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Viksit Bharat—G RAM G Bill

Building Assets Not Just Wages

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Rural India today stands transformed. Over the past two decades, rising incomes, improved connectivity, digital penetration, and diversified livelihoods have reshaped the nature of work and aspirations in villages. While the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has been instrumental in providing wage security and basic infrastructure since 2005, the socio-economic landscape it was designed for has evolved. Open-ended, demand-driven employment models, though essential in their time, no longer fully address contemporary rural needs, including income stability, climate resilience, and infrastructure-led growth.

Recognising these changed realities, the *Viksit Bharat—Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Bill, 2025—* or *Viksit Bharat—G RAM G Bill*—represents a decisive shift in rural employment policy. It moves beyond temporary relief to link guaranteed work with productive, durable assets, robust local planning, and national development priorities. By integrating wage security with sustainable infrastructure creation, digital governance, and climate-conscious interventions, the Bill transforms rural employment into a strategic driver for inclusive growth, resilience, and the vision of *Viksit Bharat 2047*.

Enhanced Employment Guarantee (125 Days)

The *Viksit Bharat—G RAM G Bill, 2025* proposes to increase guaranteed wage employment from 100 to 125 days per rural household per year, providing families dependent on casual labour with a more stable and predictable source of income. This additional entitlement helps bridge seasonal income gaps, smooths household consumption, and reduces vulnerability to economic shocks. The extra 25 days of guaranteed work can significantly strengthen the financial stability of low-income households, enabling them to invest in health, education, and livelihood-enhancing activities.

To ensure timely remuneration, the Bill mandates that wages are disbursed weekly, or at least within a fortnight, supported by digital payments and biometric authentication. This mechanism reduces dependence on intermediaries, enhances transparency, and strengthens trust in the programme.

Beyond household-level benefits, the increase in rural incomes generates a multiplier effect on the broader economy. Steady wages boost consumption of goods and services, stimulate demand for local markets, agricultural produce, and small-scale enterprises, and support rural businesses. This, in turn, creates

additional employment, strengthens supply chains, and establishes a virtuous cycle of income and growth. By enhancing purchasing power at the grassroots level, the Bill not only promotes inclusive development but also contributes to sustainable macroeconomic expansion, reinforcing the vision of a self-reliant and resilient *Viksit Bharat*.

Balanced Agricultural and Labour Needs

The *Viksit Bharat—G RAM G Bill, 2025* recognises the interdependence between rural employment and agricultural productivity, and addresses it through a carefully designed 60-day no-work period during peak farming seasons. This pause ensures that critical agricultural activities such as sowing and harvesting have

ensuring that the benefits of the employment guarantee do not come at the cost of food security or farm output. This integrated design exemplifies the Bill's broader goal of harmonising social protection with sustainable rural development.

Linking Employment to Long Lasting Assets Creation

Unlike the earlier demand-driven model, this Bill positions rural employment as a strategic instrument for productivity, resilience, and infrastructure-led development, ensuring that public works contribute not only to immediate income support but also to sustainable, long-term rural transformation.

A key feature of this alignment is the integration of wage employment with the

works like soil conservation, flood management, and water harvesting strengthen rural communities against environmental shocks. Together, these verticals create a synergistic framework, where employment generation drives asset creation, strengthens resilience, and contributes directly to the broader vision of a self-reliant, developed, and inclusive rural economy.

Decentralised Planning through Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans

The Bill empowers Gram Panchayats to lead local planning through *Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans (VGPPs)*, enabling villages to identify, prioritise, and implement works that address their specific needs. By decentralising planning, the Bill ensures that public works are people-centric and reflect the real priorities of the community, whether

What makes Viksit Bharat—G RAM G better than MGNREGA?

MGNREGA

100 days of wage employment per rural household

Multiple and scattered categories of works with limited strategic focus

Center bears unskilled wage costs, states bear unemployment allowance

No explicit statutory 'pause window'

Demand based funding with unpredictable allocations

Gram Panchayat planning is central

Viksit Bharat—G RAM G

125 days of wage employment per rural household

4 clearly defined priority areas focusing on water security, rural infrastructure, livelihoods and climate resilience

State cost-sharing for wages, 60:40 for most states, 90:10 for certain special-category regions

States can notify up to 60 days in a FY when work will not be executed

Normative funding ensuring predictable budgeting while protecting the employment guarantees

Integrates institutionalised convergence and infrastructure planning

Source: Ministry of Rural Development

sufficient access to labour, preventing potential disruptions in crop cycles and safeguarding farm incomes.

At the same time, the Bill maintains the 125-day employment guarantee for rural households by redistributing work across the remaining periods of the year. This approach balances the dual objectives of securing income for casual labourers and meeting the labour requirements of the agricultural sector. By synchronising rural employment with farming calendars, the Bill minimises competition between public works and agriculture, reduces wage inflation during peak periods, and promotes efficient allocation of human resources at the village level.

This feature demonstrates a strategic shift from purely demand-driven employment to a model that integrates rural livelihoods with broader economic planning. It not only strengthens household income security but also supports agricultural productivity,

creation of durable infrastructure. By tying employment to productive assets, the Bill ensures that public spending generates lasting value, from improved water management systems to enhanced connectivity and livelihood facilities. This approach shifts the focus from short-term relief to structural development, allowing communities to benefit from tangible, long-term improvements while workers gain skills and incomes.

To operationalise this vision, the Bill prioritises four development verticals: water security, core rural infrastructure, livelihood infrastructure, and climate resilience. Water-related projects enhance agricultural productivity and groundwater recharge, while core infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and connectivity improves market access. Livelihood infrastructure—including storage facilities, local markets, and production assets—supports income diversification, and climate-resilient

in water conservation, rural roads, or livelihood infrastructure. This approach strengthens accountability, as villagers can actively monitor execution and outcomes through *Gram Sabhas* and social audits.

Decentralised planning also allows projects to be tailored to local ecological, agricultural, and socio-economic conditions. For instance, water harvesting initiatives in drought-prone areas or flood mitigation works in low-lying regions can be implemented based on local knowledge, making employment both guaranteed and productive.

The VGPPs are integrated with national systems such as the *Viksit Bharat National Rural Infrastructure Stack* and *PM Gati Shakti*, ensuring that village-level initiatives contribute to broader national development goals through efficient resource convergence and coordinated infrastructure planning.

The Bill further strengthens the capacity of Panchayats by providing training, digital tools, and real-time monitoring systems, enabling professionalised, outcome-focused governance. This combination of local autonomy, technical capacity, and national integration maximises the developmental impact of every public work.

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