



For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the Union Government has prioritized employment through the **Prime Minister's Package for Employment and Skilling**, which includes major financial incentives for both first-time workers and employers.

### 1. **Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (VB-G RAM G):**

The **Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin)**, or **VB-G RAM G**, is a legislative overhaul and expansion of India's rural employment framework that replaced the MGNREGA Act of 2005.

Enacted in **December 2025**, it transitions rural employment from a standalone welfare programme into an integrated developmental tool aligned with the national vision of **Viksit Bharat @2047**.

#### **Core Identity & Administration**

- **Ministry:** Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD).
- **Implementing Agency:** **Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)** lead the execution, with **Gram Panchayats** responsible for at least 50% of the works by cost.
- **Scheme Type:** A **Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS)**.
- **Classification:** It serves as a **Flagship** scheme for rural transformation.

#### **Aims and Objectives**

- **Enhanced Employment:** Guarantees **125 days** of wage employment per financial year for every rural household.
- **Productive Assets:** Focuses on creating high-quality, durable rural infrastructure across four priority areas: water security, core rural infrastructure, livelihood-related assets, and climate-resilient works.
- **Saturation & Convergence:** Aims to integrate village-level development plans ([Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans](#)) with national priorities like PM Gati Shakti.
- **Agricultural Support:** Includes a "pause period" (up to 60 days) during peak sowing and harvesting to ensure the availability of farm labour.

#### **Funding Mechanism**

The scheme follows a **Normative Allocation** model based on objective parameters, shifting from the purely demand-driven, open-ended funding of its predecessor.

- **60:40:** Sharing ratio for most States.
- **90:10:** Sharing ratio for North-Eastern and Himalayan States.
- **100%:** Central funding for Union Territories without legislatures.

#### **Update (As of 2026): Achievements & Criticism**

As of May 2026, the mission is in its first full year of operationalization.



## Achievements

**Increased Earnings:** Raising the guarantee from 100 to 125 days has strengthened income security for vulnerable households.

**Digital Governance:** Implementation of biometric authentication, AI for fraud detection, and real-time GPS monitoring.

**Water Security:** Priority given to water harvesting and soil conservation to aid agriculture.

**Transparency:** Mandatory social audits every six months and real-time MIS dashboards.

## Criticisms & Concerns

**Rights Dilution:** Shifting to a "budget-capped" or "supply-driven" model is seen by some as a retreat from the universal "Right to Work".

**Federalism Concerns:** The higher cost-sharing burden (40%) and normative caps may strain state finances.

**Digital Barriers:** Over-reliance on tech and biometric systems risks excluding those in low-connectivity areas.

**Conditional Access:** Unlike the universal nature of MGNREGA, the new Act may only be available in areas notified by the Union.

## 2. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA):

As of 2026, the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)** remains a cornerstone of India's social security, though it has entered a major transition phase. In late 2025, the government introduced the **Viksit Bharat–Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB–G RAM G) Act**, which serves as a comprehensive statutory overhaul to modernise and replace the original 2005 framework.

### Core Details & 2026 Status

- **Aims & Objectives:** To enhance livelihood security by guaranteeing at least **100 days** of wage employment (increased to **125 days** under the new VB-G RAM G Act) in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer for unskilled manual work.
- **Ministry:** **Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD).**
- **Implementing Agency:** State Governments, working through **Gram Panchayats** (the primary planning and executing body) and three-tier Panchayati Raj Institutions.
- **Scheme Type:** It is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme**. Historically, the Centre bore 100% of wages; however, under the 2026 transition, it is moving toward a standard **60:40** cost-sharing ratio (Centre:State), with 90:10 for North-Eastern/Himalayan states.
- **Classification:** It is widely recognised as the world's largest **flagship** social security program.



## Key Features

- **Legal Right to Work:** Employment must be provided within **15 days** of demand; otherwise, the state must pay an **unemployment allowance**.
- **Decentralised Planning:** Gram Sabhas recommend works, and at least 50% of works must be executed by Gram Panchayats.
- **Social Inclusion:** At least **one-third** of beneficiaries must be women.
- **Digital Integration:** Use of the **Aadhaar-Based Payment System (ABPS)** and **GeoMGNREGA** for geo-tagging assets.

## Achievements (Updated to 2026)

- **Unprecedented Budgeting:** The government allocated a record **₹86,000 crore** for FY 2025–26, with an estimated requirement of ₹1.51 lakh crore (including state shares) for the transition to the new Act.
- **Employment Generation:** In FY 2024–25, it generated over **290 crore person-days** of work for 15.99 crore registered households.
- **Asset Creation:** Over **68,000 water bodies** were created under Mission Amrit Sarovar.
- **Women Empowerment:** Women's participation remains high at approximately **58.1%**.

## Criticism & Challenges

- **Implementation Issues:** Significant delays in wage payments and "technological exclusion" due to mandatory Aadhaar-based systems have been widely criticised by civil society.
- **Asset Quality:** Critics often argue that assets created (like temporary roads or bunds) are often sub-optimal or do not provide long-term structural changes to poverty.
- **Fiscal Strain on States:** The shift from 100% central wage funding to a 60:40 sharing model under the new Act has sparked concerns about increasing the financial burden on poorer states

## 3. Employment-Linked Incentive (ELI) Scheme:

The **Employment-Linked Incentive (ELI) Scheme**, officially titled the [Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojana \(PMVBRY\)](#), is a **Central Sector Scheme** approved by the Union Cabinet on July 1, 2025. It is a major component of the ₹2 lakh crore **Prime Minister's Package for Employment and Skilling** announced in the Union Budget 2024–25.

