

VIKSIT BHARAT - GUARANTEE FOR ROZGAR AND AJEEVIKA MISSION (GRAMIN) ACT, 2025

The Government of India has introduced this landmark legislation to overhaul rural employment, aligning it with the **Viksit Bharat @2047** vision. It replaces the two-decade-old MGNREGA.

1. KEY IMPLEMENTATION FACTS

- **Commencement Date:** The Act comes into effect nationwide on **July 1, 2026**.
- **Repeal of MGNREGA:** The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (2005) stands repealed from the same date.
- **Enhanced Guarantee:** Statutory employment guarantee increased from **100 to 125 days** per financial year for every rural household.
- **Motto:** "*Rozgar Bhi, Samman Bhi*" (Employment as well as Dignity).

2. THEMATIC FOCUS (PRIORITY AREAS)

Public works are structured into four major categories to ensure durable asset creation:

1. **Water Security:** Irrigation support, groundwater recharge, and rejuvenation of water bodies.
2. **Core Rural Infrastructure:** Rural roads, school buildings, Anganwadi centers, and renewable energy assets.
3. **Livelihood Infrastructure:** Rural markets, cold storage, food processing units, and livestock infrastructure.
4. **Climate Resilience:** Flood management, cyclone shelters, and disaster restoration works.

3. TECHNOLOGY & GOVERNANCE ARCHITECTURE

- **Attendance:** Captured via NMMS-enabled systems and **Face Authentication**.
- **Wage Payments:** Transferred via **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** within 15 days.
- **Delay Compensation:** If wages are delayed beyond 16 days, workers are entitled to **0.05% compensation** per day of delay.
- **Planning:** Integrated with **PM Gati Shakti** and GIS-based spatial planning through **Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans (VGPP)**.

4. FINANCIAL & ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

- **Historic Budget:** A central provision of **₹95,692.31 crore** for FY 2026-27. Total outlay (including State share) is expected to exceed **₹1.51 lakh crore**.
- **Administrative Cap:** Increased from 6% to 9% to empower field functionaries (GRS, Mates, POs) and improve capacity building.
- **Unemployment Allowance:** If work is not provided within the stipulated time, workers get 1/4th of the wage rate for the first 30 days and 1/2 for the remaining period.

5. BALANCING AGRICULTURE & LABOUR

- **Pause Period:** States are empowered to notify a "pause" in works for up to **60 days** during peak agricultural seasons (sowing/harvesting) to ensure farm labor availability. The full 125-day guarantee must still be met during the remaining year.

6. WORKSITE WELFARE & INCLUSION

- **Mandatory Facilities:** Clean drinking water, shade/rest areas, and first-aid kits are legal guarantees.
- **Childcare:** At worksites with 5+ children under age five, a woman worker will be appointed specifically for childcare at the prescribed wage rate.
- **Social Security:** Free medical treatment for accidents and ex-gratia for death/disability under **Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana**.

IMPORTANT TERMINOLOGY FOR COMPETITIVE EXAMS

- **VB-NRIS:** Viksit Bharat – National Rural Infrastructure Stack (A unified database of rural assets).
- **VGPP:** Viksit Gram Panchayat Plan (The bottom-up planning framework).
- **Normative Allocation:** A new formula-based fund distribution to States based on objective parameters to ensure equity and transparency.

NEW CHAIRMAN & MANAGING DIRECTOR (CMD) OF SAIL: DR. A.K. PANDA

Dr. Ashok Kumar Panda officially assumed charge as the Chairman and Managing Director of **Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL)** on **May 9, 2026**.

KEY PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

- **Previous Roles:** Prior to this appointment, he served as **Director (Finance)** at SAIL and held additional charge as Director (Commercial).
- **Career Trajectory:** He joined SAIL in **1992** as a Management Trainee (Technical) after completing his B.E. in **Electrical Engineering**.
- **Experience:** He brings over three decades of experience across operational, financial, and commercial domains within the steel industry.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & FUTURE TARGETS

Upon taking charge, Dr. Panda outlined the following roadmap for SAIL:

1. **Capacity Expansion:** Aiming to scale production capacity to **35 MTPA** (Million Tonnes Per Annum).
2. **Raw Material Security:** Enhancing domestic mining and exploring overseas assets to ensure a steady supply of raw materials.
3. **Product Strategy:** A sharper focus on **Value-Added Products** and strengthening the brand's market reach.
4. **Operational Safety:** Placing the highest priority on workplace safety across all plants and units.

