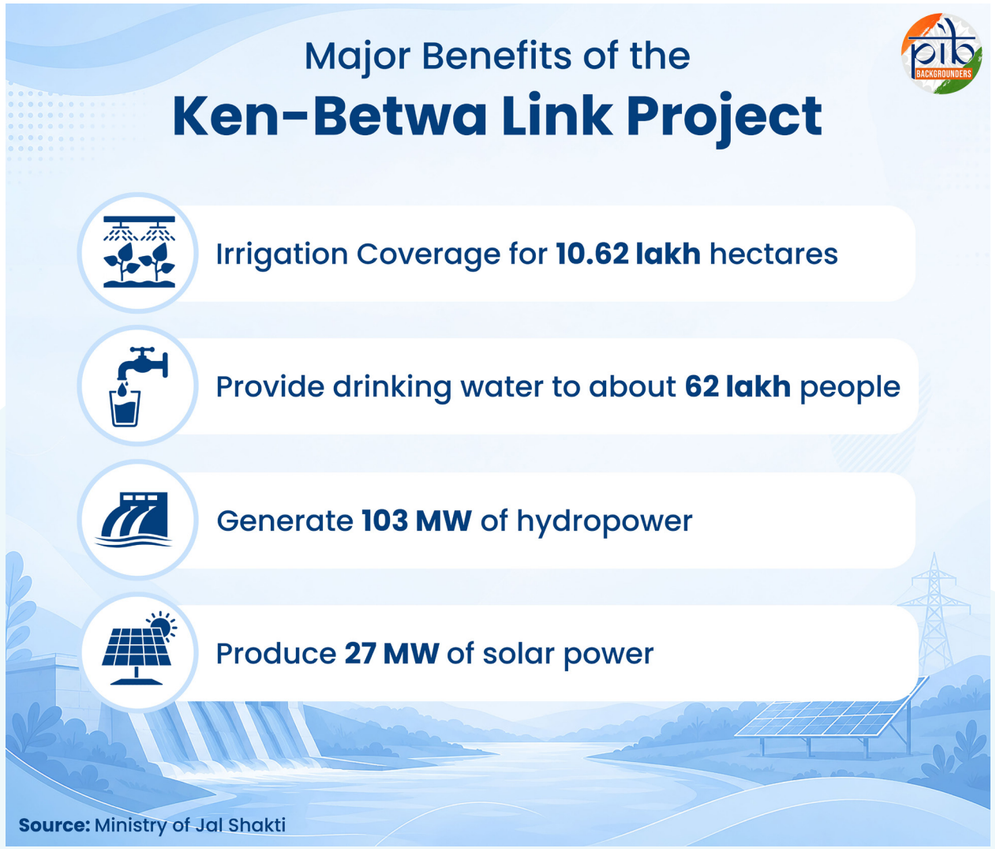
5. Why is this project needed?

Bundelkhand region has historically faced recurrent water scarcity, dependence on rainfall, inadequate irrigation facilities, declining groundwater availability in several areas and vulnerability of agriculture to drought.

The Ken Betwa Link Project is designed to provide more dependable water availability for irrigation and drinking-water requirements while also generating renewable energy and supporting broader regional development. The project is therefore not merely an irrigation project; it is envisaged as a comprehensive water-security and regional-development initiative for Bundelkhand.

6. What are the main benefits of the project?

The Project will provide irrigation to 10.62 lakh ha, drinking water to about 62 lakh people, and generate 103 MW of hydropower and 27 MW of solar power. Thus, it will supply clean drinking water, electricity, and reliable year-round irrigation across vast farmlands in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, permanently resolving the long-standing water crisis in the Bundelkhand region.



7. Which areas will benefit from this project?

The project will benefit the water-starved Bundelkhand region across Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, covering districts such as Chhatarpur, Newari, Tikamgarh, Panna, Sagar, Damoh, Datia, Vidisha, Shivpuri, and Raisen in M.P., and Banda, Mahoba, Jhansi and Lalitpur in U.P.

8. Will the Ken–Betwa Link Project create new jobs in the local area?

Yes. The Ken–Betwa Link Project (KBLP) is generating employment opportunities in the local area, particularly during the ongoing construction phase. Employment is being generated in civil construction, engineering, transportation, material supply, equipment operation, security, services and other ancillary activities. Local shops, transporters, suppliers and service providers are also benefiting from increased economic activity. In the long term, improved irrigation and water availability will support agriculture and allied activities, creating further livelihood and employment opportunities in the region.

9. How will the Ken–Betwa Link Project improve agriculture in Bundelkhand?

The Ken–Betwa Link Project is providing more reliable irrigation water, reducing dependence on uncertain rainfall and helping farmers plan agricultural activities with greater confidence. The improved availability of irrigation water is expected to support increased cropping intensity, higher crop productivity, crop diversification, cultivation of high-value crops, reduced vulnerability to drought and improved farm incomes, thereby strengthening rural livelihoods in the Bundelkhand region.



10. Will KBLP eliminate drought in Bundelkhand?

It would not be appropriate to claim that the project will completely eliminate drought.

Rather, KBLP is intended to substantially improve water security and drought resilience in its command and beneficiary areas by providing dependable irrigation and drinking-water support.

11. Will groundwater levels improve?

The availability of surface water for irrigation and other uses can reduce excessive dependence on groundwater in appropriate areas. The project also envisages rejuvenation/feeding of tanks along the link canal, wherever technically feasible, which can contribute to groundwater recharge and local water security.

Actual groundwater improvement will depend on local hydrogeological conditions and sustainable groundwater-use practices.

12. How does the wider region gain from this development?

By protecting crops from drought, it will boost harvests, reduce losses, and raise family incomes for farmers, while better utilities and transport links create new jobs and uplift everyday living standards for the entire community. It is expected to boost socio-economic prosperity in this backward region through increased agricultural activities, employment generation, and reduced distress migration. Better infrastructure attracts new schools, healthcare clinics, commercial markets, and agro-industries, transforming the area into a prosperous one.

13. Will downstream villages face any water shortage?

No. Continuous minimum environmental water release is strictly maintained around the year to ensure that downstream farming, drinking water needs, and aquatic ecosystems remain undisturbed. Similarly, the water infrastructure created under the region would also enhance the groundwater in the region.

14. How are flood risks managed during heavy monsoons?

The dam will act as a cushion against floods. Its automated spillway gates and 24/7 control rooms monitor water inflow to prevent sudden flooding in low-lying villages.

15. Are the benefits of KBLP greater than its impacts?

The project has been evaluated through the prescribed technical, economic, environmental and social assessment processes. KBLP is intended to deliver large-scale benefits in irrigation, drinking water and renewable energy while implementing mitigation and R&R measures for unavoidable impacts.

The appropriate approach is therefore not to ignore the impacts, but to minimize, mitigate, compensate and responsibly manage them while delivering the intended public benefits.

16. Is the Ken–Betwa Link Project beneficial only to farmers?

No. The Ken–Betwa Link Project (KBLP) provides benefits beyond irrigation to farmers. It supports farmers through irrigation facilities; rural and urban populations through drinking water supply; the energy sector through hydropower generation; and local communities through employment, infrastructure and increased economic activity. Overall, the project is

strengthening water security, agricultural development and socio-economic growth in the Bundelkhand region.

17. Will KBLP improve transportation infrastructure?

Major water infrastructure projects require construction and improvement of access roads, bridges, approaches and other associated infrastructure. Where such infrastructure is developed or upgraded as part of the project, it will facilitate improved connectivity to nearby areas.

18. Will project roads benefit local communities?

Project-related roads and connectivity infrastructure will facilitate secondary benefits to surrounding communities and people at large such as:

- movement of agricultural produce;
- access to markets;
- access to schools and healthcare;
- construction and economic activities;
- movement of people and goods; and
- access to project facilities.

19. Will KBLP directly develop a new transport corridor?

KBLP is primarily a water-resource and energy project. Any transport-related benefit should therefore be described in terms of project-associated roads, bridges and improved connectivity, rather than presenting KBLP as a dedicated transport project unless a particular transport facility has been formally approved as part of the project.

20. Why is drinking-water supply an important component of the Ken–Betwa Link Project (KBLP)?

Drinking-water supply is an important component of KBLP because water security is essential not only for agriculture but also for the well-being of rural and urban communities. Reliable drinking water helps improve public health, sanitation and household security, reduces the time spent by families, particularly women, in collecting water, and supports education, livelihoods and overall quality of life. Thus, KBLP has both agricultural and human-development benefits.

Land, Villages and People Affected

21. Why is land required for the Ken–Betwa Link Project (KBLP)?

Land is required for construction and development of various permanent and temporary project components of KBLP, including the Daudhan Dam and its appurtenant structures, reservoir/submergence area, Ken–Betwa Link Canal, powerhouses, access roads, project infrastructure, colonies, construction facilities and other ancillary works required for implementation of the project.

22. How many villages are affected by the project in Madhya Pradesh?

22 villages are affected — 8 in Panna district and 14 in Chhatarpur district.

23. Whether a public hearing was conducted for the Ken–Betwa Link Project?

Yes. Public hearings were conducted as part of the Environmental Clearance process for the Ken–Betwa Link Project, in accordance with the provisions of the EIA Notification, 2006. The concerns and suggestions raised by the local people and other stakeholders during the public hearing process were considered while finalizing the environmental assessment and mitigation measures for the project.

24. Is land being taken without the consent of the people?

No. The Land acquisition is being taken as per the LARR Act 2013 and other state-applicable laws of GoMP. The consents have been obtained as per the Act and accordingly the rehabilitation plan is being implemented. Under this project, a comprehensive R&R package has been announced by GoMP under which all R&R works are being undertaken. The rehabilitation plan is consent-based, and all affected families were given a choice between compensation under the normal land acquisition law or a more generous Special Package.

25. How will disputes regarding land ownership be handled?

Land ownership and entitlement issues are dealt with by competent revenue and land-acquisition authorities headed by the District Collector. Where there are disputes regarding title, succession, ownership or entitlement, the matter is processed in accordance with applicable law and established administrative/judicial procedures.

Compensation and the Special Rehabilitation Package

26. Whether any special package for R&R under KBLP has been announced by GoMP?

Yes, the GoMP announced a Special Package for the Resettlement and Rehabilitation of Project Affected Families (PAFs) in 2023. Under the Special Package, compensation for acquired land is paid at either the rate determined by the Act or ₹12.50 lakh per hectare, whichever is higher, with compensation for houses, trees, wells,

tube wells and other immovable assets similarly determined under the Act. Eligible families are receiving a grant of ₹7 lakh for a plot in rural areas (₹6.50 lakh in urban areas), or lump-sum assistance of ₹12.50 lakh where a plot is not opted for; eligible Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe families in scheduled areas receive additional financial assistance under the approved package.

27. Who is considered a Project Affected Family (PAF) for getting R&R assistance under the LARR Act, 2013?

A Project Affected Family means a family whose land, house, property, forest rights, or main source of livelihood is affected due to land acquisition for the project.

It includes:

- Landowners whose land is acquired;
- Persons whose livelihood is affected due to the acquisition;
- Tenants, agricultural labourers and share-croppers whose livelihood is affected;
- Scheduled Tribes and traditional forest dwellers whose recognised forest rights are affected; and
- Other eligible families covered under Section 3(c) of the RFCTLARR Act, 2013.

Such families may be eligible for Rehabilitation & Resettlement (R&R) benefits as provided under the Act and applicable rules.

28. How is a family unit counted for R&R benefits in KBLP?

As per Section 3(m) of the LARR Act, 2013, a family includes the person, his/her spouse, minor children and dependent minor brothers and sisters.

For R&R benefits, the following are treated as separate family units:

- Adult sons or daughters (18 years or above), whether married or unmarried.
- Widows, divorcees and women deserted by their families are treated as separate families.

Thus, in KBLP, the number of PAFs is determined by identifying the eligible family units as per the LARR Act, 2013, based on the survey and verification of affected families.

29. What support is available under KBLP for families who do not own land but whose livelihood is affected by the project?

Under the LARR Act, 2013, land ownership is not the only basis for R&R benefits. Eligible landless families whose main source of livelihood is affected due to KBLP have also been considered as Project Affected Families (PAFs), subject to the eligibility conditions under the Act and applicable State Government provisions.

Such eligible families are provided R&R benefits as applicable under the approved R&R provisions of KBLP.

30. How are people assisted in earning their livelihood after relocation?

Under various schemes, they are provided dedicated livelihood restoration programs that provide vocational and skill-development training, financial grants for self-help groups, small business assistance, and priority employment in project operations.

31. What compensation do people get for their land?

Families are paid either the rate fixed under the land acquisition law, or ₹12.50 lakh per hectare as per the Special Package announced by GoMP, whichever amount is higher.

32. What about houses, trees and wells on the land?

Compensation for houses, trees, wells, tube wells and other fixed property is also given, calculated as per the law.

33. What if a family wants a new house plot instead of just cash?

Eligible families can get a grant of ₹7 lakh for a plot in rural areas, or ₹6.50 lakh in urban areas.

34. What if a family does not want a plot at all?

They can instead choose a one-time lump-sum payment of ₹12.50 lakh per family.

35. Is there extra help for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe families?

Yes. Eligible SC and ST families living in Scheduled Areas get additional financial assistance on top of the standard package.

36. Who approved this Special Package?

The Government of Madhya Pradesh approved it on 13 September 2023, following a decision of the State Cabinet on 9 September 2023.

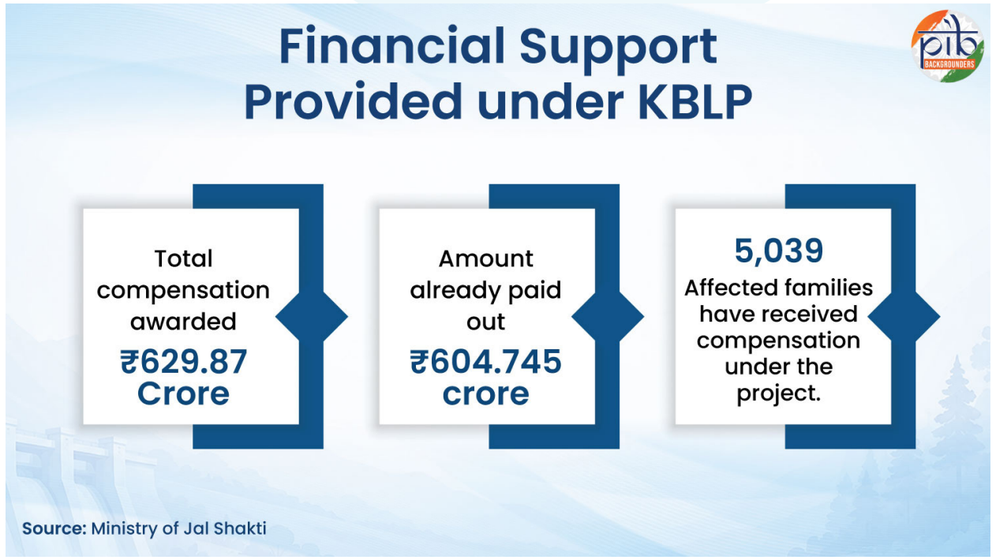
37. How much compensation has been paid so far?

As of the latest figures, awards worth about ₹360.66 crore have been passed, of which about ₹321.97 crore (around 89%) has already been paid to families. In village-habitation areas alone, over 94% of the awarded amount has been distributed.

38. What about the total project-wide compensation figures?

Across the project, awards worth

about ₹629.87 crore have been passed for 5,039 affected families, and about ₹604.745 crore (around 96%) has already been paid out. The remaining amount will be released once the required legal formalities are completed.



39. How is land compensation calculated and paid out?

Compensation is calculated transparently based on official market rates plus statutory resettlement allowances. Payments are transferred directly into verified bank accounts of landowners to prevent middlemen and unnecessary delays.

40. Are there special healthcare and educational initiatives?

Yes. Regular free medical checkup camps, mobile health vans, school infrastructure upgrades, and student scholarships are actively provided under ongoing community welfare programs.

41. What is KBLPA's approach towards affected families?

KBLPA recognizes that land acquisition affects not only land and property but also the lives and livelihoods of affected families. Accordingly, KBLPA is focusing on timely compensation, rehabilitation and resettlement, livelihood support, relocation wherever required, provision of basic civic amenities at resettlement sites, consultation with affected persons and grievance redressal. The objective is to ensure that Project Affected Families are treated with fairness, transparency and dignity throughout the rehabilitation and resettlement process.

42. Will affected landowners receive compensation?

Yes, Eligible landowners and other persons having recognized rights/ interests in land are entitled to compensation and other admissible benefits in accordance with the applicable statutory framework.

The compensation process is intended to ensure that affected persons receive the benefits to which they are legally entitled.

Making Sure No One Is Left Out

43. What happens if someone's name was left out of the compensation list?

The district administration has re-surveyed affected villages in Chhatarpur and Panna at the request of displaced families, and people who were earlier left out have now been added to the compensation awards.

44. Who checks that the process stays fair and accurate?

The District Administration continuously reviews land records. In addition, a National Monitoring Committee, set up under the land acquisition law, oversees the entire rehabilitation process.

45. Who helps families with documentation and paperwork?

Dedicated Field Facilitation Officers visit villages weekly to assist families with entitlement verification, banking paperwork, and application submissions at zero cost.

46. Can affected families still raise complaints or grievances?

Yes. Grievances are regularly received and resolved. For example, the administration has held special camps to hear and settle complaints from displaced families in the affected villages.

47. What is KBLPA's message to people affected by the project?

KBLPA's message is clear: the development of Bundelkhand should go hand in hand with the rights, dignity and welfare of Project Affected Families. KBLPA is working with the concerned State Governments, district administrations and affected communities to implement land acquisition, Rehabilitation &

Resettlement (R&R), and environmental measures in accordance with applicable laws, approved plans and prescribed procedures. The objective is to ensure fairness, transparency and responsible implementation of the project.

Support for Displaced Families

48. Are the children of displaced families looked after?

Yes. Efforts are made to enrol their children in schools and Anganwadi centres so their education is not disrupted.

49. Is healthcare support provided to displaced families?

Yes. Health camps have been organised where people are medically examined, medicines are distributed, and drinking-water handpumps are repaired.

50. Do displaced families get access to other government welfare schemes?

Yes. Special camps are held so families can also benefit from other government schemes, such as those related to livestock, social security, and welfare schemes for women and girls.

51. Does the government stay in touch with displaced families after they relocate?

Yes, Regular contact is maintained with displaced families so that any difficulty is quickly identified and their grievances are resolved fairly and speedily.

Rights of Tribal and Forest-Dependent Communities

52. Are the rights of tribal communities protected in this project?

Yes. The rights of Scheduled Tribes and other forest-dependent communities are safeguarded under the Forest Rights Act, 2006, through a statutory process of recognising and settling forest rights.

53. Was the consent of local communities taken before forest clearance?

The concerned District Collectors initiated the process for obtaining the free, prior and informed consent of the relevant Gram Sabhas, as required under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006. It was on this basis, and subject to compliance with applicable statutory requirements, that Forest Clearance for the project was accorded by MoEF&CC on 03.10.2023.

Environmental and Legal Clearances

54. Has the project received all the required government clearances?

Yes. The project has received all the statutory clearances needed under law, including Environmental Clearance (2017), Wildlife Clearance (2016), Clearance from the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (2017), and Forest Clearance (2023).

55. Will KBLP have environmental impacts?

Like any major water-resources infrastructure project, KBLP has environmental impacts that require careful assessment and management.

The project has therefore incorporated environmental safeguards and an Environmental Management Plan (EMP), along with compliance with applicable environmental, forest and wildlife-related requirements.

The approach is based on the principle that development and environmental protection must progress together.

56. Whether the environmental impacts of KBLP were studied before implementation?

Yes. The environmental impacts of the Ken–Betwa Link Project (KBLP) were assessed through detailed environmental studies as part of the statutory clearance process. Based on these assessments, the project was granted Environmental Clearance on 25.08.2017, along with the required Wildlife Clearance and Forest Clearance, subject to prescribed conditions and mitigation measures.

The project is also implementing various environmental management, compensatory afforestation, wildlife conservation and biodiversity protection measures to address and minimize the identified environmental impacts.

57. How is the loss of forest area and biodiversity in the core area of Panna Tiger Reserve (PTR) being compensated under KBLP?

The environmental impacts of KBLP, including unavoidable forest loss and impacts on biodiversity, are being addressed through a combination of compensatory afforestation, wildlife conservation and habitat management, catchment area treatment and implementation of the Integrated Landscape Management Plan (ILMP) for the Greater Panna Landscape.

In addition, an equivalent area of non-forest land has been provided adjacent to the core area of Panna Tiger Reserve for compensatory purposes, which will contribute to strengthening the habitat and conservation landscape around the Reserve.

Funds have also been provided as per the conditions of the Forest and Wildlife Clearances for implementing approved conservation and mitigation measures. These measures aim to compensate for unavoidable forest loss, minimize ecological impacts and strengthen biodiversity and wildlife conservation in the wider landscape.

58. What is the concern regarding Panna Tiger Reserve?

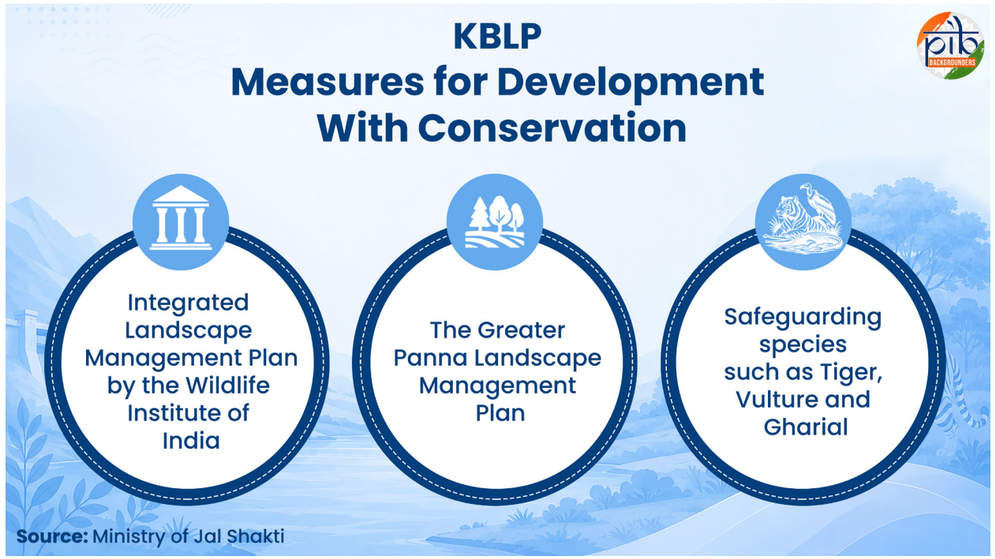
The project has significant environmental and wildlife considerations because of its proximity and relationship with the Panna landscape. Accordingly, wildlife and forest-related safeguards have been incorporated into project planning and implementation.

The Government has also undertaken landscape-level planning and conservation measures in association with the project.

59. What are the measures being taken to protect the environment and the wildlife

The project is aimed at not only providing water security in the Bundelkhand but also ensuring the overall conservation of the region and especially for landscape-dependent species such as Tiger, Vulture and Gharial. Apart from taking mitigation measures as per the approved Environmental Management Plan, the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) has prepared a comprehensive Integrated Landscape Management Plan (ILMP) for the conservation of wildlife and biodiversity not only in Panna Tiger Reserve (PTR) but also in surrounding areas. The Integrated Landscape Management Plan in Greater Panna Landscape (GPL) is one of the major and unique conservation measures being initiated in the conservation history of India.





60. What is Greater Panna Landscape Council?

A comprehensive Integrated Landscape Management Plan (ILMP) has been prepared for the conservation of wildlife and biodiversity in Panna Tiger Reserve (PTR) & surrounding areas. To ensure systematic and time-bound implementation of the Greater Panna Landscape Management Plan, the Greater Panna Landscape Council (GPLC) has been constituted under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, with members from all the stakeholders. Adequate financial provisions have been earmarked for the implementation of Environment Management Plan and Integrated Landscape Management Plan under the Ken-Betwa Link Project. This model will be a template for future development.

61. What is compensatory afforestation?

Where forest land is diverted for approved project purposes, compensatory afforestation and other prescribed measures are undertaken in accordance with applicable forest legislation and approvals. These measures are intended to compensate for permitted diversion of forest land and contribute to long-term ecological restoration.

62. Will KBLP affect biodiversity?

Environmental impacts on biodiversity have been considered as part of project planning. The project incorporates

mitigation and conservation measures intended to reduce, manage and compensate for unavoidable impacts. Environmental monitoring will also be undertaken during construction and operation.

Looking Ahead

63. What is being done to make sure the project stays on track?

Compensation and rehabilitation work continues in a transparent, fair and time-bound manner, with local officials in ongoing contact with affected families to resolve issues quickly.

64. What is the larger goal of the project going forward?

The goal is to balance the region's development needs with the rights and welfare of affected families — completing rehabilitation with dignity while delivering long-term irrigation, drinking water and power benefits to Bundelkhand.

65. Where can people get more information about the project?

More information is available on the official KBLPA website: www.kblpa.gov.in, the Ministry of Jal Shakti and the District Administrations of Chhatarpur and Panna.

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PIB Research





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Where Every Purchase Finds a GeM

Transforming Public Procurement Through Digital Governance

Published on: August 8, 2026

The **Government e-Marketplace (GeM)** has transformed public procurement by replacing manual, fragmented processes with a transparent, technology-driven digital platform. By digitising the entire procurement lifecycle, GeM has improved efficiency, transparency and accountability while reducing transaction costs. Dedicated initiatives for **MSEs, startups, women entrepreneurs** and socially disadvantaged enterprises have expanded access to government markets, making procurement more inclusive. As a key pillar of India's Digital Procurement Ecosystem, GeM supports **Digital India, Make in India, Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Ease of Doing Business**.



Public Procurement in the Digital Age

Every year, Governments procure goods and services worth thousands of crores across diverse sectors. From medical equipment and classroom furniture to transport infrastructure and digital solutions, procurement supports nearly every aspect of public administration.

Traditional procurement often involved paperwork, multiple approvals and lengthy tendering, limiting efficiency and transparency. To transform this system, the Government launched the **Government e-Marketplace (GeM) on 9 August 2016.**

From Conventional Procurement to a Digital Marketplace

Conceived as a transformative reform in public procurement, the **GeM** is a unified, **end-to-end digital platform**. It enables government buyers to procure goods and services through a secure, paperless, cashless and contactless ecosystem. It brings together buyers and sellers on a common online marketplace, making procurement more transparent, efficient and competitive.

The platform was developed after studying global best practices, including leading public procurement systems in countries such as the United States and South Korea. It leverages digital technology to simplify and standardise the procurement process. Its implementation was further strengthened through amendments to the general financial rules, which enabled government organisations to procure through the platform.

GeM serves a wide range of government buyers, including Central and State Ministries, Departments, PSUs, Autonomous Bodies, local bodies, Panchayats and Cooperatives. The platform digitises the complete procurement lifecycle- from seller registration and product listing to bidding, contract award, order fulfilment and payment. This ensures greater transparency, accountability and ease of doing business.

Building a Transparent Procurement Ecosystem

Transparency lies at the core of GeM's procurement framework. The platform enables **fair competition, standardised processes and data-driven decision-making** across government procurement. Government buyers can procure through direct purchase, comparison, electronic bidding and reverse auctions, depending on their requirements. **Digital records, real-time monitoring and automated workflows** improve accountability while reducing discretionary decision-making.

To support informed decision-making, GeM offers a range of data-driven tools and integrated services.

Did You Know?

Department of Military Affairs has crossed **₹1.35 lakh crore** in cumulative GMV as on 06 August 2026.

Defence procurement contributed over **14.93% of GeM's cumulative GMV** as on 6th August 2026.

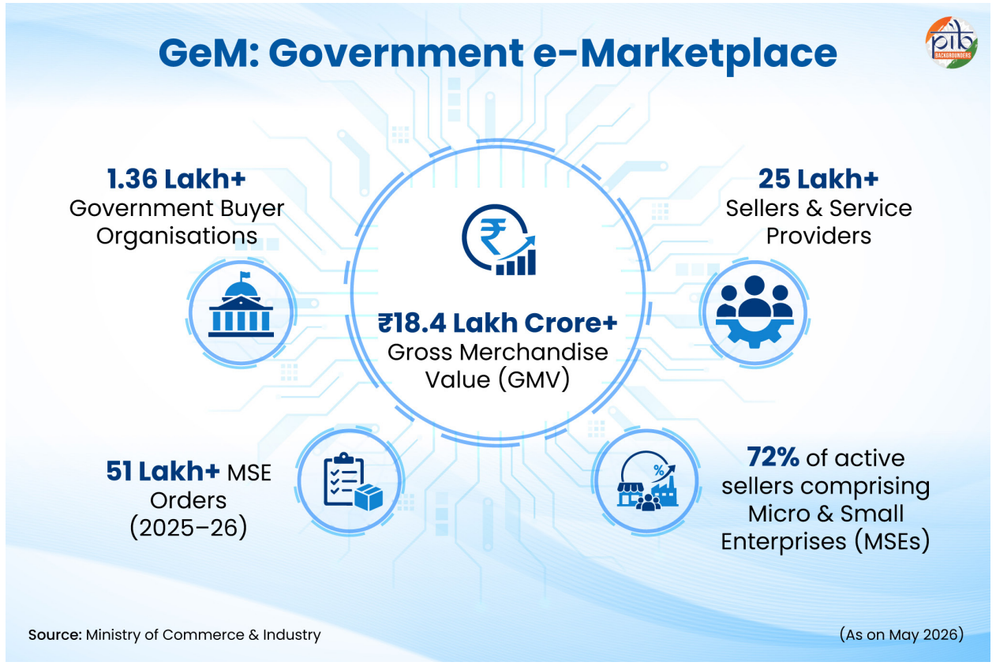
- Buyers can access the **GeM Availability Report and Past Transaction Summary** to assess product availability and previous procurement trends before making purchases outside GeM.
- Business analytics features provide insights such as the **Last Purchase Price**, price trends and departmental procurement history. This enables buyers to make informed and cost-effective procurement decisions.
- The integration with the **Central Public Procurement Portal (CPPP)** provides a single access point for

government tender information on various procurement made across the country.

- **The functionalities of the Indian Railway Electronic Procurement System (IREPS)** and the **Defence Public Procurement Portal (DPPP)** are being integrated with GeM to create a unified and interoperable public procurement ecosystem.

Expanding the Scale of Public Procurement

GeM connects more than **1.37 lakh government buyer organisations** with nearly **25 lakh sellers and service providers**, facilitating cumulative procurement worth over **₹20 lakh crore+**.



Beyond facilitating transactions, GeM has become an important pillar of India's Digital Procurement Ecosystem. The platform supports **Digital India, Make in India, Aatmanirbhar Bharat, Vocal for Local and Ease of Doing Business**. It provides a comprehensive digital marketplace with **over 10,660 product categories and 350 service categories, meeting diverse government procurement needs**. The marketplace includes medical equipment, furniture, computers, fire safety equipment and handicrafts, alongside services such as transport, catering, vehicle hiring and human resource services. Multiple **procurement modes, integrated payment systems and online contract generation** further ensure transparent, efficient and end-to-end digital procurement.

GeM has also continued to evolve through policy reforms, technology upgrades and strategic partnerships. Recent reforms include Rate Contracts for recurring purchases and removal of **Caution Money** requirements for sellers. These reforms have simplified procurement and improved the ease of doing business.

Partnerships Strengthening the GeM Ecosystem

GeM has forged strategic partnerships with government institutions, financial organisations, industry bodies and international agencies to make public procurement more innovative, transparent and inclusive.

- **Innovation:** In **April 2025**, GeM partnered with the **Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe)** for space-tech and **Drone Federation India (DFI)** for drone procurement.
- **Finance:** Under the **GeMSahay** initiative, the partnership with **Union Bank of India** improves access to collateral-free working capital for registered sellers and service providers.

GeMSahay

GeM Sahay is a dedicated mobile app that enables eligible proprietorship sellers on GeM to access **instant, collateral-free working capital loans.** It enables quick, paperless financing without requiring buyer consent, helping sellers fulfil government orders seamlessly.

- **Capacity Building:** MoUs with **Arun Jaitley National Institute of Financial Management (AJNIFM)**, **CareEdge Ratings, National Centre for Goods Governance (NCGG)** and **Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA)** support research, training, knowledge exchange and policy development in public procurement.
- **Compliance:** Integration with **Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)** to enhance transparency and strengthen compliance of the Acts in manpower outsourcing services.
- **Inclusion:** The partnership with **UN Women** promotes women-led

enterprises through the **Womaniya** initiative, encouraging gender-responsive and inclusive public procurement.

Empowering Women, Startups and Socially Marginalised Entrepreneurs

To strengthen last-mile access to government procurement, the GeM has partnered with Common Service Centre e-Governance Services India Limited (CSC-SPV) in **June 2026**. Under the partnership, **50 GeM Suvidha Kendras** will be established on a pilot basis across select States and Union Territories.

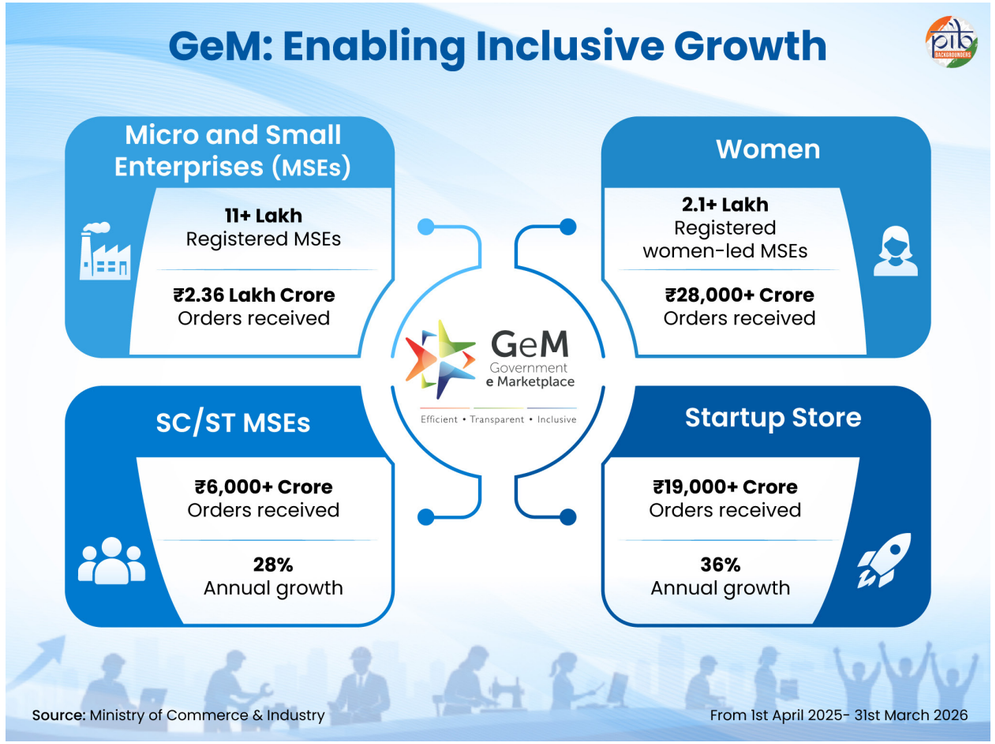
The GeM Suvidha Kendras provide **awareness, seller registration, vendor assessment, catalogue creation, capacity building and grievance redressal**, along with **local handholding**. They aim to **enhance the participation** of MSEs, women and SC/ST entrepreneurs, startups, artisans, weavers, SHGs and local manufacturers in government procurement.

Inclusive Growth through GeM (in 2025-26)

The platform has expanded market access for traditionally underrepresented groups by enabling transparent, technology-driven participation in government procurement.

- **Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs): Over 11 lakh registered** MSEs executed more **than 51 lakh orders** worth over ₹2.36 lakh crore.
- **Women-led Enterprises: More than 2.1 lakh registered women-led MSEs** secured procurement worth over ₹28,000 crore.
- **SC/ST Enterprises: Procurement exceeded ₹6,000 crore**, registering nearly **28%** annual growth.
- **Startups: Procurement crossed ₹19,000 crore**, recording over **36%** annual growth.





To strengthen inclusive participation, GeM has introduced dedicated initiatives including **SWAYATT, Startup Runway 2.0, Womaniya** and the **SARAS Collection**. These initiatives improve market access for startups, women entrepreneurs, Self Help Groups (SHGs), artisans and other underserved communities.

SWAYATT Initiative: SWAYATT (Startups, Women & Youth Advantage through e-Transactions) is GeM's flagship initiative promoting inclusive public procurement. It enables startups, women entrepreneurs, MSEs and SHGs to sell to Government buyers.

Womaniya: The initiative showcases products made by women ventrepreneurs and Women Self-Help Groups (WSHGs) on GeM. It helps them access

Government procurement opportunities and expand their market reach. Read more about Womaniya here.

SARAS Collection: Under a dedicated marketplace category, the Saras Collection showcases daily utility products made by rural self-help groups (SHGs) and aims to provide SHGs in rural areas with market access to Central and State Government buyers.

Startup Runway 2.0: It provides startups a dedicated marketplace to showcase innovative products and services to government buyers and engage in public procurement.

Towards Smarter Public Procurement

As GeM begins its 11th year, the focus is shifting towards a smarter and more integrated public procurement ecosystem. **Artificial intelligence and wider participation** will further strengthen transparency, efficiency and governance. By connecting government demand with local enterprises, GeM advances **Vocal for Local, Make in India** and inclusive economic growth. **GeM continues supporting** India's journey towards a digitally empowered and self-reliant economy.

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PIB Research





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Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana

Affordable Crop Insurance for Every Farmer

Published on: August 29, 2026

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) offers comprehensive coverage against droughts, floods, cyclones, hailstorms, pests, diseases, prevented sowing, localized calamities, damage by inundation, unseasonal rainfall, hailstorms and specified post-harvest losses nationwide. With ₹12,200 crore allocated for 2026–27, PMFBY continues strengthening farmer resilience, protecting livelihoods, stabilizing incomes, and supporting climate-resilient agriculture nationwide. In the last 10 years, since the inception of the scheme in Kharif 2016 till Rabi 2025-26, more than 92.46 crore farmer applications have been insured, and over 26.33 crore farmer applications have been paid claims exceeding ₹2.06 lakh crore. The integration of technology-driven initiatives such as the Yield Estimation System based on Technology (YES-TECH) and the Weather Information Network and Data System (WINDS) has further strengthened the scheme by enabling faster, fairer, and more transparent claim settlement.

PMFBY in Action: A Farmer's Story of Resilience

Anwar Hussain, a small farmer from Chankhala village in Assam's Nagaon district, depends entirely on agriculture for his family's livelihood. When heavy rains severely damaged his crop, he faced uncertainty over repaying his loans and financing the next sowing.

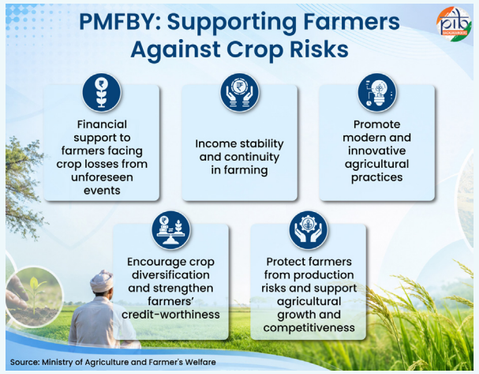
Fortunately, Anwar had enrolled under the **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)** by paying a nominal premium of just Rs 100. After the crop loss was assessed, he received **₹50,600** in compensation under the scheme. This timely financial support helped him recover from the loss, repay part of his debt, and invest in inputs for the next season. With this support, Anwar was able to continue farming with renewed confidence instead of falling into financial distress. Today, he strongly encourages other farmers in his village to insure their crops, saying that PMFBY acts as a safety net during times of crisis.

