

PUBLIC POLICIES WELFARE SCHEMES

For Civil Services Examinations



Value Addition Series

PUBLIC POLICIES & WELFARE SCHEMES

for Civil Services Examinations

- This book offers a comprehensive, concise and crisp compilation of important policies and schemes launched by the government in the past 12 years.
- The content has been developed and updated, keeping in mind the specific needs of UPSC/State PSCs Civil Services Examinations. It will be helpful in preparation for Prelims, Mains, Interview and Essay.
- In Civil Services Examinations as well as other graduate-level competitive examinations, questions are invariably asked from policies and schemes section.

Editor

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Chronicle Editorial Team

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Public Policies

Social Justice

Amendment to Model Prison Manual, 2016, and Model Prisons and Correctional Services Act, 2023

Month/year of Amendment: January 2025

Nodal Ministry: Union Home Ministry

The Union Home Ministry amended the Model Prison Manual, 2016, and the Model Prisons and Correctional Services Act, 2023 to check discrimination and classification of inmates in jails on the basis of their caste.

Key Amendments

- ◆ **New Section:** A new section, 55(A) – Prohibition of Caste-Based Discrimination in Prisons and Correctional Institutions, has been added to the Model Prisons and Correctional Services Act, 2023.
- ◆ **Prohibition of Caste-based Discrimination:** Prison authorities are required to ensure that there is no caste-based discrimination or segregation in prisons. All duties and work assignments must be allotted without bias.
- ◆ **Prohibition of Manual Scavenging:** The provisions of the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013, now apply to prisons. Manual scavenging and hazardous cleaning of sewers or septic tanks are banned.
- ◆ **Habitual Offender:** It replaced the existing definition of ‘Habitual Offender’ in the Model Prison Manual, 2016 and the Model Prisons and Correctional Services Act, 2023.

The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025

Presidential Assent: 22nd August 2025

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)

It marks a landmark move to shield citizens from the menace of online money games while promoting and regulating other kinds of online games.

Why the Act was needed?

- ◆ **Addiction & Financial Ruin:** Loss of savings, family distress.

- ◆ **Mental Health & Suicides:** Depression linked to heavy monetary losses.
- ◆ **Fraud & Money Laundering:** Platforms used for illegal activities.
- ◆ **National Security Threat:** Misuse for terror financing & illicit messaging.
- ◆ **Legal Loopholes:** Online domain largely unregulated compared to physical gambling laws.
- ◆ **Encouraging Healthy Alternatives:** Promotion of e-sports and safe social/educational games.

Key Provisions

Applicability

- ◆ Entire India, including offshore platforms offering services in India.

Promotion of E-sports

- ◆ Recognised as a legitimate competitive sport; training academies & incentives planned.
- ◆ **Promotion of social/educational games:** Govt. to recognize and register safe, age-appropriate games.

Ban on Online Money Games

- ◆ Covers games of chance, skill, or hybrid involving money.
- ◆ Ads, promotion, and financial transactions linked to these games prohibited.

Online Gaming Authority

- ◆ National-level regulator for classification, registration, grievance redressal.

Penalties

- ◆ Up to 3 years imprisonment and Rs. 1 crore fine for offering/facilitating such games.
- ◆ **Repeat Offenders:** Up to 5 years imprisonment and Rs. 2 crore fine.
- ◆ **Advertising Ban Violation:** Up to 2 years imprisonment and Rs. 50 lakh fine.

Corporate Liability

- ◆ Companies/officers accountable, except those proving due diligence.

Investigation Powers

- ◆ Search, seizure, and arrest without warrant under Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023.

2 ■ Public Policies & Welfare Schemes

Rule-making Power

- ◆ Central Govt. to frame rules for e-sports, social games, and regulator functioning.

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Act, 2026

Presidential Assent: 30 March 2026

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Act, 2026 amended the **Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019**. It mandates medical board scrutiny for gender recognition, narrows the legal definition of transgender persons, and introduces stringent penalties for forced trans identities.