STATIC GK RELATED TO SAIL (FOR EXAMS)

- **Status:** SAIL is a **Maharatna** Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE).
- **Parent Ministry:** Ministry of Steel, Government of India.
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi.
- **Significance:** It is one of the largest steel-making companies in India and one of the Maharatnas of the country's Central Public Sector Undertakings.

Likely Exam Question:

"Who has been appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) in May 2026?"

Answer: Dr. Ashok Kumar Panda.

NATIONAL TECHNOLOGY DAY 2026: ICMR TRANSFERS INDIGENOUS MEDICAL TECHNOLOGIES

On the occasion of **National Technology Day (May 11, 2026)**, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) participated in the '**विज्ञान-Tech**' (Vigyan-Tech) programme held in New Delhi. The event showcased India's scientific excellence through a "Whole-of-Government" approach involving 14 scientific ministries.

1. KEY EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

- **Theme:** Celebrating indigenous innovation under the "**Make in Bharat**" and "**Viksit Bharat**" visions.
- **Inaugurated by:** Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh.
- **Coordination:** Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) and Department of Biotechnology (DBT).

2. TRANSFER OF 3 INDIGENOUS TECHNOLOGIES

Through its **Medical Innovations Patent Mitra** initiative, ICMR licensed three high-impact technologies to industry partners for commercial production:

Technology	Developing Institute	Licensed To
PSP94 ELISA (For Prostate Biopsy decisions)	ICMR-NIRWoH	Krishgen Labs Pvt. Ltd.

Technology	Developing Institute	Licensed To
Factor VIII Inhibitor (Coagulation disorder Point-of-Care)	ICMR-NIRBID	Meril Life Sciences
Single-Tube Multiplex RT-PCR (Detects Dengue, Chikungunya, Zika)	ICMR-NIV	Vanguard Life Sciences

3. NOTABLE ICMR INNOVATIONS SHOWCASED

ICMR displayed six high-impact indigenous technologies during the exhibition:

- **Covaxin:** India's indigenous COVID-19 vaccine.
- **COVID Kavach ELISA:** Diagnostic kit for antibody detection.
- **CRISPR-Cas TB Detection:** Advanced system for Tuberculosis diagnosis.
- **Nipah Point-of-Care Assay:** Rapid detection for the Nipah virus.
- **Dengue ELISA Kit:** Diagnostic tool for Dengue.
- **Biolarvicide:** An eco-friendly solution for mosquito control.

4. STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR EXAMS

- **Self-Reliance:** Focuses on reducing dependency on imported medical devices and diagnostics.
- **Translational Research:** Demonstrates how laboratory research is successfully transitioned into commercial medical solutions.
- **IPR Support:** Highlights the importance of protecting publicly funded innovations through structured Intellectual Property support.

STATIC GK FACT BOX

- **National Technology Day:** Observed annually on **May 11** (commemorating the Pokhran-II nuclear tests of 1998).
- **DG ICMR:** Dr. Rajiv Bahl (Director General of ICMR and Secretary, Department of Health Research).
- **ICMR Headquarters:** New Delhi.

INDIAN COAST GUARD: MILESTONE IN INDIGENOUS AIR CUSHION VEHICLES (ACVS) CONSTRUCTION

On **May 11, 2026**, the Girder Laying Ceremony for the **4th, 5th, and 6th Air Cushion Vehicles (ACVs)** for the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) was held at the Chowgule Shipyard in Goa.

1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

- **Manufacturer:** Chowgule & Company Private Limited, Goa.
- **Contract Details:** Signed on October 24, 2024, for the indigenous fabrication and construction of **six ACVs**.
- **Aatmanirbhar Bharat:** These vehicles are being manufactured with **50% indigenous content**, marking a significant step toward self-reliance in maritime defense technology.