## Core Identity

- **Ministry:** [Ministry of Labour & Employment](#).
- **Implementing Agency:** [Employees' Provident Fund Organisation \(EPFO\)](#).
- **Funding Mechanism:** Fully funded by the Central Government with a budget outlay of **₹99,446 crore**.
- **Classification:** It is a **flagship scheme** within the broader umbrella of the PM's Employment and Skilling package.

## Aims and Objectives

- **Job Creation:** Target to incentivize the creation of **3.5 crore jobs** over two years (August 2025 – July 2027).



- **Formalisation:** Move workers from the informal to the formal sector through EPFO registration.
- **Incentivising Youth:** Support **1.92 crore first-time employees** entering the workforce.
- **Social Security:** Enhance social security coverage and promote long-term saving habits among youth.

### Key Features (Two-Part Structure)

Feature	Part A: For First-Time Employees	Part B: For Employers
<b>Eligibility</b>	Salary up to ₹1 lakh; registered with EPFO for the first time.	EPFO-registered firms hiring additional workers (salary ≤ ₹1 lakh).
<b>Incentive</b>	One-month wage (up to <b>₹15,000</b> ).	Up to <b>₹3,000/month per employee</b> for 2 years.
<b>Disbursal</b>	Paid in two instalments (after 6 and 12 months) via DBT.	Paid directly to employer's PAN-linked accounts.
<b>Conditions</b>	Completion of a <b>financial literacy program</b> for the 2nd instalment.	Must hire 2–5 additional employees and retain them for at least 6 months.

### Update as of 2026

As of early 2026, the scheme has moved from its initial rollout (August 2025) into a critical scaling phase:

- **Portal Launch:** A dedicated portal, [pmvbry.epfindia.gov.in](http://pmvbry.epfindia.gov.in), is fully operational for employer registration and claim processing.
- **Manufacturing Extension:** Benefits for additional employment in the manufacturing sector are confirmed for an **extended 3rd and 4th year**.
- **Integration:** The scheme is now being monitored alongside other PM Package initiatives like the [PM Internship Scheme](#), showing coordinated progress in skilling and job placement.

### Achievements and Criticisms

- **Achievements:**
  - Significant boost in **new EPFO enrolments**, helping reach the target of formalizing millions of workers.
  - Improved **youth financial literacy** through mandatory training linked to incentive payments.
  - Successfully shifted manufacturing focus, aiding India's goal to become a global production hub.
- **Criticisms/Challenges:**
  - **Deadlines:** Initial tight deadlines for Aadhaar-UAN linking (e.g., June 30, 2025) caused hurdles for some eligible workers.



- **Retention Issues:** Concerns remain whether employers will retain "additional" staff once the 2-year incentive period expires.
- **Complexity:** Critics point out that the multi-step verification (continuous service, literacy program, DBT linking) may lead to delays in first-time workers receiving their payments

#### 4. Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP):

The **Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP)** is a major **flagship, Central Sector Scheme** administered by the **Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)**. Launched in 2008, it merged the *Prime Minister's Rojgar Yojana (PMRY)* and the *Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP)* to create a unified, credit-linked subsidy initiative.

##### Core Objectives

- **Job Creation:** To generate continuous employment opportunities in both rural and urban areas.
- **Artisan Support:** To bring together dispersed traditional artisans and unemployed youth to provide them with self-employment at their doorsteps.
- **Arrest Migration:** To provide sustainable livelihoods, thereby reducing the migration of rural youth to cities.
- **Increase Earnings:** To boost the wage-earning capacity of workers and artisans.

##### Key Features & Funding Mechanism

- **Credit-Linked Subsidy:** Beneficiaries contribute a small portion (5–10%), banks provide a loan (90–95%), and the government provides a "Margin Money" subsidy.
- **Project Limits (Updated for 2026):**
  - **Manufacturing Sector:** Max project cost of ₹50 lakh.
  - **Service/Business Sector:** Max project cost of ₹20 lakh.
- **Subsidy Rates:**
  - **General Category:** 15% (Urban) and 25% (Rural).
  - **Special Categories (SC/ST/Women/OBC/NER):** 25% (Urban) and 35% (Rural).
- **Eligibility:** Individuals above 18 years, SHGs, and charitable trusts. For manufacturing projects over ₹10 lakh and service projects over ₹5 lakh, the applicant must have passed Class VIII.

##### Implementing Agencies

- **National Level:** The **Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)** serves as the single nodal agency.
- **State/Local Level:** Implemented via State KVIC Directorates, **State Khadi and Village Industries Boards (KVIBs)**, **District Industries Centres (DICs)**, and banks.

##### 2026 Status & Achievements

The scheme was extended through the **15th Finance Commission cycle (2021-22 to 2025-26)** with a total outlay of ₹13,554.42 crore.