Key Changes

- ◆ **Removal of Right to Self-Perceived Gender Identity:** It deleted Section 4(2) of the 2019 Act, which recognises a person's right to self-perceived gender identity.
- ◆ **Redefinition of Transgender Person:** The Act narrows the definition to include:
 - Socio-cultural identities such as hijra, kinner, aravani, jogta, eunuch.
 - Persons with intersex variations.
 - Individuals with congenital biological variations in sexual characteristics.
- ◆ It excludes persons identifying solely based on self-perceived gender identity or gender fluidity.
- ◆ **Recognition of Transgender Identity:** The Act requires the certificate to be issued only after the recommendation of a medical board headed by the Chief Medical Officer or Deputy Chief Medical Officer.
- ◆ **Change in Gender:** The Act makes obtaining a revised certificate after gender change surgery mandatory and requires the medical institution to inform the District Magistrate.

The Industrial Relations Code (Amendment) Act, 2026

Presidential Assent: 16 February 2026

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Labour and Employment
The Industrial Relations Code (Amendment) Act, 2026 amended the Industrial Relations Code, 2020 and provides clarity regarding the repeal and transition framework of legacy labour laws.

Major Amendments

Repeal of Three Labour Laws

- ◆ The following enactments stand repealed from the notified date:

1. Trade Unions Act, 1926
 2. Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946
 3. Industrial Disputes Act, 1947
- ◆ This step completes the consolidation of these 3 central labour laws under the Industrial Relations Code framework.

Continuity of Tribunals and Authorities

- ◆ A significant addition is sub-section (1A), which ensures continuity and prevents administrative disruption.
- ◆ Tribunals and statutory authorities functioning under the repealed Acts will continue to operate.
- ◆ They will function until new tribunals and authorities become operational under the Industrial Relations Code.
- ◆ **This transitional safeguard ensures:**
 - No interruption in dispute resolution
 - No vacuum in adjudication
 - Protection of pending proceedings
 - Administrative continuity.

Why This Amendment Matters?

- ◆ The amendment **resolves ambiguity** regarding:
 - The exact date of repeal,
 - Status of pending cases,
 - Operational continuity of existing tribunals,
 - Legal stability during transition to labour codes.
- ◆ It strengthens the implementation framework of the labour codes reform initiative introduced by the Government of India.

The Viksit Bharat-G RAM G Act 2025

Presidential Assent: 20th December 2025

Came into Effect: 1 July 2026

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Rural Development

The Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB - G RAM G) Act, 2025 replaced the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (MGNREGA).

Key Provisions

- ◆ **Increase in Number of Guaranteed Days of Employment:** MGNREGA guaranteed at least 100 days of employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer for unskilled manual work. The Viksit Bharat - G RAM G Act, 2025 increases this guarantee to 125 days. Under MGNREGA, if a person seeking work is not provided employment within 15 days, the state government must pay them an unemployment allowance. The Act retains this provision.

- ◆ **Fund Sharing:** Under MGNREGA, the central government provided the entire cost of wages for unskilled manual work, up to three-fourths of the material cost, and a share of administrative costs. State governments provided one-fourth of the material cost, administrative costs, unemployment allowance, and compensation in case of delay in wage payments. The Viksit Bharat - G RAM G Act, 2025 amends this to provide that the scheme will be implemented as a centrally sponsored scheme. State governments will notify a scheme consistent with the Bill, within six months from its commencement. The fund-sharing pattern between the central government and state governments will be 60:40 for all states other than the North-eastern and the Himalayan states (90:10). A state and the central government will share the cost of wages, material costs, and administrative costs in the above ratios. The state government will continue to pay unemployment allowance and compensation.
- ◆ **Agricultural Pause:** It introduces a 60-day “agricultural pause” during peak sowing and harvesting seasons. State governments can notify in advance which periods will see a suspension of public works under the scheme. The objective is to ensure agricultural labour availability during farming operations. States can tailor these notifications to districts, blocks, or agro-climatic zones based on local cropping patterns.
- ◆ **Integration into VB – NRIS:** All works will be aggregated into the Viksit Bharat - National Rural Infrastructure Stack, with priority to water security through water-related works, core rural infrastructure, livelihood related infrastructure, and special works to mitigate extreme weather events.
- ◆ **VGPP-based Planning:** Planning will be undertaken through Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans (VGPPs), prepared by Gram Panchayats and integrated with national spatial planning systems, including PM Gati Shakti, while factoring in varying developmental needs.
- ◆ **Securing Peak Agricultural Seasons:** States will be empowered to notify in advance, a period aggregating to 60 days in a financial year covering peak sowing and harvesting during which works under the Act will not be undertaken, facilitating sufficient farm labour at critical times.
- ◆ **Special Relaxations:** During natural calamities or extraordinary circumstances, the Central Government may make temporary relaxations for timely response and relief.
- ◆ **Transparency and Accountability:** Biometric authentication, spatial technology enabled planning, mobile and dashboard based monitoring, weekly public disclosure systems and a strengthened Social Audit mechanism will ensure transparency and accountability.
- ◆ **Institutional Oversight:** The Central Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Council and the State Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Councils shall be constituted for review, monitoring and effective implementation of the provisions of the legislation in their respective areas. Steering committees at Central and State Level shall be constituted to recommend on matters concerning normative allocations, convergence and other such matters.
- ◆ **Unemployment Allowance:** If eligible applicants are not provided work within the stipulated period, State Governments will be obliged to pay unemployment allowance as per the provisions in the Act.
- ◆ **Use of Technology:** It provides for using: (i) biometric authentication for transactions, (ii) geospatial technology for planning and monitoring, (iii) mobile application-based dashboards for real-time tracking, and (iv) weekly public disclosure systems.