Securing Rural Livelihoods Through Crop Insurance

Crop insurance protects farmers from crop losses caused by natural calamities, adverse weather, pests, and diseases. Timely compensation helps farmers manage income shocks, recover losses, repay loans, and invest in the next cropping season. It strengthens farm resilience, safeguards livelihoods, and supports continuity of agricultural production during uncertain conditions.

On 18 February 2016, the **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)** was launched to bring the maximum number of farmers under crop insurance coverage. It covers risks from pre-sowing, including prevented or failed sowing, widespread mid-season adversity, localized calamities caused by hailstorms, inundation, landslide, etc., at individual land parcels, to post-harvest losses caused by cyclones, unseasonal rains, and other specified perils. Premium rates remain low and affordable to encourage wider farmer participation. The Government has allocated **₹12,200 crore** for PMFBY in the Union Budget 2026–27, reinforcing its continued commitment to crop insurance and farmer coverage.

PMFBY provides financial coverage against crop losses and helps stabilise farmers' incomes. It also promotes modern farming practices, crop diversification, and resilience against production risks.



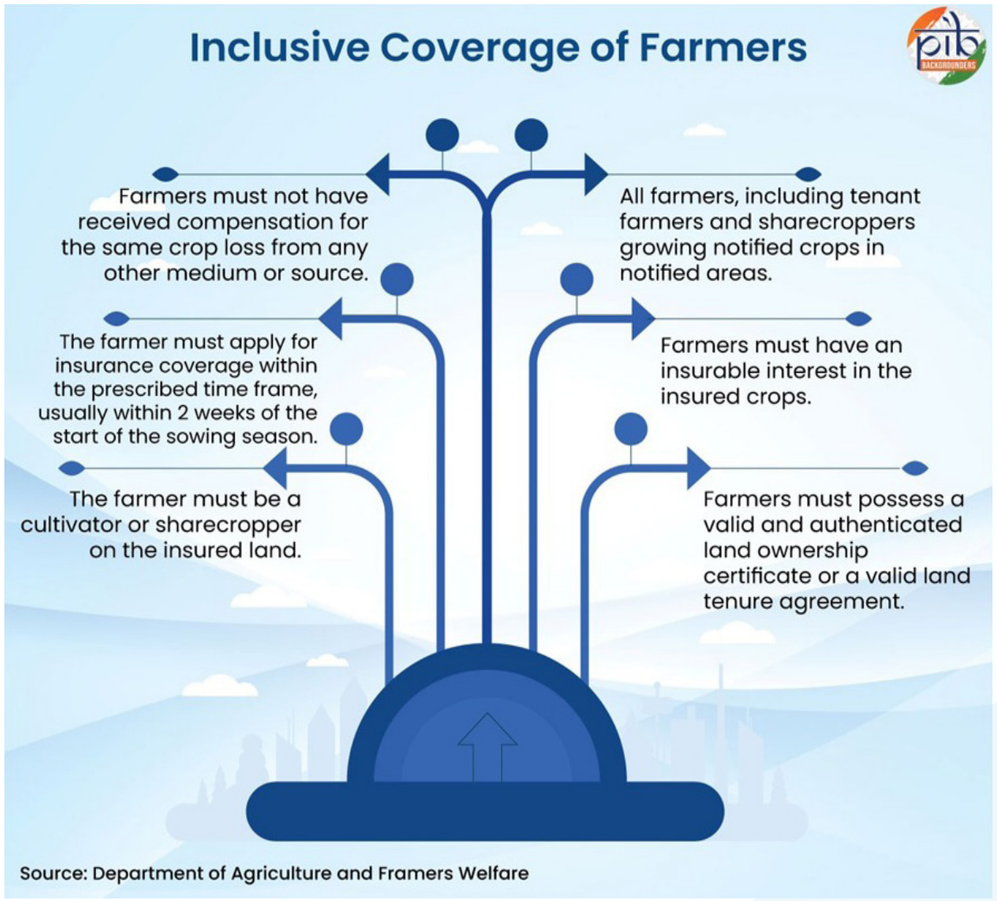
Inclusive Coverage of Farmers

PMFBY provides inclusive crop insurance coverage to farmers, including tenant farmers and sharecroppers, subject to prescribed eligibility conditions. Farmers must have an insurable interest, valid land documents or tenure agreements or sowing certificates as per state-specific pre-defined requirements, and apply within the specified timeframe. To ensure inclusive risk coverage, PMFBY covers both loanee and non-loanee farmers across the agricultural range.

- **Non-loanee farmers** are those without crop loans or with non-standard Kisan Credit Card (KCC)-

linked loans. They can voluntarily enroll under PMFBY for crop insurance coverage. In the last 10 years, on average, 50% of all farmers have voluntarily enrolled as non-loanee farmers, establishing trust among farmers in the scheme.

- **Loanee farmers** are those who take seasonal crop loans from banks or financial institutions, and their loans or KCCs are active and standard. Their premiums are automatically deducted from the loan amount by the respective banks.
- PMFBY generally provides comprehensive risk cover for all natural and climatic calamities leading to damage or loss of crops, provided that the crop has been insured and the corresponding premium has been paid to the Insurance Company within predefined timelines. However, crop losses in non-notified areas, outside the covered crop lifecycle (i.e., before sowing and after removal of the crop from the field), and losses caused by negligence or man-made or preventable risks are not covered.



Source: Department of Agriculture and Framers Welfare

Risks Covered

PMFBY provides coverage against crop losses at different stages of cultivation and harvesting:

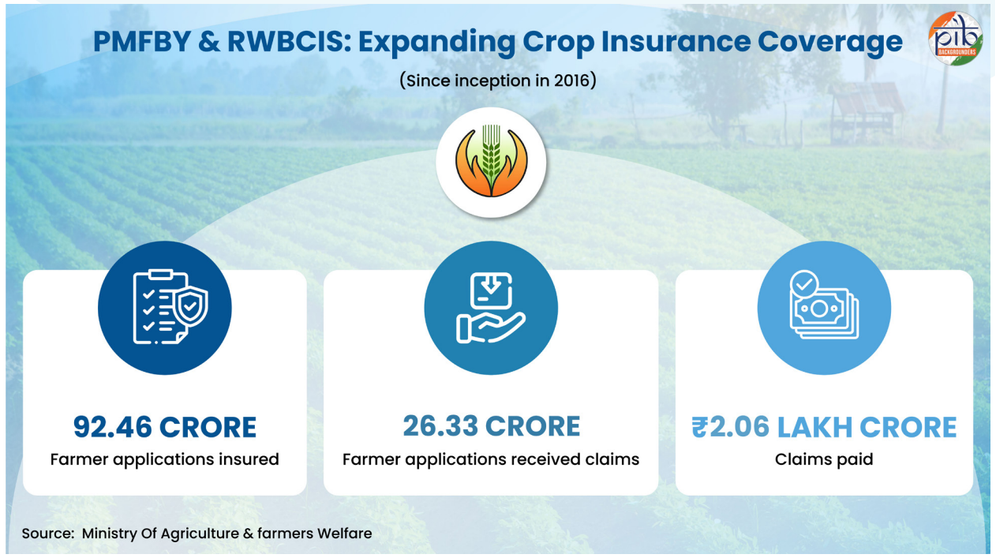
- **Yield Losses (standing crops, on notified area basis):** PMFBY provides area-based coverage against non-preventable risks such as **drought, dry spells, floods, inundation, cyclones, hailstorms, lightning, pests and diseases.**
- **Prevented Sowing:** Where insured farmers incur expenditure but are prevented from sowing due to adverse weather conditions, they **shall be eligible for claims up to a maximum of 25% of the sum insured.**
- Post-Harvest Losses: Crops kept in "cut-and-spread" condition for drying in the field are covered for up to **14 days after harvesting against specified cyclonic and unseasonal rain events.**
- **Localized Calamities:** Individual farm-level losses caused by **hailstorms, landslides, inundation, cloud bursts, and damage by natural fire** are covered under specified conditions.

However, PMFBY excludes losses from **war, nuclear risks, riots, theft, specified post-harvest conditions, and other preventable risks.**

Progress and Achievements Under PMFBY

PMFBY has witnessed significant expansion in farmer participation, insurance coverage, and institutional reach in recent years. Farmers pay a maximum premium of **2% for Kharif and 1.5% for Rabi foodgrain and oilseed crops.** For commercial and horticultural crops, the maximum premium is 5%. The Central & State Governments subsidizes the remaining premium in 50:50 proportion. For the farmers in North-Eastern & Himalayan States/ UTs, the contribution of Central & State Govt. subsidy is in a 90:10 proportion. This affordable premium structure has helped make crop insurance accessible to a wider section of farmers across the length and breadth of the country.

- PMFBY is currently being implemented by 25 States and Union Territories in Kharif 2026.
- Since its inception, more than **92.46 crore farmer applications** have been insured, and over **26.33 crore** farmer applications have received claims exceeding **₹2.06 lakh crore.**



- In Kharif **2025, crop insurance covered 229.77 lakh farmers covering 269.38 lakh hectares,** providing coverage against crop-related risks. Enrollment of farmers and area insured for Kharif 2026 has already exceeded the levels for Kharif 2025. **As of 27th August 2026, 241.38 lakh farmers have been insured, covering 278.12 lakh hectares,** reflecting the continued scale of crop insurance coverage.
- **For Kharif 2025, claims worth ₹9,837.61 Crore have already been paid to 60.89 lakh eligible farmers,** providing crucial financial support against crop losses.
- National enrolment reached an all-time high in **2024-25,** with more than **15.23 crore farmer applications** covering more than **4 crore** farmers have been insured, and over **623 lakh hectares** covered.
- Tenant and sharecropper farmers are included and covered under the scheme. Since 2018, cumulatively more than 1.44 crore such farmers have been enrolled across States and UTs.

State-Specific Progress and Insights

Rejoining of Major States Reflects Growing Confidence

The confidence of State Governments in the PMFBY framework has grown significantly, as evidenced by the systematic return of major agricultural states that had previously opted out or launched their own non-insurance crop relief schemes.

- **Andhra Pradesh** rejoined from Kharif 2022
- **Jharkhand** rejoined from **Kharif 2024.**
- **West Bengal** rejoined from **Kharif 2026.**
- **Bihar** has decided to return to the national fold and implement PMFBY starting from the **Rabi 2026–27 season.**

This wave of returns highlights the unmatched efficiency and financial safety net that the centralized scheme offers compared to regional non-insurance relief models.

Impact of Universalisation Discontinuation in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh:

A detailed look at regional enrollment trends reveals that the moderate national dip in insured farmer applications during the **2025–26** season is concentrated primarily in **Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh,** owing to a change in implementation methodology rather than indicating any broad decline in farmer trust in the scheme.

- Both states previously implemented a **"universalization approach"** during 2023 & 2024, where the State Government bore 100% of the premium on behalf of all farmers, leading to very high enrolment in Kharif 2024.
- In 2025, both states discontinued this 100% farmer premium subsidy approach, leading to expected drops in enrollments of farmers:
  - » In Kharif 2025, the farmers' enrollment in **Andhra Pradesh** dropped **77%** (from **31.92 lakh** in Kharif 2024 to **7.43 lakh** in Kharif 2025). In Kharif 2026, the trend has reversed, and till 28th Aug 2026, **16.22 lakh** farmers have been enrolled, showing 108% increase over the Kharif 2025 season.
  - » Similarly, in Kharif 2025, the farmers' enrolment in **Maharashtra** dropped **40%** (from **76.59 lakh** in Kharif 2024 to **45.99 lakh** in Kharif 2025). In Kharif 2026 till 28th Aug 2026, **42.55 lakh** farmers have been enrolled, reaching 92% of the Kharif 2025 season. The moderate dip is driven by the state's exclusion of certain add-on claims from the scheme.

Steady and Strong Growth in Other Major States

In stark contrast to these state-specific, localized policy-driven adjustments, other major agricultural states recorded highly robust growth in farmer enrollment during **Kharif 2025:**

- **Uttar Pradesh** led the growth with a massive **35% increase,** rising from **15.48 lakh** to **20.84 lakh** insured farmers.
- **Haryana** continued its steady growth trajectory with a **20% increase,** insuring **4.49 lakh** farmers in Kharif 2025 compared to 3.75 lakh in Kharif 2024 (building on a spectacular **82% growth** between 2023 and 2024).
- **Rajasthan** recorded a **19% increase,** with the number of insured farmers rising from **30.59 lakh** to **36.45 lakh.**
- **Madhya Pradesh** registered a 12% **increase,** growing to **26.80 lakh** insured farmers.
- **Chhattisgarh** saw its insured farmer population rise by **9%** to **15.75 lakh.**
- **Odisha** witnessed a **5%** increase, bringing the total insured farmers to **24.92 lakh.**

These consistent positive double-digit trends demonstrate the strong, self-motivated demand for agricultural risk coverage across India's primary farming belts.

Key Government Initiatives to Strengthen PMFBY Implementation

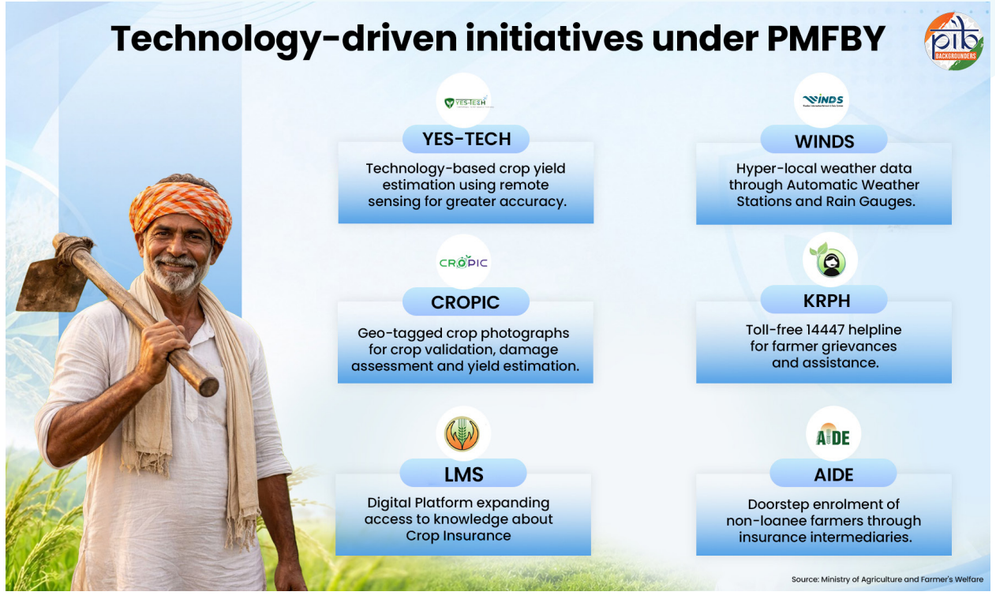
PMFBY is being implemented through a robust digital and governance framework that ensures transparent, timely, and accurate crop insurance services.

- **The National Crop Insurance Portal (NCIP)** enables digital farmer enrolment, subsidy administration, coordination, and information dissemination. It also facilitates access to insured farmers' details, the calculation of eligible claims, and the electronic transfer of claims directly into farmers' bank accounts.
- **Integration of Land Records with NCIP:** Enables validation of insured areas through state e-land records. Digital validation of land records is being implemented in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Odisha. Around 85% of the insured area in these States is now validated through integrated land records to ensure the correct identification of the land parcel, insured area, and farmer.
- **Digiclaim Module:** Introduced from Kharif 2022, it enables transparent calculation and settlement of claims on NCIP. Claims are processed through NCIP and paid through the Public Finance Management System (PFMS). It also enables full-cycle monitoring of claims up to the farmer level. Since inception, more than ₹55,000 Crore in claims have been calculated and paid through the digital platform.
- **Crop Cutting Experiment (CCE)-Agri App:** Enables digital capture and uploading of CCE yield data on NCIP. This yield data is used for the calculation of the Actual Yield for an Insurance Unit, based on which the eligible payable claims due to loss of crop yield are calculated. It also allows insurance companies to witness CCEs, improving transparency and supporting timely claim settlement

Digital Innovations Strengthening Crop Insurance Delivery

PMFBY's digital platform integrates farmers, insurers, financial institutions, and government agencies on a single IT ecosystem. It enables real-time information sharing, transparent administration, and streamlined crop insurance services. The portal digitizes area, crop, and scheme notifications, reduces manual processes, and improves access to insurance, particularly for remote and economically vulnerable farmers.

- **Yield Estimation System Based on Technology (YES-TECH)** uses remote sensing and technology-based methods to provide fair and accurate crop yield estimates. It was launched for paddy and wheat in Kharif 2023, and soybean in Kharif 2024. It started with at least 30% weightage assigned to YES-TECH-derived yields and has now increased up to 50% across certain states.
- **The Weather Information Network and Data System (WINDS)** employs Automatic Weather Stations and Automatic Rain Gauges to collect hyperlocal weather data at the Block and Gram Panchayat levels. The data support the implementation of the Weather-Based Crop Insurance Scheme for Fruits, vegetables, and plantation crops; crop yield estimation using YES-TECH; disaster management; weather forecasting; and other parametric insurance products.
- **Collection of Real-time photos and Observations of Crops (CROPIC):** Uses geo-tagged photographs to periodically validate general crop health in a given Insurance Unit. It is also envisaged to support crop damage assessment and yield estimation through pictorial analytics, for which nation-wide pilots are in the process of initiation
- The **Krishi Rakshak Portal** & Helpline (KRPH) provides a dedicated **toll-free helpline (14447)** for farmers to register grievances, seek assistance, and track the resolution of crop insurance-related issues. It was launched in January 2024 across



the nation, and since then, 26.12 lakh grievances of insured farmers have been addressed & resolved with 99.66% resolution rate.

- **Learning Management System (LMS)** expands knowledge and understanding of crop insurance across the stakeholders through a digital platform. **App for Intermediary Enrolment (AIDE)** enables doorstep enrolment of non-loanee farmers. It makes crop insurance more accessible through insurance intermediaries. Similarly, **Crop Loss Assessment App (CLAP)** is being used to digitally record the crop loss extent on the individual farm level under localized calamities through crop loss surveys and enables faster & transparent claim calculation and settlement.

These technology interventions transformed PMFBY by enabling faster enrolment, accurate loss assessment, timely claim settlement, and effective grievance redressal for farmers.

Restructured Weather-Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS)

Complementing PMFBY, the Government implements the **Restructured Weather-Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS)** to address risks arising specifically from adverse weather conditions. RWBCIS is a weather index-based scheme where admissible claims are determined using specified weather parameters as a "proxy" for crop damage rather than actual assessed crop-yield losses. Under this scheme, a crop's life cycle is divided into distinct phenological phases, with the sum insured allocated based on the crop's vulnerability during each phase.

The scheme operates on an "Area Approach" in defined Reference Unit Areas (RUAs). Payouts are triggered when quantifiable weather variables—including deficit or excess rainfall, dry spells, extreme temperatures, humidity, and wind speed-measured at notified local weather stations deviate from pre-defined thresholds. States/UTs can also offer add-on farm-level coverage for severe localized perils such as hailstorms and cloudbursts. Sharing the same affordable premium rates as PMFBY (1.5% to 5% depending on crop type), RWBCIS remains a highly popular safety net, especially for Fruit, Vegetables, and Plantation crops, covering 25.95 lakh farmer applications covering 12.31 lakh hectares in Kharif 2026.

Transforming Agricultural Risk Management through PMFBY

Over the past decade, the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) has emerged as a cornerstone of India's agricultural risk management framework. It provides millions of farmers with financial security against climate change, extreme weather events, and biological risks. By combining affordable premiums with comprehensive crop-cycle coverage, the scheme has reduced farmers' vulnerability to income shocks. It has also strengthened their ability to invest in modern inputs, improved seeds, and better farming practices.

Digital platforms & interventions such as NCIP, DigiClaim, CCE Agri App, CLAP, YES-TECH, and WINDS improved transparency, accuracy, and speed of claim settlement under PMFBY. These technologies also made PMFBY more efficient and accountable. As India moves towards climate-resilient agriculture, PMFBY stands well-positioned to continue safeguarding farmers' livelihoods, fostering resilience in agriculture, and strengthening national food security in the years ahead.

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India’s Higher Education Sector

A Decade of Growth, Access, and Inclusion

Published on: August 30, 2026

Building India's Knowledge Ecosystem: A Decade of Progress

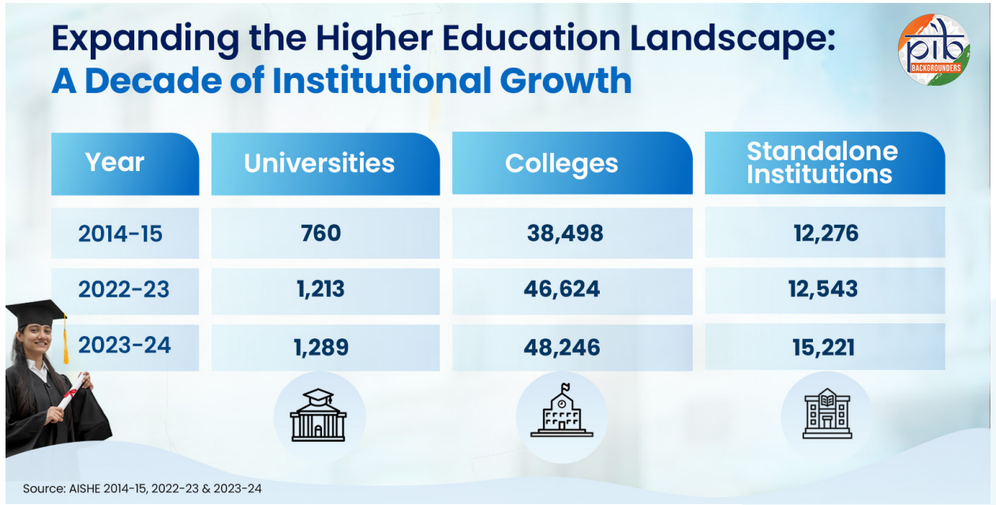
Higher education is a cornerstone of India's journey towards a **knowledge-based economy** and a key pillar of the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.** The policy envisions an education system that promotes holistic, multidisciplinary learning and advances the goals of **SDG 4. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4** focuses on *ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.* The Ministry of Education conducts an annual survey of Higher Education Institutions in India.

The **All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE),** conducted annually by the Ministry of Education, provides a comprehensive evidence base on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the country. The data helps track the progress of higher education reforms under NEP 2020, identify emerging gaps, and inform policy responses.

A Growing Higher Education Footprint

According to AISHE reports, India's higher education network has expanded significantly over the decade.

- The number of universities increased from **760** in 2014–15 to **1,289** in 2023–24, representing a growth of 69.6%.
- The number of colleges rose from **38,498** to **48,246,** an increase of **25.3%.**
- Standalone institutions increased from **12,276** to **15,221,** registering about **24%** growth.

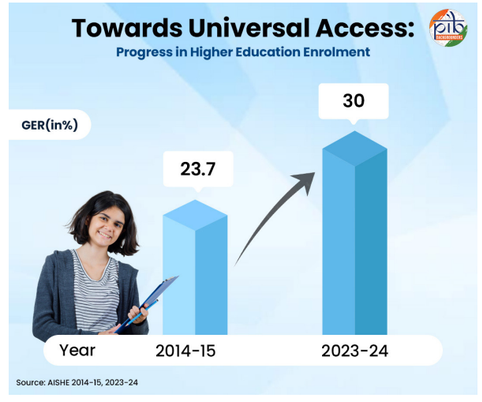


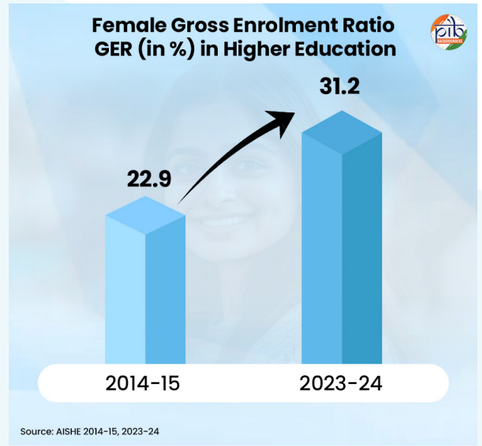
This expansion reflects a widening institutional base and greater capacity to serve learners across the country. It has strengthened the reach of higher education, supported broader participation, and contributed to building a **more accessible, diverse, and inclusive knowledge ecosystem for India's future.**

Increasing Student Enrolment: Advancing Equity and Inclusion

Higher education enrolment in India has risen steadily over the past decade, growing **31.5%** from 3.42 crore students in 2014–15 to **4.50 crore** in 2023–24.

- The **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)** in higher education rose from **23.7%** in 2014–15 to **29.5%** in 2022–23, and further to **30%** in 2023–24. This steady increase reflects growing access to and participation in higher education, supporting NEP 2020's target of raising the GER to 50% by 2035.
- From **2014-15** to **2023-24,** level-wise percentage increase in total enrolments was:
  - » Ph.D 1.17 lakh to **3.43 lakh** (192.89%); Post Graduate 38.53 lakh to **57.85 lakh** (50.15%); Under Graduate 2.71 crore to **3.45 crore** (27.27%);
  - » Diploma 25.08 lakh to **33.15 lakh** (32.22%); Certificate 1.70 lakh to **2.08 lakh** (22.55%); Integrated 1.41 lakh to **5.69 lakh** (301.36%).
- Female enrolment in higher education has witnessed steady growth over the past decade. It grew by **42.2%,** rising from **1.57 crore** in **2014–15** to **2.24 crore** in **2023–24,** outpacing the growth in total enrolment during the decade. The number of female students enrolled in various courses in **2023-24** was:





  - » Ph.D: **1.71 lakh;** Post-Graduate: **32.53 lakh;** Under Graduate: **1.71 crore**
  - » PG Diploma: **91,332;** Diploma: **13.27 lakh;** Certificate: **1.10 lakh,** and Integrated: **2.73 lakh.**
- Female GER increased from **22.9%** in **2014–15** to **31.2%** in **2023–24,** surpassing male GER (**28.9%**) for the **seventh** consecutive year.
- Higher education out-turn increased from **88.28** lakh in 2014–15 to over **1.09 crore** in 2023–24 a **24.06%** increase. The growth reflects improved programme completion, enhanced retention, rising enrolment, and expanded institutional capacity. Supported by government initiatives, this trend highlights progress in access, equity, quality, and performance in higher education.

Higher education out-turn refers to the total number of students who pass out of higher education institutions in a given academic year.

- **Gender Parity Index (GPI)** in higher education improved significantly, rising from **0.92** in **2014–15** to **1.08** in **2023–24.** GPI for the SC category increased from **0.91** to **1.11,** while ST category GPI rose from **0.81** to **1.08** during the same period.
- The rising GPI points to increasing parity favoring females. The progress highlights the impact of government initiatives in promoting **equity, inclusion,** and balanced **participation** in higher education.

Gender Parity Index (GPI)

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) is the ratio of GER for females to GER for males, reflecting equitable participation of females in the education system.

- A GPI of 1 indicates parity between the sexes.
- A GPI between 0 and 1 typically indicates a disparity favoring males.
- A GPI greater than 1 indicates a disparity favoring females.

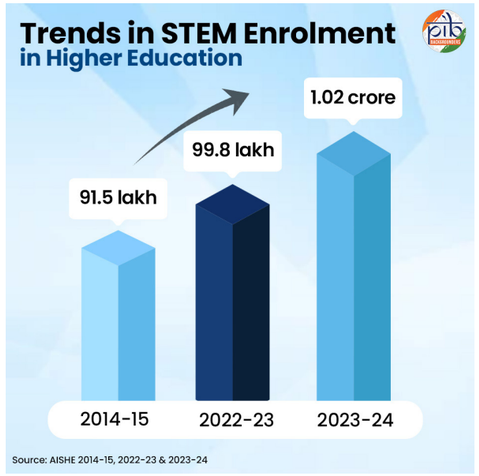
- The share of SC enrolment rose from **13.44%** in 2014–15 to **15.5%** in 2023–24 in total enrolment. During the same period, the share of ST enrolment increased from **4.8%** to **6.4%.** OBC participation climbed from **32.8%** to **40.1%,** registering the largest increase in enrolment share among all social categories.
- The **GER** for SC students increased from **18.9%** in **2014–15** to **27.8%** in **2023–24.** For the ST students, it increased from **13.5%** in **2014–15** to **22.8%** in **2023–24.** Increasing participation of students from SC, ST and OBC categories reflects growing inclusivity in higher education.
- **Persons with Benchmark Disability (PwBD)** enrolment increased from **64,298** in 2014–15 to **88,816** in 2022–23, registering a growth of **38.1%.** Male and female enrolment grew by **54.4%** and **19.0%,** respectively, during this period.
- In 2023–24, **54,080** PwBD students were enrolled, including **34,080 males** and **20,000 females.** Higher male enrolment among PwBD points to a persistent gender imbalance in access to higher education. This suggests that improvements in access have not translated equally across genders.

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Enrolment

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) enrolments in higher education have increased steadily over the past decade.

Total enrolments increased from **91.5 lakh** in 2014–15 to **1.02 crore** in 2023–24, representing an overall increase of approximately **11.5%** over the period.

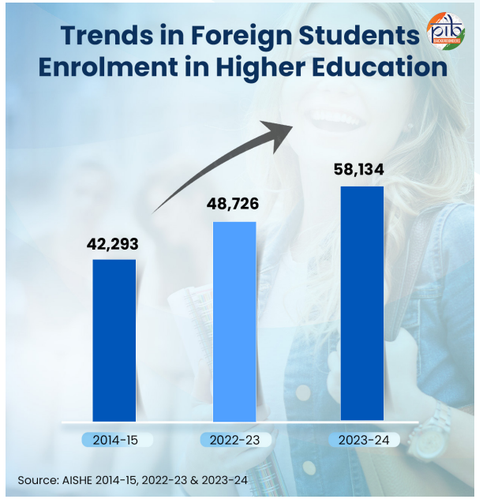
The growth reflects expanding institutional capacity and sustained student interest in STEM disciplines, driven by government initiatives, digital technologies, innovation, research, and employment opportunities strengthening India's knowledge economy.



Foreign Student Enrolment in Higher Education

- Foreign student enrolment rose from **42,293** in 2014–15 to **58,134** in 2023–24, an increase of approximately **37.5%** over the past decade — reflecting India's growing appeal as a destination for higher learning among international students.
- This points to the growing internationalisation of higher education, enhanced academic

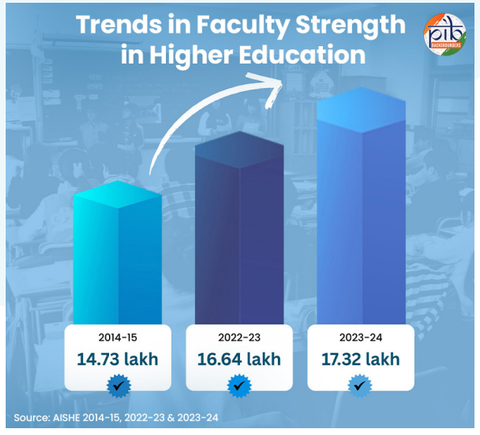
collaborations and global recognition of Indian institutions.



Faculty Growth in Higher Education

The number of teachers in higher education increased from **14.73 lakh in 2014–15** to **17.32 lakh in 2023–24,** representing an overall increase of **2.59 lakh teachers,** or approximately **17.6%** growth during the period.

- The absolute number of female teachers grew by **36.7%** between 2014–15 and 2023–24, reflecting growing equity in employment opportunities for women in the sector.
- In both 2022–23 and 2023–24, the share of male teachers in the total teaching workforce remained higher than that of female teachers.



- In 2022-23, the share of female teachers was **44.3%.** It grew marginally to **44.9%** in 2023-24.

Infrastructure facilities

Between 2014–15 and 2023–24, infrastructure facilities in higher education institutions have improved considerably. Physical and digital infrastructure, green infrastructure and separate amenities for women and PwBD have been developed across institutions. In 2023–24:

- 94% of universities, 95% of colleges, and 91% of standalone institutions had a playground.
- 98% of universities, 98% of colleges, and 98% of standalone institutions had a library facility.
- 89% of universities, 85% of colleges, and 94% of standalone institutions had a laboratory.

In addition, most universities, colleges, and standalone institutions were also equipped with facilities such as health centres, skill development and computer centres, auditoriums, and conference halls.

Towards a Future-Ready Higher Education Ecosystem

India's higher education sector has expanded significantly over the past decade, with growth in institutions, enrolment, faculty strength and student out-turn. Improvements in Gross Enrolment Ratio, women's participation, gender parity, and inclusion of SC, ST and other disadvantaged groups reflect enhanced access and equity. Rising enrolment in STEM and international students indicates the strengthening of India's knowledge ecosystem. Together, these achievements highlight the impact of NEP 2020 in promoting quality, inclusion, and excellence.

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PIB Research





5 Years of e-Shram Portal

Building an Inclusive Social Security Ecosystem

Published on: August 25, 2026

The e-Shram Portal completes five years on 26 August 2026, marking a significant milestone in strengthening social security for India's unorganised workforce. Launched in 2021 by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, it created the country's first-ever Aadhaar-seeded National Database of Unorganised Workers. It gives every registered worker a unique Universal Account Number and has evolved into a one-stop digital platform integrating welfare, jobs, skilling, apprenticeship and pension services. With over 31.89 crore registrations, e-Shram has improved benefit delivery, portability and evidence-based policymaking. It advances the Government's vision of an inclusive, technology-driven social security ecosystem.

Empowering India's Unorganised Workforce

As India advances towards the vision of Viksit Bharat, empowering its vast workforce remains central to inclusive and sustainable growth. The unorganised sector comprises a diverse range of workers, including agricultural labourers, construction workers, domestic workers, street vendors, migrant workers, gig and platform workers, and many others. Together, they form a vital pillar of India's workforce and economy. Ensuring their access to social security and welfare has therefore remained a key priority of the Government.

Building on this commitment, **the e-Shram Portal was launched on 26 August 2021, and completes 5 years since then.** It marks an important milestone in India's efforts to build a comprehensive social security ecosystem for unorganised workers.

The Vision Behind e-Shram

The e-Shram Portal, developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC), created the country's **first Aadhaar authenticated National Database of Unorganised Workers (NDUW).**It provides every registered worker with a unique **12-digit Universal Account Number (UAN).** The key objectives include:

- Improve delivery of social security services by enabling the convergence of welfare schemes across Ministries and Departments.
- Facilitate secure sharing of worker data with government agencies through APIs. This supports the effective delivery of welfare schemes and evidence-based policymaking.
- Facilitate nationwide access and portability of social security and welfare benefits for migrant and construction workers.
- Create a comprehensive national database that supports timely planning and response during national emergencies and crises.

"Unorganised worker" includes a home-based worker, self-employed worker, or a wage worker in the unorganised sector. It also includes a worker in the organised sector who is not a member of ESIC/ EPFO/ Government Employee.

Evolution into a One-Stop Solution

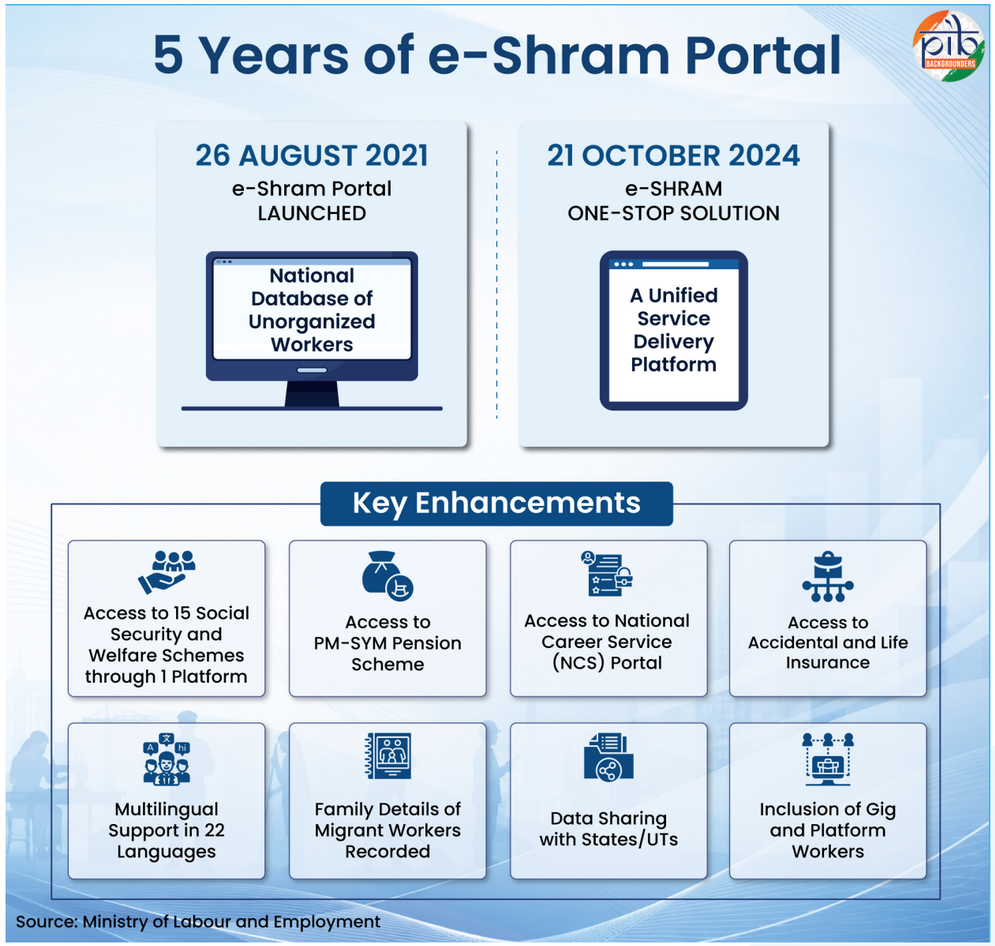
The e-Shram portal transformed from a worker registry into a **unified service delivery platform with the** launch of the **e-Shram One-Stop Solution** on **21 October 2024**. It now integrates **welfare, employment, skilling and pension services**. This aligns with the Union Budget 2024–25 vision of delivering a wide range of labour services through a single digital platform.

Registered workers can access eligible schemes and view benefits already received. The platform also promotes convergence across government portals. It strengthens access to social security and improves service delivery for unorganised workers.

- The One-Stop Solution brings together **15 Social Security and Welfare Schemes** on a single platform. These include Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan Yojana (PM-SYM), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC), Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana–Gramin (PMAY-G) and others.
- eShram registrants can conveniently enrol in the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) and Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) through the eShram portal. Under PMSBY, workers are eligible for accidental insurance benefits of ₹2 lakh for accidental death or permanent disability and ₹1 lakh for partial disability. PMJJBY provides a life insurance cover of ₹2 lakh in the event of death due to any cause.
- The portal connects workers with the **National Career Service (NCS)** for employment opportunities. It also provides access to the **Skill**

India Digital Hub for skilling and apprenticeship. Workers can also use **myScheme** to identify government schemes for which they may be eligible.