- **Entrepreneurship Growth:** Facilitated over **4.03 lakh micro-enterprises** during the cycle, surpassing the original target.
- **Employment Generation:** Created sustainable jobs for approximately **36.33 lakh individuals** by early 2026.



- **Financial Inclusion:** Achieved near-full utilization of allocated funds, with priority given to smaller projects under ₹10 lakh.

### Criticism & Challenges

- **High NPAs:** The scheme has faced structural issues, with reports indicating a significant portion of assisted units turning into **Non-Performing Assets (NPAs)**.
- **Skill Gaps:** A persistent lack of formal skill training and market study for new entrepreneurs often leads to low business sustainability.
- **Market Competition:** Micro-units often struggle to compete with larger, more established players due to low demand and stiff market competition

### 5. Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY):

As of May 2026, the **Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY)** is a **Central Sector Scheme** and serves as a **flagship initiative** for financial inclusion. It is managed by the **Ministry of Finance** through its nodal agency, the **Department of Financial Services**.

### Core Identity and Administration

- **Ministry:** [Ministry of Finance](#).
- **Implementing Agency:** **MUDRA Ltd.** (Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency), a subsidiary of **SIDBI**.
- **Scheme Type:** A **Central Sector Scheme** (funded entirely by the central government) and a **Flagship Scheme**.

### Aims and Objectives

The primary goal is to "**Fund the Unfunded**" by integrating small, non-corporate micro-enterprises into the formal financial system.

- **Financial Inclusion:** Providing credit to socio-economically neglected classes.
- **Job Creation:** Promoting self-employment and grassroots entrepreneurship.
- **Inclusive Growth:** Targeted support for women, SC, ST, and OBC entrepreneurs.

### Funding Mechanism & Loan Categories

MUDRA functions as a **refinancing institution**; it does not lend directly to individuals but provides funds to **Member Lending Institutions (MLIs)** like banks, NBFCs, and MFIs.

As of 2026, loans are classified into **four categories** (following the 2024 enhancement):

1. **Shishu:** Up to ₹50,000.
2. **Kishor:** ₹50,001 to ₹5 Lakh.
3. **Tarun:** ₹5 Lakh to ₹10 Lakh.
4. **Tarun Plus (New):** ₹10 Lakh to **₹20 Lakh** (introduced for those who successfully repaid Tarun loans).



## Key Features (2026 Update)

- **Enhanced Limit:** The maximum loan limit has been permanently raised to **₹20 Lakh**.
- **Collateral-Free:** No security is required for these loans.
- **Digital Adoption:** Over 80% of applications are now processed through digital portals like Udyamimitra, significantly reducing turnaround time.
- **Sector Coverage:** Includes manufacturing, trading, services, and **allied agricultural activities** (poultry, dairy, beekeeping).

## Achievements (Cumulative up to April 2026)

- **Disbursement:** Over **₹40.07 Lakh Crore** disbursed through **57.79 crore loan accounts** since 2015.
- **Women Empowerment:** Approximately **67% of beneficiaries** are women.
- **Social Equity:** Over **51%** of loans were sanctioned to SC/ST/OBC categories.
- **New Entrepreneurs:** Over **12 crore accounts** belong to first-time business owners.

## Criticisms and Challenges

- **Rising NPAs:** Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) remain a concern, particularly in the Shishu category where repayment discipline is often weaker.
- **Regional Imbalance:** Higher concentration of loans in states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Maharashtra, with lower penetration in the Northeast.
- **Loan Size Issues:** The dominance of Shishu loans (small amounts) leads to criticism that the scheme supports subsistence rather than scalable growth.
- **Assessment Gaps:** Banks often report that collateral-free mandates lead to less rigorous credit assessment, increasing default risks.

## 6. PM SVANidhi:

The **PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi)** is a specialized micro-credit facility launched in June 2020 to empower street vendors by providing access to affordable, collateral-free working capital. As of **2026**, the scheme has been significantly restructured and extended through **March 31, 2030**.

### Core Details

- **Ministry:** Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (**MoHUA**).
- **Implementing Agency:** Small Industries Development Bank of India (**SIDBI**).
- **Scheme Type:** **Central Sector Scheme** (100% funded by the Central Government).
- **Status:** It is a **Flagship Scheme** of the government.

### Aims & Objectives

- **Financial Support:** Facilitate working capital loans to restart and expand livelihoods.
- **Formalization:** Integrate street vendors into the formal financial system.
- **Digital Adoption:** Incentivize digital transactions through cashback rewards.



- **Social Security:** Link vendors to other welfare schemes like PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and Jan Dhan Yojana via the 'SVANidhi se Samriddhi' component.

#### Key Features (Updated for 2026)

- **Tiered Loan Structure:** Vendors can access loans in three tranches: ₹15,000 (1st), ₹25,000 (2nd), and ₹50,000 (3rd) upon timely repayment.
- **Interest Subsidy:** A 7% interest subsidy is credited via Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).
- **Digital Incentives:** Annual cashback of up to ₹1,200 (restructured) for digital transactions.
- **Expanded Reach:** Now includes vendors in **census towns, urban agglomerations, and peri-urban areas.**
- **New Tools:** Introduction of UPI-linked **RuPay credit cards** for high-performing borrowers to build credit history.

