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# A STUDY ON VIKSIT BHARAT- G RAM G ACT 2025

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KEYWORDS :

## INTRODUCTION

Rural employment has been a cornerstone of India's social protection framework for nearly two decades. Since its enactment in 2005, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) played a key role in providing wage employment, stabilizing rural incomes and creating basic infrastructure. Over time, however, the structure and objectives of rural India have evolved significantly. Rising incomes, expanded connectivity, widespread digital penetration and diversified livelihoods have altered the nature of rural employment needs.

Against this backdrop, the President of India has given assent to the *Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Bill*, 2025 marking a significant milestone in the transformation of rural employment policy. The *Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Act, 2025* represents a comprehensive statutory overhaul of MGNREGA, aligning rural employment with the long-term vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, while strengthening accountability, infrastructure outcomes and income security.

## Background of Rural Employment and Development Policy in India

Since Independence, rural development policies in India have focused on reducing poverty, improving agricultural productivity, and creating employment for surplus and underemployed rural labour. Wage employment programmes have gradually evolved as key instruments for supporting rural livelihoods while also strengthening basic infrastructure, with approaches adapting to changing socio-economic conditions over time.

India's wage employment initiatives progressed through multiple phases, beginning with early programmes such as the Rural Manpower Programme (1960s) and the Crash Schemefor Rural Employment (1971). These were followed by more structured efforts in the 1980s and 1990s, including the National Rural Employment Programme, Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme, later merged into Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (1993), which consolidated into Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana in 1999, aimed at improving coverage and coordination. Complementary schemes such as the Employment Assurance Scheme and the Food for Work Programme addressed seasonal unemployment and food security. A major shift came with the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Act of 1977, which introduced the concept of a statutory right to work. These experiences culminated in the enactment of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in 2005, providing a nationwide legal framework for rural employment generation.

The Viksit Bharat- G RAM G Act, 2025 responds to this context by modernizing rural employment guarantees, strengthening accountability, and aligning employment creation with long term infrastructure and climate resilience goals.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE TUDY:

1. To understand the background of Rural employment and development policies in India.
2. To study the key features in between MGNREGA and VB-G RAM G Bill.
3. To understand the Funding Pattern under VB-G Ram G Bill.
4. To study the key concern of the VB-G RAM G Bill.

## METHODOLOGY:

The study is in descriptive nature. Information related to are collected from various books, journals and magazines, articles published in Newspaper and Websites.

**Table 1: MGNREGA and VB-G RAM G Bill: Comparative Features**

| Dimension | MGNREGA | VB-G RAM G Bill (Proposed) |
|---|---|---|
| Legal Foundation | Statutory right under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employ ment Guarantee Act guaranteeing up to 100 days of wage employment per rural household. | Proposed statutory framework; employment provision appears program driven rather than strictly demand guaranteed. |
| Nature of Entitlement | Demand-driven; work must be provided within a stipulated period or unemployment allowance is payable. | Employment tied to pre-approved projects and defined budget envelopes; entitlement mediated through administrative planning. |
| Primary Objective | Livelihood security and income stabilisation for rural households. | Integration of employment with development goals such as infrastructure, water con |
| Governance Structure | Decentralised planning through Gram Sabhas; social audits and local accountability mechanisms embedded in design. | Greater central coordination, standardised work packages, and enhanced digital monitoring. |
| Fiscal Design | Open-ended demand within allocated funds; Centre–State cost sharing. | Likely capped or program-bound allocations linked to project planning. |
| Crisis Response Capacity | Demonstrated counter-cyclical role (e.g., surge during COVID-19 | Scale-up flexibility may be limited if employment depends on pre-planned works. |
| Normative Framework | Rights-based welfare model (employment as a justiciable entitlement). | Development-oriented welfare model. |

**Registration and Eligibility:-**

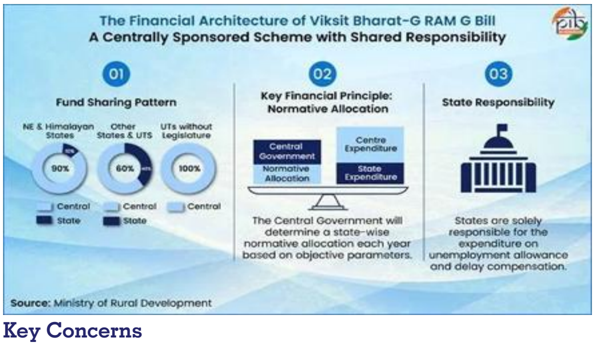
- Do unskilled manual work is eligible.
- Existing job card continue during the transition period.
- Adhar linked registration to reduce duplication amd

leakage.