National Blood Transfusion Bill, 2025

Introduction in the Parliament: 12 December 2025

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

The National Blood Transfusion Bill, 2025 aims to regulate aspects like the collection and processing of blood components, prevention of transfusion-transmitted conditions and imposition of penalties for unsafe or non-compliant practices.

Key Provisions of the Bill

- ◆ **Regulatory Overhaul:** It proposes moving blood transfusion services from the outdated Drugs and Cosmetics Act of 1940 to a dedicated, unified legal framework.
- ◆ **National Blood Transfusion Authority (NBTA):** Establishment of a central statutory authority to set uniform national standards for the collection, testing, processing, and distribution of blood.
- ◆ **Mandatory Registration:** All blood centers across the country must register with the NBTA, and registration must be renewed.
- ◆ **Haemovigilance:** The implementation of a national haemovigilance program to monitor and report adverse reactions and transfusion-transmitted diseases.
- ◆ **Stringent Penalties:** Imposes strict penalties, including up to 3 years in prison or a Rs. 10 Lakh fine for operating unregistered centers, and up to 5 years in prison for providing unsafe or contaminated blood.

Sabka Bima Sabki Raksha (Amendment of Insurance Laws) Act, 2025

Presidential Assent: 20 December 2025

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Finance

The Sabka Bima Sabki Raksha (Amendment of Insurance Laws) Act, 2025 amended the Insurance Act, 1938, the Life Insurance Corporation Act, 1956, and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999.

Major Provisions

- ♦ **FDI in Indian Insurance Companies:** The new Act proposes to increase the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) limit in Indian insurance companies from 74% to 100% of the paid-up equity capital.
- ♦ **Net-Owned Fund Requirements for Foreign Re-insurers:** It reduces the net-owned fund requirement for foreign entities engaged in re-insurance business from Rs 5,000 crore to Rs 1,000 crore. Net-owned fund includes paid-up equity capital, free reserves, balance in the share premium account, and capital reserves arising from surplus sale proceeds.
- ♦ **Registration of Transfer of Shares:** Currently, IRDAI approval is required where the value of shares being transferred exceeds 1% of the insurer's paid-up share capital. The Act raises this threshold to 5%.
- ♦ **Insurance Co-operative Societies:** The Act amends the definition of insurance co-operative societies by removing the requirement of maintaining a minimum paid-up share capital of Rs 100 crore for life, general, and health insurance businesses.
- ♦ **Applicability of the Act to SEZs and IFSCs:** Under the 1938 Act, the central government may direct that certain provisions of the Act may not apply, or may apply with modifications, to insurers operating in Special Economic Zones (SEZs). The new Act extends these powers to International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs) established within SEZs. These provisions will also apply to insurance intermediaries operating in SEZs and IFSCs.
- ♦ **Powers of IRDAI:** It enhances the powers of IRDAI by authorising it to approve schemes of arrangement between insurers and non-insurance companies. It also empowers IRDAI to supersede the Board of Directors of an insurer and appoint an Administrator if the insurer's business is conducted in a manner prejudicial to policyholders' interests.
- ♦ **Policyholders' Education and Protection Fund:** It provides for the establishment of a Policyholders' Education and Protection Fund to be administered by IRDAI. The Fund will be used for educating policyholders and protecting their interests.