#### Achievements (as of 2026)

- **Widespread Impact:** Benefited over **1.15 crore** vendors, including 50 lakh new beneficiaries in the latest phase.
- **Income Growth:** Annualized business income for borrowers grew by roughly **20%** between 2023 and 2025.
- **Digital Milestone:** Millions of vendors are now "digitally active," having conducted billions of transactions worth over ₹6 lakh crore.
- **Recognition:** Won the *Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration* (2023).

#### Criticisms & Challenges

- **Bank Reluctance:** Some banks remain hesitant to lend due to perceived high risks of default in the informal sector.
- **Documentation Barriers:** Many vendors still struggle with the requirement for a **Letter of Recommendation (LoR)** or official vending certificates.
- **Digital Divide:** Vendors in smaller towns often lack the smartphones or digital literacy required to access cashback benefits.
- **Geographic Variation:** Implementation remains uneven across different states, largely depending on how quickly local bodies identify and register vendors

#### 7. Service (NCS) Project:

The **National Career Service (NCS) Project** is a mission-mode initiative launched in July 2015 by the **Ministry of Labour and Employment**. It serves as a one-stop digital and physical ecosystem to bridge the gap between job seekers and employers.

#### Core Framework & Classification

- **Ministry:** Ministry of Labour and Employment.
- **Implementing Agency:** Directorate General of Employment (DGE).



- **Scheme Type:** It is a **Central Sector Scheme** (100% funded and implemented by the Central Government) and is categorized as a **Flagship Programme**. It also functions as a Mission Mode Project under the National e-Governance Plan.
- **Funding Mechanism:** Fully funded by the Central Government through budgetary allocations to the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

### Aims and Objectives

- **Connecting Talent:** Facilitating direct interaction between job seekers, employers, and training providers.
- **Decent Employment:** Enhancing access to quality work opportunities for youth and the unorganized sector.
- **Holistic Support:** Providing career counseling, vocational guidance, and skill development information.
- **Modernization:** Replacing the old employment exchange system with a dynamic, IT-enabled platform.

### Key Features

- **ICT-Based Portal:** A unified digital platform ([www.ncs.gov.in](http://www.ncs.gov.in)) for job matching and services.
- **Model Career Centres (MCCs):** Physical centers established across India to provide offline career support.
- **Multilingual Support:** A toll-free call center assisting users in multiple regional languages.
- **Integration:** Linked with various state employment portals and other government platforms like MY Bharat.

### 2026 Status & Achievements

As of early 2026, the project has shown significant scaling:

- **Job Vacancies:** Over **8 crore vacancies** have been mobilized on the platform since its inception.
- **Registrations:** More than **78.86 lakh job seekers** and **12.36 lakh employers** registered in FY 2025-26 alone (as of January 20, 2026).
- **Infrastructure:** The government has approved **407 Model Career Centres** to strengthen offline reach.
- **Career Guidance:** Over **1,180 career counselors** have conducted more than **55 lakh counseling sessions** nationwide.

### Criticisms

- **Mandatory Reporting:** There is no mandatory requirement for employers to notify final hiring figures, which can lead to data gaps regarding actual job placements versus advertised vacancies.
- **Digital Divide:** Despite physical MCCs, the heavy reliance on a digital portal may exclude rural job seekers with limited internet access or digital literacy.
- **Job Quality:** Questions have been raised regarding the proportion of "decent" or high-paying jobs versus entry-level or gig-based roles listed on the portal.

### 8. Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana (DAY-NRLM & NULM):

The **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana (DAY)** is India's premier **flagship** and **centrally sponsored scheme** designed to alleviate poverty through sustainable livelihood opportunities. It operates through two distinct missions: **DAY-NRLM** for rural areas and **DAY-NULM** for urban areas.



## Core Identity and Classification

- **Ministry:**
  - **NRLM:** Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD).
  - **NULM:** Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
- **Scheme Type: Centrally Sponsored Scheme** (funded jointly by Centre and States).
- **Status:** It is a **flagship umbrella scheme**, integrating various sub-schemes like **DDU-GKY** (skill training) and **SVEP** (village entrepreneurship).
- **Implementing Agencies:**
  - **National Level:** National Mission Management Units (NMMU) within the respective ministries.
  - **State Level:** State Rural/Urban Livelihood Missions (SRLMs/SULMs), often organized as Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs).

## Aims, Objectives, and Funding

Feature	DAY-NRLM (Rural)	DAY-NULM (Urban)
<b>Primary Aim</b>	Reduce rural poverty by organizing the poor into Self-Help Groups (SHGs).	Reduce urban poverty and vulnerability through skill development and employment.
<b>Objectives</b>	Mobilize 10 crore households; provide access to formal credit and diversified livelihoods.	Provide shelters for homeless, support street vendors, and offer market-oriented skill training.
<b>Funding Ratio</b>	<b>60:40</b> (Centre:State) generally; <b>90:10</b> for NE and Himalayan states.	<b>75:25</b> generally; <b>90:10</b> for Special Category States.