- Through the portal, eligible workers can enrol in the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan (PM-SYM) Scheme, which offers a minimum assured pension of **₹3,000 per month** upon attaining the age of 60 years, subject to eligibility.
- Powered by the **Bhashini** platform, multilingual functionality in 22 languages was introduced in **2025**.
- The portal includes a provision to capture the family details of migrant workers.
- It enables sharing of construction workers' data with States and Union Territories. This facilitates their registration with the respective **Building and Other Construction Workers (BOCW) Boards.**
- eShram provides a platform for the **identification and registration of gig and platform workers** as part of the national database of unorganised workers. As of date, around **11.5 lakh platform workers have registered on the portal**. This database may support the formulation and implementation of suitable social security and welfare measures for such workers.



e-Shram Registration: Eligibility and Process

Registration on the e-Shram Portal is **simple, accessible** and a o**ne-time process.**

Eligibility: Any worker aged **16 years and above**, engaged in the unorganised sector, is eligible to register on the e-Shram Portal. A worker must not be an income tax-payer or a member of the **Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)** or the **Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC).**

Coverage: The portal covers a wide range of unorganised workers. These include construction workers, migrant workers, gig and platform workers, street vendors, domestic workers, agricultural workers, and other unorganised workers.

How to register: Workers can register by visiting the **e-Shram Portal (https://register.eshram.gov.in/#/user/self).** They can also register through the nearest **Common Service Centre (CSC)** or **State Seva Kendra.** State Government field officers also facilitate registration at the district and sub-district levels.

Registration cost: Registration on the e-Shram Portal is completely free of cost. Workers are not required to pay any fee to any registering agency or service provider.

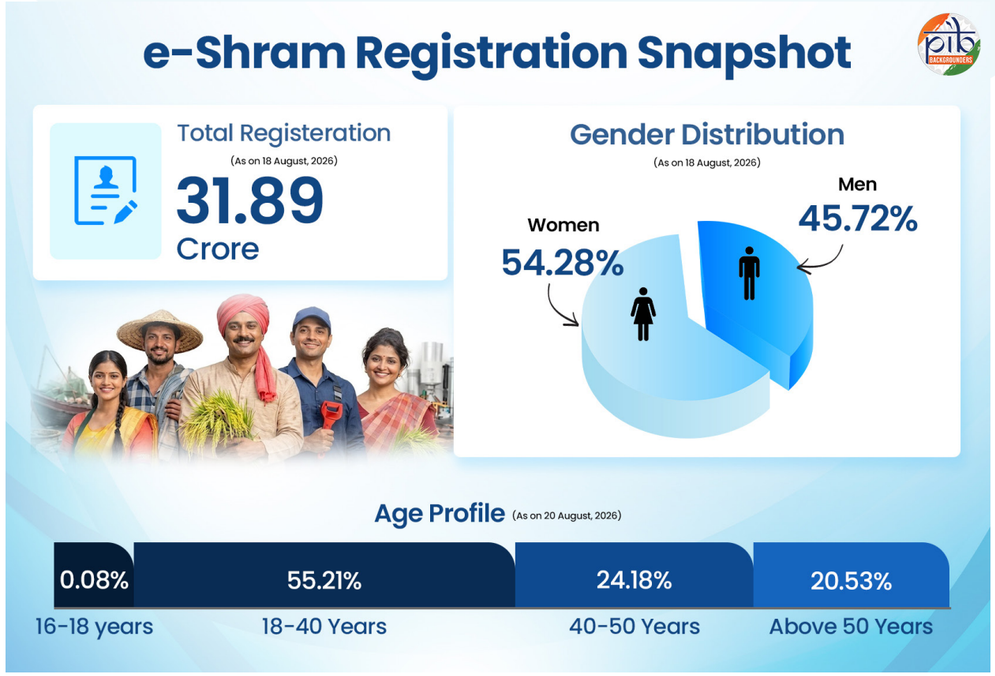
Required Documents: Registration requires their **Aadhaar number (for Aadhar eKYC)** and a **mobile number** (preferably linked with Aadhaar)

Growing Coverage of India's Unorganised Workforce

Registrations on e-Shram portal over the past 5 years reflects broad participation across genders, age groups, occupations and States (as on 18 August, 2026).

Total registrations: The portal has recorded **31.89 crore** registrations.

Gender distribution: Women account for **54.28%** of registered workers, while men account for **45.72%.**



Age profile: 0.08% are aged **16-18 years, 55.21%** of registered workers are aged **18–40 years, 24.18%** are aged **40–50 years** and **20.53%** are above **50 years** (as on 20 August, 2026).

Top occupational categories: Agriculture, Domestic and Household Workers, Construction, and Apparel account for the highest registrations.

Top States: Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra have recorded the highest registrations.

Mode of registration: Most registrations have been completed through **Common Service Centres (CSCs),** followed by **self-registration.**

Building the Future of Labour Welfare

The e-Shram Portal has laid a strong foundation for an inclusive and technology-enabled social security ecosystem for India's unorganised workforce. By creating a nationwide digital identity and database for unorganised workers, it has enabled more targeted and transparent delivery of government support. As its coverage and services continue to expand, e-Shram remains an important digital pillar of a more inclusive and future-ready workforce.

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India’s Sugar Industry

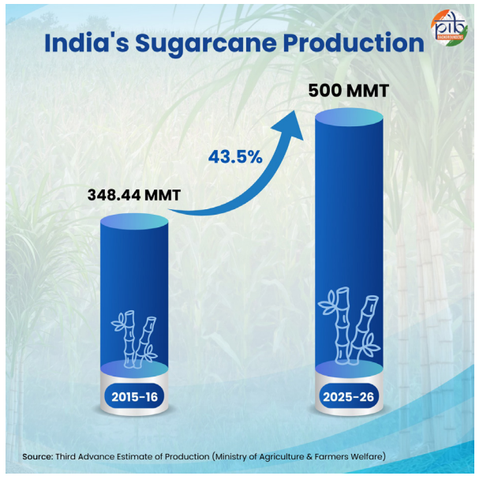
Understanding the Sector, Value Chain, and Recent Price Rise

Published on: August 26, 2026

India's Sugar Industry at a Glance

India's sugar industry is a major agricultural, industrial, and rural livelihood ecosystem. India is the world's **second-largest sugarcane producer.** The sugarcane sector supports nearly 5 crore farmers and around 5 lakh workers in sugar factories and its allied industries.

- India's sugarcane production has reached **500 MMT in 2025-26** as per the Third Advance Estimate of Production released by the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare. This marks approximately 43.5 percent growth over the last 10 years, compared with 348.44 MMT of production in 2015-16.



- The area under sugarcane cultivation has also increased from 49.27 lakh hectares in 2015-16 to **58.87 lakh hectares in 2025-26.**
- **Uttar Pradesh** and **Maharashtra** are the top sugarcane-producing states in India.
- India exported **8 lakh MT** of sugar in 2025-26, compared with 0.47 lakh MT in 2016-17.



- **Fair and Remunerative Price** (FRP) of sugarcane for the sugar season 2026-27 (October - September) has been set at **₹365/quintal** by the government. This provides a basic recovery rate of 10.25%. This price is ₹135 more than the FRP for the sugar season 2016-17, which was fixed at ₹230/quintal with a basic recovery rate of 9.5%.
- Major export destinations of Indian sugar include **Sri Lanka, West Asia**, and **East Africa.**
- Adequate sugar buffer stocks are available, and sugar production in 2025–26 is expected to remain sufficient.

The Role of the Indian Sugar Industry in Advancing Ethanol Blending

The blending of ethanol with petrol is aimed at reducing dependence on fossil fuels and enhancing energy security. This move is in sync with the government's push for sustainable fuel alternatives. This initiative also supports farmers by providing them with a stable income and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. However, this does not mean that ethanol blending would lead to a shortage in sugar for domestic consumption.

- The share of **sugar diverted for ethanol production** has declined from around 12% in 2022-23 to around **9% in 2025-26.**
- Moreover, nearly **three-fourths** of the ethanol produced in the country now comes from **grains**, particularly **maize**.

In fact, the ethanol programme has helped sugarcane farmers and strengthened sugar mills:

- On an average, India produces around **300-340 lakh MT of sugar** annually.
- India's domestic sugar consumption is around **280-290 lakh MT** annually.
- In years of surplus production, excess stocks block the funds of sugar mills and delay payments to sugarcane farmers. Diversion of excess sugar towards ethanol has helped address this structural problem and improved the financial health of sugar mills.
- As of August 20, 2026, **97% of sugarcane dues** for the 2025-26 sugar season have already been paid to farmers.
- The improved financial position of sugar mills has reduced their dependence on government support.
- Simultaneously, **retail sugar prices for consumers** have also remained broadly stable, increasing by only around 3% annually between August 2024 and July 2026.

Analysing the Current Sugar Price Hike

Sugar prices have increased in recent weeks, from ₹48.18 per kg on July 20, 2026, to ₹55.70 per kg on August 20, 2026. This reflects an increase of around 15.6% within one month. It's worth distinguishing this recent movement from the longer-term trend, however:

as noted earlier, sugar prices rose by only about 3% annually between August 2024 and July 2026. This suggests the current uptick largely reflects s**hort-term supply and market factors**, rather than a shift in the underlying price trend.

The present increase in sugar prices is due to a combination of factors, including:

- Lower-than-expected domestic production,
- Increased demand ahead of the festive season,
- Weather-related damage to the sugarcane crop,
- Tightening global sugar supplies and rising prices, and
- Speculation and hoarding by some sections of the industry.

Sugar production during the current season is expected to be around **306 LMT**, compared to the initial estimate of around **343 LMT**. Production has been affected by two factors: Red Rot and Top Borer disease, and waterlogging caused by excess rainfall. However, despite the lower-than-estimated production, **adequate sugar stocks are available in the country to meet domestic demand.** The new crushing season will begin in October.

The tightening of sugar supplies is a global phenomenon and is not limited just to India. The global sugar deficit for 2026-27 is estimated at around 33 lakh MT. As a result, international sugar prices have risen sharply from $474/ tonnes on June 30, 2026 to $552/ tonnes on August 20, 2026. This marks an increase of over 16% in less than two months.

Table 1: Myth v/s Fact of Rising Sugar Prices

MYTH	FACT
Ethanol diversion caused the sugar price rise.	Sugar diverted to ethanol production fell from 12% in 2022–23 to around 9% in 2025–26.
Ethanol is taking away sugar from consumers.	Nearly three-fourths of India's ethanol now comes from grains, particularly maize.
India is facing a sugar shortage..	Adequate stocks are available to meet domestic demand until the new crushing season begins.
Global sugar prices have remained stable.	International prices rose from $474 to $552 per tonne, increasing over 16% in less than two months.
India's sugar production has collapsed.	Current production is estimated at 306 LMT, below the initial estimate of 343 LMT.
Sugar prices have been continuously rising sharply.	Long-term prices increased by only around 3% annually between August 2024 and July 2026. Current hike price is short-term.

The government has observed that **speculation** and **hoarding** by some sugar mills and traders have also contributed to the recent price increase.

Government Efforts to Curb Hoarding of Sugar and Increase Supply

The government has taken the following steps to control the short-term price hike in sugar and curb the ongoing sugar hoarding:

1. **A stock limit of 400 tonnes has been imposed on sugar dealers** across the country from August 1, 2026, to November 30, 2026.
2. From September 1, 2026, onwards, bulk consumers will **not be permitted to hold sugar stocks** exceeding 15 days of consumption.
3. Joint teams of central and state government officials are conducting **physical verification of sugar stocks at mills** to check for hoarding and artificial scarcity.
4. As a **precautionary measure,** the government has decided to permit **duty-free import of 10 lakh MT of raw sugar** to augment domestic availability.
5. States and sugar mills have been advised to begin crushing from

October 15, 2026. This is expected to raise October sugar production from the usual 3-4 lakh MT to more than 10 lakh MT. This would improve availability during the festive season.

Looking Beyond the Current Price Rise

India's sugar sector has evolved into a diversified industry that supports farmers, mills, energy production, and global trade. Recent price pressures reflect lower production, seasonal demand, global supply conditions, and market practices. However, these pressures remain temporary against the sector's broader growth and diversification. The government's priority remains balancing consumer interests, timely farmer payments, and industry stability.

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National Handloom Day 2026

Celebrating Weavers, Renewing Traditions, Expanding Horizons

Published on: August 06, 2026

Observed on 7 August, National Handloom Day celebrates India's weaving heritage. It recognises 35.22 lakh weavers and allied workers, over 72% of whom are women. In 2026, the occasion reflects a sector firmly rooted in regional knowledge. Handlooms are also finding new expression through design, digital platforms and global markets. Government support, awards, market access and authenticity safeguards are carrying these traditions from rural communities to wider national and international audiences..

National Handloom Day 2026 in a changing textile landscape

India's handloom tradition has deep historical roots, with its earliest traces dating back to the Indus Valley Civilisation. Spinning and weaving find mention across the Rigveda, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The fine quality of Indian cotton and silk is also documented in these texts and in the works of Kautilya.

Over the centuries, weaving skills and techniques have been passed down from one generation to the next. These traditions have evolved through the distinctive practices of different regions across India. The institution of **National Handloom Day in 2015** gave this long-standing heritage a dedicated national platform.

National Handloom Day

National Handloom Day is celebrated annually on **7 August**. It commemorates the launch of the **Swadeshi Movement in 1905**, which promoted indigenous goods and encouraged self-reliance. The occasion **celebrates India's weaving traditions** and recognises the socio-economic and cultural **contribution of handloom workers**.

In 2026, the observance marks an important point in this journey. It reflects the growing relevance of handloom among contemporary consumers and its greater visibility in global markets.

Handloom weaving remains rooted in manual craftsmanship and household enterprises. Its identity is closely connected to the weaver, the region and the knowledge involved in creating each textile. At the same time, the landscape around handloom continues to evolve. Contemporary design, digital platforms and national and international showcases are connecting Indian weaves with newer consumers and expanding their visibility.

The People Behind India's Handlooms

The Fourth All India Handloom Census 2019-20, the comprehensive official census of the sector, recorded around 31.45 lakh handloom households. It also counted 35.22 lakh handloom weavers and allied workers across the country. Of these, 8.48 lakh were allied workers engaged in pre-loom and post-loom activities such as winding, warping, dyeing and calendaring. Further, social and geographical patterns show that handloom is closely tied to rural livelihoods.

Handloom Census

- India has conducted four censuses so far: 1987-88, 1995-96, 2009-10 and 2019-20.
- They are conducted at intervals averaging 8-12 years.

Recognising and Registering Handloom Workers

Workers enumerated through the Census have been provided Pehchan/ e-Pehchan cards. To further extend this coverage, the e-Pehchan portal was launched in January 2025. It allows new and previously left-out workers to register, while existing workers can update details and download their cards. By July 2026, around **84,000 additional workers** had been approved for **e-Pehchan cards**.

A Sector Driven by Women

Women form the majority of India's handloom workforce. They account for 25.46 lakh, or more than 72% of the total workers engaged in weaving and allied activities.

A Sector Supporting Diverse Communities

The handloom workforce included **4.84 lakh Scheduled Caste workers, 6.28 lakh Scheduled Tribe workers** and **12.67 lakh workers belonging to Other Backward Classes.**

Furthermore, the census recorded **28.20 lakh looms across the country**. Of these, 25.30 lakh were situated in rural areas and 2.90 lakh in urban areas. Thus, placing **nearly nine out of every ten handlooms in rural India**

An Ecosystem of Support for Handloom Weavers

The National Handloom Development Programme and the Raw Material Supply Scheme form the core operational support system for the sector.

NHDP was formulated for implementation from 2021-22 to 2025-26. It follows a need-based approach to the integrated development of the handloom sector, focusing on the welfare of handloom weavers.

- ## National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP)



NHDP was formulated for implementation from 2021-22 to 2025-26. It follows a **need-based approach** to the **integrated development of the handloom sector,** focusing on the welfare of handloom weavers.

Handloom Producer Companies organise weavers into professionally managed, member-owned enterprises. Under NHDP, **200 HPC** were formed during 2020-21 to 2026-27.

NHDP components are implemented through Government handloom organisations, as well as national and State-level handloom corporations. Implementing agencies also include weavers' cooperative societies, federations, Handloom Producer Companies and participating banks.

The Programme delivers its wider support through the following **key components:**

- **Small Cluster Development Programme (SCDP)**

SCDP supports small handloom clusters with **funding of up to ₹2 crore** to address their specific development needs. The assistance covers better looms, lighting and worksheds, alongside design, product development and marketing.

- **From 2021-22 to 2026-27 (till June), 357 clusters were sanctioned** under the programme.
- Additionally, during 2025-26, **₹94 crore was released for key interventions** such as worksheds, looms and accessories, and electronic jacquards.

SCDP's Impact

Construction of Worksheds: Workshed construction under the Programme provides handloom beneficiaries with improved workspace infrastructure. Weavers receive a subsidy of up to 100% for constructing these worksheds. The intervention has recorded the following outcomes:

- **Average daily production** increased **by 53%**.
- **Average working hours** rose **by 60%**, while monthly working days increased by 28%.
- **Average daily earnings** increased **by 42%**, from ₹328 to ₹465.

Electronic Jacquard: Electronic jacquards use digital controls to manipulate individual warp threads, enabling faster, more flexible and intricate weaving. Their introduction has improved productivity and earnings among handloom weavers.



- **Average daily production** increased by 55%.
- **96% of beneficiaries** reported **productivity gains.**
- **Average daily wages** rose **by 56%**, from ₹360 to ₹560.
- **Average monthly income** increased from ₹9,600 to ₹15,000.

Handloom Marketing Assistance (HMA)

Handloom Marketing Assistance provides weavers and handloom organisations with direct platforms to sell their products. It supports domestic and export promotion, setting up of Urban Haats and marketing incentives. Key achievements under various components include:

- **Between 2021-22 to 2026-27 (till June), 960+ events were organised** to facilitate the sale of handloom products at the district, state and national levels. These included National, State and District Handloom Expos, Craft Melas and other marketing events.
- Under HMA, two national-level awards, **The Sant Kabir Handloom Award** and **The National Handloom Award** recognise outstanding contributions to the handloom sector. The latest completed award cycle covered the 2024 awards, presented on National Handloom Day 2025. A total of 24 recipients were honoured, including 5 **Sant Kabir** and **19 National Handloom awardees**. The awardees included **six women and one Divyang weaver.**

The Sant Kabir Handloom Award recognises outstanding weavers for exceptional skills and contributions to weaving traditions, community welfare and sector development. The award carries ₹3.5 lakh, a mounted gold coin, tamrapatra, shawl and certificate.
The National Handloom Award honours craftsmanship, dedication and innovation and includes ₹2 lakh, a tamrapatra, shawl and certificate.

- **Concessional Credit/Weaver MUDRA Scheme**

The scheme provides handloom-sector loans at a concessional **6% interest rate for three years**. This is further supported by government interest subvention of up to 7%. It also offers margin money assistance and covers credit guarantee fees. **The Handloom Weaver MUDRA Portal supports the timely transfer of financial assistance.**

- **Between 2021-22 to 2026-27** (till June), a total of **~40,000+ loans**, amounting to **~₹280+ crore**, were sanctioned.
- **As on 2026-27, a total of 967 loans**, amounting to **₹7.45 crore**, were sanctioned.

- **Handloom Weavers' Welfare (Social Security measures)**

The weavers' welfare measures provide social security to handloom weavers and workers, along with scholarships for their children. These include:

- **Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY):** PMJJBY provides annually renewable life insurance to handloom weavers and workers aged **18-50 years**. It offers a benefit of **₹2 lakh in the event of death due to any cause.**
- **Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY):** PMSBY provides annually renewable accident insurance to handloom weavers and workers aged **18-70 years.** It offers **₹2 lakh for accidental death or permanent total disability and ₹1 lakh for permanent partial disability.**

Performance of PMJJBY and PMSBY

Enrolment increased from 1,11,957 handloom weavers and workers in 2021-22 to 2,02,393 in 2026-27(till May), **registering an increase of 80.8%**.

During this period, **funds released** rose from **₹204.83 lakh to ₹335 lakh**, an increase of **63.6%**.

- **Scholarship:** Scholarships of up to ₹2 lakh annually support two children per handloom worker pursuing recognised textile diploma, undergraduate or postgraduate courses. Since inception, 531 applications were sanctioned by June 2026.

- **Mega Cluster Development Programme**

Under the Mega Cluster Development Programme, each mega handloom cluster covers at least 10,000 handlooms/clusters and can receive central assistance of up to ₹30 crore over five years.

- **Eight Mega clusters are completed** and functional and **Four Mega clusters are under implementation.**
- Under the Programme, **financial assistance of ₹370.72 crore was released**, benefiting a total of **1,62,682 handloom weavers.**

Need Based Special Infrastructure Projects

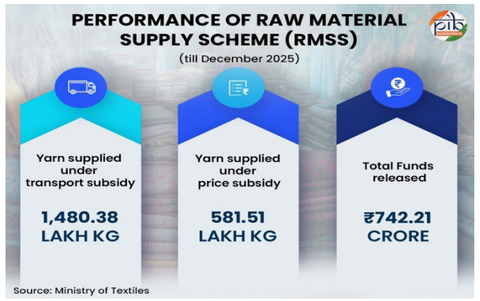
Under the Programme, assistance of up to **₹12 crore is provided** for product

development, productivity, quality improvement, value addition and marketing.

- **Six Craft Handloom Villages** are operational and **three are under implementation.**

• Raw Material Supply Scheme (RMSS)

The Scheme supports access to yarn **by reimbursing freight charges on all types of yarn.** It also provides a **15% price subsidy** on specified yarns, subject to prescribed quantity limits.



NHDP and RMSS continue to be implemented in 2026-27, with budgetary allocations of **₹205 crore and ₹200 crore**, respectively.

• GST Relief for Handlooms and Traditional Crafts

The Next-Generation GST reforms recommended at the 56th GST Council meeting in September 2025 included measures supporting the handloom sector.

- Under the GST rationalisation, the tax rate on **36 handicraft items** was **reduced from 12% to 5%**.
- **Cotton handloom rugs** and **handwoven carpets** were also brought under the **5% GST** rate.
- **The rate on domestic and industrial sewing machines** was similarly **reduced from 12% to 5%**, easing costs for tailoring units and supporting domestic manufacturing

• Union Budget 2026-27: A New Policy Push for India's Handlooms

The Union Budget 2026-27 placed special emphasis on textiles through several new measures:

- The **National Fibre Scheme** is designed to strengthen the textile raw-material base. It promotes self-reliance in natural, man-made and new-age fibres.
- Traditional clusters will be modernised under the **Textile Expansion and Employment Scheme**. It provides capital support for machinery, technology upgrades, and common testing and certification centres.
- The **National Handloom and Handicraft Programme** will integrate and strengthen existing schemes. This will ensure targeted support for both sectors.
- The **Mahatma Gandhi Gram Swaraj Initiative** will strengthen khadi, handloom and handicrafts while benefiting weavers, village industries, rural youth and the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative. It focuses **on global market linkages, branding, training, skilling, and improvements in production processes and quality.**

The ODOP Initiative promotes unique district products, balanced regional development and wider market access for local artisans and entrepreneurs.

Read more: One District One Product (ODOP): A Journey from Local Streets to Global Shelves.

Reimagining Handloom through Design and Innovation

India's handloom traditions remain rooted in regional fibres, techniques, motifs and generations of weaving knowledge. At the same time, the platforms on which these textiles are presented are expanding. Supported by government institutions and initiatives, regional weaving traditions are reaching new platforms.

Several recent showcases illustrate how traditional textiles are being presented through contemporary design and wider cultural platforms.

DC Handlooms and NIFT unveiled Vishwa Sutra at the 61st Femina Miss India in April 2026. Presented in Bhubaneswar, the collection brought together 30 handloom weaves across India. Each was reinterpreted through inspiration from 30 countries, combining textiles with international silhouettes and influences. These pairings placed Indian handlooms within a global design narrative while retaining authenticity and regional identities.



Breathing Threads brought handlooms into contemporary fashion at **Bharat Tex 2025.** It presented 30 looks using fabrics woven across five states. These fabrics came from West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Rajasthan. Chanderi, Maheshwari, Jamdani, Khun, Banarasi, Kota Doria and Murshidabad weaves gained contemporary expression through textures and cording.



At IFFI 2025 in Goa, DC Handlooms united couture, culture and cinema in **Handloom Sarees in Motion: 70MM on Runway.** The show traced Indian cinema's changing styles, from graceful 1940s drapes to experimental silhouettes of the 2020s. More than 40 sarees represented regional weaving traditions, including Tussar, Ikat Pashmina, Banarasi, Chanderi, Venkatagiri and Kuthampully. Several were hand-painted by award-winning artists using Pichwai, Pattachitra, Warli, Kalamkari, Madhubani, Gond and Bhil art.



Alongside these showcases, collaborative platforms are creating new spaces for experimentation across the handloom sector.

Expanding the Meaning of Design

- **Weave The Future 4.0:** Upcycling Edition of the event took place at Dilli Haat, New Delhi, from 12-17 July 2026. The exhibition brought together more than 100 brands, artisans, recyclers and innovators working in circular design. It promoted upcycling, repair, sustainable production and responsible consumption.
- **Handloom Hackathon 2026:** Ministry of Textiles launched Handloom Hackathon 2026 –'Weaving Innovation' for National Handloom Day 2026. The challenge invites students, weavers, artisans, researchers, startups and professionals to develop practical solutions for the sector. Its themes span design, sustainability, digital technology, market access, branding, productivity and entrepreneurship.

These appearances demonstrate the widening visibility of Indian handlooms. Through fashion shows, pageants, cinema, textile exhibitions and collaborative design platforms, regional weaves are entering broader cultural and creative spaces. This growing visibility forms part of a wider story that also encompasses market access and India's handloom export presence.

Strengthening Market Access and Buyer Confidence

Distinctive designs, small-batch production and eco-friendly processes have **created strong demand for handloom products in domestic and international markets.**

India's handloom exports stood at **~₹1,330.96 crore** in 2025-26. The leading export destinations during this period were **the UAE**, the **United States, France, the United Kingdom and Spain.**

As handloom products reach wider and more diverse markets, establishing their authenticity, quality and origin becomes increasingly important. **Government-supported marks, branding systems, GI registration and legal safeguards** help distinguish genuine handloom products and protect recognised weaving traditions. **Digital platforms** are also expanding market access.

- **Around 1.50 lakh weavers** and handloom entities have joined **GeM** to supply government buyers.
- **Indiahandmade platform** enables verified weavers and producer groups to sell authentic products, including GI-tagged items, directly to consumers. The platform **onboarded 4,186 weavers & artisans between 2023-24 and June 2026.**



Handloom Mark: Establishing that a Product is Handwoven

Launched in 2006, the Handloom Mark scheme **gives handloom products a collective and distinctive identity.** It promotes handwoven goods while assuring buyers that the product they purchase is genuinely handwoven and helps identify the product or its manufacturer more easily.

- As of 30 June 2026, **29,402 Handloom Mark registrations have been issued** and;
- A total of **815 retail outlets** were selling products carrying the label

A **GI tag** identifies goods originating in a specific territory whose quality, reputation or characteristics are linked to that geographical origin.

India Handloom Brand: Adding Quality Assurance

The India Handloom Brand was launched on the **first National Handloom Day on 7 August 2015.** It promotes niche handloom products with high quality, authentic traditional designs, zero defects and zero environmental impact. **The certification covers natural-fibre products with assured fast colours, skin-friendly dyes and social compliance.**

By June 2026, **2,305 registrations** had been issued across **184 categories.**

GI Tags: Protecting the Identity of Regional Weaves

The **GI Act, 1999** protects registered geographical indications from unauthorised use. Registered users may approach police authorities against illegal manufacture or marketing, while State Handlooms and Textiles Departments have been advised to strengthen protection.

- As reported in August 2026, registrations covered 1**06 handloom products, six product logos and 227 handicraft products.**

Legal Protection for Reserved Handloom Products

The **Handlooms Act, 1985** protects weavers and India's cultural heritage from encroachment by powerlooms and mills. **It reserves 11 specified textile articles for handloom production.**

Government agencies inspect powerloom units to prevent the production of items reserved exclusively for handlooms.

The Future is Handwoven

National Handloom Day 2026 offers a moment to look beyond the endurance of a tradition towards the possibilities ahead.

Indian handlooms carry the memory of place, community and skill, yet their story continues to find new expression with each generation. Their growing presence in contemporary life shows how heritage can remain relevant without losing its character.

As the world discovers more of India through its weaves, handloom continues to connect inherited knowledge with new aspirations. It carries regional identities from the hands of the weaver to a wider world.

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Independence day Factsheets



Building a Business-Ready India

Advancing Ease of Doing Business, Empowering Enterprises

Published on: August 13, 2026

Enabling Enterprise-Led Growth

As India celebrates its 80th Independence Day, the nation continues to strengthen the foundations of a self-reliant, resilient and growing economy. The Government has undertaken reforms aimed at reducing compliance burdens, enhancing transparency, encouraging entrepreneurship and creating greater opportunities for enterprises of all sizes.

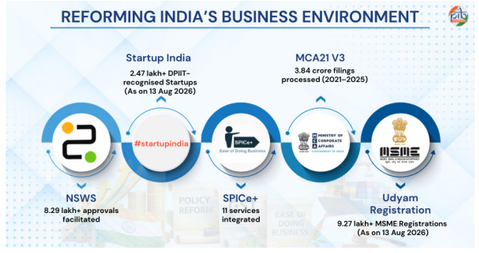
These efforts are advancing **Ease of Doing Business through digital single-window systems, simplified incorporation processes, wider market access, improved access to finance and trust-based regulation**.

Reforming India's Business Environment

From digital single-window clearances to large-scale regulatory clean-ups, the focus of the reforms is on creating a predictable and facilitation-driven business environment.

- **National Single Window System (NSWS):** It is a single window digital platform which guides in **identifying and applying for approvals** according to the business requirements. The system integrates approvals across **32 Central ministries and 34 States**. It provides access to over 686 central and 7,498 state approvals. Since its launch in 2021, NSWS has granted over **8.29 lakh approvals** (November, 2025).

- **Startup India (2016):** The initiative aims to support entrepreneurs and build a robust startup ecosystem. It seeks to **transform India into a nation of job creators** rather than job seekers. DPIIT-recognised startups increased from **502 in 2016 to over 2.47 lakh as on 12 August 2026.**



- **SPICe+ Form (2020):** This web-based form **integrates 11 services from 3 Central Government ministries and departments**. The form integrates **10 essential procedures** including name reservation, incorporation, DIN allotment, PAN issuance, TAN issuance, EPFO registration, ESIC registration, Profession Tax registration, Bank account opening, and GSTIN allotment, and First-Time Registration of Shops and Establishment for all new companies getting incorporated in Delhi. It thereby, reduces procedural burden, saves time and lowers compliance costs for businesses.

- **MCA21 V3: MCA21 Project**, a forward-looking, **AI-driven initiative** significantly enhances transparency in India's corporate landscape. The platform is used for **end-to-end registry and incorporation related services of companies & limited liability partnerships (LLPs).** Between 2021 and 2025, it processed **3.84 crore filings,** with **3.33 crore approved through Straight Through Process.**

- **Udyam Registration (2020):** It offers a free, paperless, and **self-declaration-based system for MSMEs** (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises). MSME registrations on the Udyam Portal increased from **0.10 lakh in October 2020 to over 9.27 lakh** by 13th August 2026.

- **Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP) :** Launched in 2015, BRAP promotes Ease of Doing Business by **simplifying regulations and improving transparency** across States and Union Territories (UTs). It covers reforms across single-window clearances, land, labour, inspections, taxation, environmental approvals and others.

Unlocking Finance for Enterprise Growth

Credit guarantees, digital lending and receivables financing are widening access to formal finance, particularly for MSMEs.

- **Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY) :** PMMY (2015) bridges the gap in financial accessibility, **offering collateral-free loans up to ₹20 lakh to support non-corporate and non-farm income-generating activities.** As on 27 March 2026, the scheme has **sanctioned loans worth ₹40.07 lakh crore through 57.79 crore loans** since inception.

- **Credit Guarantee Scheme:** Enables MSEs to access **credit without collateral security or third-party guarantees,** with support for credit facilities of up to ₹10 crore. As of March 2026, Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE) had approved cumulative coverage worth **₹13.67 lakh crore,** benefiting **1.41 crore guarantees.**

- **Credit Assessment Model (CAM):** Launched by Public Sector Banks in 2025, CAM uses digitally fetched and verifiable data for automated MSME loan appraisal. Between April and December 2025, over **3.96 lakh MSME applications worth ₹52,300 crore+** were sanctioned under the model.

- **TReDS (Trade Receivables Discounting System):** TReDS **is an electronic platform that facilitates financing and discounting of trade**

receivables of MSMEs through multiple financiers. Union Budget 2026–27 proposed measures to strengthen TReDS, including a credit guarantee mechanism for invoice discounting and its use for Central Public Sector Enterprise transactions. The platform has grown from strength to strength, with invoice discounting **increasing from ₹40,000 crore in 2021-22 to ₹3.47 lakh crore in 2025-26.**

From Compliance to Trust-Based Governance

India's regulatory reforms are moving beyond simply digitising processes towards reducing unnecessary requirements, decriminalising minor offences and creating greater certainty for businesses.

- **Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Act, 2026:** Decriminalises **717 provisions and amends 784 provisions across 79 Central Acts,** covering 23 Ministries. It strengthens trust-based governance by reducing criminal liability for minor and technical offences.

- **Regulatory Compliance Burden:** The initiative simplifies regulations and reduces unnecessary requirements to lower compliance costs and strengthen Ease of Doing Business. More than **47,000 compliances** have been reduced, including **16,108 simplified, 22,287 digitised, 4,458 decriminalised, and 4,270 redundant compliances removed** as of November 2025.

- **GST 2.0:** Introduced in 2017, GST replaced multiple indirect taxes with a **unified national tax framework.** Reforms announced in September 2025 further rationalised rates and moved towards a **simplified two-rate structure**, reducing compliance and transaction costs. Registered taxpayers increased from around **60 lakh in 2017 to over 1.68 crore as on 31st July 2026,** reflecting deeper formalisation.

- **Faceless Assessment Scheme:** The scheme **eliminates physical interface between the taxpayer and tax officers. Automated case selection, random allocation** and **a Central Cell** for taxpayer communication **reduce multiple visits and waiting time.** The approach promotes standardised, objective and consistent tax assessments, making tax compliance more efficient and transparent.

Expanding Markets for Indian Businesses

India's digital public infrastructure is opening new markets for enterprises. Investments in logistics and multimodal connectivity are helping businesses move goods faster and more efficiently.

- **Government e-Marketplace (GeM) (2016):** GeM **digitises public procurement** and expands market access for diverse businesses. **As on 6th August 2026,** GeM connects **more than 1.37 lakh government buyer organisations** with nearly **25 lakh sellers and service providers**. It facilitated cumulative procurement worth **over ₹20 lakh crore+**. In 2025–26, more **than 75 lakh orders** were executed.



- **PM GatiShakti (2021):** It enables integrated infrastructure planning and multimodal connectivity through a unified digital platform. The platform brings together **58 Ministries/ Departments and 36 States/UTs with 3,291 data layers.** As of February 2026, the **Network Planning Group evaluated 352 projects worth ₹16.10 lakh crore, with 201 sanctioned and out of which 167 projects are under implementation.** The initiative helps businesses identify suitable locations, plan investments and access upfront multimodal connectivity and infrastructure, strengthening Ease of Doing Business.

- **Open Network for Digital Commerce (2022):** It promotes open digital commerce networks and reduces dependence on individual platforms. It has **7.64 lakh+ sellers across 616+ cities**, supporting wider and more inclusive market access.

Strengthening India's Global Business Footprint

India is strengthening its position in global markets by combining export promotion with better logistics, digital trade facilitation and stronger domestic production capabilities.

- **Export Promotion Mission (2025):** The mission is designed to enhance India's export competitiveness, with a focused emphasis on MSMEs, first-time exporters, labour-intensive sectors, and exporters from interior and low-export-intensity regions. By bringing financial and non-financial

support under one framework, the Mission reduces barriers to exporting and makes global market access easier for businesses.

- **Trade Connect e-Platform:** Provides exporters, including MSMEs, with trade information, market opportunities and access to global buyers. It has crossed **20 lakh registered users,** with **40 lakh+ Certificates of Origin issued** as of August 2026.

- **ICEGATE (Indian Customs Electronic Gateway):** ICEGATE enables electronic filing, duty payment, document amendments, query resolution and refund processing, making cross-border trade more efficient. **Bills of Entry filings** increased from o**ver 1.43 lakhs in April 2020 to over 6.14 lakhs in June 2026**, reflecting growth in digital customs processing and trade activity.

Creating an Enabling Enterprise Ecosystem

India's Ease of Doing Business journey is evolving from simplifying individual processes to building a more responsive and enterprise-friendly ecosystem. **With stronger digital infrastructure, wider access to markets and finance, and greater regulatory certainty, businesses are better positioned to seize opportunities, scale sustainably and compete globally.**

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Financial Inclusion in India: Banking Every Citizen, Empowering Every Household

Published on: August 12, 2026

Introduction

Financial inclusion is central to India's vision of equitable development. Over the past decade, India has expanded access to banking, digital payments, credit, insurance, pensions and investment opportunities. Digital Public Infrastructure and citizen-centric reforms have driven this transformation. India has moved beyond universal bank account ownership towards active participation in the formal financial system. This transformation has empowered millions of households, entrepreneurs and businesses.

Key Indicators of Financial Inclusion in India

Several indicators highlight the significant progress made in expanding financial access, infrastructure and participation across India.

RBI's Financial Inclusion (FI) Index

The **RBI's FI Index** measures the extent of financial inclusion across access, usage and quality of financial services. It serves as a comprehensive indicator of progress in expanding formal financial services nationwide. The FI Index increased from **43.4 in March 2017** to **70.0 in March 2026,** reflecting broad-based improvements across all three dimensions.

World Bank Global Findex

The Global Findex Database is the world's leading source of data on financial inclusion. It measures how adults access and use financial services across economies. The **Global Findex 2025** highlights India's remarkable progress in financial inclusion. **Account ownership has reached 89%** since 2011, reflecting significant gains in access to formal financial services and active account usage over the past decade.

Banking Access Network

Bank branches remain the foundation of India's formal banking system. They provide savings, credit and other financial services across the country. India has **over 1.81 lakh bank branches** (17 July 2026).

Banking access is delivered through branches, Business Correspondents and India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) outlets. As of **6 March 2026, 99.92% villages in the country** are covered with banking outlets within a 5 km radius.

IPPB strengthens last-mile banking through **over 1.65 lakh post offices** (17 July, 2026). It serves **more than 11 crore customers** across **5.57 lakh villages and towns.**

Business Correspondents extend doorstep banking services to unbanked and under-banked areas. India has over 17.36 lakh BC supporting doorstep banking services nationwide (17 July 2026).

Pillars of Financial Inclusion

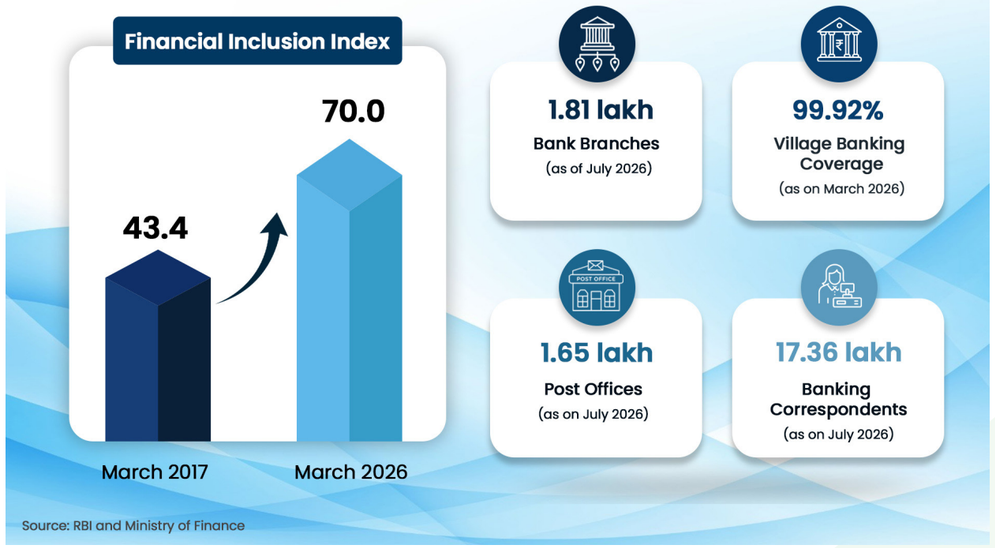
India's financial inclusion ecosystem rests on interconnected policy and institutional pillars. They promote universal access and meaningful participation in the formal financial system.