Indian Economy

The Finance Act, 2025

Date of Notification: 29th March 2025

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Finance

The Government notified The Finance Act, 2025 to give effect to the financial proposals of the Central Government for the financial year 2025-2026.

Key Provisions

- ♦ **Abolition of Equalisation Levy:** The government proposes to abolish the 6% equalisation levy (EL) on online advertisements, effective 1st April 2025.
- ♦ **Tax Rationalization:** Several provisions have been simplified to provide tax relief and enhance compliance for businesses and individuals.
- ♦ **Income Tax Rebate:** Under the new tax regime, the rebate limit under **Section 87A** is increased to **Rs. 12 lakh (from Rs. 7 lakh)**. Individuals earning up to Rs. 12 lakh will pay no tax but must still file returns.
- ♦ **Salaried Individuals:** With a **standard deduction of Rs. 75,000**, salaried employees earning up to **Rs. 12.75 lakh** will be exempt from tax under the new regime but must file returns.
- ♦ **Marginal Relief:** Those earning between **Rs. 12 lakh and Rs. 12.75 lakh** will pay tax only on income exceeding Rs. 12 lakh, ensuring their **net take-home remains Rs. 12 lakh**. Maximum relief is **Rs. 60,000**.
- ♦ **Mandatory Input Service Distributor (ISD) Mechanism:** From April 1, businesses must obtain ISD registration to distribute common input tax credits. Earlier, they had the option to use ISD or cross-charge.
- ♦ **Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for GST:** Required for generating e-way bills and e-invoices, involving login via username, password, and OTP.

Welfare Schemes

Social Development & Social Justice

Health & Sanitation

Prime Minister – Road Accident Victims' Hospitalisation and Assured Treatment (PM-RAHAT) Scheme

Launch Date: Notified on **May 5, 2025**, with comprehensive implementation guidelines issued in June 2025. It was formally launched nationwide by the Prime Minister on **February 13, 2026**.

Nodal Ministry: The scheme is led by the **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH)**. It is implemented in close coordination with the **National Health Authority (NHA)**, which provides the technical framework, and the **Ministry of Home Affairs**, which integrates the emergency response and police reporting systems.

About the Scheme

The **Prime Minister – Road Accident Victims' Hospitalisation and Assured Treatment (PM-RAHAT) Scheme** is a transformative initiative designed to fulfill the statutory mandate of Section 162 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. It aims to provide immediate, high-quality medical care to road accident victims during the “Golden Hour”—the critical period when prompt treatment can most effectively prevent fatalities and long-term disabilities.

Key Provisions

- ♦ **Financial Coverage:** The scheme provides cashless treatment up to **Rs. 1.5 lakh per victim** for a maximum of seven days from the date of the accident. This applies to all road accidents involving motor vehicles on any road category.
- ♦ **Stabilization Period:** Victims receive guaranteed stabilization treatment for up to 24 hours in non-life-threatening cases and up to 48 hours in life-threatening cases, even before formal police authentication is finalized.
- ♦ **Digital Integration:** The scheme integrates the **eDAR (Electronic Detailed Accident Report)** platform used by police with the **TMS 2.0 (Transaction Management System)** used by hospitals under the Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY network.

- ♦ **Emergency Support:** Integrated with the **112 Emergency Response Support System (ERSS)**, the scheme assists victims and Good Samaritans (**RAH-VEER**) in locating the nearest designated hospitals and requesting ambulances.
- ♦ **Motor Vehicle Accident Fund (MVAf):** Payments to hospitals are disbursed via the MVAf. This fund is sustained by contributions from insurance companies for insured vehicles and budgetary support for hit-and-run or uninsured cases.
- ♦ **Monitoring and Redressal:** A three-tier grievance mechanism exists at the District, State, and National levels, with District Road Safety Committees (**DRSCs**) overseeing local implementation.

HEALD Initiative

Launched on: 19th April 2025

Nodal Organisation: Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (**ILBS**)

On the occasion of World Liver Day (19th April), Union government launched **HEALD (Healthy Liver Education and Alcohol-associated Liver Disease Prevention)**, a pioneering initiative by the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (**ILBS**) to combat liver disease across India.