## Key Features

- **Social Mobilization:** Organizing poor women into SHGs, Village Organizations, and Cluster-Level Federations.
- **Financial Inclusion:** Providing **Revolving Funds** (₹10,000–15,000) and **Community Investment Support Funds** (up to ₹2.5 lakh) per SHG, plus interest subventions on bank loans.
- **Skill Training:** Implemented via **RSETIs** and **DDU-GKY** for rural youth, and **EST&P** for urban poor.
- **Targeting:** Identified through **Participatory Identification of Poor (PIP)** rather than just BPL lists.

## 2026 Updates and Achievements

- **Lakhpati Didi Initiative:** As of early 2026, the government is aggressively pursuing a target to enable **3 crore SHG women** (Lakhpati Didis) to earn at least ₹1 lakh annually.
- **NRLM 2.0 (Roadmap 2026–31):** A new strategic cycle focusing on scaling **women-led rural enterprises** and strengthening grassroots institutions has been launched for the 2026–2031 period.
- **Urban Update:** While the primary phase of DAY-NULM ended in September 2024, components like **PM SVANidhi** (for street vendors) have been extended until **March 2030**.



- **Scale:** Approximately **10 crore rural households** have been mobilized into roughly **91 lakh SHGs** by 2026.

### Criticism

- **Credit Dependency:** Concerns that the focus on SHG loans can lead to high debt levels if livelihood activities are not immediately profitable.
- **Skill-Market Mismatch:** Critics often point out that skill training (especially in urban areas) sometimes fails to result in long-term, high-wage employment due to local market saturation.
- **Regional Imbalance:** Significant success in southern and western states compared to slower progress in some northern and eastern regions.
- **Administrative Hurdles:** Delays in fund release at the state level and complex documentation requirements for illiterate or semi-literate SHG members

### 9. Lakhpati Didi Initiative:

The **Lakhpati Didi Initiative**, launched in 2023, is a comprehensive outcome of the **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)**. Its primary goal is to empower women in Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to achieve a sustainable annual household income of **₹1 lakh or more**.

### Core Identity & Administration

- **Ministry:** [Ministry of Rural Development \(MoRD\)](#).
- **Implementing Agency:** Implemented by the **Rural Livelihoods (RL) Division** of the MoRD in partnership with **State Rural Livelihoods Missions (SRLMs)**.
- **Scheme Type:** It is part of a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** (DAY-NRLM), where funding is shared between the Centre and States/UTs.
- **Classification:** It is considered a **Flagship Initiative** under the broader **Umbrella** of DAY-NRLM.

### Aims and Objectives

- **Economic Empowerment:** Enable women to earn at least ₹10,000 per month sustained over at least four agricultural seasons or business cycles.
- **Entrepreneurship:** Promote women-led micro-enterprises and diversified livelihood activities (e.g., poultry, organic farming, food processing).
- **Financial Inclusion:** Improve access to credit, banking, and financial literacy.
- **Social Transformation:** Position rural women as community role models and leaders.

### Funding Mechanism & Features

- **Direct Support:** Provided through **Revolving Funds (RF)** (₹20,000–₹30,000 per SHG) and **Community Investment Funds (CIF)** (up to ₹2.5 lakh per SHG).
- **Credit Linkage:** Facilitates collateral-free bank loans (up to ₹20 lakh for SHGs) at subsidised interest rates.
- **Technology & Monitoring:** Uses the **LokOS app** for real-time tracking of SHG records and member income.
- **Skill Training:** Backed by **Community Resource Persons (CRPs)** who help prepare "Lakhpati Livelihood Plans".



## 2026 Status and Achievements

- **Revised Target:** The government surpassed its original goal and has now set a new target to create **6 crore Lakhpati Didis by March 2029**.
- **Current Milestone:** As of early 2026, over **3 crore women** have already achieved "Lakhpati" status.
- **New Initiatives:** **Lakhpati Didi 2.0** and **SHE-Marts** (retail outlets for SHG products) were introduced in the 2026 Budget to scale these micro-enterprises.

## Criticism and Challenges

- **Implementation Gaps:** Issues with delayed payments and inclusion errors where the poorest households are sometimes left out.
- **Sustainability:** Critics question if the ₹1 lakh income is truly sustainable against inflation and market competition.
- **Digital/Infrastructure Barriers:** Lack of high-speed internet and digital equipment in remote areas hinders progress tracking and market access.
- **Socio-Cultural Norms:** Family obligations and restricted mobility remain significant hurdles for women looking to scale their businesses

## 10. Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PMVBRY)

The **Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PMVBRY)** is a **Central Sector Scheme** under the **Ministry of Labour and Employment**. It is a **flagship initiative** designed as an **Employment Linked Incentive (ELI) scheme** to boost job creation and formalize the Indian workforce.

### Overview as of 2026

Feature	Details
Ministry	Ministry of Labour & Employment
Implementing Agency	Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)
Scheme Type	Central Sector Scheme (100% funded by the Union Government)
Status	Flagship scheme (Part of the "Prime Minister's Package for Employment and Skilling")



**Budgetary Outlay** ₹99,446 crore

**Target Period** August 1, 2025 – July 31, 2027 (for registration of new jobs)

### Aims and Objectives

- **Job Creation:** Target of generating over **3.5 crore new jobs** by 2027.
- **Formalization:** Encouraging employers to register employees with the EPFO to provide social security.
- **Supporting First-Timers:** Assisting nearly **1.92 crore youth** entering the formal workforce for the first time.
- **Manufacturing Push:** Providing extended incentives specifically for the labour-intensive **manufacturing sector**.