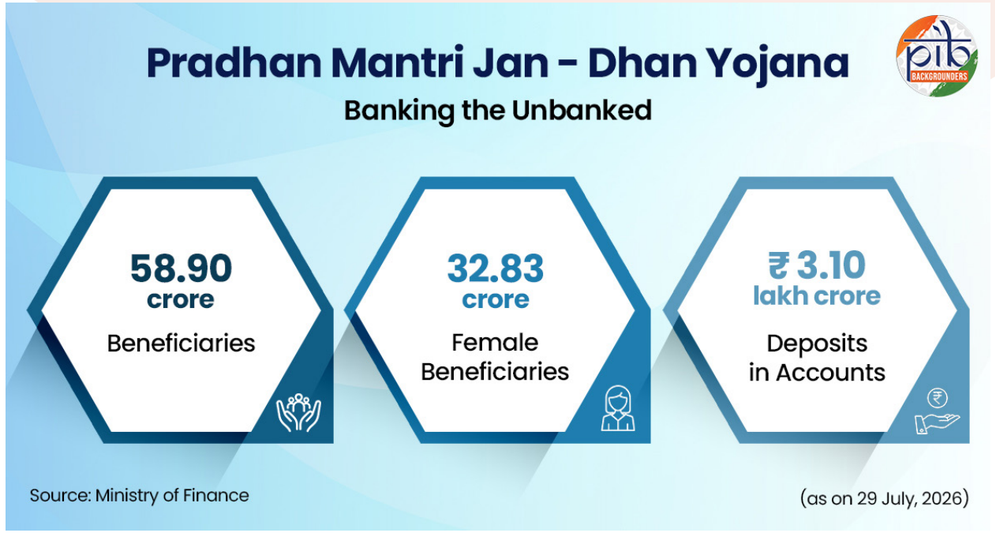
Universal Banking

Pradhan Mantri Jan - Dhan Yojana (PMJDY)

- PMJDY (2014) **provides every unbanked adult with a basic savings bank account** where minimum balance needs to be maintained.
- It offers access to savings, remittances, credit, insurance, pension and Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).
- PMJDY account holders are provided a RuPay Debit Card and accident insurance cover. The insurance cover is ₹2 lakh for accounts opened

Building a Nationwide Financial Inclusion Network





after 28 August 2018 and ₹1 lakh for accounts opened before that date. Eligible account holders can also avail an overdraft facility up to ₹10,000.

- It facilitates enrolment under Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), Atal Pension Yojana (APY), and access to MUDRA loans.

JAM Trinity

- The **JAM Trinity Integrates Jan Dhan accounts, Aadhaar and mobile connectivity** to strengthen financial inclusion.
- It **enables Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** for transparent and efficient delivery of government benefits. DBT **reduces leakages, eliminates fake beneficiaries and minimises intermediaries** in welfare delivery.
- The JAM Trinity **strengthens formal banking access** and promotes trust in digital financial services.

Total Direct Benefit Transfer	No. of Schemes	No. of Ministries Involved
(as on 10 August, 2026)		
₹ 52,89,019 Cr	320	56

Social Security for All

Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)

- PMJJBY (2015) is an annual renewable **life insurance scheme** which offers a ₹2 lakh life cover for individuals aged 18–50 years.
- The scheme is available at an **annual premium of ₹436,** which is auto-debited from the subscriber's bank account.
- It provides financial security to families in the event of the insured person's death.
- The scheme provides immediate cover for accidental death and a 30-day waiting period for non-accidental death.

Gross Enrolments	No. of Claim Received	No. of Claims Disbursed
(as on 30 June 2026)		
27.78 Cr	11,31,505	10,97,751

Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY)

- PMSBY (2015) is also an annual renewable **accident insurance scheme** for savings bank account holders aged 18–70 years.
- It provides ₹2 lakh cover for accidental death or full disability, and ₹1 lakh for partial disability.
- The insurance is available at **an annual premium of ₹20** which is auto-debited from the linked bank account.

Gross Enrolments	No. of Claim Received	No. of Claims Disbursed
(as on 30 June 2026)		
58.66 Cr	2,56,526	1,89,057

Atal Pension Yojana (APY)

- APY (2015) is a **contributory pension scheme for workers in the unorganised sector,** launched in 2015.
- It provides a guaranteed monthly pension ranging from ₹1,000 to ₹5,000 after attaining 60 years of age.
- The contributions are based on the subscriber's age at enrolment and the chosen pension amount.
- Enrolment under the scheme is facilitated through banks and post offices, expanding pension coverage among low-income workers.

Total Subscribers	Male Subscribers	Female Subscribers	Transgender Subscribers
(as on 30 June 2026)			
9.29 crore	4.72 crore (50.8%)	4.56 crore (49.16%)	26,599 (0.028%)

Inclusive Credit

PM Mudra Yojana

- PM Mudra Yojana (2015) provides **collateral-free loans up to ₹20 lakh** to non-corporate, non-farm micro and small enterprises **across manufacturing, trading, services, and allied agricultural activities.**
- Mudra loans are extended for a wide range of activities that promote income generation and employment creation.
- It offers four loan categories based on enterprise growth: Shishu, Kishor, Tarun and Tarun Plus.

No. of Loans Sanctioned	Amount Sanctioned
(as on 27 March, 2026)	
57.79 crore	₹40.07 lakh crore

PM SVANidhi

- PM SVANidhi is a first-of-its-kind **micro-credit initiative focused on street vendors** with government-backed credit guarantee support.
- It provides collateral-free loans in three progressive tranches of ₹15,000, ₹25,000 and ₹50,000.
- The scheme offers interest subsidy and credit guarantee support to eligible street vendors.

Total Beneficiaries	Loans Disbursed	Total Loan Value
(as on May 2026)		
More than 75.5 lakh	Over 1.12 crore	More than ₹17,800 crore

Kisan Credit Card (KCC)

- KCC provides timely and adequate **credit to farmers through the banking system.**
- It offers an ATM-enabled debit card, one-time documentation and flexible withdrawals.
- KCC provides credit for crop cultivation, post-harvest needs, marketing, farm maintenance, household expenses and allied activities.

Total number of KCC/ISS applications (as on 10 August 2026)		
Commercial Bank	**Rural Bank**	**Cooperative Bank**
763.6 lakh	368.6 Lakh	1242.0 Lakh

Jan Samarth

- Jan Samarth is a unified **digital platform for credit-linked government schemes.**
- It connects beneficiaries directly with lenders, simplifying access to government-sponsored credit.
- The platform has 16 registered credit schemes, 8 loan categories and more than 300 lenders.

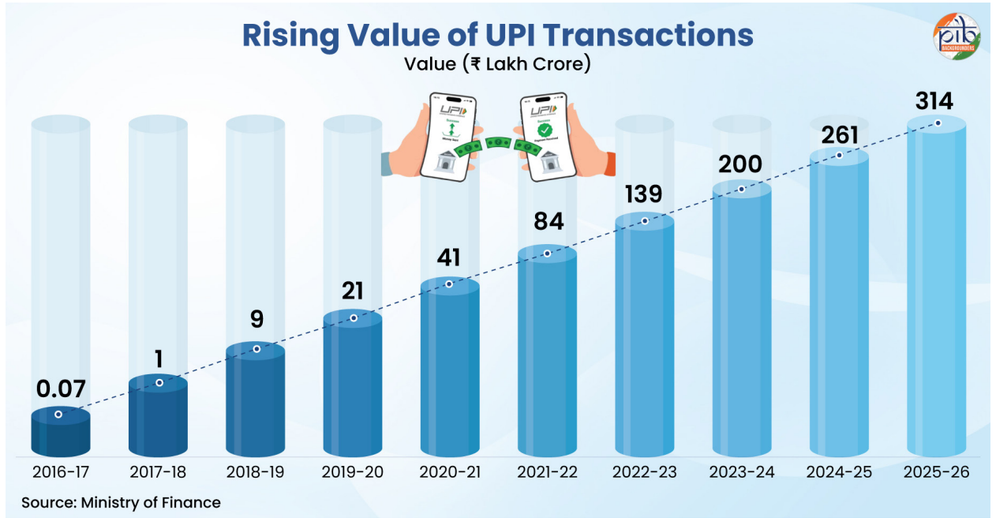
No. of Applications	Amount of Applications
(as on 1 June 2026)	
54.10 lakh	₹ 3,00,951 crore

Digital Financial Inclusion

UPI

- UPI has emerged as the **backbone of India's digital payments ecosystem,** driving financial inclusion and digital transactions.
- The **transaction volume increased nearly 12,000-fold** and **transaction value increased nearly 4,000-fold** between FY 2016–17 and FY 2025–26.
- The I**MF has recognised UPI as the world's largest real-time payment system** by transaction volume, highlighting India's digital public infrastructure leadership.

Volume of Transactions	Value of Transactions	No. of Banks live on UPI
(as on July 2026)		
2,365.8 crore	29,87,880.49 crore	741



Financial Literacy

National Centre for Financial Education (NCFE)

- The centre **promotes financial education and awareness across all sections** of society under the National Strategy for Financial Education.
- It conducts seminars, workshops, training programmes and awareness campaigns to strengthen financial literacy.
- It also develops targeted financial education materials covering financial markets and digital financial services

Workshops Conducted	Beneficiaries	Male	Female
(as on 10 August, 2026)			
31,082	10,68,571	373,999 (35%)	694,572 (65%)

Financial Education Programme for Adults (FEPA)

- FEPA was launched in September 2019 by NCFE to promote financial awareness among adults.
- The **programme covers farmers, women's groups, ASHA and Anganwadi workers, SHGs, employees and skill development trainees.**
- It focuses on Special Focused Districts (SFDs), aligned with the National Strategy for Financial Education.

Workshops Conducted	Beneficiaries Covered
(as on 10 August, 2026)	
19,266	6,48,512

Nationwide Financial Inclusion Saturation Campaign

- The **four-month campaign** was launched on 1 July, 2025 to extend financial inclusion across 2.70 lakh Gram Panchayats and ULBs.
- **More than 2.67 lakh camps were organised** across villages and towns during the campaign.
- **5.19 crore KYC re-verifications, 1.20 crore nomination updates** were completed and **92,066 claims** were settled under PMJJBY/ PMSBY

PMJDY accounts Opened	PMJJBY Enrolments	PMSBY Enrolments	APY Enrolments
(as on 31st October 2025)			
1.11 crore	1.40 crore	2.86 crore	44.43 lakh

From Access to Empowerment

India's financial inclusion journey has evolved from expanding account ownership to enabling meaningful financial participation. A strong network of banks, digital infrastructure and government schemes has widened access to formal financial services. PMJDY, JAM trinity, social security and inclusive credit have strengthened financial resilience across diverse sections of society. Digital payments and financial literacy are further enabling citizens to participate confidently in the formal financial system. Together, these initiatives are building a more accessible, resilient and inclusive financial ecosystem that supports inclusive growth.

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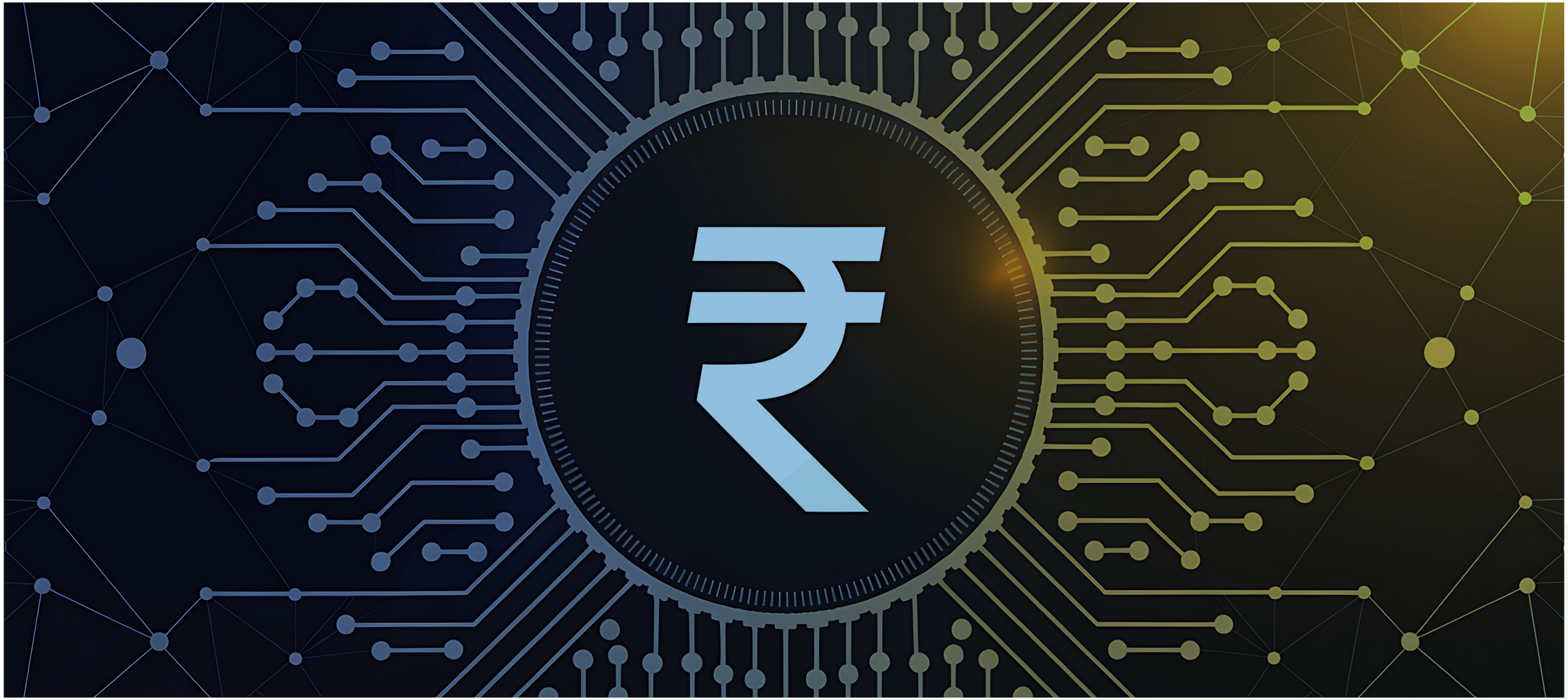



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India’s Infrastructure Transformation: From Connectivity to Capacity

Published on: August 12, 2026

Building the Foundation of Growth

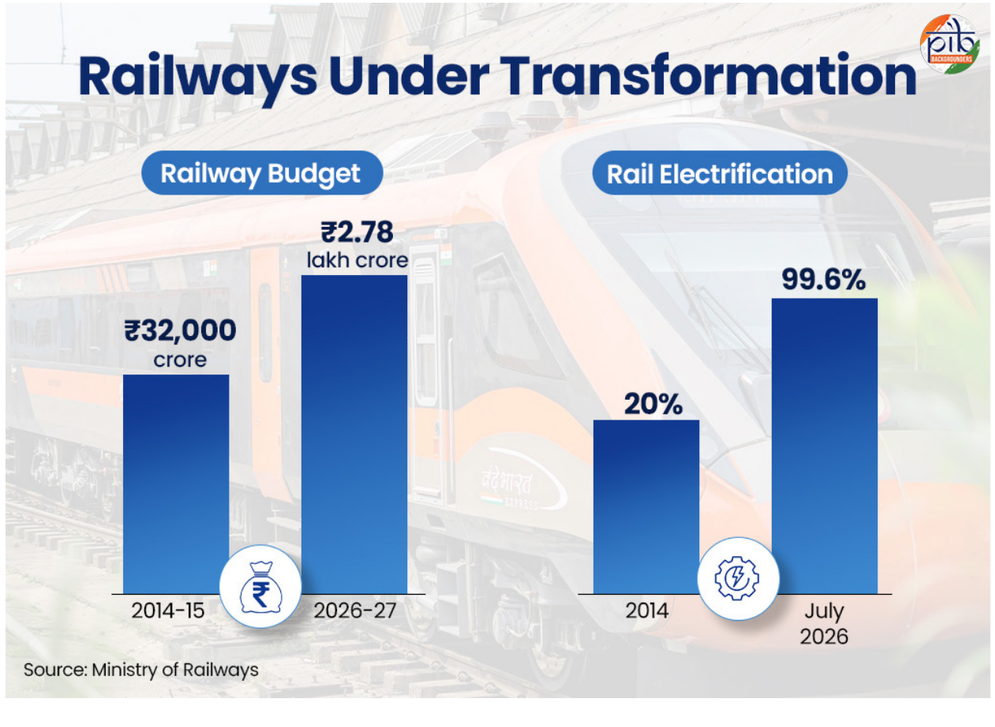
India's infrastructure landscape has undergone a major transformation over the past 12 years. From transport and logistics to housing and water, infrastructure development has moved towards integrated planning and large-scale expansion. This has strengthened connectivity, improved access to essential services and created the foundations for sustained economic growth. Public capital expenditure has risen from about **₹2 lakh crore in FY 2014–15 to ₹12.2 lakh crore in FY 2026–27**, supporting this advancement.

A New Era of Rail Mobility

Indian Railways is moving towards faster, safer and more modern mobility. Electrification, advanced safety systems, high-speed rail and new-generation trains are reshaping the rail network.

- Railway budget increased from **₹32,000 crore in 2014–15 to ₹2.78 lakh crore in FY2026–27**.
- Rail electrification increased from about 20% before 2014 to **99.6% by July 2026**.
- **162 Vande Bharat, 2 Vande Bharat Sleeper** Services and **72 Amrit Bharat** services have improved connectivity and travel experience.
- The **Kavach Version 4.0** has been commissioned on 2,633 route km as of July 2026.
- The **Mumbai–Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Corridor** is being developed over a **508 km** route with a design speed of **350 kmph**.
- Of the **1,340 stations** identified under the **Amrit Bharat Station Scheme**, redevelopment has been completed for **261 stations** as on 18 July 2026.
- First indigenously developed **Hydrogen Fuel Cell Trainset** has been launched in July 2026. It is a 10-coach train with capacity for around **2,600 passengers**, running on the Jind–Sonipat section. It generates its own electricity onboard with water vapour and heat as the only by-product.





Roads and Highways Connecting India

A wider and more capable road network is bringing regions closer. The expansion of National Highways, rural roads and major corridors is enabling smoother movement of people and goods.

- India has the world's second-largest road network at **63.73 lakh km**.
- Length of national highways **increased by about 61%**, from **91,287 km in FY 14 to 1,46,572 km in March 2026**.
- The length of four-lane and above national highways **increased from 18,371 km in 2014 to 45,516 km**.
- The length of roads increased from **3.86 lakh km during 2000–2014 to 4.11 lakh km during 2014–2026 under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana**. Since September 2024, PMGSY-IV has been launched with an objective to provide connectivity to 25,000 unconnected habitations by the year 2029.
- Under Bharatmala, **22,590 km** of roads have been completed till **31 March 2026**.

Bridges and Tunnels: Engineering New Frontiers

Engineering breakthroughs are overcoming some of India's most demanding geographical challenges. These projects are opening new routes across difficult terrain.

- **Chenab Bridge (2025)**: World's highest railway arch bridge, standing 359 m above the Chenab River; 1,315 m steel structure strengthening Jammu–Srinagar connectivity.



Chenab Bridge

- **Anji Khad Bridge (2025)**: India's first cable-stayed railway bridge, in Jammu & Kashmir.
- **Pamban Bridge (2025)**: India's first vertical-lift railway sea bridge, connecting Rameswaram to the mainland; 2.07 km with a 72.5 m vertical lift span.



Pamban Bridge

- **Z-Morh/Sonamarg Tunnel (2025)**: 12 km tunnel providing all-weather access through avalanche-prone terrain in J&K, improving movement towards Ladakh.
- **Sudarshan Setu (2024)**: 2.32 km bridge connecting Okha with Beyt Dwarka, Gujarat.
- **Atal Tunnel (2020)**: 9.02 km — world's longest highway tunnel above 10,000 feet, connecting Manali and Lahaul-Spiti.



Atal Tunnel

- **Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee Tunnel (2017)**: 9 km all-weather tunnel between Jammu and Srinagar, cutting travel time by ~2 hours.

Civil Aviation and Regional Air Access

Air connectivity is reaching more cities, towns and remote regions. The expansion of airports, UDAN routes and digital passenger services is making flying more accessible across the country.

- **UDAN** connected **95 airports**, **heliports**, and **water aerodromes** through **679 routes**, benefiting over **1.68 crore passengers** as on 15 July 2026.
- Operational airports increased from **74 in 2014** to **165 in July 2026**.
- **25 greenfield airports** have been approved after 2014.
- **Digi Yatra** is active at **38 airports**. **The app has enabled over 10 crore seamless journeys with over 2.4 crore downloads**.
- **Modified UDAN** has been approved in March 2026 for FY 2026–27 to FY 2035–36 with an outlay of **₹28,840 crore**, envisioning **100 new airports and 200 modern helipads** to strengthen last-mile regional air connectivity.

Metro: The Rise of Mass Urban Transit

India's urban mobility network is expanding in scale and scope. Metro connectivity now spans more cities, while innovative systems are opening new possibilities for urban transport.

- Metro network expanded from **248 km in 2014** to over **1,155 km in 2026**.
- Cities with metro connectivity increased from **5 to 26**, while daily ridership crossed **1.15 crore passengers**.
- Kolkata operationalised **India's first underwater metro tunnel** in 2024.
- Kochi operationalised **India's first Water Metro** system with the first boat launched in December 2021.

India's Maritime Momentum

India is strengthening its maritime backbone to support a growing economy and expanding trade. Investments in ports, waterways and maritime infrastructure are creating a more capable and connected ecosystem.

- **Major ports' cargo handling capacity** nearly doubled from **873 MMTPA in 2014** to **1,728 MMTPA in 2026**.

- **Vessel turnaround time** improved from **94 hours** to **48.8 hours in 2025-26**.
- **Major ports collectively handled 915.17 MT of cargo during FY 2025-26**, increasing from **581 MT in FY 2014-15**.
- The **Sagarmala Programme** strengthened port-led development, coastal connectivity, and logistics integration.
- **National waterways** increased from **5 in 2014 to 111 in 2026**, of which **32 are operational**.
- **India became the world's No. 1 ship-recycling nation in 2025**, with its global share rising from 30.1% (2024) to **35.4% (2025)** — recycling 2.**99 million gross tons (GT)**, up nearly 60% from 1.86 million GT in 2024.
- Jawaharlal Nehru Port ranked **22nd** as per the Container Port Performance Index (CPPI) 2025, published by the World Bank.
- **Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMIP)** has been launched on 12 May 2026. It is a USD 1.5 billion domestic insurance pool with a sovereign guarantee of USD 1.4 billion (₹12,980 crore), covering Hull & Machinery, Cargo, Protection and Indemnity, and War risk for Indian-flagged/ controlled vessels. As on 29th July 2026, a total of **1608 policies** covering Cargo War risks and Hull War risks have been issued under the Pool.

Strengthening Logistics and Industrial Capacity

Infrastructure is increasingly being planned as an interconnected network supporting industry and trade. From GatiShakti to industrial corridors, the focus is on improving coordination, efficiency and manufacturing capacity.

- **PM GatiShakti National Master Plan** integrated infrastructure planning across **58 Ministries and Departments** using over **3,291 data layers**.
- As on 11 August 2026, **396 infrastructure projects** with a total estimated cost of about ₹18.66 Lakh Crore have been evaluated through the Network Planning Group mechanism. Out of these, 256 projects have been sanctioned and **198 projects** are under implementation.
- The **National Logistics Policy** has strengthened multimodal logistics efficiency and supply chain integration.
- **PRAGATI** reviewed **382 projects** worth over **₹85 lakh crore** and resolved **2,958 issues**.
- Over **4,220 industrial parks** are mapped on the **India Industrial Land Bank (IILB)**.
- **272 plug-and-play industrial parks** are operational across the country.
- **20 industrial smart cities** have been approved across **7 industrial corridors**.
- The **BHAVYA** scheme has been approved in March 2026 to develop **100 new plug-and-play industrial parks**.
- **BHAVYA Rasayan Scheme** has been approved on 24 July 2026, with an outlay of **₹3,030 crore**. The scheme will be implemented over five years, from FY2026–27 to FY2030–31.
- **7 Pradhan Mantri MITRA Parks** have been proposed to strengthen the manufacturing ecosystem.

Water, Housing and Urban Development

The infrastructure push extends directly to people's homes and everyday needs. From tap-water access and affordable housing to urban renewal, these efforts are shaping better living conditions across rural and urban India.

- Under **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)**, rural tap water coverage increased from **3.23 crore** in 2019 to around **15.91 crore households** as on 10th August 2026.
- **JJM 2.0** has been approved in March 2026. The mission has been extended to December 2028, with an enhanced outlay of **₹8.69 lakh crore**.
- Under **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U)**, **99.25 lakh houses** have been completed as on 12 August 2026. Around **96% of houses** under **PMAY-U 2.0** are allotted to women.
- Under **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Grameen (PMAY-G)**, **out of the 3.91 crore houses** sanctioned, **3.13 crore houses** have been completed as on 12 August 2026. Nearly **75%** of the houses sanctioned under PMAY-G are either in the name of women or under joint ownership.
- The **SWAMIH Fund** launched in 2019 delivered over **63,000 homes**, benefiting around **2.52 lakh people** as of June 2026.
- Under **AMRUT and AMRUT 2.0**, projects worth about **₹2.79 lakh crore** have been sanctioned since 2015.
- Under Smart Cities Mission, a total of **7,790 projects** worth **₹1,56,257 crore** have been completed as of March 2026.

Infrastructure for a Stronger, Future-Ready India

India's infrastructure journey reflects a

decisive shift in the scale and ambition of national development. The focus has moved towards building resilient, high-capacity systems that not only support a fast-growing economy today but also anticipate the needs of tomorrow. Collectively, these initiatives are strengthening the foundation for a more efficient, inclusive, and future-ready India.

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Revitalising India’s Cultural Heritage

Preserving the Past, Enriching the Future

Published on: August 14, 2026

Strengthening India's Cultural Identity

India's rich cultural legacy reflects its civilizational heritage and national identity. It has strengthened heritage conservation through digitisation, tourism infrastructure, and cultural preservation. The Government has undertaken major initiatives to preserve, promote, and revitalise India's cultural assets. These efforts have strengthened tourism, connectivity, visitor facilities, and local economic development while safeguarding the nation's cultural identity.

Enhancing Heritage Preservation

Adopt a Heritage 2.0

- The **Adopt A Heritage 2.0 scheme was launched in** September 2023 to develop and maintain visitor-friendly amenities at **Protected Monuments of National Importance**.
- As of March 2026, a total of 30 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) have been signed under the **Adopt a Heritage 2.0** programme.
- Recorded strong visitor participation at adopted monuments, with a **total footfall of 13.59 million visitors during FY 2024–25**.

Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD)

- **The PRASHAD** scheme focuses on developing pilgrimage and heritage destinations by improving infrastructure, sanitation, safety, and visitor amenities.
- **Total 54** projects have been sanctioned across **28 States and Union Territories** (as of February 2026).
- **Projects Completed**: **32 (as of December 2025)**
- **Total Project Cost**: **Rs. 1,726.74 crore**.

Swadesh Darshan

- **Swadesh Darshan**, seeks to develop an integrated tourism infrastructure across thematic tourist circuits.
- **Tourism Circuits Covered**: The 15 thematic tourist circuits covered under the Swadesh Darshan scheme are the Buddhist, Coastal, Desert, Eco, Heritage, Himalayan, Krishna, North-East, Ramayana, Rural, Spiritual, Tirthankar, Tribal, Wildlife, and Sufi circuits.
- **Total 76** Projects has been Sanctioned (as of March 2026), with a total Investment Rs. 5,290.33 crore.
- **Projects Completed**: **75** (as of March 2026).

Under **Swadesh Darshan 2.0**, the focus has moved beyond circuit-based development to adopt a destination-centric approach.

- Under this scheme, **53 projects** have been sanctioned with a total investment of **Rs. 2,208.31 crore**, which are at various stages of implementation by States and Union Territories.

Challenge Based Destination Development (CBDD)

- **Challenge Based Destination Development (CBDD)**, introduced in March 2024 under **Swadesh Darshan 2.0**.
- The scheme focuses on developing sustainable tourism destinations through a competitive, challenge-based framework.
- **Focus Areas**: Holistic planning, innovation, community participation, and destination development.
- Total no. of Projects Sanctioned are **38**, with a total Investment of **₹697.94 crore**.

Archaeology and Monument Preservation

Archaeological Survey of India

- **The Archaeological Survey of India is a** premier organization for archaeological research and conservation of India's cultural heritage.
- ASI carries out its functions through a network of around **38** Circles, across the country.
- Safeguards **3,686** centrally protected monuments, supported by strengthened conservation systems and scientific restoration methods (as of April 2026).
- **Rs. 374 crore** was allocated for the conservation and maintenance of protected monuments **(FY 2024–25)**.
- Over the last five years, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has issued 121 **permissions for archaeological projects** across the country.



National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities (NMMA)

- **National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities (NMMA)** is implemented by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).
- NMMA focuses on creating a comprehensive national database of monuments and antiquities to support conservation planning and management.
- As of March 2026, the mission has documented **1.84 lakh Monuments** and **17.20 lakh Antiquities** across India.

HRIDAY Scheme

Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana (HRIDAY)

- **HRIDAY focuses** on integrating urban development with heritage conservation while preserving the unique character of heritage cities.
- The scheme also focuses on rejuvenation of water bodies and green spaces, smart technology and safety enhancements, and the boosting of local livelihoods through tourism.
- **Coverage: 12 heritage cities** across India.
- **Key Outcomes**:
  - » Improved cleanliness, tourism and community development in **Ajmer, Amaravati and Badami**.
  - » Promoted heritage revitalisation, inclusivity and economic growth in **Amritsar, Gaya and Varanasi**.
  - » Enhanced tourism infrastructure and public amenities in **Warangal and Puri**.
  - » Strengthened safety and urban infrastructure in **Kancheepuram and Mathura**.
  - » Advanced environmental sustainability and heritage conservation in **Velankanni**.
  - » Developed comprehensive heritage zones, processional streets, CCTV networks, and the Bet Dwarka Darshan Circuit in **Dwarka**.
- **Overall Impact**: Improved quality of life for residents and strengthened tourism potential.
- **Mission Period**: Concluded on **31 March 2019**.



Reclaiming India's Cultural Treasures Entrepreneurs

The Government has intensified efforts to repatriate sacred relics and antiquities taken abroad through colonial exploitation, foreign occupations, and illegal trafficking.

Repatriation of Sacred Relics

Major repatriation achievements include:

- **Piprahwa Relics of Lord Buddha** returned in 2025 after **127 years**
- **Goddess Annapurna idol** repatriated from Canada in 2021 after **108 years**
- **Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana bronze idols** returned from the UK in 2020
- Sacred and cultural objects have also been returned from **Australia, the USA, the UK, Germany, Singapore, and Canada**.

Global Exposition of Sacred Relics:

India expanded the international exposition of sacred Buddha relics to strengthen cultural and civilizational ties.

- **Vietnam (2025)**: Attracted over 15 million devotees
- **Kalmykia, Russia (2025)**: Welcomed over 90,000 visitors
- **Bhutan (2025)**: Featured an exposition during the **Global Peace Prayer Festival**
- **Sri Lanka (2026)**: Featured an exposition at the **Gangaramaya Temple, Colombo.**

Domestic exhibitions were also organised in **New Delhi** and **Ladakh** in 2026, showcasing the reunited Piprahwa relics.

Repatriation of Antiquities

- Number of antiquities retrieved during the last five years: **615** (up to 30 June 2026).
- Verified Objects Handed Over: **11** to concerned organisations and institutions.
- 09 objects have been given on loan to **Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)** for display at the New Parliament Building, 01 object to the National Museum, and **14 objects** to the Indian Institute of Heritage.

Museums and Cultural Infrastructure

Museum Grant Scheme

- **The Museum Grant Scheme provides** financial assistance for establishing new museums and strengthening existing museums at the regional, state, and district levels.
- **Support Areas**: Modernization,

digitization of museum collections, and capacity building of museum professionals.

- Under this scheme, various initiatives have been undertaken to develop **virtual museums, theme-based museums, and Virtual Experiential Museums (VEMs)**.
- **Total Sanctioned Amount during the last five financial years: Rs. 184.39 Crores**
- **Total Utilized Fund during the last five financial years: Rs. 101.19 Crores**

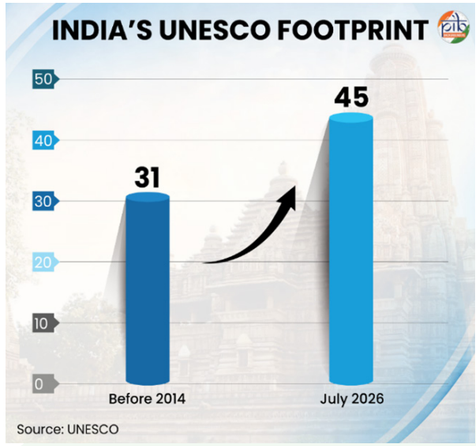


India's First Archaeological Experiential Museum-Vadnagar, Gujarat

- The **'Archaeological Experiential Museum'** is the only museum in the world where history and excavation come together.
- **Spread over an area of 12,500 square meters and built at a total project cost of ₹298 crore.**
- The museum displays over **5,000 artefacts**, including food grains, DNA samples, and skeletal remains.
- It also features a **4,000 sq. m.** open excavation site showcasing archaeological remains at **16–18 metres** depth.
- **An experiential walkway** enables visitors to observe archaeological findings unearthed during excavations.

Global Recognition Through UNESCO

- India has significantly expanded its global heritage recognition over the past decade. India now has **45 UNESCO World Heritage Sites**.
- India hosted the **46th UNESCO World Heritage Committee Session in New Delhi (2024)**.



Preserving Knowledge Through Digitisation

Digitisation of Cultural Heritage (Gyan Bharatam)

Gyan Bharatam Mission

- **Mission was launched in 2025, with a focus on** preserving, digitizing, and promoting access to India's manuscript heritage.
- **Technology Integration:** Modern technologies are adopted for long-term preservation and global accessibility.

National Manuscript Survey

- National Manuscript Survey launched in March 2026 with the aim to identifying, documenting, and creating a comprehensive national database of manuscripts.
- During this survey, more than **1.19 crore** manuscripts have been reported.
- The total number of digitized manuscripts available across the country is **over 8 lakh**, out of which, more than **4.40 lakh manuscripts** are available on Gyan Bharatam portal at present for public access.
- Mission approved with an outlay of **₹482.85 crore** (2024–31) to scale digitization and access.

Digitisation of Museum Collections

- The **Ministry of Culture** is digitising museum collections and archival resources through **JATAN software**, developed in technical collaboration with **C-DAC, Pune, Maharashtra**.
- A **National Digital Repository** has been created through the **Museums**

of India portal to provide digital access to museum collections.

- The portal hosts digitised collections from **8 National Level Museums, 2 ASI Site Museums, and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum, Pune, Maharashtra**.
- **3,75,707 artefacts out of 4,88,983 artefacts** have been digitised and made available online (as on July 15, 2026).

Technology-Enabled Heritage Conservation

Modern technologies such as LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) scanning, GIS (Geographic Information System)-based mapping, and drone surveys are being used to strengthen heritage documentation and conservation. The Government is also leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) to support the digitisation, documentation, and accessibility of cultural assets and heritage data.

Harnessing AI for Cultural and Knowledge Preservation

India is using AI to preserve languages, manuscripts, and cultural heritage while improving access to education and public services.

- **BHASHINI** (launched in 2022) supports **22 languages (voice)** and **36 languages (text)**, with **350+ AI models** and over **4 billion+ language transactions**. It enabled real-time translation at events like **Kashi Tamil Sangamam and Maha Kumbh 2025**.
- **BharatGen** is developing AI models for **22 Scheduled Languages**, while **Adi-Vaani** supports tribal languages such as **Santali, Bhili, Mundari, and Gondi** through digital preservation and translation. **Adi-Vaani** is an AI-based platform for preserving and revitalising **India's tribal languages**. It enables real-time translation between Hindi, English, and tribal languages, speech-to-text transcription, language learning for younger generations, and digitisation of folklore and oral traditions.
- Platforms like **Anuvadini, e-KUMBH, SPPEL, Sanchika,** and **Gyan-Setu** are expanding multilingual education, and preserving endangered languages and traditional knowledge.
- Over **5 crore+ learners** are connected through digital education platforms like **SWAYAM**.

Vedic Heritage Portal

- **Launched in March 2023** under the **Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)**, it aims to preserve, document, and provide digital access to India's Vedic knowledge traditions.
- **Coverage: Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, and Atharvaveda** traditions.

It includes extensive audio-visual material, manuscripts, and ritual documentation, with more than 500 hours of recordings integrated into the platform.

- It records **Vedic Shakhas (recensions)** and oral traditions to preserve living knowledge systems.

UNESCO Recognition:

- **Tradition of Vedic Chanting** recognised as **UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage**.
- **Rigveda manuscripts** included in **UNESCO's Memory of the World Register**.

Conserving India's Cinematic Heritage

National Film Heritage Mission (NFHM)

- **Launched: 2015**, with a focus to preserve, digitize and restore India's cinematic heritage.
- It covers feature films, short films, and documentaries across Indian languages.
- As of December 2025, **1,469 titles**, equaling 4.3 Lakh minutes of films have been digitized.
- Restored films are maintained by the **National Film Archive of India (NFAI)** and are available on demand through its official website.

National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC)

- **National Museum of Indian Cinema** was inaugurated in 2019 with a project cost of Rs.140.61 crore.
- **Showcases 100+ years of Indian cinema** through artefacts, vintage film equipment, photographs, memorabilia, interactive exhibits and multimedia displays.
- **Visitor Footfall: 17,000+ visitors** in **May 2026**, reinforcing its position as a major cultural and tourism destination.

Carrying India's Cultural Legacy Forward

India's cultural heritage is a living link between its past, present, and future. Through sustained conservation, digitisation, restoration, and promotion, the Government has strengthened efforts to safeguard this legacy while widening public access. These efforts will help create a future where heritage remains a dynamic source of knowledge, identity, and inspiration for generations to come.

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India’s Energy Journey: Expanding Capacity, Strengthening Security

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India's Energy Landscape

India's energy landscape is evolving to meet rising demand while strengthening energy security and supporting a cleaner future. The transformation spans renewable energy, nuclear power, petroleum, natural gas, coal and emerging technologies.

Policy support, infrastructure development, domestic production, manufacturing expansion and wider energy access are shaping this transformation. India is simultaneously expanding non-fossil energy capacity, strengthening domestic energy resources and developing new technologies for the future.

Numbers At a Glance:

- **Total installed power capacity:** Around **552 GW** in July 2026, up from 249 GW in 2014.
- **Non-fossil capacity: 300.50 GW** as of 31 July 2026, accounting for over 54% of total installed capacity.
- **India ranks third** globally in **renewable energy** installed capacity.