Objective of HEALD

- ♦ To raise awareness about **liver diseases**, especially those linked to alcohol use.
- ♦ To provide **early screening, psychological support, and medical treatment** for liver ailments.
- ♦ To integrate **liver health into mainstream public health** through education, rehabilitation, and policy action.
- ♦ To **reduce stigma associated with alcohol dependence** and promote mental health support.

Key Features

- ♦ **Combines multi-sectoral efforts** involving healthcare, community engagement, and policy reform.
- ♦ Launch of India's first **Integrated Liver Habilitation (LiHAB) Centre** to provide comprehensive liver care.

- ◆ **Incorporates lifestyle education** to prevent fatty liver, diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease.
- ◆ **Includes educational tools** like cartoons and survivor stories to humanize and spread awareness.

‘Swasth Nari, Sashakt Parivar’ Abhiyaan

Launched on: 17th September 2025

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) and the Ministry of Women & Child Development (MoWCD).

The Prime Minister of India launched the ‘Swasth Nari, Sashakt Parivar’ (SNSP) Abhiyaan along with the 8th Rashtriya Poshan Maah, in Dhar, Madhya Pradesh.

What is SNSP?

- ◆ Organised in convergence with Poshan Maah, the campaign highlights the crucial role of women’s health in building stronger families and a healthier nation.

Aim

- ◆ Improve health outcomes for women, adolescent girls, and children.
- ◆ Provide screening for communicable and non-communicable diseases.
- ◆ Conduct health counselling and awareness sessions on nutrition and hygiene.
- ◆ Strengthen immunization and child health coverage.
- ◆ Ensure access to comprehensive health services nationwide.

Implementation Strategy

- ◆ SNSPA will organise more than **one lakh health camps** across Ayushman Arogya Mandirs and Community Health Centres, coordinated and tracked through the SASHAKT portal for real-time updates on progress and resource allocation.

Significance

- ◆ **Addressing Critical Gaps in Health Care system:** SNSP builds on the legacy of transformative government programs like Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan, leveraging the momentum of nationwide health and sanitation drives to address critical gaps in maternal and child health, as identified in prior national health surveys.
- ◆ **Foster Behavioural Changes Through Education:** The Abhiyaan will drive behavioural change by educating communities on essential health issues such as menstrual hygiene, balanced nutrition, and overall wellness.
- ◆ **Encourage Community Participation and Public Awareness:** It will foster community participation by promoting a Jan Bhagidaari Abhiyaan, encouraging involvement from private hospitals, local leaders, and citizens.
- ◆ **Towards Viksit Bharat:** It will thus contribute to the larger goal of building resilient families aligned with the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision.

Women & Children

Swavalambini

Launched on: 1st March 2025

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

Swavalambini - a Women Entrepreneurship Programme was launched at Chaudhary Charan Singh University, Meerut, taking a significant step towards strengthening women entrepreneurship in India. Earlier, the program was launched in Assam, Meghalaya and Mizoram in first week of February, 2025.

Key Points

- ◆ **Objective:** Empowering female students in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).
- ◆ **Collaboration:** Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and NITI Aayog.
- ◆ **Implementation:** Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) in collaboration with NITI Aayog.
- ◆ **Wide Coverage:** Swavalambini was also virtually introduced in Banaras Hindu University (BHU),

the University of Hyderabad and Maulana Azad National Urdu University.

Program Components

- ◆ **Entrepreneurship Awareness Programme (EAP):** 2-day session for 600 students on basic entrepreneurial concepts.
- ◆ **Women Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP):** 40-hour training for 300 selected students covering business aspects (finance, market, legal, networking).
- ◆ **Mentorship:** 6 months of support for EDP participants.
- ◆ **Faculty Development Programme (FDP):** 5-day training for HEI faculty on entrepreneurship education.
- ◆ **Award to Rewards Initiative:** Recognizes successful women entrepreneurs.

The program builds upon the foundation laid by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasizes entrepreneurship-driven education, industry collaboration, and hands-on experience.

With Swavalambini, the Government of India aims to create a self-reliant, women-led entrepreneurial landscape, ensuring that at least 10% of trained participants establish successful enterprises. The initiative marks a new era of women's empowerment, enabling them to become leaders, innovators, and changemakers in India's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

'We Rise' Initiative

Launched on: 17th October 2025

Nodal Organisation: NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) and the global logistics firm DP World.

We Rise - Women Entrepreneurs Reimagining Inclusive and Sustainable Enterprises programme under the aegis of WEP's Award to Reward (ATR) initiative, aims to help women entrepreneurs in India to scale their businesses globally through trade facilitation, mentorship, and strategic partnerships.