### Key Features

The scheme is divided into two primary components:

- **Part A: First-Timer Support:**
  - **Incentive:** A one-time subsidy of up to **₹15,000** for first-time employees with a salary up to ₹1 lakh.
  - **Payout:** Released in two installments (after 6 and 12 months) directly to the employee's bank account via [Direct Benefit Transfer \(DBT\)](#).
  - **Mandate:** The second installment is linked to the completion of an online **financial literacy programme**.
- **Part B: Employer Incentives:**
  - **Incentive:** Employers receive up to **₹3,000 per month** for every additional job created for up to 2 years.
  - **Extended Support:** For the manufacturing sector, these incentives are extended for a total of **4 years**.
  - **Eligibility:** Applies to new hires earning up to ₹1 lakh per month.

### Achievements (2025–2026)

- **Rapid Registration:** Since the PMVBRY Portal went live in late 2025, over **100 employers and employees** registered within initial sensitization phases in regions like the Andaman and Nicobar Islands alone.
- **Infrastructure Integration:** The scheme is now integrated with the e-Shram portal, serving as a one-stop solution for unorganized workers to access formal benefits.

### Criticisms and Challenges

- **Administrative Burden:** Critics argue the multi-installment payout (6-month and 12-month marks) may be cumbersome for both small employers and low-wage workers who need immediate liquidity.
- **Sectoral Specificity:** While it focuses heavily on manufacturing, some experts believe the service sector (a major job creator) requires more aggressive long-term support than the currently offered 2-year window.
- **Baseline Complexity:** Calculating the "additional employment" baseline (based on average EPFO data from previous years) can be complex for existing firms, potentially leading to disputes



## 11. Centres of Excellence:

As of **May 2026**, the **Centres of Excellence (CoE)** in India do not exist as a single "umbrella" scheme but rather as a **strategic framework** integrated across several ministries to foster high-end research, innovation, and skill development. These CoEs are typically **Central Sector Schemes** (100% funded by the Union Government) or components of **Flagship Missions** like the **National Green Hydrogen Mission** and **Atal Innovation Mission**.

### Key CoE Domains and Updates (2026)

Feature	Details (Latest 2026 Data)
<b>Aims &amp; Objectives</b>	To position India as a global leader in specific sectors (e.g., AI, Green Hydrogen, Cyber Law) through interdisciplinary research, industrial collaboration, and creating "market-ready" prototypes.
<b>Key Ministries</b>	Ministry of Education, Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY), and Ministry of Heavy Industries.
<b>Implementing Agencies</b>	Leading academic and research institutions like <b>IITs</b> , <b>IISc Bangalore</b> , <b>NIPERs</b> , and specialized agencies like <b>ANRF</b> (Anusandhan National Research Foundation).
<b>Funding Mechanism</b>	Primarily <b>Project-based funding</b> . Total outlays for specific clusters like AI for Education stand at <b>₹500 crore</b> (announced in 2025-26), while AI for Agriculture/Health has an outlay of <b>₹990 crore</b> through 2027-28.
<b>Scheme Type</b>	Usually <b>Central Sector Schemes</b> (directly handled by Central ministries). Some, like those in the skill sector, follow a <b>Hub &amp; Spoke model</b> involving industry partners.

### Major Achievements (by May 2026)

- **Establishment Reach:** Over **202 CoEs** have been established across India with the help of Sector Skill Councils to enhance industrial visibility and credibility.
- **Technological Milestones:**
  - **AI Integration:** Three national AI centres (IIT Kanpur, IIT Ropar, IISc) are operational, focusing on health, agriculture, and sustainable cities.
  - **Medical Innovation:** Seven CoEs established at **NIPERs** under the **PRIP Scheme** released **₹1,834.6 million** by Jan 2026 for MedTech research.
  - **Aeronautics:** Launch of the **National Centre of Excellence for Skilling in Aeronautics** at NSTI Kanpur in collaboration with **France**.
- **Grassroots Transition:** The success of agricultural CoEs (developed with Israeli cooperation) led to the 2026 announcement of "**Villages of Excellence**" to bring tech to the grassroots.



## Critical Analysis & Challenges

- **Criticism:**
  - **Sustainability Concerns:** Many CoEs face difficulty maintaining consistent quality and securing long-term private funding after initial government grants.
  - **Research-to-Market Gap:** While academic output is high, bridging the gap from "Proof-of-Concept" (TRL-4) to commercialization remains a significant hurdle.
  - **Geographical Concentration:** A high concentration of CoEs remains in Tier-1 cities or premier IITs, sometimes limiting accessibility for regional institutions

## 12. Revamped PM SVANidhi:

The revamped **PM SVANidhi** (PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi) has been extended until **March 2030** with an increased outlay of **₹7,332 crore**, transitioning from a pandemic-relief measure to a long-term urban welfare initiative.

### Core Identity & Administration

- **Ministry:** Jointly managed by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** and the **Department of Financial Services (DFS)**.
- **Implementing Agency:** **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)**.
- **Scheme Type:** A **Central Sector Scheme** (100% funded by the Union Government).
- **Category:** It is considered a **Flagship Scheme** for urban financial inclusion and street vendor empowerment.