Powering Energy Security with Coal

Coal continues to play a major role in India's energy security and electricity supply. It meets nearly **55 per cent of the country's primary energy needs** and supports **over 70 per cent of its electricity generation.** India has about **4,00,715 million tonnes (MT) of coal reserves** and is the **world's second-largest coal producer and consumer.**

- India produced **1,047.52 MT** of coal in **FY2024-25** and **1,040.08 MT in FY2025-26,** compared with **609.18 MT in FY2014-15.**
- **Captive and commercial mining:** Production from captive and commercial mines reached **210.46 MT** in FY2025-26, registering **10.22%** growth over the previous year.
- **Reducing import dependence:** Coal imports by thermal power plants fell to 45.4 MT in FY2025-26, from 62.5 MT in FY2024-25, a **decline of about 27.4%.**

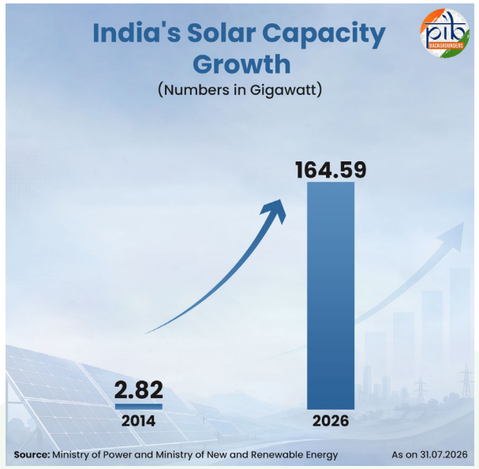
Promotion of Surface Coal/Lignite Gasification Projects (2026)

The Government approved a ₹37,500 crore scheme in May 2026 to promote surface coal/lignite gasification.

- Expected to utilise approximately **75 MTPA of coal,** contributing to the national target of **100 MT of coal/ lignite gasification by 2030.**
- Expected to mobilise **₹2.5–3 lakh crore** in investment.
- Projected to generate around **50,000 direct and indirect jobs** across 25 projects.

Solar Power: Scaling Up, Reaching More People

India's **installed solar capacity** has reached **164.59 GW** (as of 31 July 2026), rising from 2.8 GW in 2014. Solar is now the largest component of India's renewable energy capacity. **India became the world's second-largest solar growth market in 2025,** adding more than **37 GW** of solar capacity, compared with **34 GW** added by the United States.



PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana

Launched with a total outlay of ₹75,021 crore for 1 crore households in February 2024.

- **51.58 lakh households** are now benefiting from rooftop solar installations across the country (As of 12.08.2026).
- Approximately **₹28,024 crore in subsidy** has been transferred to the beneficiaries.
- Nearly **19 lakh households** are now receiving zero electricity bills.
- Cumulatively, **14.8 GW of rooftop solar capacity has been commissioned** under the scheme so far.

Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana

The government approved the **Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY)** on **31 July 2026** with an outlay of **₹5,070 crore.** It adds a new dimension to India's solar expansion with the development of **Floating Solar Photovoltaic Projects with Energy Storage Systems.**

- **Target:** 5,000 MW of Floating Solar PV projects.
- Co-located storage with a minimum two-hour duration, equivalent to **10,000 MWh.**
- Projects to be sanctioned from **FY 2026–27 to FY 2030–31.**

Wind Energy

Wind energy continues to be an important pillar of India's renewable energy expansion. India ranks **fourth globally in installed wind power capacity.** The sector is also seeing stronger annual additions and growing domestic manufacturing

- **Installed capacity: 58.14 GW as of 31 July 2026.**
- India added **6.05 GW in FY 2025–26,** its highest-ever annual wind capacity addition and **46% higher** than FY 2024–25.
- Around **28 GW** of additional wind capacity is under implementation.
- Wind turbine manufacturing capacity reached about **24 GW** (March 2026), up from 10 GW in 2014. The sector has achieved **70–80% indigenisation** across key components.
- The Union Cabinet approved a **₹7,453 crore VGF scheme** on 19 June 2024 for **1 GW of offshore wind projects.**

Bio-Energy



Bio-power capacity stands at 11.75 GW as of 31 July 2026. The CBG ecosystem has also expanded, with 1,929 CBG/Bio-CNG plants registered as of 13 August 2026. Of these, 217 have been commissioned and 357 are under construction.

- **Biomass cogeneration: 9821.32 MW** of bagasse-based and **1048.84 MW** of non-bagasse capacity as of **31 July 2026.**
- **Waste-to-Energy:** As of 31 July 2026, grid-connected waste-to-energy capacity stood at 324.24 MW. Off-grid plants contributed another 554.16 MW.
- **National Bioenergy Programme:** The programme supports **Waste-to-Energy, Biomass and Biogas projects** through financial assistance. Phase-I covered **FY 2021–22 to FY 2025–26,** with an outlay of **₹858 crore.**

GOBARdhan: Turning Waste into Energy Growth

- **Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan (GOBARdhan)–National Circular Bioenergy Scheme:** Approved by the government on **6 August 2026,** with an outlay of **₹23,731 crore** for **FY 2026–27 to FY 2035–36.**
- The scheme aims to **nearly ten-fold domestic CBG production** and create a national circular bioeconomy.

Hydro



Hydropower remains an important source of renewable electricity, providing reliable and flexible power generation. It also supports grid stability as solar and wind capacity expand. Cumulative capacity of **hydro power** is **57.24 GW (as of 31 July 2026),** including large and small hydro.

Small Hydro Power Development Scheme

- The government has approved the **Small Hydro Power (SHP) Development Scheme** in March 2026 for **FY 2026–27 to FY 2030–31,** with an outlay of **₹2,584.60 crore.**
- The scheme aims to add approximately **1,500 MW** of small hydro capacity through projects of **1–25 MW.** It particularly supports projects in **hilly and North-Eastern regions.**

Green Hydrogen



Green hydrogen has emerged as a clean fuel option for hard-to-abate sectors. It can also support energy security and industrial growth.

National Green Hydrogen Mission:

The government launched **the National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM)** in 2023 as an umbrella programme to establish a Green Hydrogen ecosystem and catalyse a systemic response to the opportunities and challenges in this sector.

- Approved in January 2023 with an outlay of **₹19,744 crore,** targeting **5 MMT (Million Metric Tonne)** of green hydrogen production by 2030.
- **Production capacity:** Around **8,000 tonnes per annum** of green hydrogen production capacity had been commissioned by **February 2026.**
- **Transport:** In July 2026, the Government launched **12 pilot projects** under the Mission for **70 hydrogen-powered vehicles across 21 routes.**
- India's first indigenous **hydrogen fuel cell-powered train** began operations on the Jind–Sonipat section in July 2026.

Nuclear Energy



India's nuclear energy sector has witnessed significant expansion and modernisation over the past decade. With a focus on clean energy, indigenous technology, and performance excellence, the country has scaled up both its operational capacity and future potential.

- **Installed capacity: 8.78 GW** of nuclear power capacity as of **31 July 2026.**
- **Nuclear Energy Mission:** India aims to increase nuclear power capacity to **100 GW by 2047.**
- **Planned Expansion:** With the indigenous 700 MW and 1000 MW reactors being developed through international cooperation, the capacity is projected to rise to 22.38 GW by 2031–32.
- **Small Modular Reactors:** The Nuclear Energy Mission provides **₹20,000 crore** for the design, development and deployment of Small Modular

Reactors, with a target of at least **five indigenous SMRs by 2033.**

- **Fast Breeder Reactor:** The **500 MWe Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor at Kalpakkam achieved first criticality on 6 April 2026,** marking an important milestone in India's three-stage nuclear power programme.

SHANTI Act, 2025

The **Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Act, 2025** enables private-sector participation for setting up a nuclear facility, or to carry out activities for the production, use and disposal of nuclear energy under a license.

- **Civil liability:** The maximum liability for each nuclear incident is the rupee equivalent of 300 million Special Drawing Rights (SDR) or an amount specified by the Central Government.
- The Act gives the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) statutory status, strengthening its regulatory and safety functions.

Geo Thermal



Geothermal energy offers a reliable renewable source that can complement variable sources such as solar and wind. Geothermal energy uses heat stored within the Earth to generate electricity or provide direct heat.

National Policy on Geothermal Energy (notified on 15 September 2025)

- The policy provides a framework for the exploration, development and utilisation of geothermal resources.
- The Geological Survey of India has estimated **India's geothermal potential at around 10,600 MW,** based on exploration across **381 hot springs,** with **42 geothermal manifestations** identified as promising areas.
- The policy promotes technology partnerships, knowledge transfer and joint R&D. India has cooperation mechanisms with Australia, Iceland, Saudi Arabia and the United States for geothermal energy.
- **Five projects sanctioned during July–August 2025,** including a **pilot production plant, resource assessment projects and a solar–geothermal hybrid plant.** These aim to establish the **techno-economic viability** of geothermal applications.

India's Evolving Fuel Landscape

Clean cooking has moved from being an access challenge to a widely available household energy option. The expansion of LPG connections and rising consumption reflect its growing reach across Indian households.

- National LPG coverage increased from **55.9% in 2014 to 107.2%** in 2026.
- LPG consumers increased from **14.51 crore** to 33.18 crore from 2014 to 2026.
- Under Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, refill delivery reached around 49.21 crore cylinders in FY2025–26.
- 25 lakh additional LPG connections approved under PMUY in FY2025–26, of which 24.84 lakh connections have been released as on 5 August 2026.
- India is the world's fourth largest crude refiner, with an installed capacity of 258.1 million tonnes per annum across **22 operational refineries.**

'Samudra Manthan' – National Offshore Exploration Scheme

Approved on 31 July 2026 with an outlay of ₹84,084 crore to boost offshore oil and gas exploration and strengthen energy security, covering seismic surveys, deepwater exploratory drilling, and offshore production/evacuation infrastructure.

Looking Ahead: Building India's Energy Future

India is building an energy system that combines **security, sustainability and innovation.** Expanding non-fossil capacity is being supported by stronger domestic resources, infrastructure, manufacturing and emerging technologies.

As energy demand grows, India's diversified energy mix will support **reliable power, greater energy security and a cleaner future.** Continued policy support and technological progress will help build an energy system that is **resilient, self-reliant and future-ready.**

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Manufacturing Momentum: Building a Self-Reliant India

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Introduction

As India celebrates its 80th Independence Day, the nation's manufacturing sector stands as a pillar of self-reliance and progress. Over the past 12 years, bold reforms under the Make in India vision have reshaped industries, positioning the country as a global hub. Defence equipment, textiles, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, and heavy machinery are now produced at world-class standards, serving both domestic and international markets. To further accelerate this momentum, the Government has introduced several initiatives like the **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, PM GatiShakti, the National Logistics Policy, BHAVYA, and programmes for the electronics and MSME sectors.**

Strengthening India's Manufacturing Ecosystem

The manufacturing sector now contributes about **16–17 percent of GDP** and employs **over 27 million workers**. The compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of Manufacturing GVA at constant prices (2022-23 base) as per the revised series during 2022-23 to 2025-26 is **10.88%**. Merchandise exports in July 2026 reached **USD 44.24 billion**, compared to USD 36.98 billion a year earlier, while manufacturing output grew **7.8 percent** in June 2026. These indicators show manufacturing as a central driver of India's economic growth.



India's Defence Transformation: From Self-Reliance to Global Exports

India's defence industry has undergone a remarkable transformation in the past decade. Focused policies, targeted investments, and a strong push for self-reliance have turned the country into a significant producer and exporter of defence equipment.

Key Facts:

- The value of indigenous defence production reached a record ₹1.78 lakh crore in FY 2025–26. This marked 15.6% growth from ₹1,54,071 crore in the previous fiscal and ₹46,429 crore in 2014–15.
- Defence exports surged from ₹686 crore in 2013–14 to ₹38,424 crore in 2025–26.
- Indian defence products are now exported to 80+ countries, showing over 5,500% growth in the last twelve years.
- Defence PSUs and other PSUs contributed around 76% of total production in FY 2025–26.
- The private sector's share rose to 24%, reflecting greater industry participation.
- Till May 2026, 10 Positive Indigenisation lists, five each of DMA & DDP, covering 5,521 items, were notified, resulting in increased Aatmanirbharta in defence production.
- Srijan Defence Equipment Empowerment Platform (DEEP) is a digital repository promoting indigenous defence sourcing. As of May 2026, it listed over 41,000 vendors and 2.7 lakh products, strengthening domestic supply chains.

India's Electronics Boost

India has rapidly evolved into a major centre for electronics production, achieving exceptional growth in both output and exports. Successive policies like the National Policy on Electronics, SPECS, EMC 2.0, and PLI have reshaped electronics manufacturing. Schemes such as Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS) further strengthened India's Electronics System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) ecosystem, driving growth and competitiveness. Electronics production rose from **₹11.32 lakh crore in FY 2024–25 to ₹13.11 lakh crore in FY 2025–26, a 15.8% year-on-year increase**

Indicator	2014–15	2025–26	Growth
Production of electronics goods	~Rs 1.9 lakh crore	~Rs 13.11 lakh crore	7 times
Exports of electronics goods	~Rs 38,000 crore	~Rs 4.24 lakh crore	11 times
Mobile phone production	~Rs 18,000 crore	~Rs 6.27 lakh crore	33 times
Mobile phone exports	~Rs 1,500 crore	~Rs 2.59 lakh crore	165 times

Semicon Manufacturing

India's emergence as a semiconductor destination has been built on sustained reforms across the electronics sector. The Semicon India Programme (Semicon 1.0) was approved in December 2021 with an outlay of ₹76,000 crore. It was launched to build a domestic semiconductor and display manufacturing ecosystem. Building on it, Semicon 2.0 has been approved in July, 2026 with a total budget outlay of ₹1,27,500 crore.

Progress Under Semicon India Programme 1.0

As of July 2026, twelve manufacturing units have been approved with investments **exceeding ₹1.64 lakh crore.** These include one silicon fab, one silicon carbide fab, an integrated Gallium Nitride Micro LED display fab, and nine packaging units. Together, they are expected to meet chip requirements across consumer appliances, industrial electronics, automobiles, power electronics, telecommunications, and aerospace.

Out of the twelve approved proposals, three companies, Micron, Kaynes, and CG Semi have already started commercial production. One more company is expected to begin operations in 2026, further strengthening India's semiconductor manufacturing base.

India's Mobile Manufacturing Rise

India's mobile manufacturing sector has grown rapidly, strengthening domestic production, exports and value addition.

- **99.2%** of mobile phones used in India are now made domestically.
- India is the **world's second-largest mobile phone manufacturer** by volume.
- India has shifted from a net importer to a **net exporter** of mobile phones since 2014.
- PLI scheme for **Large Scale Electronic Manufacturing (LSEM)** has attracted around ₹96,000 crore in investments across the mobile manufacturing ecosystem.
- Domestic value addition reached **23%** in FY 2023–24, alongside strong growth in production and exports.
- Smartphones became India's top individual exported commodity in FY 2025–26, surpassing petroleum, gems and jewellery.

Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme:

This scheme was approved on July 15, 2026, with a **₹62,500 crore** budget. It focusses on boosting production, domestic value addition, supply chain resilience and global competitiveness. The five-year scheme will run from **FY 2026–27 to FY 2030–31.** Incentives range from **2.25% to 5%,** with additional support for local sourcing, Indian brands, design and R&D.

India's Pharma Edge: Scaling Manufacturing and Exports

India ranks 3rd in volume and 11th in value in the global pharmaceutical industry. It plays a crucial role in ensuring affordable healthcare worldwide by supplying 20% of the world's generic medicines and a large share of vaccines. Steady growth in production, exports, and domestic innovation has reinforced its position as a trusted global supplier.

Key Facts:

- In **2024-25,** the sector's annual turnover reached **Rs. 4.72 lakh crore.**
- **Three PLI schemes under** the sector have a total budgetary outlay of **₹25,360 crore** and have attracted over **₹51,997 crore in investments.**

- The schemes have achieved **₹3.88 lakh crore in cumulative sales**, including exports exceeding **₹2.43 lakh crore.**

- Manufacturing capacity has been created for **218 APIs/KSMs/drug intermediates** and **57 medical devices,** including CT, MRI, ultrasound and critical implants.

- Medical device exports increased from **₹26,915 crore in 2019–20** to **₹42,360 crore in 2024–25**. Domestic manufacturing rose from **₹28,000 crore to ₹41,500 crore during** the same period.

- **Scheme for promotion of Bulk Drug Parks:** The scheme was approved in 2020 to establish three Bulk Drug Parks with world-class common infrastructure to reduce the cost of manufacturing of bulk drugs. Three parks were approved in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh in FY 2022–23.

- **Biopharma SHAKTI (Strategy for Healthcare Advancement through Knowledge, Technology and Innovation) Scheme:** The scheme was announced in Union Budget 2026-27, with an outlay of ₹10,000 crores over the next 5 years.

Textiles& Apparel on the Rise: Building Global Competitiveness

India's textile and apparel industry is one of its most important manufacturing sectors. It is the **second-largest employer** after agriculture, providing livelihoods to **over 45 million people** and supporting MSME-led industrial development.

- India has several natural and structural advantages in the sector, such as a strong raw material base, manufacturing capabilities for the complete value chain, and a sizeable domestic market. Additionally, the country is among the world's largest **cotton producers** and the largest exporter of cotton yarn.

- Textiles and apparel contribute **~2% to national GDP, 11% to manufacturing GVA, and 9% of merchandise exports.**

- In FY2025, India exported textile products worth **USD 37.7 billion**. It accounted for **4.1% of global textile and apparel exports**, making it the sixth-largest textile exporter globally.

- Government initiatives such as the **PLI Scheme for Textiles, PM MITRA Parks, the National Technical Textiles Mission, Textiles Export Promotion Mission, National Fibre Mission** and the recently announced **Mission for Cotton Productivity** are likely to strengthen manufacturing capabilities further and improve sector competitiveness.

India's Maritime Push: Making Ships and Containers

Several initiatives in the maritime sector have been introduced to strengthen domestic manufacturing and enhance India's competitiveness globally.

In September, 2025, a comprehensive package of ₹69,725 crore was announced to strengthen domestic shipbuilding capacity, maritime financing and skilling. It has the following three components:

Shipbuilding Development Scheme (SbDS)

- This scheme has an outlay of **₹19,989 crore** and aims to increase India's **annual shipbuilding capacity to 4.5 million Gross Tonnage (GT).**

- Greenfield shipbuilding clusters will receive 100% capital support for common maritime and internal infrastructure through a 50:50 Centre–State Special Purpose Vehicle.

- Existing shipyards will receive 25% capital assistance for brownfield expansion and upgradation of critical infrastructure, including dry docks, ship lifts, fabrication facilities and automation systems.

- Greenfield shipbuilding clusters are proposed in **Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.** Three brownfield expansion projects have also received in-principle approval.

Maritime Development Fund

- The Maritime Development Fund has a corpus of **₹25,000 crore** to support long-term financing in the maritime sector. It includes a **₹20,000 crore Maritime Investment Fund** with 49 percent Government equity participation. Also, it has a **₹5,000 crore Interest Incentivization Fund** to reduce borrowing costs for shipyards.

Shipbuilding Financial Assistance Scheme (SBFAS)

- **₹24,736 crore** has been allocated under the SBFAS to address cost disadvantages and strengthen financing, capacity, and infrastructure. Its guidelines were issued on **26 December 2025.**

Container Manufacturing Assistance Scheme (CMAS)

CMAS was announced in **the Union Budget 2026-27** to expand domestic container manufacturing capacity and strengthen India's position in global container supply chains.

- **₹10,000 crore** has been allocated

under CMAS over five years.

- CMAS targets annual domestic capacity of up to **7.5 lakh TEUs.** This is around **10 times the existing capacity.**

- **In July 2026,** India rolled out its **first domestically manufactured EXIM shipping container** for A.P. Moller–Maersk. The container was unveiled at the **Maersk–CONCOR Inland Container Depot in Dadri, Uttar Pradesh**.

Automobiles: Manufacturing Strength

India has a strong automobile industry, supported by extensive manufacturing capabilities and a large auto-component ecosystem. It is the **world's largest market for two-wheelers and three-wheelers**, and the **third-largest** for passenger and commercial vehicles globally. The sector is also advancing electric mobility, supported by rising EV adoption and government initiatives.

- The sector provides direct and indirect employment to over 30 million people across India.

- Vehicle production increased from 22.65 million units in FY21 to **31.03 million units in FY25**. Overall production grew by nearly **33%** between FY15 and FY25.

- **PLI Scheme for Automobile & Auto Components Industry:** The scheme was approved in September 2021 with an outlay of **₹25,938 crore**. It promotes high-value Advanced Automotive Technology vehicles and products. It attracted **₹44,326 crore** in investment by March 2026. It also generated **67,820 jobs** during the same period.

- **PM E-DRIVE Scheme:** Launched in September 2024, the scheme has an outlay of **₹10,900 crore** to support electric mobility. It provides incentives for around 28.30 lakh EVs, including e-2W, e-3W, e-trucks, e-buses, and e-ambulances. ₹4,391 crore has been allocated for 14,028 e-buses, out of which 14,000 e-buses have already been deployed. ₹2,000 crore has also been allocated for EV public charging stations across India.

India's Solar PV Manufacturing: Rapid Growth and Expansion

India's solar PV manufacturing sector has expanded rapidly, strengthening domestic production of solar cells and modules. The domestic PV market is valued at around ₹32,400 crore and is expected to grow strongly through 2030.

- The domestic PV market is expected to grow at a **17–20% CAGR** between FY23 and FY30.

- Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM) listed solar module capacity reached **100 GW** in August 2025. This increased sharply from nearly 2.3 GW in 2014.

- Solar cell manufacturing capacity reached **25 GW** in March 2025. This Capacity increased from less than 1.2 GW in 2014.

- The government introduced the PLI scheme for high-efficiency solar PV module manufacturing.

- The scheme has two tranches with total funding of **₹24,000 crore** and awarded **48 GW** integrated PV capacity.

- PV exports in FY25 were **eight times higher** than in FY18. Higher cell-to-module capacity under the PLI scheme supported this growth.

The Road Ahead

India's manufacturing sector today reflects steady progress, deepening capability and growing confidence across industry. Sustained policy support and rising private participation continue to strengthen this foundation year after year. As new capacities mature, the sector is well placed to expand its global role. The coming years promise wider opportunity, greater value creation and a stronger self-reliant economy.

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Empowering Governance through Digital Infrastructure

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Building a Connected and Citizen-Centric India

India's governance has undergone a fundamental transformation through Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI). Public services that once depended on extensive paperwork and physical offices are now available through integrated digital platforms. Over the past 12 years, DPI has connected citizens, governments and institutions on an unprecedented scale. It has made governance faster, transparent and more responsive to citizens' needs.

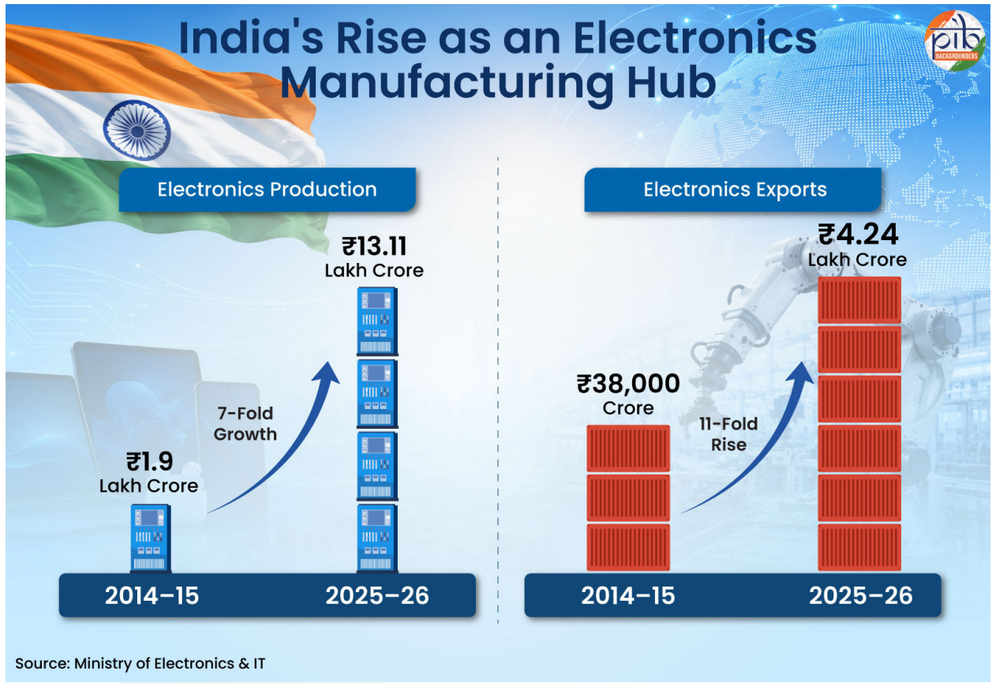
Digital infrastructure has also emerged as a cornerstone of India's economic growth. Digital Economy now contributes about 12–14% of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and is projected to account for 20% over the next decade. India is now the world's fifth-largest digitalised economy and the fourth-highest ranked G20 economy, according to the State of India's Digital Economy Report 2026. As India marks its 80th Independence Day, the continued expansion of digital governance is strengthening service delivery, enabling economic opportunities and advancing the vision of Viksit Bharat.

Key Milestones in India's Digital Self-Reliance Landscape

Electronics Manufacturing: Driving India's Self-Reliance

Guided by the vision of Make in India, India has emerged as a global hub for electronics manufacturing. Flagship initiatives, including the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme, Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS), India Semiconductor Mission (ISM), Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC 2.0), have strengthened domestic manufacturing in India.

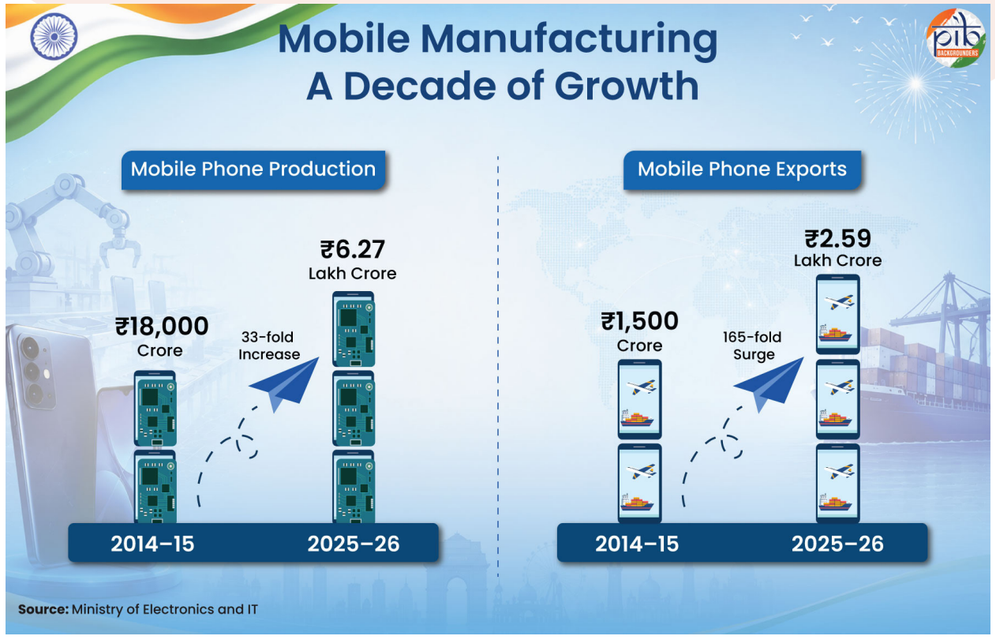
- **7-Fold Growth in Electronics Production:** Electronics production increased from ₹1.9 lakh crore in 2014–15 to ₹13.11 lakh crore in 2025–26.
- **11-Fold Rise in Electronics Exports:** Electronics exports grew from ₹38,000 crore to ₹4.24 lakh crore during the same period.
- **Third-largest Export Sector:** Electronic goods have now become India's third-largest export category, with exports reaching USD 47.96 billion in FY 2025-26.
- **Employment and Women Participation:** Electronic manufacturing ecosystem supports nearly 25 lakh jobs, with women accounting for nearly 30% of the workforce.



Source: Ministry of Electronics & IT

Building India's Semiconductor Ecosystem

The Union Cabinet approved Semicon 2.0 with an outlay of ₹1.27 lakh crore to strengthen India's semiconductor ecosystem. Under ISM 1.0, 12 semiconductor units worth ₹1.64 lakh crore have been approved. Three facilities have already started commercial production, with another unit expected to commence operations this year.

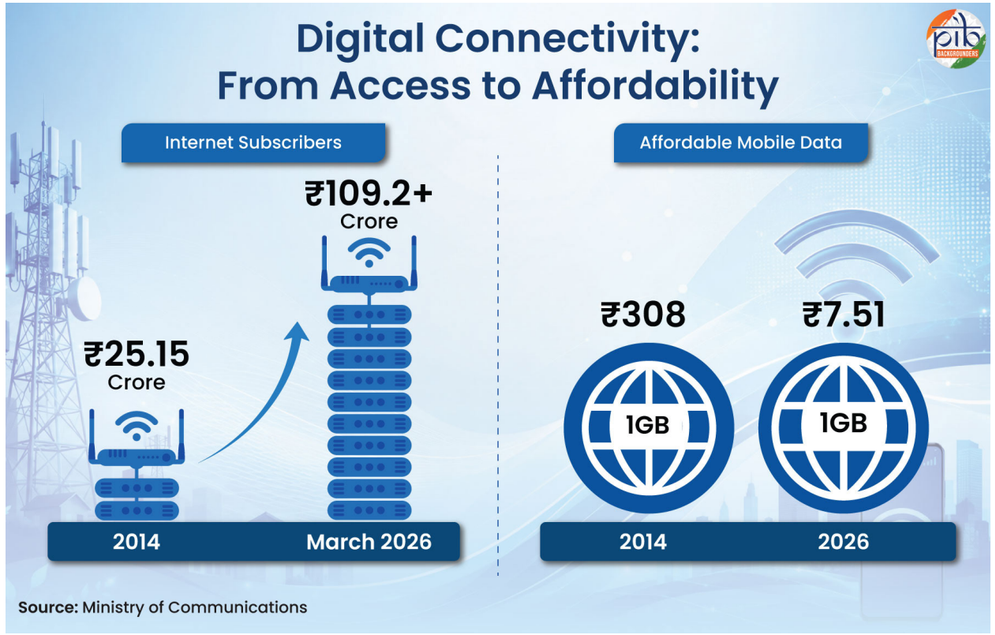


Mobile Phones: A Major Driver of Growth

- **Global Mobile Manufacturing Hub:** India is now the world's 2nd largest mobile phone manufacturer, with mobile phones rising from the 153rd largest export item in FY 2014-15 to become India's largest export product in FY 2025-26.
- **33-fold increase in mobile phone production:** Production rose from ₹18,000 crore in 2014–15 to ₹6.27 lakh crore in 2025–26.
- **165-fold surge in mobile phone exports:** Exports increased from ₹1,500 crore to ₹2.59 lakh crore over the same period.
- **Employment and Women Participation:** Out of 12 lakh jobs in mobile manufacturing segment, women constitute nearly 70% of the workforce.

Enhanced Telecommunications Infrastructure

- **Telephone Connectivity:** Telephone connections increased from 93.3 crore in 2014 to 134.8+ crore at the end of June 2026.
- **Higher Tele-density:** Tele-density grew from 75.23% in 2014 to 94.31% at the end of June 2026.
- **Wireless Mobile Subscribers:** The number of active wireless mobile subscribers reached 1201.06 million in June 2026.



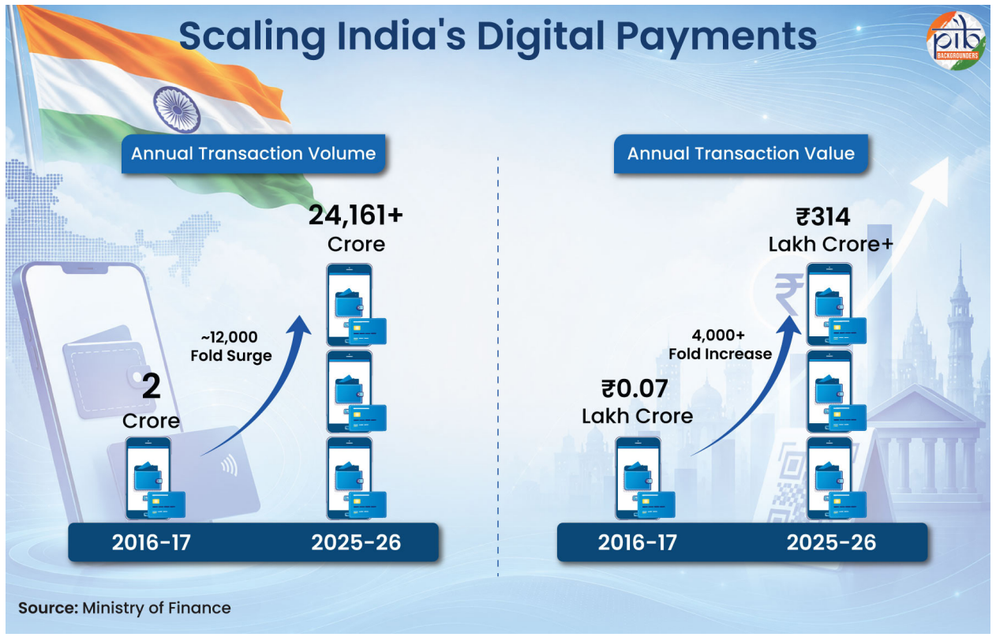
Internet and Digital Connectivity

- **Internet Users Quadrupled:** Internet subscribers increased from 25.15 crore in 2014 to 109.2+ crore at the end of March 2026.
- **Affordable Mobile Data:** Wireless data cost dropped drastically from ₹308/GB in 2014 to ₹7.51/GB in 2026, making digital services more affordable.
- **Mobile broadband speed:** Average mobile broadband download speed has increased from 13.67 Mbps in March 2022 to 132.00 Mbps in December 2025 as per Ookla's global speedtest index.
- **Nationwide 5G Rollout:** 5G services are now available in 99.9% of districts across all States and Union Territories. The number of 5G Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) has now reached 5.63 lakh in June 2026.
- **Expanding Rural Mobile Connectivity:** A total of 6.31 lakh villages have been now covered with 4G services by BSNL and other operators.
- **Connectivity under BharatNet Initiative:** As of June 2026, 2.21 lakh Gram Panchayats are service-ready, supported by over 8.5 lakh route km of optical fibre cable.

- **PM-WANI:** PM-WANI provides affordable public Wi-Fi through a distributed network of public data offices and other ecosystem partners. Over 4 lakh hotspots have been deployed nationwide, as of 28 February 2026. New reforms introduced in May 2026 enable QR-based authentication, 15, 30 and 60-minute Wi-Fi plans, and standardised hotspot names.

India is Preparing for the 6G Era

The Bharat 6G Vision aims to position India among the global leaders in 6G technology by 2030, with a focus on indigenous research, intellectual property, standards development and next-generation telecom innovation.



UPI: Powering Seamless Digital Payments

- **Volume of Transactions:** UPI processed 24,161.69 crore transactions worth ₹314.23 lakh crore in FY 2025–26.
- **India's Largest Digital Payments Network:** UPI serves more than 55.49 crore individuals, 6.5 crore merchants, and connects 731 banks on one platform, making it the world's largest digital payment system.
- **Share of UPI in India's Digital Payments:** UPI accounted for 85% of India's digital payment transactions by volume in FY 2025–26.
- **Monthly Transactions Soar:** UPI transactions increased from 0.01 crore in a month in 2016 to 2,000+ crore transactions in a month by 2025, reflecting its rapid adoption across India.
- **UPI Goes Global:** UPI is now accepted in 11 foreign countries like Cambodia, Singapore, UAE, France, Mauritius etc.

Digital Commerce

- **Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC):** ONDC is building an open digital commerce ecosystem connecting buyers and sellers across platforms.
- By June 2026, it had over 20 crore buyers, 5 lakh sellers, presence in 1,000 cities and nearly 90 lakh monthly transactions.
- Its integration with eSaras and Indiahandmade has expanded market access for SHGs, weavers and artisans across 11+ buyer apps, while the Sahayak WhatsApp Bot supports small businesses in 5 languages.
- **Government e-Marketplace (GeM):** GeM has transformed public procurement by making it transparent, efficient and paperless.
- By June 2026, it recorded over ₹18.4 lakh crore in cumulative Gross Merchandise Value (GMV), including ₹5 lakh crore in FY 2025–26, and enabled over 11 lakh MSMEs to access government markets.
- SWAYATT (Startup Runway for Women and Youth-led Enterprises) initiative, promotes inclusive public procurement through the GeM by enabling startups, women and youth-led enterprises to directly access government buyers.
- By FY 2025–26, women-led businesses recorded ₹83,323 crore and startups ₹54,005.8 crore in cumulative order value, demonstrating the initiative's growing reach.

E-Governance Initiatives Revolutionising G2C Services

- **DigiLocker:** DigiLocker is replacing physical documents with a secure digital wallet. As of 31 July 2026, the platform has registered over 72 crore users and issued more than 934+ Cr documents.
- **UMANG:** UMANG has become a single digital gateway for government services, expanding from 166 services in 2017 to 2585 services as of 23 July 2026. Transactions have grown from 4.6 crore to over 798

crore as of 23 July 2026, reflecting widespread digital adoption.

- **Aadhaar:** Aadhaar created a trusted biometric identity platform for secure and instant digital authentication. Aadhaar generation increased from 0.42 crore in 2010-11 to over 145 crore by July 2026.
- **Common Service Centres:** CSCs provide physical access points for Government-to-Citizen (G2C) e-services, reducing the need to visit government offices. As of June 2026, more than 5.16 lakh CSCs were functional across India.
- **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT):** Aadhaar-linked DBT enables direct transfer of welfare benefits from 318 schemes across 56 Ministries into beneficiaries' bank accounts. More than ₹52 lakh crore has been transferred through DBT across the country.

Digital Platforms Driving Educational Access

- **DIKSHA:** DIKSHA provides curriculum-linked content, QR-coded textbooks, teacher training and accessible learning resources. It has 2.35 crore registered users and 3.58 lakh daily active users, as on 10 August 2026.
- **SWAYAM:** SWAYAM offers free courses from Class IX to postgraduate level. The platform hosts over 20,000 courses across disciplines with 6.5 crore+ total enrollments, as of 10 August 2026.
- **SWAYAM Prabha:** It uses 40 DTH channels to broadcast high-quality educational programmes 24×7 through the GSAT-15 satellite, enabling students to access learning without internet connectivity.
- **PM e-Vidya:** PM e-Vidya integrates DIKSHA, SWAYAM, SWAYAM Prabha, community radio and educational television to support uninterrupted and inclusive learning.
- **Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR):** APAAR provides students with a unique digital academic identity for storing and verifying academic records. More than 33.74 crore APAAR IDs had been generated by June 2026.



A Stronger Framework Against Exam Fraud

The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026, introduced in the Lok Sabha on 31 July 2026, proposes tougher penalties and a time-bound justice mechanism. Under the Bill, individual offenders face 5–10 years' imprisonment and a fine up to ₹50 lakh, service providers face fines up to ₹5 crore and an 8-year ban, while organised exam-fraud syndicates face 7–10 years' imprisonment and a minimum fine of ₹10 crore. Investigations must be completed within 2 months, trials within 3 months of filing the chargesheet, and appeals before the High Court are to be disposed of within 3 months of admission.