Key Features

- ◆ **Scope:** The initiative will focus on 100 women entrepreneurs with product-based businesses.

- ◆ **Mentorship for Export Readiness:** 100 women entrepreneurs will receive structured mentorship on- Trade compliance, Cross-border logistics, and Brand positioning and digital visibility. This will leverage DP World's trade facilitation expertise and global logistics network.

- ◆ **Global Trade and Market Access:** Selected women entrepreneurs will be given the opportunity to showcase their products at Bharat Mart, a dedicated B2B and B2C platform within Dubai's Jebel Ali Free Zone. This aims to promote Indian women-led brands in global markets.

Expected Impact

- ◆ The We Rise initiative strengthens **India's commitment to inclusive trade and women-led economic growth.**
- ◆ By integrating DP World's global logistics expertise with the Women Entrepreneurship Platform's entrepreneurial ecosystem, the program **enhances India's participation in global value chains.**
- ◆ It also contributes to the **achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5**, which focuses on promoting gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

Education & Human Resource Development

National Scheme for ITI Upgradation

Approved on: 7th May 2025

On 7th May 2025, in a major step towards transforming vocational education in India, the Union Cabinet approved the National Scheme for Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Upgradation and the setting up of five (5) National Centres of Excellence for Skilling as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

Overview of the Scheme

Objectives and Focus Areas

- ◆ Transform ITIs into government-owned, industry-managed aspirational skill institutes.
- ◆ Train 20 lakh youth over five years.
- ◆ Align skilling programs with industry and local workforce demand.
- ◆ Address skill shortages in high-growth sectors like:
 - Electronics
 - Automotive
 - Renewable Energy

Budget Announcement

- ◆ Announced under Budget 2024–25 and 2025–26.

Funding and Outlay

- ◆ **Total Outlay:** Rs.60, 000 crore.
- ◆ **Co-financing:** 50% of the Central share to be jointly funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and World Bank.

Key Components

Upgradation of 1,000 Government ITI

- ◆ To follow a hub-and-spoke model.
- ◆ Introduction of industry-aligned, revamped trades/courses.

Setting up of 5 National Centres of Excellence (NCOEs)

- ◆ Located within existing National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs).
- ◆ NSTIs to be upgraded in:
 - Bhubaneswar
 - Chennai
 - Hyderabad
 - Kanpur
 - Ludhiana

Training of Trainers (ToT)

- ◆ Upgraded infrastructure for ToT in 5 NSTIs.
- ◆ Training for 50,000 trainers, including both pre-service and in-service.

Implementation Strategy

- ◆ Industry-led Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) model for outcome-driven implementation.

Capacity Building and Human Resource Development Scheme

Approved on: 24th September 2025

Nodal Organisation: Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) / Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

The Union Cabinet approved the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) / Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Scheme on “Capacity Building and Human Resource Development (CBHRD)”.

About the Scheme

- ◆ **Implementation:** Managed by CSIR, the scheme will cover all R&D institutions, national laboratories, Institutes of National Importance, Institutes of Eminence, and universities across India.

- ◆ **Objective:** To provide a structured platform for young researchers to build careers in universities, industry, national R&D laboratories, and academic institutions.
- ◆ **Focus Areas:** The initiative targets growth in Science, Technology & Engineering, Medical, and Mathematical Sciences (STEMM).
- ◆ **Four Sub-schemes**
 - 1. Doctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships:** Support for young researchers pursuing advanced studies.
 - 2. Extramural Research Scheme, Emeritus Scientist Scheme, and Bhatnagar Fellowship Programme:** Encouraging research excellence and mentorship.
 - 3. Promotion and Recognition of Excellence through Award Schemes:** Recognizing outstanding contributions in science and technology.
 - 4. Knowledge Sharing through Travel and Symposia Grant Schemes:** Facilitating exposure to global research environments and collaborative opportunities.

Skill & Employment

MERITE Scheme

Approved on: 8th August 2025

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Education

The Union Cabinet approved the proposal for implementation of the ‘Multidisciplinary Education and Research Improvement in Technical Education’ (MERITE) Scheme.

What is MERITE Scheme?