### Aims and Objectives

- **Credit Access:** Facilitate affordable, collateral-free working capital loans to street vendors.
- **Incentivize Repayment:** Encourage timely repayment through interest subsidies.
- **Digital Onboarding:** Reward digital transactions to formalize the street vending economy.
- **Holistic Welfare:** Link vendors and their families to eight major government welfare schemes via the 'SVANidhi se Samriddhi' component.

### Key Features (Revamped for 2026)

- **Enhanced Loan Structure:** The 2026 update features increased loan limits:
  - **1st Tranche:** Up to **₹15,000** (originally ₹10,000).
  - **2nd Tranche:** Up to **₹25,000** (originally ₹20,000).
  - **3rd Tranche:** Remains at **₹50,000**.
- **UPI-linked RuPay Credit Card:** New provision of a credit card (up to **₹30,000 limit**) for vendors who successfully repay their second tranche loan.
- **Geographic Expansion:** Coverage extended beyond statutory towns to **census towns, urban agglomerations, and peri-urban areas**.
- **Financial Benefits:**



- **7% Interest Subsidy:** Credited via Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) quarterly.
- **Cashback:** Up to ₹1,600 annually for retail and wholesale digital transactions.
- **No Collateral or Penalty:** Loans require no guarantee and have no early repayment charges.

### Achievements (as of 2026)

- **Disbursement Milestones:** Over **1.05 crore loans** have been disbursed across all three tranches since June 2020.
- **Income Growth:** An ISB impact study found that borrowers' average annualized business income grew by approximately **20%** between 2023 and 2025.
- **Social Impact:** Profiling of over **47 lakh vendors** and their families has led to more than **1.46 crore** welfare scheme sanctions (e.g., insurance, pension).

### Criticism & Challenges

- **Eviction and Harassment:** Vendors often face evictions by municipal authorities despite being scheme beneficiaries, as the scheme does not fully guarantee tenure security provided by the [Street Vendors Act, 2014](#).
- **Bank Reluctance:** Private and commercial banks frequently exhibit hesitation in lending to street vendors due to perceived default risks.
- **Digital Divide:** Limited smartphone access and digital literacy hinder vendors from fully utilizing the cashback incentives.
- **Documentation Barriers:** Many informal vendors still struggle to obtain the mandatory **Letter of Recommendation (LoR)** or vendor certificates from Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)

### 13. Tourist Guide Upskilling Pilot Scheme

The **Tourist Guide Upskilling Pilot Scheme**, announced in the **Union Budget 2026-27**, is a targeted initiative to professionalise India's tourism workforce by training **10,000 guides** across **20 iconic tourist sites**.

#### Key Objectives & Aims

- **Professionalisation:** Develop professionally trained, knowledgeable, and responsible guides.
- **Economic Growth:** Position tourism as a strategic growth driver to boost local economies and generate large-scale employment.
- **Visitor Experience:** Enhance the overall experience for domestic and international tourists through better storytelling, safety, and service quality.
- **Standardisation:** Establish a high-quality, standardised curriculum aligned with global hospitality trends.

#### Scheme Features & Mechanism

- **Ministry & Agency:** Administered by the **Ministry of Tourism**. Implementing partners include **Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs)**, the **Indian Institute of Tourism & Travel Management (IITTM)**, and the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**.



- **Training Model:** A **12-week hybrid program** combining classroom instruction, digital modules, and field training.
- **Certification:** Aligned with the **National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF)** and **National Credit Framework (NCrF)** to ensure quality and credit-based outcomes.
- **Scheme Type:** It is a **Central Sector Scheme** (100% funded by the Union Government). It functions as a specialized **pilot initiative** under the broader human capital reform efforts of the Ministry of Tourism.

#### Update as of 2026

- **Rollout:** The scheme is being conducted during the **financial year 2026-27**.
- **Integration:** It works alongside the newly proposed **National Destination Digital Knowledge Grid**, which documents cultural and spiritual sites to create a job ecosystem for local researchers and historians.
- **Hospitality Upgrade:** Complemented by the creation of a **National Institute of Hospitality (NIH)**, upgraded from the existing NCHMCT.

#### Achievements & Criticisms

- **Achievements:**
  - **Stakeholder Collaboration:** Successfully onboarded premier institutes like [IIM Indore](#) and **IIM Nagpur** to design tourism-specific curricula (e.g., forest conservation and tiger safaris).
  - **Wide Reach:** Identified and targeted 20 iconic sites across diverse states, including Andhra Pradesh, to ensure regional representation.
- **Criticisms & Challenges:**
  - **Implementation Gaps:** Concerns persist regarding **infrastructure gaps** and overcrowding at major sites that training alone cannot solve.
  - **Quality vs. Quantity:** Critics have noted that while 10,000 is a significant number, it remains a "pilot" against the massive demand in a sector supporting over **13% of total employment**.
  - **Tourism Barriers:** Issues such as high visa costs, safety, and hygiene continue to affect the sector's competitiveness regardless of guide training

#### 14. Namu Drone Didi:

The **Namu Drone Didi Scheme** is a **Central Sector Scheme** (100% funded by the Union Government) launched in November 2023 to empower women in rural areas by integrating them into the agricultural technology supply chain.