Powering India's Digital Workforce

- **FutureSkills PRIME:** It equips learners with cutting-edge skills essential in today's rapidly evolving digital landscape. The platform has 34 lakh+ registered users for digital skills, as of 10 August 2026.
- **Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH):** SIDH brings skilling, digital learning and employment opportunities onto a single platform. As of 2 August 2026, it has 20.10 million registrations, offers 3,643 self-paced courses, and has generated 1 million+ opportunities.
- **National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT):** NIELIT delivers digital literacy and skill development programmes, including Awareness in Computer Concepts (ACC) and Course on Computer Concepts (CCC), through 56 centres and over 9,000 partner institutes across India. More than 31.92 lakh candidates have been trained over the last three financial years.
- **IndiaAI Mission:** The IndiaAI Mission is strengthening AI education, infrastructure and responsible AI adoption. It is promoting AI skilling across schools, higher education institutions and professional training programmes through initiatives such as IndiaAI Kosh.

India's Growing Digital Rise

India's digital rise is transforming the way citizens, businesses and institutions interact with the government and economy. A rapidly expanding digital ecosystem is enabling faster services,

greater transparency and wider access. Digital Public Infrastructure is creating a strong foundation for innovation, entrepreneurship and inclusive growth. The growing adoption of emerging technologies is opening new opportunities across sectors and strengthening India's global digital presence. Digital capabilities are also making governance more responsive, efficient and citizen-centric. This transformation is positioning technology as a key enabler of economic opportunity and social development. Together, these advances are strengthening the foundations of a digitally empowered and Viksit Bharat.

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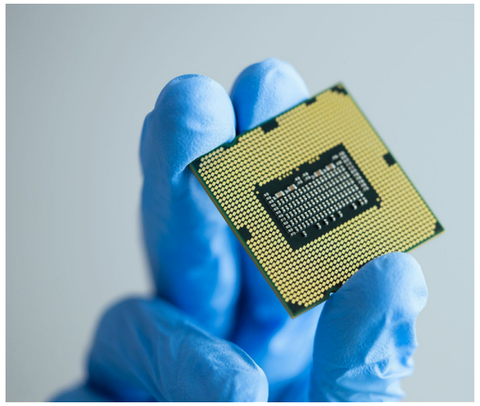
Semiconductor and AI Revolution

Powering the Future

Published on: August 13, 2026

From Chips to AI: Building India's Technology Leadership

Semiconductors are the foundation of modern technology, powering everything from smartphones and vehicles to satellites and AI systems. AI is now accelerating the demand for advanced chips, specialised processors and high-performance computing, making the two technologies increasingly inseparable. Recognising this convergence, India is building capabilities from chip design and fabrication to computing infrastructure and indigenous AI models. Government initiatives across both sectors are creating an integrated technology ecosystem that strengthens self-reliance, supply-chain resilience and innovation. This convergence is also opening new opportunities in advanced manufacturing, research, entrepreneurship and high-value employment. As India marks its **80th Independence Day**, these capabilities mark a decisive step towards global technology leadership and a Viksit Bharat.



Semiconductors: Foundation for Technological Self-Reliance

India is building domestic capabilities across the semiconductor value chain, from chip design and fabrication to advanced packaging, equipment and materials. By strengthening domestic capabilities today, India is positioning itself to shape the technologies of tomorrow.

Dedicated Mission Laid The Foundation For Self-Reliance

- **Semicon 1.0** laid the foundation with a **₹76,000 crore outlay** to build India's semiconductor ecosystem.
- It supports the entire value chain, spanning chip design, fabrication, packaging, testing, equipment, materials and skilled talent etc.
- **Semicon 2.0** is scaling this foundation into global ecosystem leadership, with a **₹1,27,500 crore** outlay approved in July 2026.
- **Six strategic pillars** drive Semicon India 2.0: chip design, semiconductor equipment and materials, fabrication facilities, advanced packaging, research and development, and talent development.

This integrated approach strengthens supply-chain resilience, expands domestic value addition and positions India for future semiconductor leadership.

From Policy to Semiconductor Manufacturing

- **12 semiconductor projects** have been approved across **six states**, with investments commitments exceeding **₹1.64 lakh crore**.
- Projects span silicon and compound semiconductor fabs, display fabrication and advanced packaging facilities.
- **Three facilities** have already commenced commercial production, marking India's transition from semiconductor policy to manufacturing.

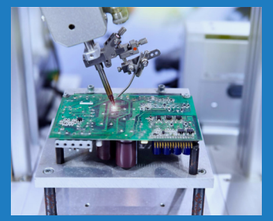
Semiconductor facilities will supply critical components for automobiles, telecommunications, aerospace, power electronics and consumer electronics

- Semiconductor fabs plants that build raw silicon wafers into functioning integrated circuits and microchips.
- Display fabrication are Plants that build flat and flexible screens for phones, cars, and gadgets etc.
- Advanced packaging methods that encase, wire, and shield fragile chips to make them run faster and last longer.

Developing Indigenous Semiconductor Design Capabilities

- To meet future workforce requirements, the Government has prioritised semiconductor skilling through initiatives such as Chips to Startup (C2S), under which,
- Electronic Design Automation (EDA) tools have been deployed in 320 academic institutions and
- **Over 68,000 students trained**, expanding access to advanced chip-design capabilities.

- **24 semiconductor design projects** have also been approved for financial support and 105 startups/MSMEs for EDA tool support under DLI Scheme.



Electronic Design Automation (EDA)

EDA tools are software platforms used to design, simulate, verify and optimize semiconductor chips. They manage complex chip designs, detect errors before manufacturing, and improve performance, power efficiency and reliability. By reducing design time, costs and manufacturing risks, EDA tools enable faster development of advanced chips for various applications.

- **211 chips were taped out by 75 institutions** by April 2026, demonstrating growing domestic design capabilities.
- **7 chips** have been successfully fabricated at various nodes including advanced nodes such as 12 nm.
- **Semicon 2.0 will further intended to support semiconductor 0IP, chip and system designs**, strengthening India's position as a global semiconductor design hub.

Global Partnerships

- Global partnerships with the United States, Japan, Singapore, the Netherlands, Germany and the European Union are strengthening technology collaboration and ecosystem development.
- Semicon India 2025 brought together **350+ exhibitors** and participants from 48 countries and regions, strengthening India's global semiconductor engagement.
- The event recorded 35,000 registrations, 30,000 footfalls and 25,000 online viewers, reflecting strong global interest in India's semiconductor ambitions.
- **12 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs)** were announced to strengthen product development, services and semiconductor skill development.

These partnerships are helping integrate Indian companies into global semiconductor value chains and accelerate domestic capabilities.

IndiaAI Mission: Building India's Sovereign and Inclusive AI Ecosystem

The IndiaAI Mission, approved with an outlay of about ₹10,372 crore, has made significant strides over the past year. The Mission`s ambition is focused on building capabilities that are **secure, inclusive and rooted in Indian needs**. It aims to make AI a **strategic capability for innovation, economic growth and public service delivery**.

Sovereign AI Computing Capacity At Scale

- The IndiaAI Mission has expanded shared compute capacity to **45,000+ Graphics Processing Units (GPUs)**, as of June 2026.
- By August 2026, **237 projects** had accessed subsidised AI computing, covering **93.18 lakh GPU hours**. This provides affordable high-performance computing for AI model development, training, testing and research, lowering entry barriers for Indian researchers, start-ups and innovators.

Graphics Processing Unit (GPU)

A GPU is a specialised electronic processor designed to accelerate **graphics, image processing and other data-intensive computing tasks**. GPUs are widely used in **computers, smartphones, servers and other digital devices**.

Foundational AI Models

- From **506 applications** received, the Government has selected 20 indigenous foundation model proposals, including **12 Large Multimodal Models and 8 Small Language Models**.
- This strengthens India's

capabilities in developing AI models suited to Indian languages, needs and contexts.

Digital Backbone For AI Models

- As of July 2026, AI Kosh hosts **over 14,000 datasets** and **331 AI models**, providing researchers, developers and innovators access to critical resources for building and scaling AI solutions.

From Laboratories To Real-World Governance

- As on Aug 2026, IndiaAI initiatives have **developed 62 AI prototypes and deployed 20 AI solutions** across public-sector institutions.
- 11 national-level hackathons and innovation challenges are further expanding the pipeline from ideas to deployable solutions.

Innovation Via Centres Of Excellences

- As on Aug 2026, **58 Artificial Intelligence Centres of Excellence (AI CoEs)** have been approved across States and Union Territories.
- 22 CoE already approved and initiated across 13 States/UTs.
- These centres are strengthening domain-specific research, innovation and application development.

Building The Talent And Deep-Tech Ecosystem

- The National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS) has **established 25 Technology Innovation Hubs** across leading academic institutions.
- These hubs support research, skills, start-ups and technology transfer across AI, robotics, cybersecurity, quantum technologies and other emerging fields.

Trusted AI Alongside Rapid Adoption

- As of July 2026, the Indian government approved **13 Responsible AI projects** under the Safe & Trusted AI pillar of the IndiaAI Mission. These projects tackle critical challenges like bias mitigation, machine unlearning, deepfake detection, privacy-preserving AI, explainability, and AI risk assessment.

Expansion of Data Centre Capacity to Support AI Infrastructure

- Data centres are located across the country such as Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Delhi NCR and Gujarat.
- The installed capacity has grown from 375 MW in 2020 to current capacity of about 1,575 MW.
- The Data Centre industry is now further expanding in states like Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh & West Bengal which are coming up with new investment destinations.

Global Recognition

- The Stanford Global AI Vibrancy Report 2025 ranked India third globally in AI competitiveness and ecosystem vibrancy.
- In 2025, India was the second-largest contributor to GitHub AI projects, reflecting the strength of its developer and innovation community.
- The India AI Impact Summit 2026 was held in February 2026. Participation from delegations from more than 100 countries and 20 international organisations, with the declaration adopted by 92 countries and organisations.
- India joined the Pax Silica coalition at the India AI Impact Summit 2026, working with the United States and other partners to strengthen resilient global silicon supply chains.
- This complements India's domestic efforts to build a self-reliant, inclusive and globally competitive AI ecosystem.

Sustaining Momentum in Chips and AI

India's semiconductor programme is progressing from approvals and design support to commercial production. The next phase, Semicon 2.0, broadens the focus to equipment, materials, advanced packaging, research, indigenous intellectual property and talent. The IndiaAI Mission is building shared compute and supporting applications across government, industry, academia and start-ups. This integrated approach is strengthening technology capabilities, enabling responsible AI governance and supporting sustained innovation.

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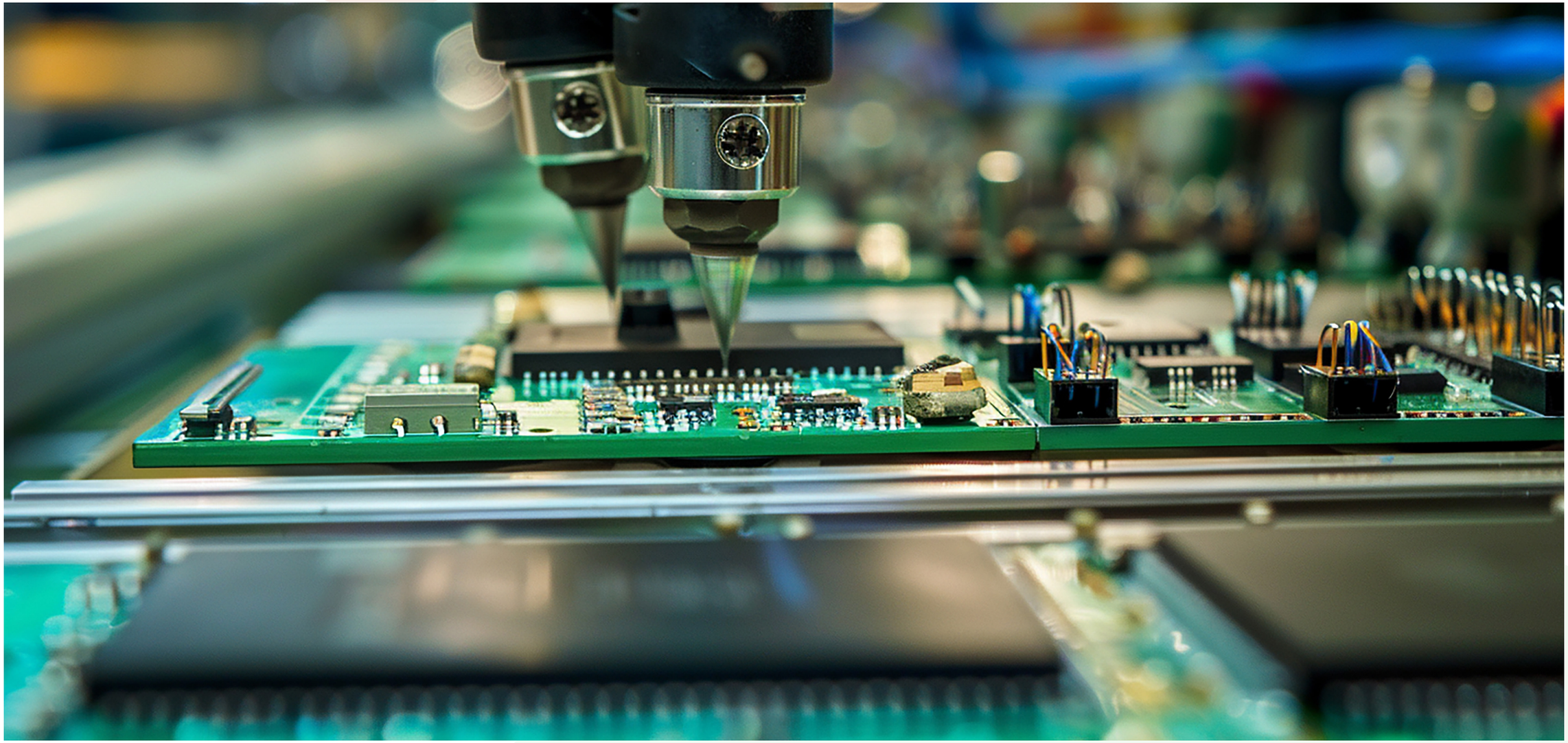



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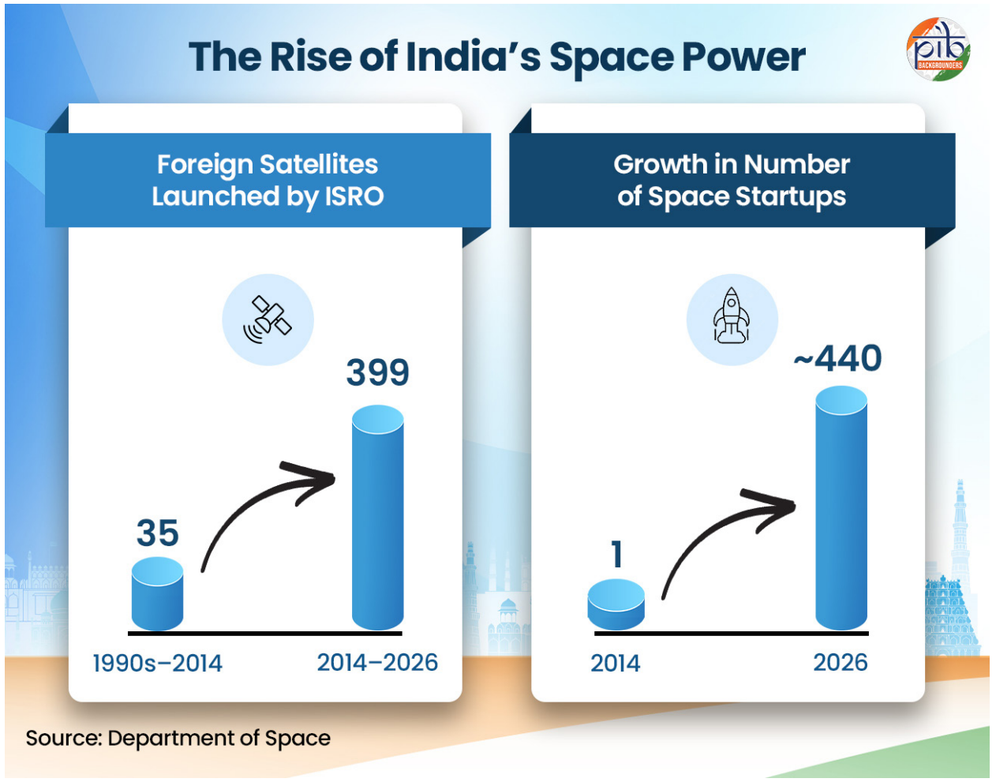
Strengthening India’s Space Sovereignty

Driving Innovation and Development

Published on: August 14, 2026

India's Leap Towards Space Leadership

India's space journey has evolved from building basic capabilities to delivering advanced, globally competitive space technologies. Over the past decade, reforms have opened the sector to private enterprise, startups and global partnerships. India is now expanding its capabilities across launch systems, satellites, space applications and human spaceflight. As India marks its **80th Independence Day,** its space ambitions reflect a confident and self-reliant nation shaping the future of space.



- India's space ecosystem has expanded rapidly, with **registered space start-ups** rising from 1 in 2014 to around 440 in 2026 (till August).
- This expanding ecosystem is strengthening **India's space economy,** valued at USD 9 billion, as of August 2026. It is projected to reach USD 40–45 billion over the next decade.
- **Private investment** in India's space sector surged nearly six-fold, climbing from USD 100.5 million in 2021–22 to USD 618.5 million by March 31, 2026, with USD 187 million recorded during 2026 alone.
- By mid-2026, **113 authorisations** had been granted to **52 Non-Government Entities (NGEs) out of which 18 are start-ups** for satellite operations, payload establishment and launch services.

The Earth Observation Public-Private Partnership (EO-PPP)

EO-PPP is a pioneering public–private framework launched by IN-SPACe. It brings government oversight and private industry together to develop India's first privately owned Earth observation satellite constellation, backed by around ₹1,200 crore in private investment commitments.

- India's growing launch capabilities are attracting global demand, with foreign satellite launches increasing from 35 before 2014 to 399 as of January 2026.
- India's global partnerships reinforce its growing space leadership, with 300+ space cooperation agreements across 61 countries and 5 multilateral organizations, covering research, technology, joint missions and capacity building.

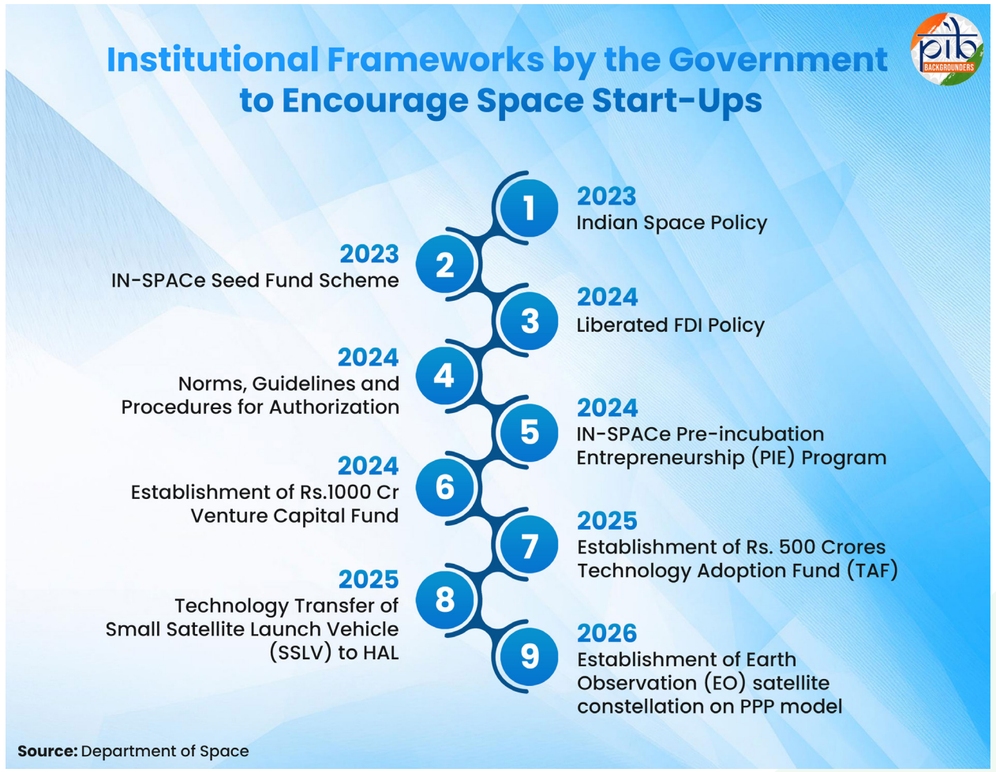
Catalysing Reforms through Strategic Action

India's space reforms have created an enabling environment for private participation, investment, innovation and technology-led growth. These measures have broadened the sector beyond traditional government-led space activities.

- India opened its space sector to private participation in 2020, enabling industry and start-ups across satellites, launch systems and space applications. This marked a major shift towards a broader national space ecosystem.
- **The Indian Space Policy 2023** further expanded private participation across the space value chain. It also defined the roles and responsibilities of NewSpace India Limited (NSIL) and Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe).
- **NSIL,** the commercial arm of ISRO, provides launch, satellite and space-based services and transfers ISRO technologies to Indian industry. Its revenue rose from ₹321.77 crore in FY 2021–22 to over ₹3,000 crore in FY 2024–25, reflecting the growing commercialisation of India's space programme.
- As on date, NSIL has signed **118 Technology Transfer Agreements**

for transferring 83 technologies developed at ISRO/ Department of Space to Indian Industry.

- **IN-SPACe** enables private space activities through a single-window mechanism. It facilitated 71 ISRO's technology transfers to industry and start-ups as on 31 January 2026.
- **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** rules in February 2024 were liberalised for the space sector. Up to 74% FDI is permitted automatically for satellite manufacturing and operations, 49% for launch vehicles and spaceports, and 100% for satellite and ground-segment components.
- **The Norms, Guidelines and Procedures (NGP) 2024** established transparent authorisation and compliance requirements. The framework enhances regulatory predictability and ease of doing business.
- **Targeted financing** is strengthening India's private space ecosystem. The **IN-SPACe Seed Fund Scheme** supports early-stage space start-ups, the ₹1,000 crore **Venture Capital Fund** provides growth capital, and the ₹500 crore **Technology Adoption Fund** enables wider deployment of space technologies. Further, The Satellite Bus as a Service (SBaaS) Scheme **has been allocated ₹75 crore** to support the development of satellite bus capabilities.



These reforms are creating a more competitive and dynamic space ecosystem. They are enabling Indian industry and start-ups to contribute across the space value chain.

Space Capability Reaching Beyond Earth

India's space programme has progressed from satellite development to complex missions across the Moon, Mars and solar system. Achievements demonstrate growing capabilities in exploration, navigation, science and advanced space operations.

Self-Reliant Space Transportation

- India has operationalised four indigenous launch vehicles: Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV), Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV), Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark III (GSLV Mk III), and Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV).
- These launch vehicles support Earth observation, communication, navigation, space science and exploration, besides commercial launches for national and international customers.
- Over the last three years (July 2023 to June 2026), India successfully completed 12 launch vehicle missions, carrying 11 national satellites and nine satellites for international customers.

India is Expanding Its Launch Capacity

India is strengthening its launch infrastructure to meet growing national and commercial space demand. **Sriharikota currently has two operational launch** pads, with a third being established for next-generation launch vehicles. **Kulasekarapattinam, Tamil Nadu,** is also emerging as India's second rocket launch site for **Small Satellite Launch Vehicles (SSLVs)** and private-sector launches. Together, these facilities will expand **launch capacity, frequency and operational flexibility,** reinforcing India's position as a competitive global space-launch hub.

Lunar Exploration — Chandrayaan Programme

- **Chandrayaan-1 (2008)** was India's first Moon mission and detected water molecules and hydroxyl on the lunar surface. It established India as a contributor to global lunar science.
- **Chandrayaan-2 (2019)** operated from 100 km altitude and captured lunar images at up to 30 cm resolution, the highest resolution optical images ever from a lunar orbiter platform.
- **Chandrayaan-3 (2023)** made India the first country to soft-land near the Moon's south pole and the fourth nation to soft-land on the Moon.

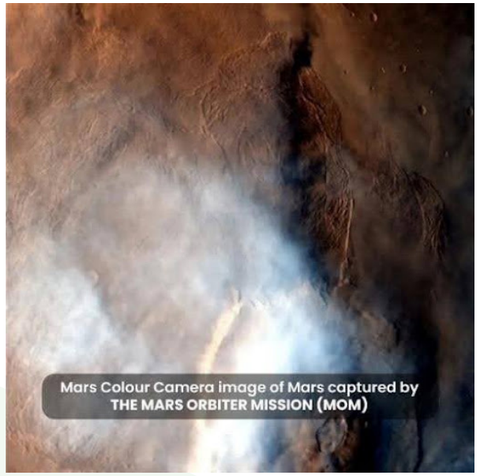


Future Lunar Missions

- **Chandrayaan-4,** the mission will demonstrate lunar sample collection, ascent from the lunar surface and sample return to Earth. The planned timeline for the mission is 2027.
- **Chandrayaan-5/LUPEX,** a joint ISRO-JAXA mission, will study lunar volatiles, including lunar water, near the Moon's south polar region.

Beyond the Moon: Mars, Sun and Deep Space

- **Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan)** was inserted to the Martian orbit on 24 September 2014, making it India's maiden interplanetary mission. The spacecraft operated for over 8 years, far exceeding its planned six-month mission.
- **AstroSat,** India's first dedicated Indian astronomy mission aimed at studying celestial sources in X-ray, optical and UV spectral bands simultaneously.
- **Aditya-L1 (2023)** is India's first space-based mission to study the Sun, positioned nearly 1.5 million km from the Earth at the Sun-Earth L1 point. More than 27 TB of solar data has been released publicly.
- **XPoSat** launched in January 2024 expanded India's capabilities in X-ray polarization astronomy. It enables detailed studies of extreme cosmic sources.
- **Space Docking Experiment (SPADEX),** January 2025, made India the fourth nation to demonstrate autonomous space docking and undocking.



Axiom-4: Advancing Human Spaceflight Capabilities

- **Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla,** India's first astronaut to have journeyed to the ISS in the Axiom-4 mission which was launched on 25 June 2025. His participation provided India with valuable experience in human spaceflight and microgravity research.

- Axiom-4 concluded successfully on 15 July 2025, strengthening India's operational experience for future crewed missions, including Gaganyaan.

NavIC — India's Indigenous Navigation System

- **Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC)** provides positioning, navigation and timing across India and up to 1,500 km beyond its boundary. It strengthens India's navigation autonomy and supports strategic and civilian applications.
- NVS-01 and NVS-02, the first two second-generation NavIC satellites, were launched in May 2023 and January 2025, respectively.
- While NVS-03 is ready for launch and NVS-04 and NVS-05 are under advanced realization. The second-generation satellites will enhance system reliability and continuity.
- NavIC is being integrated into power-grid synchronisation, real-time train tracking, Aadhaar geo-tagging and mobile chipsets.
- Its adoption is expanding satellite-based positioning across critical infrastructure and everyday services.

India's expanding capabilities are opening new frontiers in space science and exploration

India's Space Journey Ahead



India is entering a new phase of human spaceflight, deep-space exploration and advanced space infrastructure. Upcoming missions will build capabilities for sustained human presence and complex orbital operations.

- The Gaganyaan human spaceflight programme was approved in January 2019. Its scope was expanded and revised in September 2024 to a total outlay of ₹20,193 crore encompassing 8 total missions—including precursor flights for the Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS-01).
- It aims to launch a crew of 3 Indian astronauts to a 400-km orbit for a three-day mission.
- The first uncrewed experimental mission to validate various technologies including **Vyommitra** half-humanoid is targeted in Q4 of 2026. The crewed mission is targeted by 2027.
- India's planned five-module space station **Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS).** It is targeted for operationalisation by 2035, with BAS-01 planned for launch by 2028. It will support long-duration human spaceflight, microgravity research and advanced space operations.
- **SPADEX-2 and SPADEX-3:** The missions are being studied to advance orbital docking technologies for future Chandrayaan-4, Gaganyaan and BAS missions. They will enable capabilities such as spacecraft docking, sample transfer, crew transfer and power, fluid and propellant transfer.
- **Venus Orbiter Mission:** Targeted for launch in March 2028, the mission will study Venus' geology, atmosphere and ionosphere. It will demonstrate advanced aerobraking and thermal-management technologies.

Advanced Technologies Shaping India's Next Generation of Space Capabilities

- ISRO is developing a **200-tonne thrust semi-cryogenic engine.** It will enable more powerful launch vehicles and higher payload capacity.
- A semi-**cryogenic booster stage** is being developed for the Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3). It will significantly enhance LVM3's payload-carrying capability.
- ISRO is demonstrating booster recovery using **Vertical Take-off and Vertical Landing** (VTVL) technology. This will enable rocket-stage reusability and reduce future launch costs.
- ISRO is developing a partially reusable **Next Generation Launch Vehicle** (NGLV) using **LOX-Methane propulsion.** It will provide greater payload capability and support frequent, cost-effective launches.
- ISRO is developing a winged **Winged Orbital Re-entry Vehicle** for the Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV) programme. It will demonstrate orbital re-entry and runway landing for reusable space transportation.
- ISRO is developing **air-breathing propulsion** and a technology demonstrator vehicle. This technology could enable more efficient atmospheric flight and advanced reusable launch systems.

The next phase will deepen India's role in human spaceflight, planetary exploration and advanced space technology. These efforts will support India's ambition to become a leading global space power.

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The New Era of Indian Agriculture and Allied Sectors

Driving Growth, Resilience and Food Security

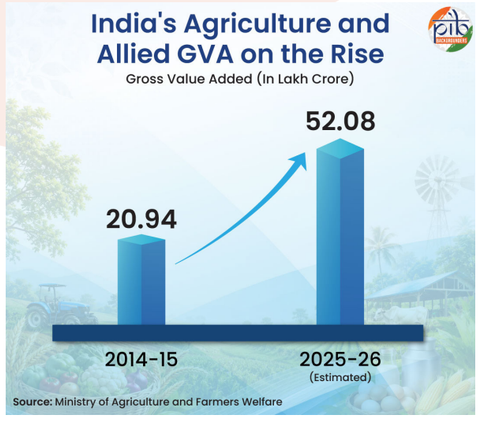
Published on: August 12, 2026

Driving Agricultural Transformation

India's agriculture and allied sectors are witnessing a significant transformation, marked by rising productivity, stronger farmer support systems, and greater resilience. Agriculture remains the backbone of India's economy, providing livelihoods to approximately **46.1 percent** of the workforce. Livestock and fisheries have maintained stable growth of **5-6 percent**, strengthening rural incomes and supporting agricultural diversification. Over the past decade, sustained policy interventions have improved access to credit, insurance, and markets, and accelerated the adoption of digital technologies. Growing investments in food processing, cooperatives, livestock, dairy, and fisheries are enabling greater value addition, income diversification, and employment across the agricultural value chain.

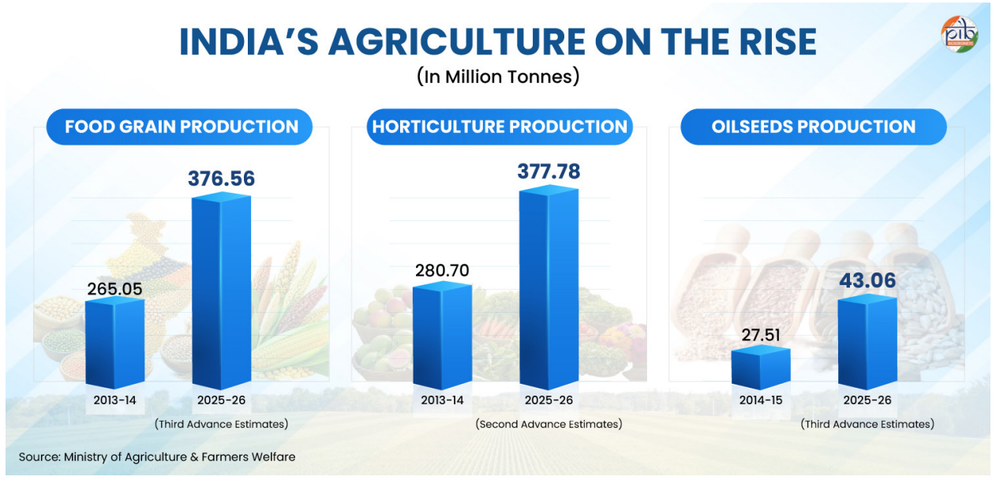
Strengthening the Agricultural Economy

- **The GVA of the Agriculture and Allied Sector** increased from **Rs.20.94 lakh crore** in **2014-15** to an estimated **Rs.52.08 lakh crore** in **2025-26**.
- Budget allocation for the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare increased from **Rs.27,663 crore** in **2013-14** to **Rs.1,40,528.78 crore** in **2026-27.**



Harvesting Higher Production

- Total foodgrain production increased from **265.05 million tonnes** in **2013-14** to **376.56 million tonnes** in **2025-26 (Third Advance Estimates)**.
- Horticulture production increased from **280.70 million tonnes** in **2013-14** to **approximately 377.78 million tonnes** in **2025-26 (Second Advance Estimates)**.
- Oilseeds production increased from **27.51 million tonnes** in **2014-15** to **43.06 million tonnes** in **2025-26 (Third Advance Estimates)**



Securing Farmers' Livelihoods

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)

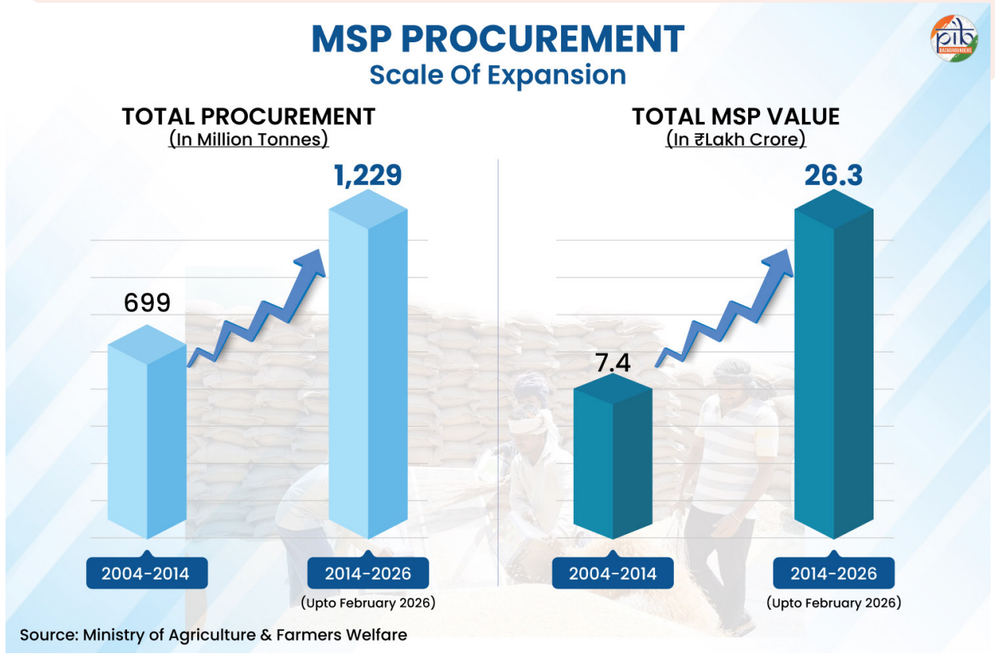
- More than **Rs.4.47 lakh crore** has been transferred directly into farmers' bank accounts through 23 instalments under the Scheme.
- Under the 23rd instalment, more than **9.49 crore farmers benefited**, with over **Rs.18,984 crore** released.

The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)

- Since its launch in 2016-17, over **92.46 crore** farmer applications have been insured.
- Claims worth **Rs.1.96 lakh crore** have been disbursed up to December 2025, benefiting around **24.31 crore farmers.**

Minimum Support Prices (MSP)

- Total procurement increased from **698.7 million tonnes** during **2004-2014** to **1,229.2 million tonnes** during **2014-2026**.
- Total MSP value increased from **Rs.7.41 lakh crore** during **2004-2014** to **Rs.26.32 lakh crore** during **2014-2026** (up to February 2026).
- MSP for Paddy (Grade A) increased from **Rs.1,400 per quintal** in **2014-15** to **Rs.2,461 per quintal** in **2026-27**.
- MSP for Wheat increased from **Rs.1,400 per quintal** in **2014-15** to **Rs.2,585 per quintal** in **2026-27**.



The Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme

As on 3rd August 2026,

- **7.28 crore** Kisan Credit Card (KCC) accounts were operational across the country in 2025-26.
- The amount outstanding under the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme stood at **Rs.10.08 lakh crore**.

The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maandhan Yojana (PMKMY)

- As of February 2026, around 24.96 lakh farmers have been enrolled under the scheme.

Towards Sustainable Agriculture

The Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme

- **26.09 crore soil health cards** have been issued as of July 2026.
- In addition, over **70,002 Krishi Sakhis** have been trained to provide soil health advisories and support informed farm practices.

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)

- Since its inception (as of June 2026), **18.93 lakh hectares** of area have been covered, benefiting **33.63 lakh** farmers.

Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER)

- Since its inception (as on 30 June 2026), **2.36 lakh hectares** have been brought under organic farming benefitting **2.74 lakh** farmers.

National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF)

- During FY 2025-26, **18,893** clusters covering **10.32 lakh hectares** and involving **20.93 lakh** farmers were formed under the Mission.
- **33.89 lakh** farmers have been made aware of natural farming.
- More than **22.47 lakh** farmers have been registered under the Natural Farming Certification System (NFCS), of which over 1**4.43 lakh farmers** have been certified.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthan Mahabhiyan (PM KUSUM)

As on 2nd August 2026,

- Nearly **11.49 lakh off-grid solar pumps** have been installed for agricultural use.
- More than **15.89 lakh agricultural pumps** are covered through feeder-level solarisation.
- Around **1,726 MW** of decentralized solar power capacity was commissioned on farmers' land.
- Over **21.77 lakh** farmers benefited across the country.

Ensuring Food for All

- As of February 2026, under the **National Food Security Act (NFSA)**, against the intended coverage of **81.35 crore**, the States/UTs have identified **80.56 crore persons** for the provision of subsidized foodgrains.
- Around **79.8 crore beneficiaries** are covered across the country under **NFSA, as of December 2025**.
- Centre to spend **Rs. 25,530 crore** in next 5 years under **SARTHAK PDS - Scheme for Assistance in Ration Transport and Handling-Income with Automation in PDS**.
- The Scheme will work towards fulfilling India's commitment to **81.35 crore** persons covered under NFSA.

Building Stronger Rural Institutions through Cooperatives and FPOs

- 10,000 **Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)** have been

registered across the country as of July 2026.

- **79,630 Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS)** have been sanctioned for computerization across 31 States and Union Territories.
- **63,707 PACS** have been onboarded on the **Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)** based national software as of 05th August 2026.

Connecting Farms to Markets

National Agriculture Market (e-NAM)

- As of June 2026, **1,656 mandis** have been integrated.
- **1.89 crore farmers** and **2.78 lakh traders** have been registered on e-NAM.

Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure (AMI)

- As of July 2026, **12,353** storage infrastructure projects with a storage capacity of **369.18 LMT** have been sanctioned in the last ten years.

Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF)

- Interest subvention support has been extended to **18,893** warehouses, **3,110** cold stores/cold chain projects and **2,105** integrated primary and secondary processing units.