- ◆ MERITE is a **Central Sector Scheme** designed to **elevate the quality, equity, and governance of technical education nationwide**.
- ◆ This ambitious programme **aligns closely with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020’s** vision for a multidisciplinary, innovative, and skill-driven education system.
- ◆ It **will be rolled out over five years**, from 2025-26 to 2029-30.
- ◆ **Funding outlay of Rs 4200 crores.**

Implementation

- ◆ The programme will be implemented through a central nodal agency responsible for fund disbursal and coordination.
- ◆ Notably, premier educational institutions such as IITs and IIMs, along with key regulatory bodies

like AICTE and NBA, will play a pivotal role in guiding and overseeing the scheme’s rollout.

Who will benefit?

- ◆ The scheme **will impact around 275 government and government-aided technical institutions** including-
 - National Institutes of Technology (NITs)
 - State Engineering Colleges
 - Polytechnics
 - Affiliating Technical Universities (ATUs)
- ◆ Additionally, **state and UT departments** managing technical education will receive support.
- ◆ Approximately **7.5 lakh students will benefit** through improved learning environments, better infrastructure, and enhanced opportunities.

Comprehensive Internship Policy

Launched on: 23rd December 2025

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
Comprehensive Internship Policy is a landmark initiative designed to nurture young talent and professionalize sports administration in India.

Scope and Scale

The policy aims to bridge the gap between academic learning and grassroots sports management.

Indian Economy

Agriculture & Allied Sectors

PM Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana

Approved on: 16th July 2025

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare

The Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY) — a landmark initiative for transforming India's agricultural landscape.

- ◆ First announced in the Union Budget 2025–26, the scheme is designed to catalyse growth in 100 agri-districts through saturation-based convergence of 36 Central schemes across 11 Ministries.
- ◆ The scheme draws on insights from the successful Aspirational District Programme and is projected to benefit 1.7 crore farmers directly.

Objectives

- ◆ Enhancing agricultural productivity.
- ◆ Encouraging crop diversification and sustainable agricultural practices.
- ◆ Augmenting post-harvest storage capacity at panchayat and block levels.
- ◆ Improving irrigation infrastructure for reliable water access.
- ◆ Enabling greater access to short-term and long-term agricultural credit for farmers.

Salient Features

Targeted Districts: Criteria and Selection

- ◆ The scheme identifies 100 districts based on:
 - Low productivity
 - Low cropping intensity
 - Less credit disbursement
- ◆ The number of districts in each state/UT will be based on the share of Net Cropped Area and operational holdings.
- ◆ However, a minimum of one district from each state is to be selected, ensuring balanced geographic inclusion.
- ◆ These districts will be the focal points of convergence-driven agricultural reform, tailored to their agro-climatic conditions and cropping patterns.

Structural Design and Institutional Mechanism

District-Level Planning and Implementation

- ◆ Each selected district under PMDDKY will establish a District Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana

(DDKY) Samiti, chaired by the District Collector or Gram Panchayat.

- ◆ This committee will include progressive farmers and departmental officers to ensure a broader representation.

Multi-Tier Governance

- ◆ The scheme will be governed through a three-tier implementation structure:
 - District-level committees
 - State-level steering groups
 - National-level oversight bodies
- ◆ To bolster on-ground oversight, Central Nodal Officers will be appointed for each district to conduct regular field visits, monitor progress, and coordinate with local teams.

Institutional and Knowledge Support

- ◆ For effective implementation, PMDDKY will also integrate support from key institutions.
- ◆ NITI Aayog will play a central role in:
 - Strategic guidance
 - Capacity-building for state and district-level functionaries
 - Tracking district-level progress
 - Creating a dashboard to monitor the progress
 - Reviewing and guiding district-level plans
 - Each district will also be paired with a Central or State Agricultural University to act as a technical knowledge partner.

Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses

Approved on: 1st October 2025

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare

Despite being a leading producer, India has historically relied on imports for pulses like Tur, Urad, and Masur. This mission aims to bridge the production-consumption gap through a technology-driven, farmer-centric approach, ensuring that India's protein requirements are met domestically.

Key Objectives

- ◆ **Production Targets:** Scaling up domestic production to exceed 35 million tonnes by 2027–28.
- ◆ **Import Substitution:** Reducing pulse imports to zero, thereby saving significant foreign exchange.
- ◆ **Nutritional Security:** Providing affordable, home-grown protein sources to the Indian population.