#### Core Identity & Governance

- **Ministry:** [Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare](#) (MoA&FW).
- **Classification:** It is a **flagship scheme** categorized under the broader **umbrella** of the [Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission](#) (DAY-NRLM).



- **Implementing Agencies:** A collaborative effort between the Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW), Department of Rural Development (DoRD), and Department of Fertilizers (DoF). **Lead Fertilizer Companies (LFCs)** act as the primary bridge for drone distribution and maintenance.

### Aims & Objectives

- **Empowerment:** Provide sustainable livelihood and business opportunities to 15,000 women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs).
- **Agri-Tech Adoption:** Promote advanced technology to improve crop yields and reduce operational costs for farmers.
- **Efficiency:** Optimize the use of nano-fertilizers and pesticides through precision spraying.
- **Economic Goal:** Target an additional annual income of at least **₹1 lakh** for each participating SHG.

### Funding Mechanism & Features

- **Total Outlay:** ₹1,261 crore for the period 2023-24 to 2025-26.
- **Financial Assistance:** The Central Government provides an **80% subsidy** (up to ₹8 lakh) on the drone and accessory package.
- **Loan Support:** The remaining 20% can be financed via the [Agriculture Infrastructure Fund](#) (AIF) with a **3% interest subvention**.
- **Training:** A comprehensive **15-day package**, including 5 days of mandatory drone pilot training and 10 days of agricultural training (nutrient/pesticide application).

### 2026 Status & Achievements

- **Lakhpati Didi Milestone:** As of February 2026, drone didis have contributed significantly to the national milestone of **41.1 million Lakhpati Didis**.
- **Distribution:** Over **1,094 drones** were distributed in the initial phases, with roughly 500 directly under this scheme's budget and others through LFC internal resources.
- **Operational Success:** Farmers using these services report **30–40% reduction** in pesticide usage and up to **90% water savings** compared to traditional methods.
- **State Leadership:** **Karnataka** has emerged as a leader, training the highest number (145) of SHG members as certified drone pilots.

### Criticisms & Challenges

- **Maintenance & Technical Support:** Critics highlight the difficulty of accessing prompt repair services in remote rural areas once the initial two-year annual maintenance contract (AMC) expires.
- **Sustainability of Demand:** Concerns exist regarding whether there is enough year-round demand in small-holder farming clusters to sustain a monthly income of ₹60,000–80,000 outside peak spraying seasons.
- **Digital Divide:** Some reports suggest a steep learning curve for members with low baseline digital literacy, necessitating more than the standard 15-day training for long-term proficiency



## 15. PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana:

**PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana** is a **Central Sector Scheme** launched in February 2024 to provide free electricity to **one crore households** in India by promoting rooftop solar installations. As of **May 2026**, the scheme is in its peak implementation phase, targeting a cumulative 40 lakh installations by March 2026 and one crore by March 2027.

### Core Framework

- **Ministry & Agency:** Overseen by the [Ministry of New and Renewable Energy \(MNRE\)](#). It is implemented by the **National Programme Implementation Agency (NPIA)** at the national level and **State Implementation Agencies (SIAs)**—primarily DISCOMs—at the state level.
- **Scheme Type:** It is a **Central Sector Scheme** (100% funded by the Union Government) and is considered a **flagship initiative**.
- **Aims & Objectives:**
  - Empower households to generate their own power and get up to **300 units of free electricity** monthly.
  - Reduce the government's electricity subsidy burden by an estimated ₹75,000 crore annually.
  - Achieve **30 GW** of residential rooftop solar capacity and create ~1 lakh green jobs.

### Funding Mechanism & Features

- **Total Outlay:** ₹75,021 crore for implementation through FY 2026-27.
- **Subsidy Structure (CFA):** Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) into bank accounts:
  - **1 kW system:** ₹30,000.
  - **2 kW system:** ₹60,000.
  - **3 kW system & above:** Fixed at **₹78,000**.
- **Concessional Loans:** Collateral-free loans at attractive interest rates (approx. 5.75% to 7%) for systems up to 3 kW.
- **Innovative Models (2025-26 Updates):**
  - **RESCO Model:** Third-party entities install and maintain panels; consumers pay only for power consumed without upfront costs.
  - **Utility-Led Aggregation (ULA):** DISCOMs manage installations on behalf of households.
  - **Model Solar Village:** ₹800 crore allocated to develop one "Model Solar Village" per district.

### Status & Achievements (Update 2026)

- **Installations:** Surpassed **19 lakh systems** by late 2025, with projections hitting the **40 lakh mark** by March 2026.
- **Registrations:** Over 1.45 crore households have registered on the National Portal.
- **Economic Impact:** Thousands of households report achieving **zero electricity bills**.

### Criticisms & Challenges

- **Technical Hurdles:** Issues with grid stability and the timely availability of **net meters** from DISCOMs.



- **Upfront Costs:** Despite subsidies, the initial high cost remains a barrier for low-income groups.
- **Awareness & Documentation:** Complexity in the application process and digital literacy requirements for rural beneficiaries.
- **Equipment Quality:** Strict **ALMM (Approved List of Models and Manufacturers)** requirements can limit vendor choices and cause project delays

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