- Emphasis on voluntary demand for work similar ro the earlier work.

### Proposed Funding Pattern under VB-G Ram G Bill:

- 90% by Centre and 10% by the States –
  - These cover Northeast and Himalayan states and UTs – Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura and Uttarakhand.
- 60% by Centre and 40% by the States –
  - This covers all other states and UTs with a legislature. These are – Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Puducherry.
- 100% by Centre –
  - Four UTs without legislature. These are – Ladakh, Andaman and Nicobar, Dadra Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, and Lakshadweep.




### Key Concerns

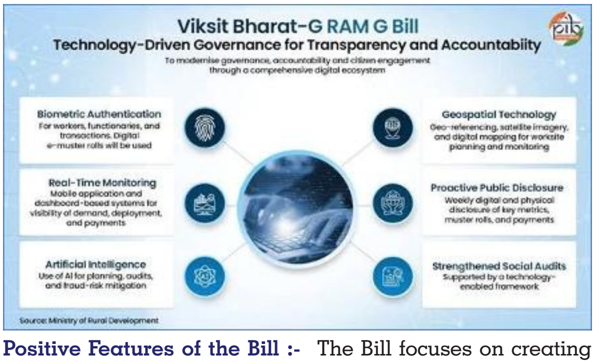
**(a) Financial Burden on States:-** Poorer states with high rural poverty may struggle to meet the 40% funding requirement, affecting employment delivery.

**(b) Reduced Legal Guarantee:-** Fixed budgets may weaken the demand-based and rights-based nature of rural employment guaranteed under MGNREGA.

**(c) Digital Access Problems :-** Biometric systems and online platforms may exclude workers due to technical failures, poor internet connectivity, or fingerprint recognition issues.

**(d) Impact of Agricultural Pause:-** The assumption that all workers will find farm jobs during the pause may not hold true for landless labourers and marginal farmers.

**(e) Gap Between Promise and Delivery:-** Even under MGNREGA, households received only about 45–55 days of work on average, despite a 100-day guarantee. This raises concerns about implementation capacity under the new Bill.




**Positive Features of the Bill :-** The Bill focuses on creating durable and climate-resilient assets, improving rural productivity. Better coordination with national infrastructure plans may improve irrigation, storage, and connectivity. Weekly wage payments, higher penalties for violations (up to ₹10,000), and special cards for vulnerable groups like single women, persons with disabilities, elderly people, and transgender persons show a strong focus on governance and inclusion.

### Rationale behind the Proposed Overhaul of MGNREGA:

- To begin with, the government argues that MGNREGA, enacted in 2005, no longer fully reflects present-day rural realities.
- Over time, declining poverty levels and wider digital access have altered the rural socio-economic landscape.
- However, despite these changes, the scheme continues to face structural challenges such as misuse of funds, weak monitoring mechanisms, and the creation of low-quality assets.
- In fact, during FY 2024-25, misappropriation under MGNREGA amounted to 193.67 crore.
- At the same time, only 7.61% of participating households were able to complete the full 100 days of guaranteed employment.
- Therefore, the proposed VB–G RAM G framework aims to replace the fragmented implementation model.
- Ultimately, it seeks to establish a more focused, accountable, and technology-driven rural employment system.

### Key observation

- Rural employment remains lower than urban unemployment, but rural unemployment significant.
- Youth and Female unemployment, especially in urban areas, remains a major concern.
- Raising Labor Force Participation Rate indicates more people entering the job market.
- Informal employment continues to dominates Indias Labor market.

### CONCLUSION:

The VB-G Ram G Bill, 2025 represents a decisive shift in India's approach to rural employment and livelihood security. The VB-G Ram G Bill attempts to address long-standing challenges associated with MGNREGA, including fund misuse, weak monitoring, and limited asset quality. It also aims at expanding social inclusion through special GraminRozgar Guarantee Cards for vulnerable groups.

By proposing to replace the MGNREGA Act, 2005, the government seeks to realign the rural job guarantee framework with contemporary socio-economic realities, fiscal constraints, and the long-term vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. However, concerns related to reduced state autonomy, additional fiscal burden on states, and the effective implementation of a top-down allocation model remain critical areas for debate.

Overall, the VB-G Ram G Bill, 2025 marks a significant policy transition in India's rural development landscape. Its success will ultimately depend on cooperative federalism, adequate financial support to states, and robust accountability mechanisms to ensure that the promise of guaranteed rural employment translates into sustainable livelihoods and resilient rural infrastructure.

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