Food Processing Reforms

Enhanced Financial Support for Food Processing

- Budget allocation for the Ministry of Food Processing Industries increased from **Rs.785.86 crore** in **2014-15** to **Rs.4,064 crore** in **2026-27**.

Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Food Processing Industry (PLISFPI)

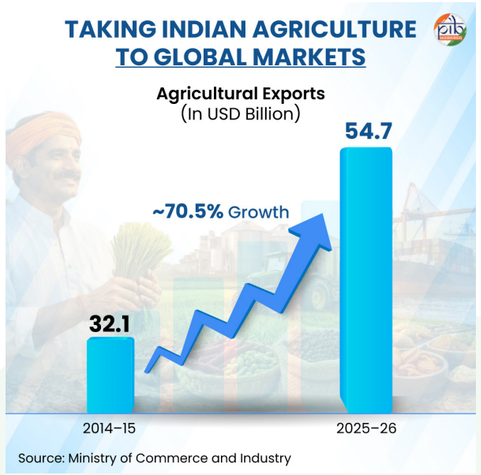
- Incentives amounting to **Rs.3,271.44 crore** have been disbursed up to June 2026.
- The investments undertaken under the Scheme have resulted in the creation of food processing capacity of **34 lakh metric tonnes per annum**.
- Sales of PLI-supported products increased from **Rs.58,758 crore** in FY 2019-20 to **Rs.1,08,854 crore** in FY 2025-26.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojna (PMKSY)

- As of June 2026, **1,256** projects (post-harvest infrastructure and processing facilities) have been completed or are operational, benefitting about **37.76 lakh** farmers.
- **294.21 LMT/Annum** of processing and preservation capacity created, generating **9.16 lakh** employment opportunities across the country.

Taking Indian Agriculture Global

- The value of agricultural exports increased from **USD 32.08 billion** in **2014-15** to **USD 54.70 billion** in **2025-26**, recording a growth of about **70.5 percent**.
- Share of processed food exports increased from **13.7 percent** in **2014-15** to **20.4 percent** in **2024-25**, a nearly **49 percent** rise.



Technology at the Farmgate

Under the Digital Agriculture Mission

As on 3rd August 2026

- More than **10.31 Crore** Farmer IDs have been created across the country. Further, during Rabi 2025-26, the Digital Crop Survey (DCS) was conducted in 648 Districts covering more than **31.3 crore plots** across the country.

AI-Enabled Initiatives:

- **National Pest Surveillance System (NPSS)-** As of July 2026, this tool is being used by over 10,000 extension workers supporting 73 crops over 436 pests.
- **BharatVistaar**- As of July 2026, the platform has served over **3 lakh** farmers and addressed more than **72 lakh** farmer queries.

Empowering Farmers Through Knowledge

Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs)

As of June 2026,

- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has established **731 KVKs** across the country.
- Around **58.02 lakh farmers** were trained between 2021-22 and 2023-24.
- An additional **18.56 lakh farmers** were trained during the first ten months of 2024-25.

Agricultural Diversification and the Growth of Allied Sectors

Livestock and Dairy as Drivers of Rural Economic Growth

The livestock sector has recorded a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of **12.77 percent** since 2014-15. In the Union Budget 2026-27, **Rs.6,153.46 crore** has been allocated to the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying.

- **Indigenous and non-descript cattle productivity** reached **1,343.2 kilograms per animal per year** in 2024-25 from 927 kilograms per animal per year in 2014-15.
- **Buffalo productivity** reached **2,365.2 kilograms per animal per year** in 2024-25 from 1880 kilograms per animal per year in 2014-15.
- **Average bovine milk productivity** has reached **2,251 kilograms per animal per year** in 2024-25 from 1,648 kg per animal per year in 2014-15.

India holds the **leading global position in milk production**, accounting for nearly **25 percent of global output**.

- Per capita milk availability reached **485 grams per day in 2024-25**, compared to the global average of **394 grams per day**.
- Milk production has increased by **70 percent**, rising from **146.31 million tonnes** in 2014-15 to **248 million tonnes** in 2024-25.

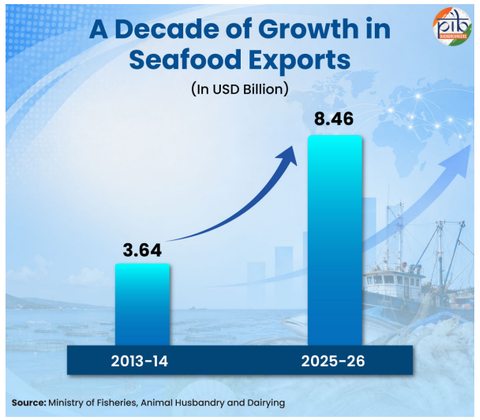
Poultry and meat production have also expanded, with India ranking **second in egg production and fourth in meat production globally**:

- Egg production has grown by **90 percent**, increasing from **78.48 billion eggs** in 2014-15 to **149.11 billion eggs** in 2024-25.
- Per capita egg availability has risen from **62 eggs per annum** in 2014-15 to **106 eggs per annum** in 2024-25.
- Meat Production has increased from 6.69 million tonnes in 2014-15 to **10.50 million tonnes** in 2024-25.



Strengthening Fisheries Infrastructure, Market Access and Credit Support

The **Union Budget 2026-27** allocated a record **Rs.2,761.80 crore** to fisheries under the Blue Revolution initiatives.



- Fish production reached **197.75 lakh tonnes** in **2024-25**, **up** from 95.79 lakh tonnes in FY 2013-14.
- Seafood exports increased from USD 3.64 billion in 2013-14 to around **USD 8.46 billion** in 2025-26.

Fisheries Infrastructure and Market Access

Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)

- **Rs.2,500 crore** allocated under the Union Budget **2026-27**.

As on April 2026, Key activities approved:

- **28,489** fish transportation and handling units
- **1,394** live fish vending units, **6,018** fish kiosks, and 117 fish retail markets
- **775** cold storages and ice plants, and 24 wholesale fish markets.

Institutional Credit Support for fisheries

- **6.83 lakh applications** were received under the **Kisan Credit Card (KCC)**, of which **6.77 lakh** were accepted. Of which, **4.82 lakh applications** were sanctioned, indicating a meaningful conversion of demand into credit access as of early 2026.
- KCC benefits have reached **4.39 lakh fishers**. Insurance coverage has been provided to **33 lakh** beneficiaries. An average of **7.44 lakh** fisher families received livelihood assistance during lean fishing periods.

Strengthening Livestock through Infrastructure and Entrepreneurship

National Livestock Mission

As on 4th August 2026,

- **4,084 breed multiplication farms** for poultry, sheep, goat, pig, camel, horse, and donkey have been approved.
- **1.61 lakh metric tonnes** of quality fodder seed have been produced.

Entrepreneurship Development Programme under the National Livestock Mission, as on 11th August 2026,

- **4,321 projects approved**, worth **Rs.2,948.68 crore** total project cost with the **Rs.1,386.18 crore** approved subsidy

Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF)

- Projects approved with **418 lakh litres/day** of milk processing capacity and value-addition capacity as on 4th August 2026.

Bharat Pashudhan

As of 6th August 2026,

- Livestock Owners Registered: **9.84 crore**, Pashu Aadhaar Issued: **Over 38.53 crore**, All Vaccinations: **168.67 crore**.

National Programme for Dairy Development (NPDD)

As on June 2026,

- **36,611** new Dairy Cooperative Societies have been organised.
- **34,557** village-level dairy cooperative societies have been strengthened.
- **168 lakh litres/day** of milk chilling capacity has been created.
- **76,748** milk quality testing devices have been distributed.

Advancing Livestock Breeding, Productivity, and Animal Health

- A total of **47,687 Multi-Purpose Artificial Insemination Technicians in Rural India (MAITRIs)** have been trained, 24 IVF laboratories established, 48 semen stations sanctioned, and 28 heifer rearing centres approved under RGM as on 4th August 2026.
- During the last five years, **over 17.27 crore** artificial inseminations have been carried out under the **Nationwide Artificial Insemination Programme**, benefiting nearly **5.98 crore farmers**.
- **Accelerated Breed Improvement programme:** As on 4th August 2026, 7,959 embryos transferred, 1,666 pregnancies established, and 1,223 calves born. Out of which 1,142 of the calves are females.

Strengthening Animal Health and Risk Mitigation

Livestock productivity and income stability are closely linked to disease control. Under

National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP)

- As of March 2026, **132.49 crore** doses of the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccine have been administered.
- **Brucellosis Control Programme:** As of March 2026, **3.17 crores**, 4-8 months old bovine female calf for Brucellosis have been vaccinated in the country since inception. **296.74 lakh vaccine doses** administered to eligible female calves to prevent brucellosis and strengthen livestock health during the last five years alone.

Mobile Veterinary Units (MVUs)

- **4,019 MVUs** are operational across 29 States/UTs, delivering doorstep veterinary services through the toll-free number **1962** as of July 2026.
- Benefited **119.77 lakh farmers** and treated **245.05 lakh animals**, significantly boosting farmer confidence and supporting the livestock sector as a viable enterprise.

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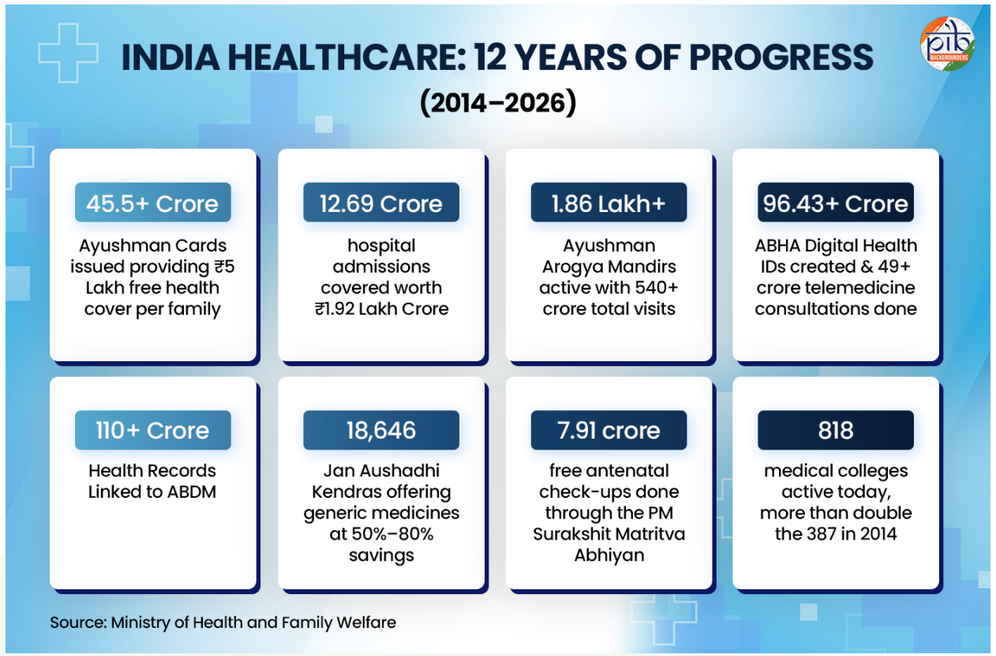
Affordable and Accessible Healthcare for All

Published on: August 12, 2026

In the past 12 years, the Government of India has significantly strengthened India's health system. Quality healthcare is **more accessible, more affordable, and more equitable** than it has ever been. This aligns with the principle of **"Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas"** to build an Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Ayushman Bharat

- The **Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY)** provides health insurance of Rs. 5 lakh per family per year to families from the poorest 40% of society and all senior citizens aged 70 and above.
  - » Over **40,000 claims are processed every single day** for over 1,900 treatment packages.
  - » Since the scheme launched in 2018, as of August 12, 2026:
    - **Over 45.5 crore Ayushman Cards** have been issued
    - **12.69 crore hospitalizations** have been covered, amounting to Rs. 1.92 lakh crore (as on June 30, 2026)
    - Over **38,466 public and private hospitals** are empanelled.
    - **1.20 crore senior citizens** enrolled under the Ayushman Bharat Vay Vandana scheme.
    - **Over 13.84 lakh treatments, worth Rs. 3,000 crore** have been availed.
    - Under AB PM-JAY, 29.05 lakh inter-state portability hospital admissions, amounting to more than Rs. 8,383.97 crore, have been authorised (as on June 30, 2026)
- **Over 1.86 lakh Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (AAMs)** are now functional across the country to provide primary healthcare at every neighbourhood (as of 12 August 2026). These centres offer **12 free services** and have recorded a cumulative footfall of over **540 crore till date**.
- The **Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM)**:
  - » Support for 23,224 rural health and wellness centres in 10 high-focus states.
  - » Establishing 13,736 urban health and wellness centres in all states.
  - » 3,389 block public health units in 11 high-focus states.
  - » Setting up 744 integrated public health labs in all districts.
  - » Establishing 631 critical care hospital blocks in all districts with a population of more than 5 lakh.
- And underpinning all of this is India's digital health backbone, the **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)**. Coverage under ABDM (as of August 12, 2026):
  - » **96.43 crore ABHA** health identity numbers created
  - » **Over 110 crore health records** have been linked with ABHA
  - » **Over 5.47 lakh health facilities** have been registered on the platform
  - » **More than 10.50 lakh healthcare professionals** have been registered on the platform.



National Health Mission: Targeted Health Interventions

The **National Health Mission (NHM)**, with its two sub-missions-**National Rural Health Mission and National Urban Health Mission**, delivers targeted programmes that address specific diseases, populations, and health challenges. NHM has significantly improved public health outcomes across maternal and child health, disease elimination, and immunisation.

Maternal and Child Health: Making Safe Births the Norm

- The **Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan** has enabled over **7.91 crore free antenatal check-ups**.
  - » More than 1.24 crore high-risk pregnancies have been identified.
  - » First-trimester antenatal registration in India increased from 58.6% in NFHS-4 (2015-16) to 76.2% in NFHS-6 (2023-24).
  - » Mothers receiving four or more antenatal care visits in India increased significantly from 51.2% in NFHS-4 (2015-16) to 65.2% in NFHS-6 (2023-24).
  - » Institutional deliveries in India increased from 78.9% in NFHS-4 (2015-16) to 90.6% in NFHS-6 (2023-24).
- On immunisation, the **Universal Immunisation Programme** reaches **2.67 crore newborns** and **2.9 crore pregnant women every year** with free vaccines against 12 diseases.
- **Mission Indradhanush**, launched in 2014, has functioned as a catch-up drive, vaccinating **5.46 crore children** and **1.32 crore pregnant women** across its various phases.
- The percentage of zero-dose children-those who had received no vaccines at all-dropped from **0.11% of the population in 2023 to 0.06% in 2024**.
- Under Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP), the government launched **U-WIN** in October 2024 — a platform that ensures no family loses its vaccination records. As of March 2026, **11.87 crore children** and **3.96 crore pregnant women** are already registered.
- In February 2026, the government launched a three-month campaign to provide free **HPV vaccines** to **1.2 crore girls aged 14 years**, for combating cervical cancer.
  - » **52,10,302 girls** have received the HPV vaccine across the country (as on July 15, 2026).
- These initiatives have improved various mortality rates, including:
  - » **Maternal mortality rate** declined to **87 per 1,00,000 live births in 2022-24 from 130 per 1,00,000 in 2014-16**.
  - » **Neonatal mortality rate** declined to **17 per 1,000 live births in 2023 from 28 per 1,000 live births in 2015**.
  - » **Under-5 mortality rate** declined to **28 per 1,000 live births in 2023 from 48 per 1,000 live births in 2015**.

Eliminating Communicable Diseases: Real Progress on Long-Standing Burdens

- The government has reduced the prevalence of communicable diseases over the past 12 years.
- New cases of tuberculosis emerging yearly in India **dipped by 21% from 2015-2024; mortality due to TB dropped by 28% during the same period**.
  - » Treatment success rates in **Tuberculosis** have climbed from **83% in 2021 to 90% in 2025** — and treatment coverage has gone from **53% (2015) to 92% (2024)**.
  - » More than **28.1 crore people** have already been **screened, 20 lakh people given preventive treatment**, and **5.7 lakh new Nikshay Mitras have been added** so far under the intensified campaigns since December 2024.
- Malaria cases and deaths have fallen by **80.5% and 78.38% respectively between 2015 and 2023**. India exited the WHO's 'High Burden to High Impact (HBHI) group' for malaria in 2024.

Non-Communicable Diseases: Catching Problems Early

- **National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD)** focuses on strengthening infrastructure, human resource development, screening, early diagnosis, referral, treatment, and health promotion for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). Through nationwide screening drives:
  - » 41.5 crore screened for hypertension
  - » 41.3 crore for diabetes
  - » 35.3 crore for oral cancer and
  - » 16.5 crore for breast cancer.
- The **Pradhan Mantri National Dialysis Programme** (launched 2016) has provided free dialysis to **32.44 lakh patients** across **1,856 centres** (as of June, 2026).
- **Under the Strengthening of Tertiary Cancer Care Centres Facilities Scheme**, 19 State Cancer Institutes (SCIs) and 20 Tertiary Cancer Care Centers (TCCCs) have been approved.
- Under the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases, **770 District NCD Clinics, 524 Day Care Cancer Centres (DCCCs) and 6,410 NCD clinics** at Community Health Centres have been set up across the country.

- India has achieved a **17.3% relative reduction in overall tobacco use** from 2009-10 to 2016-17, as per the Report of the second round of the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS-2).
  - » To achieve a tobacco-free generation, the Government launched the Tobacco Free Youth Campaign in 2023 — now in its third edition. This work has earned India the **2025 Bloomberg Philanthropies Award** for tobacco control.

Making Medicines and Tests Actually Affordable

- The **Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP)** has made generic medicines cheaper. The **Jan Aushadhi Kendras**, where these medicines are available, have grown from a handful of stores in 2014-15 to over **18,646 Jan Aushadhi Kendras** as of February 2026.
- These medicines are sold at **50–80% below branded prices**, with a basket of over **2,000 medicines and 300 surgical devices**.
- **AMRIT (Affordable Medicines and Reliable Implants for Treatment) Pharmacies** launched in 2015, go even further, offering life-saving medicines at discounts of **50–90%,** making treatment affordable for low-income patients who would otherwise go without treatment.
  - » The scheme has benefited **more than 6.85 crore patients** and **medicines worth over Rs. 17,000 crore** at MRP have been dispensed so far, resulting in cumulative savings of about Rs. 8,400 crore for patients.
- **Free Diagnostics Service Initiative** under NHM makes tests, X-rays, blood work free at every level of the public health system from sub-centres all the way up to district hospitals, spanning haematology, radiology, biochemistry, and more.
  - » Diagnostics services are provided free of cost at all levels of public health facilities
    - 14 tests at Sub Centers
    - 63 at Primary Health Centers
    - 97 at Community Health Centres
    - 111 tests at Sub District Hospitals
    - 134 tests at District Hospitals.



Reaching People Where They Are: Digital Health and Telemedicine

- eSanjeevani, India's national telemedicine platform, has delivered over **49 crore consultations** since its launch in 2019 (as on August 11, 2026). Over **2.4 lakh healthcare providers** are now on the platform.
- **Tele-MANAS** — launched in October 2022 — was introduced as a toll-free helpline (14416) available nationwide, offering a wide range of mental health services.
- It operates in **20 languages** across all 36 states and union territories. It has already received **43.64 lakh calls** since the launch of the service, through 53 Tele-Manas Cells and 23 Mentoring Institutes (as on August 11, 2026).
- **i-DRONE** service launched in 2021 is delivering medicines and vaccines by drone. **22,000 medicines** have been delivered over **7,700 kilometres** through 65 healthcare centres.
- AI is now also embedded in care delivery. Between April 2023 and November 2025, **28.2 crore eSanjeevani consultations** were supported by AI-enabled Clinical Decision Support Systems, providing real-time clinical alerts to doctors.

Building the Workforce India Needs

- Over the past 12 years, the number of medical colleges has **more than doubled** — from 387 to **818 allopathy colleges (as of 2025-2026)**.
- **12 new AIIMS** have been made functional since 2014. There are 23 AIIMS now.
- **MBBS and PG seats** increased to 1,28,976 and 85,822, respectively, as of 2025-26.
- Nursing has received equal attention. **157 new nursing colleges** are being set up, adding around **15,700 nursing graduates annually**.

» B.Sc. Nursing seats are up **53%** to 1,27,290, and M.Sc. Nursing seats up **39%** to 14,986 as of June 2025.

Alternative Healthcare

Alongside modern medicine, the government has formally integrated traditional healthcare systems into the public health framework. The **Ministry of AYUSH** (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa, and Homeopathy), formed in November 2014, has established traditional medicines as an active part of India's health system.

- **942 AYUSH institutions** exist in the country as of May 2025.
- Ayush Grid is India's digital bridge between traditional healing and modern healthcare delivery, making AYUSH more accessible, integrated, and future-ready. This AYUSH Grid will digitally connect all AYUSH hospitals and laboratories nationwide.

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PIB Research





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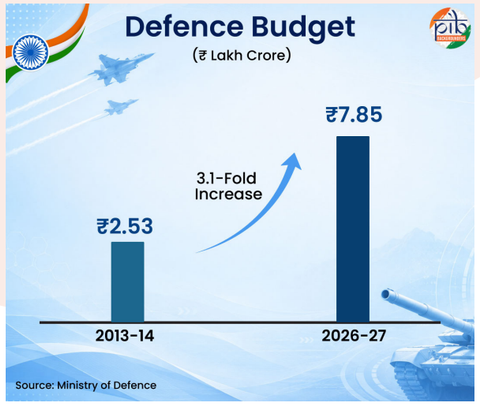
India’s Defence Strength

Powering National Security through Self-Reliance

Published on: August 14, 2026

Strengthening India's Defence

India's defence sector has undergone a remarkable transformation over the past decade. It has emerged as a stronger, more self-reliant and globally credible force. Guided by Atmanirbhar Bharat, sustained reforms, investment and indigenous innovation have strengthened defence capabilities. The domestic defence industrial base has also expanded significantly. As India marks its **80th Independence Day**, this transformation reflects growing confidence in India's ability to safeguard its sovereignty and contribute to global security.



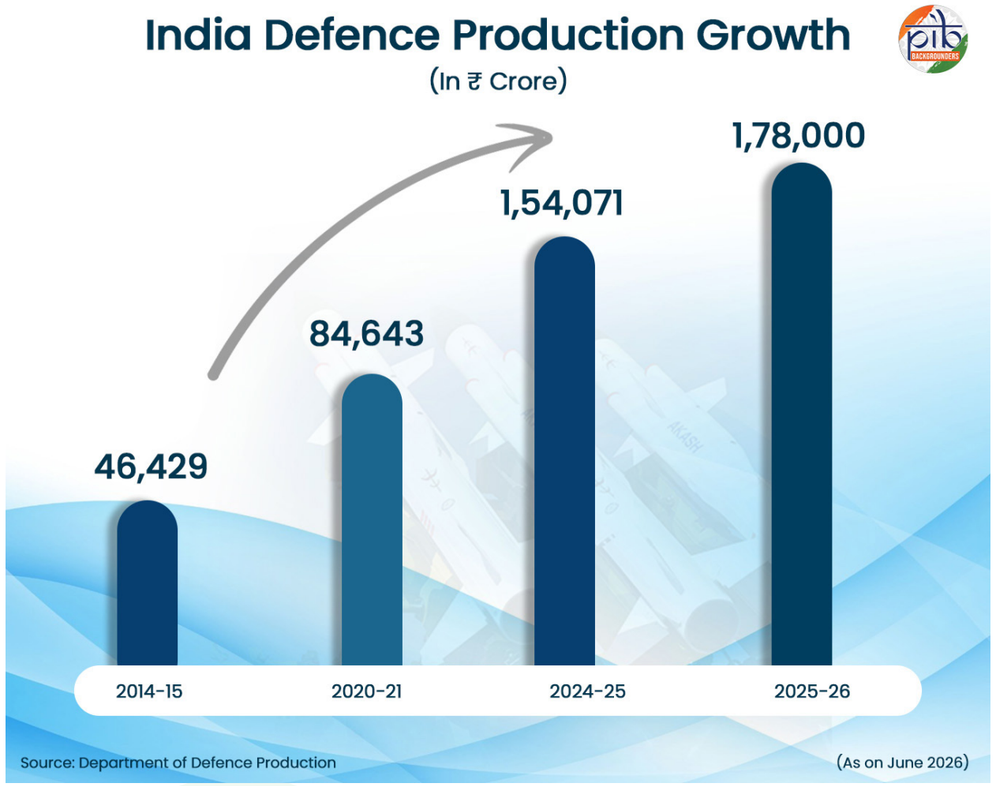


Defence Investment Strengthening Military Capabilities

- **3.1-Fold Growth in Defence Budget**: The defence budget rose from ₹2.53 lakh crore in 2013–14 to ₹7.85 lakh crore in 2026–27.
- **2.3-Fold Growth in Capital Expenditure**: Capital expenditure also increased from **₹94,587.95 crore in 2014–15 to ₹2.19 lakh crore in 2026–27**, enabling sustained modernisation.

Investment Driving Indigenous Defence Production

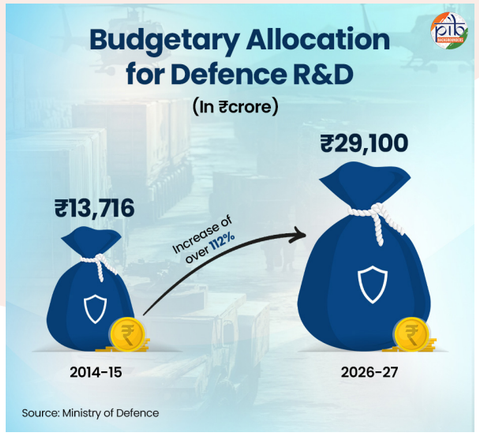
- Defence production reached a record **₹1.78 lakh crore in 2025–26**.
- **76%** production **from public-sector entities and 24% from the private sector**.



Domestic Industrial Base Expanding Exports

- **56-Fold Growth in Defence Exports:** Exports rose from **₹686 crore in FY2013–14 to ₹38,424 crore in FY2025–26**.
- Exports is reaching **80+ countries** and increased to over **5,500%** in twelve years.
- Private sector contributed **₹17,353 crore or 45.16%** of defence exports in FY2025–26, while Defence Public Sector Undertakings contributed **₹21,071 crore or 54.84%**.
- The Government targets **₹3 lakh crore in annual defence production and ₹50,000 crore in exports by 2029**.





Innovation Strengthening Technological Foundation

- Defence R&D allocation rose from **₹13,716.14 crore in 2014–15 to ₹29,100.25 crore in 2026–27**, an increase of over **112%**.
- Since 2022–23, 25% of the defence R&D budget has been opened to industry, start-ups and academia,
- Testing facilities across 24 DRDO laboratories are accessible through the Defence Testing Portal (DTP), a digital platform managed by the Ministry of Defence. This portal lets domestic manufacturers, startups, and industries request paid access to specialised government testing infrastructure to support indigenous defence production.

Key Initiatives Strengthening India's Defence Industrial Base

India is expanding its defence industrial capacity through indigenous manufacturing, modern infrastructure and greater private-sector participation. This growing ecosystem is strengthening domestic capabilities, supporting innovation and building a resilient defence supply chain.

Defence Acquisition Reforms

- **The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC)**, India's apex defence procurement body, is driving **Atmanirbhar Bharat** through indigenous acquisitions. It has accorded **Acceptance of Necessity (AoN)** for over **₹6 lakh crore** of DRDO-designed, Indian industry-manufactured systems.
- **Major indigenous acquisitions are strengthening combat capabilities**: Approvals include **97 Tejas Mk-1A fighter jets worth ₹62,000 crore** and **156 LCH Prachand helicopters worth ₹62,700 crore**. These procurements expand India's domestic aerospace and defence manufacturing capabilities.
- **Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020** strengthened indigenous procurement and domestic manufacturing. It also expanded opportunities for Indian companies in defence design, development and production.
- **Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) 2016** streamlined defence acquisitions while advancing **Make in India**. It laid the foundation for subsequent reforms in defence procurement.
- **Defence Procurement Manual (DPM) 2025** streamlined nearly **₹1 lakh crore** in revenue procurement. It enabled faster approvals, relaxed penalties for indigenous projects and assured long-term orders.

Draft Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2026

DAP 2026 proposes simpler acquisition categories and stronger support for indigenous design and development. It also proposes indigenous content requirements of up to **60%**.

Boosting Innovation — iDEX, ADITI & TDF

- The **Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX)** scheme, with a ₹498.78 crore outlay, engaged 676 startups, MSMEs, and innovators, resulting in 551 design and development contracts as of March 2026.
- **ADITI Scheme**: Approved with a ₹750 crore outlay (2023–24 to 2025–26), ADITI provides financial support through the Defence Innovation Organisation (DIO) to accelerate innovative defence technologies.
- **Technology Development Fund**: The scheme provides grants of up to **₹50 crore** for critical

defence technology development. As of June 2026, **80 projects worth ₹334 crore** were under implementation, with an additional **₹500 crore corpus** sanctioned for deep technology and emerging technologies.

Technology Transfer & Industry Participation

- DRDO's **Development cum Production Partner framework** transferred technologies to 134 partner companies.
- 2,180 technology transfer agreements signed.
- 2,780+ IPRs opened for industry use as on March 2026.

Indigenisation & Domestic Manufacturing

- Till May 2026, 10 **Positive Indigenisation** lists, five each of DMA & DDP, covering 5,521 items were notified, resulting in increased Aatmanirbharta in defence production.
- **Srijan Defence Equipment Empowerment Platform (DEEP)** is a digital repository promoting indigenous defence sourcing. As of May 2026, it listed over 41,000 vendors and 2.7 lakh products, strengthening domestic supply chains.
- By April 2026, the **Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor** had attracted **₹42,057 crore** in investment commitments, with **₹4,409 crore grounded**.
- The **Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor** attracted **₹32,699 crore**, with **₹6,446 crore realised**, strengthening India's defence manufacturing base.
- The **BrahMos Integration & Testing Facility in Lucknow** has begun manufacturing missiles.

Ease of Doing Business & Defence Trade

- Industrial licence validity was extended from 7 (+3) years to 15 (+3, up to 18) years, with lifetime validity now granted under the Arms Act.
- The **revamped Defence Exim Portal** enables end to end application processing, automated company verification, simplified registration, real time tracking and secure payment integration, making defence trade clear and more efficient.
- The **FDI limit** in the defence sector was increased to 74% under the Automatic Route and up to 100% via the Government Route, attracting ₹6,670.59 crore in inflows by March 2026.

The reforms have created a more enabling environment for defence manufacturing, with stronger institutional support and clearer pathways from innovation to deployment.

Advancing India's Defence Self-Reliance: FY 2025–26

India's defence landscape has undergone a significant shift towards greater domestic capability, technological sophistication and operational resilience. Indigenous development now spans ammunition, missiles, propulsion, air defence and naval platforms, supported by stronger government-industry collaboration.

Indigenisation Strengthening Operational Self-Reliance

- **The Indian Army achieved roughly 91% self-sufficiency by indigenising 159 out of 175 ammunition variants in its inventory**.
- India has successfully tested the **Agni-4 Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile and Agni-5 Long Range Surface-to-Surface Ballistic Missile**, validating their operational and technical parameters.
- The **TARA Glide Weapon** and **RudraM-II air-to-surface missile** have also demonstrated indigenous precision-strike capabilities against ground targets.
- The **DRDO** has advanced multiple indigenous systems, including the **Kusha Long Range Air Defence Missile** and **Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS)**. An integrated air-defence system combining missile interceptors, short-range weapons and laser technologies has also been successfully tested.
- DRDO successfully conducted a **12-minute ground test of an actively cooled scramjet combustor**, supporting hypersonic missile development.

Advancing Maritime Defence And Strike Capabilities

- The Indian Navy commissioned **12 warships and submarines**, including **INS Surat, INS Nilgiri and INS Vaghsheer**.
- **INS Mahendragiri**, stealth frigate, also entered service with over **75% indigenous content**.
- **SHACHI**, the first of **11 Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessels**, launched. **INS Dunagiri, INS Sanshodhak and INS Agray** also commissioned, completing the indigenous **Sandhayak-class**

survey fleet, expanding maritime surveillance and survey capabilities.

- DRDO successfully tested the **Naval Anti-Ship Missile–Medium Range** and demonstrated **multi-layered Ballistic Missile Defence** capability. It is strengthening India's ability to counter diverse aerial and maritime threats.

India's defence transformation has built greater depth across military preparedness, manufacturing and internal security.

Powering India's Defence Ambition to 2047

India's defence transformation reflects a clear shift towards greater self-reliance, technological capability and global confidence. Stronger indigenous production, research and development, innovation and industry participation are enhancing defence capacity across land, air and maritime domains. Growing exports and strategic partnerships are reinforcing India's role as a reliable global defence partner. With continued investment in advanced technologies and domestic manufacturing, India is building the capabilities needed to meet future security requirements and strengthen its position as a technologically advanced defence power by 2047.

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Empowering Youth, Transforming India

Published on: August 13, 2026

Amrit Peedhi for Viksit Bharat@2047

India is home to one of the world's largest youth populations, with nearly 65 percent of its citizens below the age of 35. Over the years, the Government has expanded investment across education, skilling, employment, entrepreneurship, sports, health, and civic participation to convert this demographic advantage into a development dividend. Together, these efforts are enabling the Amrit Peedhi to shape Viksit Bharat @ 2047.

MY Bharat: A Platform for Youth-Led Development

At the centre of this vision is Mera Yuva Bharat, launched in October 2023 for youth aged 15–29. The technology-enabled platform brings volunteering, experiential learning, leadership, skilling, career support and civic participation into a single nationwide ecosystem.

- **Growing national platform** – More than **2.22 crore youth** have registered on the platform for volunteering, experiential learning, leadership, skilling, and career opportunities, as of July 2026.
- **Volunteering at scale** – Over **1.52 lakh** volunteering opportunities enable young people to participate in community service, environmental action, cultural initiatives and public programmes.
- **Learning through experience** – More than **24,900** experiential learning programmes have connected youth with governance, healthcare, media, technology and public service.

Digital Engagement and Civic Participation

- **Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue 2026** – More than 50 lakh youth participated through a nationwide quiz. The dialogue also involved 78 diaspora youth from 21 countries and identified 6,000 young leaders for a district-wise repository.
- **National Service Scheme (NSS)** – Volunteer enrolment increased from 34.09 lakh in 2014–15 to 38.90 lakh in 2025–26.

Education, Skills, and Aspirational Growth

The education ecosystem has expanded while becoming more flexible, digital and innovation-driven. National Education Policy 2020 places the learner at the centre and links schooling, higher education, skills and employability.

- **One of the world's largest school systems** – India has 14.67 lakh schools serving 24.72 crore students, supported by more than 1.02 crore teachers.
- **Improved retention** – The secondary-school dropout rate declined from 14.54 % in 2013–14 to 7 in 2025–26.
- **Digital classrooms** – Over 1.49 lakh schools were covered under ICT and digital initiatives by 2025–26, with more than 1.76 lakh smart classrooms and 1.79 lakh ICT laboratories sanctioned (as of March 2026).
- **Atal Tinkering Labs** – More than 10,000 labs have engaged over 1.1 crore student innovators and supported more than 16 lakh projects.

Higher Education and Innovation

- **Rising enrolment** – Higher-education enrolment increased from 3.4 crore in 2014–15 to 4.5 crore in 2023–24; Female enrolment increased 42.2% since 2014-2015 to 2.2 crores in 2023-24.
- **Institutional growth**

Expansion of Higher Education Institutions

Institution	2014	2023-24
IITs	16	23
IIMs	13	22
AIIMS	7	20
IIITs	9	25
IISERs	5	7
Universities	~760	~1,289
Colleges	~38,500	~48,246

Source: Ministry of Education

- **Incubation and research** – 85 Atal Incubation Centres have created 32,000+ jobs and supported over 2,900 startups.

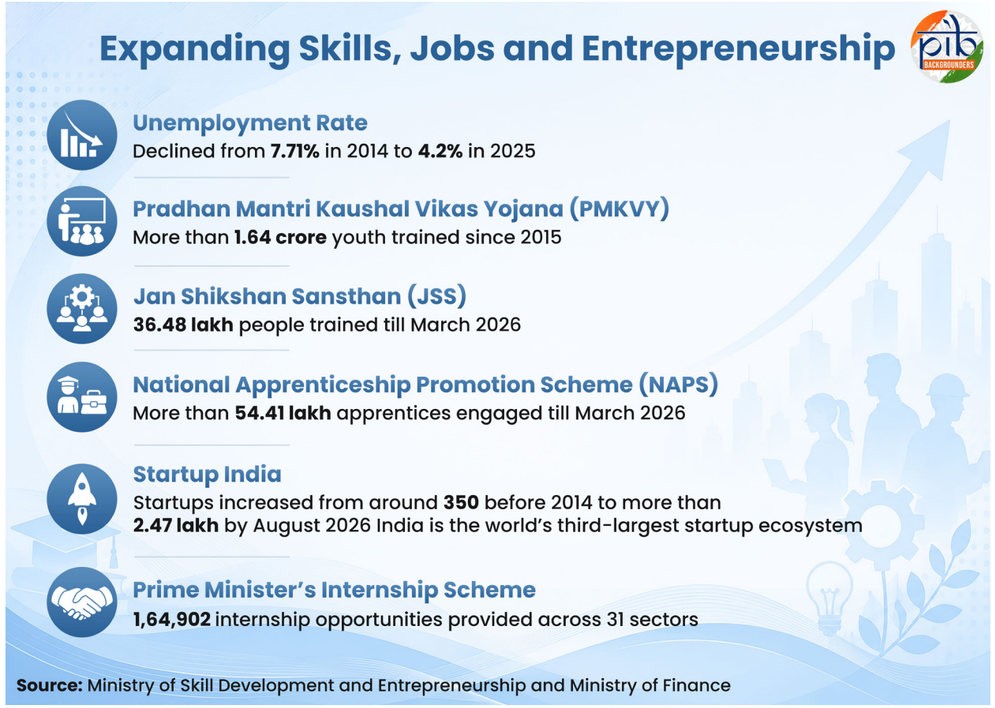
Flexible Learning and Digital Access

- **National Credit Framework** – More than 700 universities and over 7,500 affiliated colleges have adopted the National Credit Framework (NCrF).
- **Academic Bank of Credits** – **3,123** institutions have been onboarded and more than **35.27 crore** APAAR IDs issued, enabling learners to store, transfer, and redeem credits. (as on 12th August 2026).
- **SWAYAM** – As on 12th August 2026, the platform offers more than 20,370 courses and has recorded 6.5 crore+ enrolments.
- **DIKSHA** – Across India, 342 courses have recorded 19.06 crore enrolments, 15.02 crore completions, and the issuance of 13 crore certificates (as on 12th August 2026).