2. OPERATIONAL ROLES & CAPABILITIES

Air Cushion Vehicles (commonly known as **Hovercrafts**) provide unique advantages due to their ability to operate across different terrains:

- **Multi-Terrain Access:** Capable of high-speed operations in shallow waters, marshy areas, and the deep sea.
- **Coastal Security:** Used for high-speed patrolling, reconnaissance, and interception/interdiction (day and night).
- **SAR Operations:** Vital for Search and Rescue (SAR) missions and rendering assistance to vessels in distress.
- **Strategic Flexibility:** Enhances the ICG's ability to safeguard India's vast and dynamic coastal zones.

3. STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR EXAMS

- **Self-Reliance:** Reduces dependency on foreign OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturers) for specialized coastal craft.
- **Operational Reach:** ACVs are the only vessels that can seamlessly transition between water and land (swamps/beaches), making them indispensable for Creek areas (like Sir Creek) and island territories.

STATIC GK FACT BOX (DEFENCE SECTOR)

- **Indian Coast Guard (ICG):**
 - **Established:** February 1, 1977 (Formalized by the Coast Guard Act, 1978).
 - **Motto:** *Vayam Rakshamah* (We Protect).
 - **Ministry:** Under the administrative control of the **Ministry of Defence**.
 - **Headquarters:** New Delhi.
- **Chowgule Shipyard:** Located in **Goa** (Venue for the current ACV project).
- **National Technology Day:** Notably, this ceremony coincided with National Technology Day (May 11).

INDIA-SRI LANKA RELATIONS & THE PARADIGM SHIFT IN WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

On **May 11, 2026**, a high-level delegation of the **Women Parliamentarians' Caucus of Sri Lanka**, led by Minister **Saroja Savithri Paulraj**, called on Lok Sabha Speaker **Shri Om Birla** at the Parliament House in New Delhi.

1. BILATERAL & CIVILIZATIONAL TIES

- **Shared Heritage:** The Speaker emphasized that India and Sri Lanka are bound by centuries-old spiritual and cultural bonds, specifically the **shared Buddhist heritage**.
- **Parliamentary Diplomacy:** Increased frequency of inter-parliamentary exchanges is seen as a tool to strengthen mutual understanding and bilateral momentum.

2. SHIFT TO "WOMEN-LED DEVELOPMENT"

Shri Om Birla highlighted India's transformative journey in gender policy, noting a shift from focusing merely on "Women's Development" to "**Women-led Development**." Key legislative and grassroots milestones mentioned include:

- **Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam:** This was the **first legislation** passed in the new Parliament House. It mandates **33% reservation** for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies (**106th Constitutional Amendment Act**).
- **Local Governance:** At the grassroots level, several Indian states have implemented **50% reservation** for women in Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies.
- **Current Representation:** Over **1.4 million** elected women representatives are currently serving in India's local self-government institutions.

3. ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVES

The delegation was briefed on specific schemes aimed at financial self-reliance for women:

- **Lakshpati Didi Scheme:** A mission to empower rural women to become entrepreneurs and earn a sustainable annual income.
- **Self-Help Groups (SHGs):** These groups serve as the backbone of rural female financial independence and digital commerce integration.

4. HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE & REGIONAL COOPERATION

The Sri Lankan Minister expressed gratitude for India's "Neighborhood First" policy, citing support during:

- The **COVID-19 pandemic**.
- Natural disasters, specifically referencing **Cyclone Ditwa**.

STATIC GK FACT BOX (INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS)

- **Lok Sabha Speaker:** Shri Om Birla.
- **Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam:** Formally known as the Constitution (One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023.
- **Bilateral Exercises:**
 - **Mitra Shakti:** Joint Army Exercise.
 - **SLINEX:** Joint Naval Exercise.

- **Neighborhood First Policy:** India's foreign policy priority focused on its immediate neighbors in South Asia.