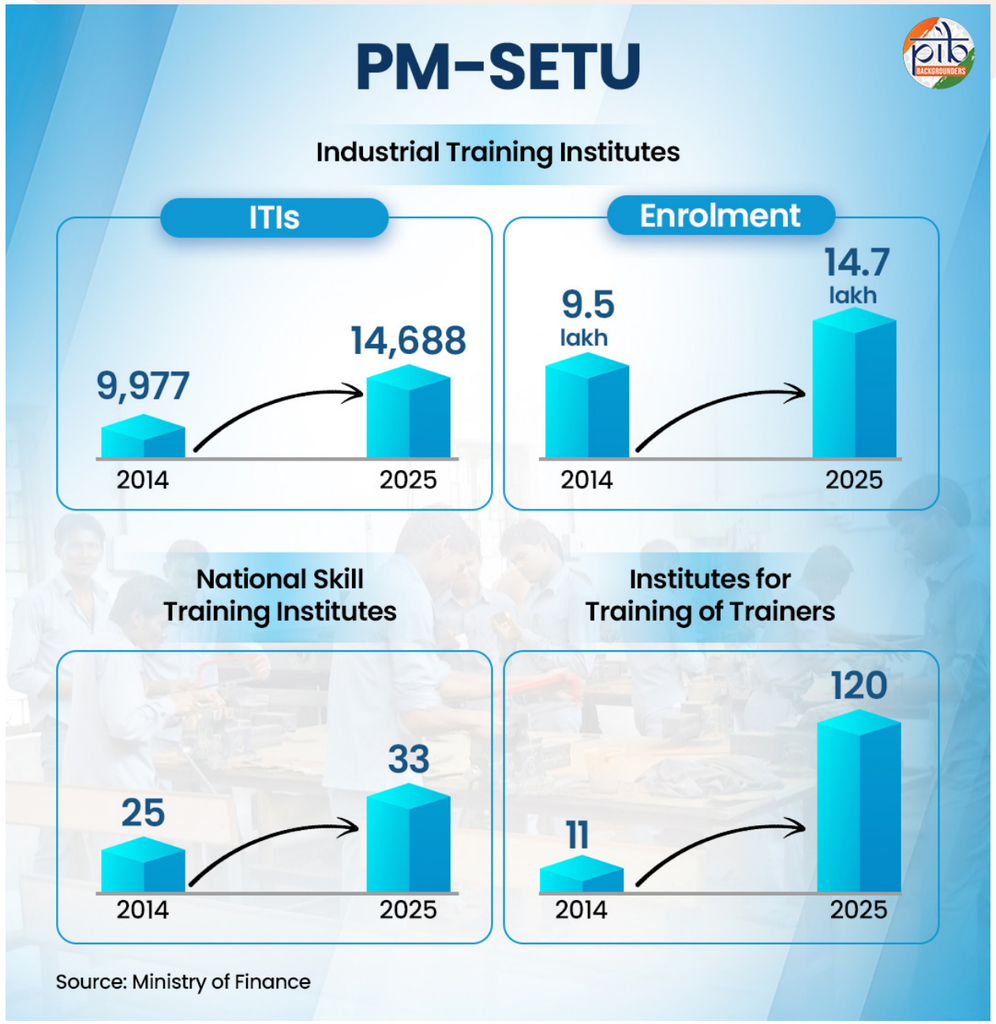
Skilling and Employability

The Government has empowered over 6 crore people through its skilling initiatives. Skill India Mission has shifted training from basic certification towards a demand-led model connected with industry, apprenticeships, digital platforms, and emerging technologies.

- **Lower unemployment** – The unemployment rate declined from 7.71 per cent in 2014 to 4.2 per cent in 2025.
- **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)** – More than 1.64 crore youth have been trained across four phases since 2015. PMKVY includes industry-linked training in AI, robotics, drones, electronics, green energy, and other future-facing sectors, with on-the-job exposure.
- **Jan Shikshan Sansthan** – 36.48 lakh people were trained till March 2026.
- **National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS)** – More than 54.41 lakh apprentices were engaged till March 2026.



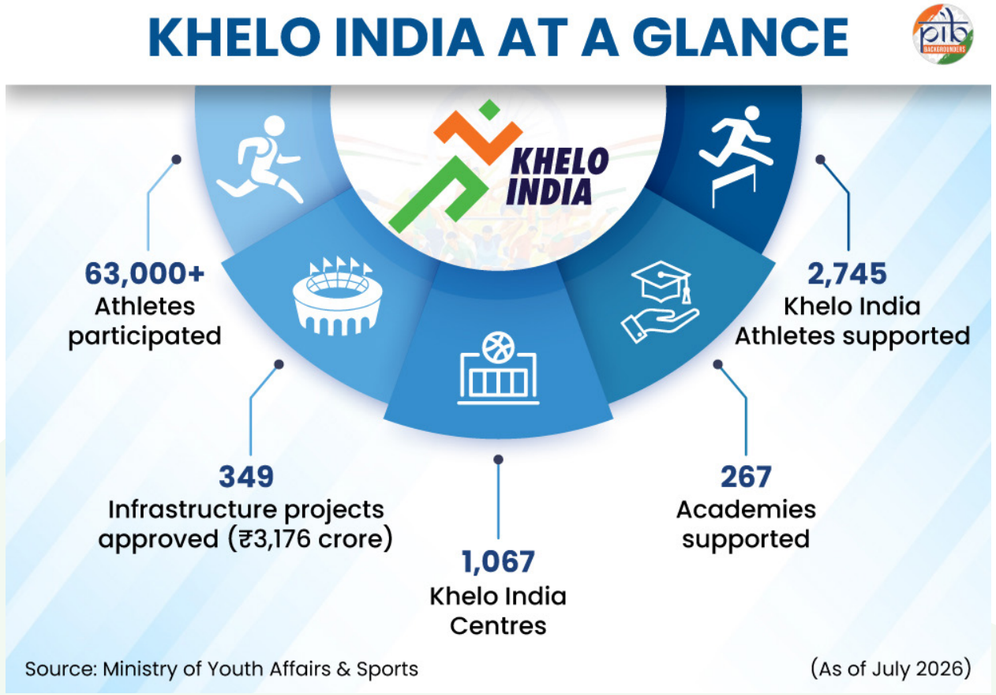
- **Startup India** – The number of startups grew from about 350 before 2014 to more than 2.47 lakh by August 2026, making India the world's third-largest startup ecosystem.
- **Prime Minister's Internship Scheme** - As of 12th August, 2026, the PM Internship Scheme has provided **1,64,902** internship opportunities across 31 sectors.
- **PM-SETU** – Launched in October 2025 with an estimated outlay of ₹60,000 crore to upgrade 1,000 government ITIs through 200 hubs and 800 spokes, with industry participation and labor-market-led courses.
  - » Between 2014 and 2025, ITIs increased from 9,977 to 14,688; enrolment from 9.5 lakh to 14.7 lakh; National Skill Training Institutes from 25 to 33; and Institutes for Training of
  - » Trainers from 11 to 120.



Sports and Fitness

India has built a structured sports pathway that begins with local talent identification and extends to high-performance support. Sport is increasingly seen as a viable career, backed by coaching, infrastructure, scientific training and competition exposure.

- **Khelo India infrastructure** – Under the scheme, 349 infrastructure projects worth ₹3,176 crore have been approved, alongside the establishment of 1,067 Khelo India Centres and 267 academies. The scheme also supports 2,745 athletes.
- **Khelo India Games** – Since 2018, more than 63,000 athletes have participated in the Youth, University, Winter, Para, Beach, Water Sports and Tribal Games.
- **Support for elite athletes** – The Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) supports 51 Core, 52 Para Core and 130 Development athletes. Core and Development athletes receive monthly stipends of ₹50,000 and ₹25,000, respectively.
- **Expanded investment** – The revamped Khelo India Scheme and enhanced support for National Sports Federations have a combined outlay of ₹36,441 crore for the period 2026–27 to 2030–31.



Health and Well-being

Youth empowerment depends on physical, mental, and preventive healthcare. Government programmes have expanded adolescent-friendly services, mental-health counselling, substance-abuse awareness, and access to comprehensive primary care.

- **Adolescent health** – Adolescent Friendly Health Clinics (AFHCs) increased from 6,619 in 2014–15 to 7,203 in 2021–22. Adolescents receiving clinical and counselling services rose from 39 lakh to 82 lakh in the same period; 97.67 lakh youth registered in the clinic in 2024–25 up to November 2024.
- **Mental health** – Tele-MANAS has handled over **43.70 lakh** calls through 53 cells, supported by 23 mentoring institutes and five Regional Coordinating Centres (as on 12th August 2026).
- **Substance-abuse prevention** – As on 12th August, 2026, Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan has reached over **30.05 crore people**, including 11.86 **crore** youth. More than **28.56 lakh** activities have been conducted in educational institutions, while over 28.29 lakh persons have received treatment and rehabilitation support.

A Decade of Transformation

Twelve years of sustained, multi-sectoral investment have produced a measurable transformation in India's youth. More young Indians are staying in education, acquiring industry-relevant skills, entering formal employment, creating businesses, participating in community life, and competing at the highest levels of sport.

The shift has been from access to opportunity, from participation to leadership, and from youth as beneficiaries to youth as co-creators. Policy, institutions, and digital platforms have laid a strong foundation; the Amrit Peedhi is carrying it forward towards Viksit Bharat @ 2047.

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PIB Research





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Expanding the Development Horizon

Ensuring Welfare, Inclusion, and Empowerment for Rural and Tribal Communities

Published on: August 13, 2026

India's development story is reaching deeper into rural and tribal communities, transforming access, opportunity, and quality of life. From basic services and resilient infrastructure to livelihoods, skills, education, and financial security, interventions are expanding the foundations of inclusive growth. Focused efforts for women, tribal communities, and vulnerable groups are further strengthening pathways to dignity and empowerment. These initiatives are reshaping rural India through wider opportunity, stronger communities, and more equitable development.

From Welfare Delivery to Decentralised Partnerships

- **Direct fiscal transfers to gram panchayats** have been increased. It has been increased from ₹2.36 lakh crore under the 15th Finance Commission (2021–26) to ₹4.35 lakh crore under the 16th Finance Commission (2026–31).
- The **Union Budget for rural development** has been increased from ₹87,765 crore (2016–17) to ₹2.73 lakh crore (2026–27).
- The **Union Budget for tribal affairs** has been increased from ₹4,826 crore (2016–17) to ₹15,421.97 crore (2026–27).

Foundations of Dignity: Universal Access to Basic Needs

Jal Jeevan Mission

- **Household tap water coverage** increased from 3.23 crore (August 2019) to over 15.91 crore (August 12, 2026).
- As of August 12, 2026, 2.89 lakh villages have reported **100% tap water coverage** under **Har Ghar Jal** campaign.

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan - Grameen

- Over 12.19 crore **individual household toilets** have been constructed, as of August 12, 2026.
- India was declared **Open Defecation Free in 2019.**
- Over 1,288 **GOBARdhan biogas plants** are operational, as of August 11, 2026, compared to 14 plants in FY 2018-19.

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana

- As of August 12, 2026, over 10.57 crore **free LPG connections** have been provided to women from **below-poverty-line households.**



- The **total number of LPG connections** in India has increased from 14.52 crore in 2014 to 33.39 crore in 2026.

Universal Village Electrification

- **100%** willing household electrification (pan-India level) was achieved by **March 2019** under **PM Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (SAUBHAGYA).**
- Under the **Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana, 100% village electrification** was achieved by **2025.**

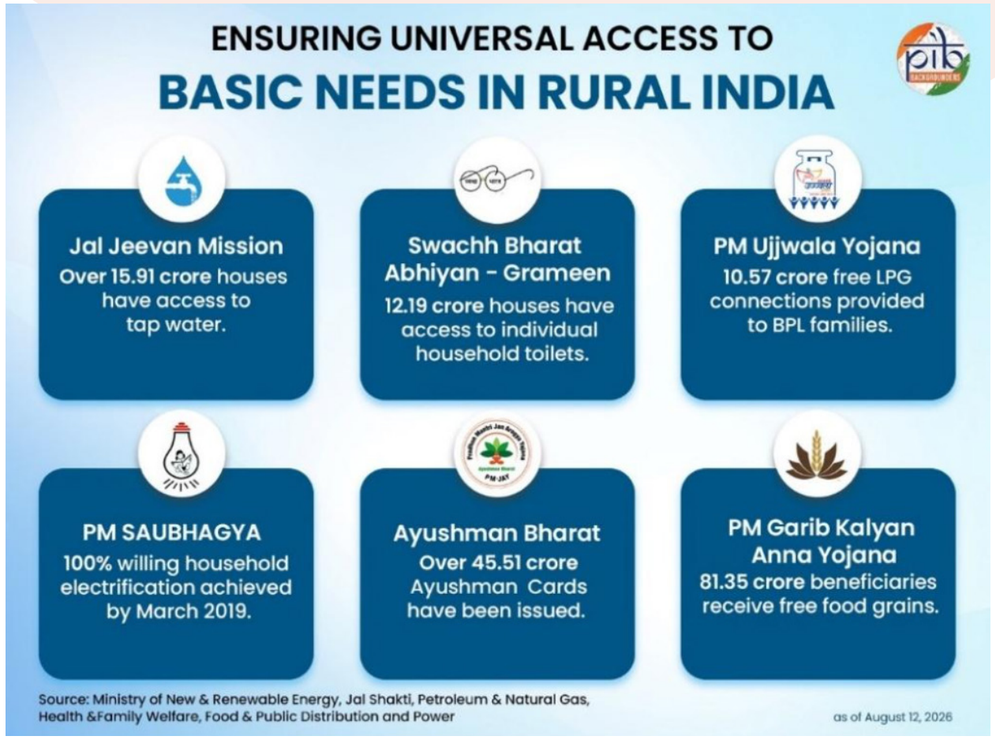
Ayushman Bharat

- More than 45.51 crore **Ayushman Cards** have been issued as of August 12, 2026.
- 96.43 crore **ABHA accounts** have been created as of August 12, 2026.
- Over 1.86 lakh **Ayushman Arogya Mandirs** are currently functional (as of August 12, 2026).



Food Security for All

- **PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana** provides free foodgrains to over 81.35 crore beneficiaries.
- 99.8% **Fair Price Shops** under the PDS are automated for **Aadhaar-based distribution,** as of July 29, 2026.
- **Ration cards** are **100% digitised** across all States/UTs as of July 29, 2026.
- As of July 29, 2026, over 221 crore portability transactions have been recorded under **One Nation One Ration Card.**



Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan)

- Between 2018-19 to 2025-26, 4,073 schools have been **upgraded** and 1.49 lakh **ICT** and **digital initiatives** implemented. Further, 25,000 schools are covered under **skill education.**
- 97.3% of the schools are equipped with functional female sanitation facilities.
- **Female drop-out rate** at **primary school level** decreased from 4.6% (2013-14) to 0.1% (2025-26). At **secondary school level,** it reduced from 14.5% (2013-14) to 8% (2025-26).

Reservation for Economically Weaker Section and Improved Enrolment Levels

- **10% EWS reservation** provided for candidates outside existing SC, ST, and OBC reservation categories in 2019. This decision benefits the economically disadvantaged individuals from the **general** category.
- In 2025-26, **Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER)** was recorded 89.4 at **primary** level and 81.5 at **secondary** level. **GER at higher secondary** level increased to 61.7 in 2025-26 as compared to 46.4 in 2014-15.

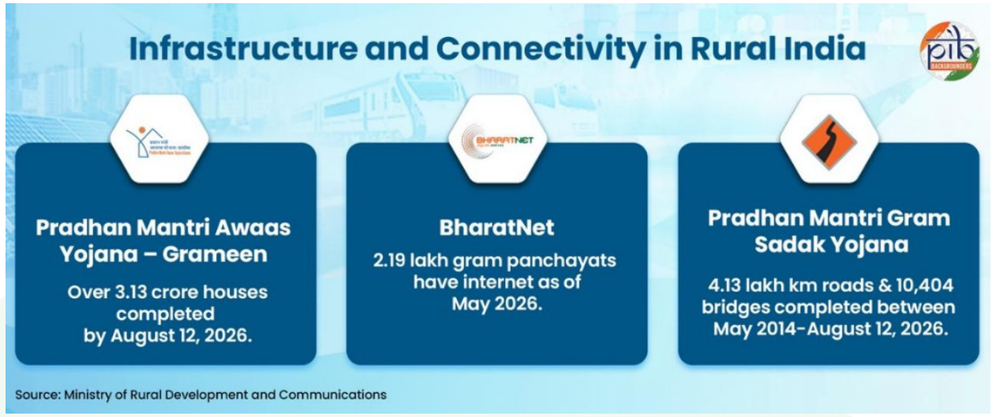
Beti Bachao Beti Padhao

- **Girls' Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER)** for girls at the **secondary level (Classes 9–10)** rose from **75.5% in 2014–15 to 83.4% in 2025–26.**

Kasturba Balika Vidyalayas and PM eVidya

- The number of **sanctioned schools** increased from 3,609 (2014–15) to 5,639 (2024-25). **Operational** KGBVs stand at 5,133, as of 2024–25.
- **Enrolment** increased from 3.52 lakh (2014–15) to 7.11 lakh (2024).
- The **SWAYAM portal (India's indigenous MOOC platform)** has over 6.5 crore enrolments (as of August 12, 2026).
- As of August 12, 2026, **DIKSHA** has 2.35 crore registered users.

Building the Backbone: Infrastructure and Connectivity



Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Grameen

- Under PMAY-G, over 3.91 crore houses have been sanctioned, and **3.13 crore houses** have been **completed** (as of August 12, 2026).

Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana

- As of June 2026, 99.6% of eligible habitations have been connected with **all-weather roads.**
- **Completed length of roads** increased from 3.86 lakh km (May 2000 – May

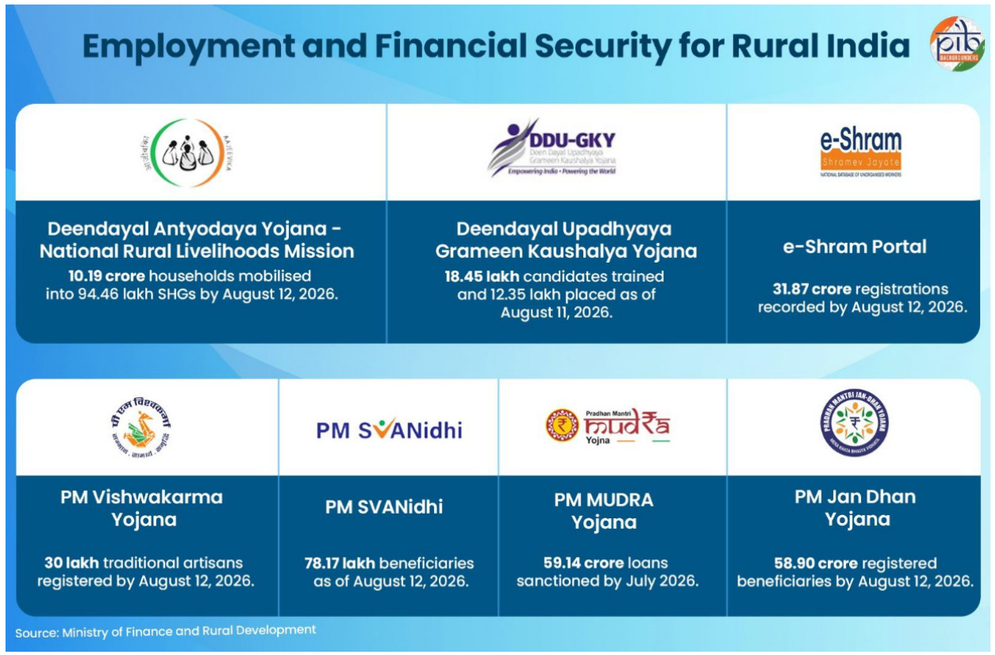
2014) to 4.13 lakh km (May 2014 – August 12, 2026).

- **Completed number of bridges** rose from 484 to 10,404 during May 2014 – August 12, 2026.

Digitalization of Gram Panchayats

- Under **BharatNet,** 2.19 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs) are connected as of May 2026.
- Through **eGramSwaraj,** over ₹3 lakh crore in payments have been processed, as of June 2026.
- Over 1.28 lakh GPs are using **SabhaSaar** for creating meeting summaries, as of June 2026.

Pathways to Prosperity: Livelihoods, Skills, and Financial Security



Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)

- As of August 12, 2026, 10.19 crore **households** have been mobilised into 94.46 lakh SHGs.
- As of July 29, 2026, 3.46 crore **Lakhpati Didis** have been created.

Role of Community Resource Persons in Ensuring Last-Mile Delivery of Schemes

- **Over 9 lakh CRPs** are currently active, serving thematic areas like agriculture, banking, insurance and nutrition.
- This includes more than **50,548 Bank Sakhis, 1.91 lakh Krishi Sakhis, 2,012 Matsya Sakhis, and 1.70 lakh Pashu Sakhis.**

Introduction of Self-Help Entrepreneur Mart (SHE-Mart)

- Announced in the Union Budget 2026-27, aiming to benefit **1 crore women.**
- Aims to create **community-owned retail spaces** for women under the SHG ecosystem.

Deendayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana

- **Candidates trained** increased from 43,038 in 2014–15 to 18.45 lakh till August 11, 2026.
- **Candidates placed** rose from 21,446 in 2014–15 to 12.35 lakh till August 11, 2026.

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana

- Over 1.64 crore youth have received **skill training** since inception till June 2026.

Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin)

- **Total persondays** generated between FY 2006-07 to FY 2013-14 were 1,660 crore, whereas, between FY 2014-15 to FY 2024-25, it rose to 3,029 crore.
- **Women's participation** increased from 48% (FY 2013–14) to 58.19% (FY 2024–25).

e-Shram Portal

- **Registrations** increased from 14.40 crore (Dec 2021) to 31.87 crore (August 12, 2026).

PM Vishwakarma Yojana

- As of August 12, 2026, over 30 lakh **traditional artisans** have been **registered.**
- As of August 12, 2026, 24.32 lakh artisans have received **skill training** and 17.70 lakh have received **toolkits.**

PM SVANidhi

- **Number of beneficiaries** has increased from 26.37 lakh (Nov 2021) to 78.17 lakh (August 12, 2026).
- As of August 12, 2026, loans amounting to **₹18,971.18** crore have been **disbursed.** 46% of the beneficiaries are women.

PM MUDRA Yojana

- Total number of loans sanctioned have increased from 3.49 crore (2016) to over 59.14 crore (July 2026).

PM Jan Dhan Yojana

Number of beneficiaries have increased from 17.9 crore (Aug 2015) to 58.90 crore (August 12, 2026).

Expanding Social Security Coverage

- Under National Pension System, beneficiaries increased from 1.05 crore (2016–17) to 2.17 crore (2025–26).
- Under Atal Pension Yojana, beneficiaries increased from 48.80 lakh (2016–17) to 9.29 crore (June 2026).
- 27.90 crore people covered by Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana up to July 2026.
- 58.78 crore people covered under Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana up to July 1, 2026.
- More than 54 lakh unorganised sector workers have been registered under Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan scheme as of July 2026.

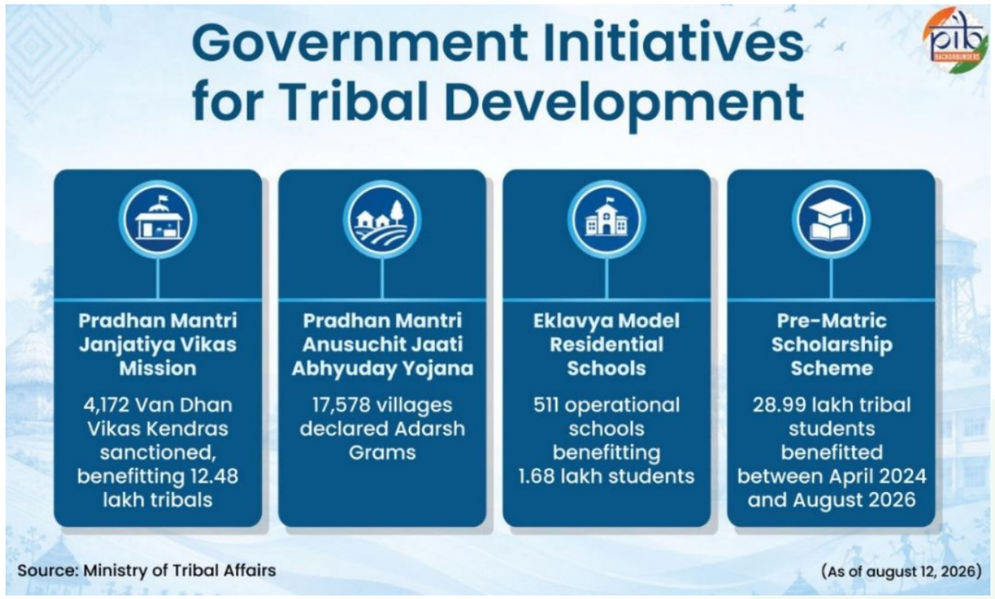
Accelerating Tribal Development through Integrated Interventions

Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN)

- As of August 5, 2026, 540 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVK) have been sanctioned, benefiting 46,042 persons from Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups.

Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission (PM-JVM)

- 4,172 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras sanctioned, benefitting 12.48 lakh tribals under this scheme, as of August 2026.



Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan (PM-JUGA)

It combines the efforts of 17 ministries and focuses on filling long-standing gaps in tribal-majority villages and PVTG habitations. Under PM JUGA, the emphasis has increasingly moved from isolated interventions to coordinated, mission-mode delivery across sectors and ministries. In last 12 years-

- 7.60 lakh tribal houses have been completed and 28,303 tribal villages have access to drinking water.
- 59,812 tribal households and public institutions have been electrified and 657 Anganwadi Centres have been operationalized in tribal areas.
- 692 hostels have also sanctioned for tribal students.

Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM-AJAY)

- As of August 12, 2026, over 4.16 lakh Scheduled Caste (SC) houses have been built, over 4.17 lakh SC households are covered under health protection schemes, and more than 3.57 lakh SC households have individual toilets.
- 17,578 villages have been declared Adarsh Grams as of August 12, 2026.

Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs)

- Operational schools increased from 129 (2014–15) to 511 (August 12, 2026).
- As of August 12, 2026, EMRSs have an enrolment of 1.68 lakh students.

PM-YASASVI

- 20.61 lakh students have received pre-matric scholarship, and 24.53 lakh students have received post-matric scholarship for FY 2024-25.

Scholarships for Scheduled Tribe (ST) Students

- Between April 2024 and August 12, 2026, Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme has benefitted more than 28.99 lakh tribal students.
- National Fellowship for ST Students supported 2,961 research scholars in 2025–26. 56% of the beneficiaries were females.

Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS)

- The Top-Class Education for SC Students scheme enabled 8,571 students to study in leading institutions such as IITs, IIMs, NITs and AIIMS in 2025-26.

National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE)

- 89,915 sewer and septic tank workers and more than 2.81 lakh waste pickers have been validated as of July 2026.

Scheme for Economic Empowerment of De-Notified Tribes (SEED)

- During 2025-26, ₹26.75 crore was disbursed for the educational empowerment of 4,485 De-Notified Tribe (DNT) students.
- 73,569 Ayushman Bharat cards have been issued to DNT families, under the health component, during 2025-26.

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PIB Research





Sashakt Nari, Sashakt Bharat

Published on: August 14, 2026

Women Powering India's Growth Story

Women have moved from being beneficiaries to active drivers of India's development story. Life-cycle interventions now cover the girl child, health, nutrition, skills, entrepreneurship, and leadership. Financial inclusion and leadership opportunities have expanded through Self Help Groups, entrepreneurship, and digital inclusion. Better access to sanitation, housing, clean fuel, and tap water has boosted women's dignity and safety. Growing participation in governance reflects women's expanding role in nation-building.



Protecting Beginnings, Nurturing Futures

Maternal and early childhood care have been strengthened through health services, nutrition support, and institutional delivery systems.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)

- BBBP addresses the declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and related issues of women empowerment over a life-cycle continuum.
- It focuses on institutional deliveries, girls' secondary school enrolment, dropout reduction, and antenatal care registration.
- **NFHS-5 (2019-21) reported a sex ratio of 1,020 females per 1,000 males**, compared with 943 females per 1,000 males in Census 2011.

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)

- A maternity benefit scheme giving Direct Benefit Transfers to pregnant and lactating women.
- Women receive ₹5,000 in two instalments for the first living child; ₹6,000 for a second child, if a girl.
- **Reach:** 5.13 crore beneficiaries enrolled, 4.37 crore beneficiaries paid, ₹20,571 crore paid in total (as on 31 July 2026).

Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA)

- It provides free antenatal check-ups at government facilities on the 9th of every month, for high-risk pregnancies.
- **Reach:** Over 7.50 crore Pregnant Women Examined; 8,812 volunteers registered; 22,000+ facilities offer PMSMA nationwide as on 13 Aug 2026.
- 6.85 crore+ antenatal check-ups conducted; 1.03 crore high-risk pregnancies identified for focused digital tracking.

Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK)

- JSSK entitles every pregnant woman to free delivery, including caesarean section, in public health institutions along with the provision of free transport, diagnostics, medicines, blood, and diet.
- FY 2024-25: Over 1.99 crore pregnant women and more than 16.85 lakh sick infants assisted as beneficiaries.
- Since 2014-15, more than 18.05 crore beneficiaries receiving support under the scheme.

Outcomes

- First-trimester antenatal visits rose from 58.6% in NFHS-4 (2015-16) to 76.2% in NFHS-6 (2023-24).
- Women completing four or more antenatal care visits grew from 51.2% in NFHS-4 (2015-16) to 65.2% in NFHS-6 (2023-24).
- Institutional births rose from 78.9% in NFHS-4 (2015-16) to 90.6% in NFHS-6 (2023-24) at the national level.

Education, Skills, and Aspirational Growth

Girls' education has moved from access to continuity, progression, and measurable outcomes, anchored in NEP 2020.

- **Gender Inclusion Fund:** enables targeted support for disadvantaged girls across the school system.
- **Flexible pathways:** reduce dropouts and support continued participation through school and college.
- **Multidisciplinary options:** let girls pursue diverse academic interests under one framework.

Samagra Shiksha & Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBV)

- India's school education system (2025-26): 14.67 lakh schools, 1.02 crore teachers, and 24.72 crore students nationwide.
- **Female enrolment in school:** 11.96 crore female enrolment in 2025-26.
- **KGBVs:** Enrolment increased from 6.07 lakh (2020–21) to 7.58 lakh (2025–26).

Scholarships & Financial Support

- **Central Sector Scholarship:** Reserves about 50% of scholarships

for meritorious girls from economically weaker families.

- **National PG Scholarship** gives ₹1.5 lakh a year to selected students, including to 3,000 women annually.
- **AICTE PRAGATI Scholarship:** 10,000 scholarships offered annually since 2014-15; nearly 36,000 girls benefited by 2024-25.
- **Outcome:** The Female enrolment has increased in higher education to 2.18 crore in 2022-23 from 2.07 crore in 2021-22. There has been an increase of around 60.32 lakh in the female enrolment from 1.57 crore (38.4%) in 2014-15.

Women in STEM & Higher Education

- **Since December 2019, Vigyan Jyoti Scheme**: has benefitted over 1.12 lakh girls (Classes IX-XII) across 300 districts (as on March 2026).
- Supernumerary seats in IITs/NITs raised women's participation from below 10% to over 20%.
- Women made up over 53% of UGC NET-JRF scholars in STEM subjects in 2024-25.

Skills & Digital Inclusion

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)

- PMKVY gives short-term, industry-aligned training; **nearly 45% of beneficiaries are women**.
- PMKVY 1.0: 19.85 lakh candidates were trained.
- PMKVY 2.0: 1.10 crore candidates were trained/oriented.
- PMKVY 3.0: 7.37 lakh trained.
- PMKVY 4.0: Over 28 lakh candidates trained, with more than 19.36 lakh certified.

Nurturing Aspirations through Vocational Training for Young Adolescent Girls (NAVYA)

- **NAVYA (2025):** trains girls aged 16-18 in digital marketing, cybersecurity, and AI-enabled services, across 27 aspirational and North-Eastern districts and 19 states.
- As of June 2026: **1,060 girls** have been trained since inception.

Health, Nutrition, and Well-being with Dignity

Ayushman Bharat

- **Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY)**: provides cashless secondary and tertiary care; 45.5 crore Ayushman cards have been created as of 12 August 2026, among which 22.48 crore cards issued to women and more than 5.25 crore of the hospital admissions were of women.
- **Ayushman Arogya Mandirs: Over 1.86 lakh** Ayushman Arogya Mandir is functional as on 12 Aug 2026, offering maternal and preventive healthcare for women.
- **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM):** has digitally linked over **110 crore** health records as on 12 Aug 2026; women hold **49.72%** of ABHA accounts as on 12 Aug 2026.

Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0

Mission Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0 focused on tackling malnutrition and improving early childhood development. It brings several nutrition and Anganwadi interventions under one integrated framework.

- **Over 8.94 crore beneficiaries** are being served including more than **64.46 lakh pregnant women, over 45.44 lakh lactating mothers and 15.68 lakh adolescent girls** as on 31st July 2026.
- **1.29 lakh** Anganwadi Centres upgraded to Saksham Anganwadis in the last five years.
- **Around 13.31 lakh Anganwadi Workers were in position as on 31 July 2026**.

Mission Indradhanush

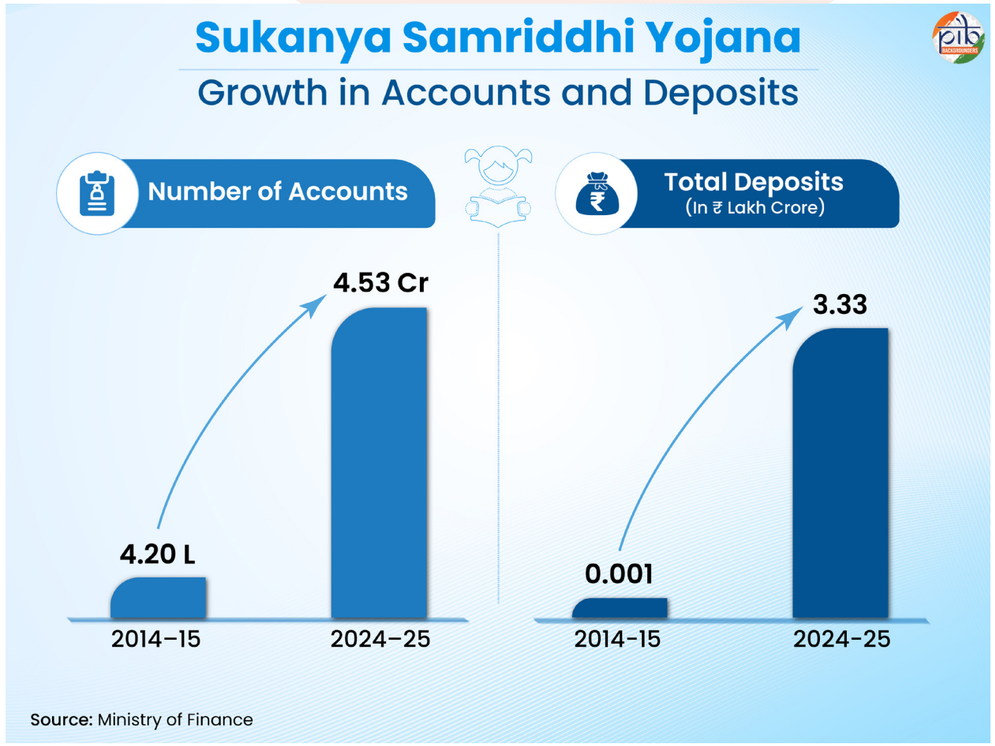
- As of 18 March 2026, **11.87 crore children** and **3.96 crore pregnant women** were registered on the U-WIN portal, which digitally records and tracks immunisation services for these beneficiaries.
- **5.46 crore** children and **1.32 crore** pregnant women vaccinated against preventable diseases.
- **8.73 crore** women screened for cervical cancer, as of 17 February 2026.
- Nationwide HPV vaccination campaign was launched on 28th February 2026 for approximately 1.2 crore eligible beneficiary girls aged 14 years across all 36 States and Union Territories.
- As of 15 July 2026, a total of 52,10,302 girls have received the HPV vaccine across the country.

Financial Inclusion and Economic Empowerment

Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana

- Deposits start at ₹250 and earn 8.2% tax-free annual interest under Section 80C.

- Allows partial withdrawal for higher education and marriage, boosting structured family savings.
- Since its inception, total deposits have exceeded ₹3.33 lakh crore (as on December 2025).



DAY-NRLM - Self Help Group ecosystem

- Expanded SHGs into a nationwide platform covering 7,627 blocks with 1.51 crore community cadre members.
- Since inception, SHGs have accessed bank credit over ₹12.18 lakh crore through 50,548+ trained Bank Sakhis as of 6 Feb 2026.
- By June 30, 2026, **4.32 lakh** enterprises backed under Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Program (SVEP).

Lakhpati Didi Scheme

- Helps SHG women achieve sustainable annual incomes of at least ₹1 lakh.
- **Scale:** 34 States/UTs, 757 districts, **94.31 lakh** SHGs, and **10.14 crore** SHG members as of March 31, 2026.
- It enables implementation through a robust network of 6,611 Master Trainers, 4.09 lakh Community Resource Persons (CRPs), and 3.87 crore Potential Lakhpati Didis (PLDs).

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana

- A total of 58.90 crore Jan-Dhan accounts have been opened as on 12th August, 2026.
- As of 1st July, 2026, **32.68 crore** Jan-Dhan accounts belong to women.

Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)

- Cumulatively, more than 57.79 crore loans have been sanctioned, amounting to ₹40.07 lakh crore of disbursement as on April 8 2026.
- Two-thirds of the loans have been sanctioned to **women entrepreneurs**.

PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (SVANidhi)

Reach: The scheme is benefiting 7,824,611 vendors as on 13 Aug 2026; out of which **women are 46% of beneficiaries**.

NaMo Drone Didi Yojana

- Trains SHG women to operate drones for spraying fertilizers and pesticides on farms.
- Approved with a ₹1,261 crore outlay (2023-24 to 2025-26); targets 15,000 drones to women SHGs.
- Since inception, 1,094 drones distributed to women SHGs including 500+ under Namo Drone Didi initiative, enhancing farm productivity and livelihoods.

Womaniya (GeM)

- Over 2.1 lakh women-led enterprises registered; 13.7 lakh orders secured in FY 2025-26.
- ₹28,000 crore+ contract value awarded to women MSME, up 27.60% over FY 2024-25; secures 5.6% of GeM's order value.

Self Help Entrepreneur Mart (SHE-Mart)

- Announced in the Union Budget 2026-27, aiming to benefit 1 crore women.
- Helping them own and manage sustainable enterprises.

Safety, Security, Dignity and Living Standards

Mission Shakti

- Combines **Sambal** (safety) and **Samarthya** (empowerment) verticals for women's protection and support.
- 15.2 lakh One Stop Centres and 642 Nari Adalat are operational nationwide.
- Women Helpline (181) has supported over 1.05 crore women with 24×7 assistance, linked to Emergency Response (112), till 31st July, 2026.
- SHe-Box portal enables online reporting of workplace harassment for faster grievance redressal.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)

- PMAY-Urban (2015) and PMAY-Gramin (2016) provide pucca houses with basic amenities.
- **PMAY-Gramin:** Over 96.06 lakhs or 24.73% houses were allotted only to women as on 13 Aug 2026.
- **PMAY-U 2.0:** 1.25 crore houses sanctioned and **1 crore houses** allotted to women as on 9 Aug 2026.

Participation, Representation, and Decision-Making

- Women accounted for over 47.15 crore of the 96.88 crore people on the final electoral roll as on February 8, 2026.
- As on 19 March 2025, 14.5 lakh women serve as elected Panchayati Raj representatives, nearly 46% of the total.
- The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023 (the 106th Constitutional Amendment Act) provides 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies, and the Delhi Assembly, which will take effect following the post-census delimitation exercise.
- In 2025, the first batch of **17 women cadets** graduated from the National Defence Academy.
- By early 2026, a total of **158 women cadets** had joined the NDA since 2022.

Nari Shakti as the Foundation of Viksit Bharat

Government focus has reshaped welfare into a platform for women's leadership, dignity, and opportunity. Women are increasingly central to Viksit Bharat by 2047, as workers, entrepreneurs, farmers, and leaders. Access to education, income, and decision-making now extends impact to families and communities. From entrepreneurship to grassroots governance, Nari Shakti is advancing with strength and purpose.

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