



Viksit Bharat 2047: Blueprint for inclusive sustainability

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Abstract

As India nears its 100th year of sovereignty, the "Viksit Bharat@2047" framework serves as an ambitious socio-economic blueprint designed to elevate the country to the status of a premier global power. This research paper examines the multi-dimensional framework required to achieve this objective, focusing on economic prosperity, social equity, technological advancement, and environmental stewardship. Drawing upon a methodology that synthesises policy documents, developmental indices, academic literature, and economic data, the study argues that India's trajectory toward a USD 30–40 trillion economy must be anchored in innovation and international collaboration. This study identifies several pivotal thematic pillars, specifically focusing on the socio-economic advancement of the youth, women, agricultural communities, and underprivileged segments of society. It examines how these internal priorities align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Furthermore, the analysis evaluates the strategic importance of the National Education Policy (NEP, 2020) and vocational upskilling in cultivating a labour force equipped to meet future industrial demands, while situating the shift toward renewable energy as a mandatory requirement for fulfilling India's 2070 carbon-neutrality pledges (Ministry of Environment, 2022). Particularly in vulnerable ecosystems. By integrating modern development economics with indigenous ethical principles, the Viksit Bharat@2047 vision provides a proactive roadmap to overcome structural bottlenecks and global challenges. Ultimately, this paper concludes that achieving developed nation status requires a collective effort – Jan Bhagidari (citizen participation)–integrating institutional reforms, citizen participation, and resilient self-reliance to ensure sustainable and equitable progress for all segments of the Indian population.

Keywords: Digital infrastructure, Inclusive growth, Skill development, Sustainable development, Viksit Bharat

1. Introduction

The centenary aspiration

As India approaches the hundredth anniversary of its sovereignty, the Viksit Bharat@2047 initiative establishes an extensive strategic blueprint to transition the country into a premier global power. This objective is fundamentally anchored in a synergistic administrative framework that mandates the active involvement of all societal sectors (Ministry of Finance, 2024) ^[12]. The paradigm emphasises national movement, signifying a departure from marginal, step-by-step progress toward the realisation of systemic and radical developmental milestones.

In the contemporary geopolitical landscape, India stands at a critical strategic inflexion point. Defined by its status as the world's demographic leader and its rank as a top-five global economy, the nation has maintained an exceptional growth trajectory despite international volatility. However, the transition toward a 'Viksit' or developed state by the centenary necessitates a decisive resolution of deep-seated systemic hurdles, including wealth disparity, logistical gaps, and ecological fragility. This study interrogates the 2047 roadmap through a holistic framework, analysing the intricate synergies between financial expansion, societal equity, green transitions, and the digital revolution (NITI Aayog, 2023) ^[18].

2. Historical context: from prosperity to self-reliance

India's economic journey has evolved through three distinct phases:

- **The pre-colonial era (321 BC – 1857 AD):** During this period, the Maurya, Gupta, and Mughal Empires established strong cultural and economic foundations. Advancements in administration, trade, and urban development shaped a prosperous society that significantly contributed to the global economy.
- **The colonial phase:** The arrival and dominance of the British East India Company shifted the economic focus toward resource extraction. While colonial rule introduced technologies such as railways, telegraphs, and ports, these were primarily tools to facilitate the export of resources to Britain. This era resulted in substantial exploitation of human and natural resources, creating a vast socio-economic gap and systematic economic dependency.
- **Post-independence reconstruction:** Following independence, India faced the monumental task of addressing colonial-induced inequalities. The nation pivoted toward self-reliance through land reforms, industrialisation, infrastructure development, and poverty alleviation strategies designed to dismantle the structures of colonial dependency and foster a progressive, independent state (Dan, 2024, pp. 54-58) ^[2].

3. Research methodology

Conceptual framework: the bold approach and four pillars

The strategic architecture of Viksit Bharat@2047 is defined by a proactive and ambitious mindset, supported by specific socio-economic targets.

The strategic framework (BOLD)

Component	Definition
Broad	An expansive, all-encompassing scope covering every sector of development-economic, social, and technological.
Optimistic	A focus on resilience, commitment, and the belief in national potential to achieve high-income status.
Long-term	Audacious, multi-decadal goals targeting 2047, specifically the target of a USD 30 trillion economy.
Daring	Embracing purpose-led leadership to overcome persistent infrastructure or environmental bottlenecks.

To achieve the 2047 developmental milestones, a citizen-first paradigm has been established, focusing on four primary columns of growth. These sectors are collectively formulated to foster a national transition characterized by fairness and broad-based participation, moving beyond traditional economic metrics to prioritize egalitarian progress across all demographics (NITI Aayog, 2023) ^[18].

- **Yuva (Youth):** A significant portion of India's competitive advantage lies in its youth, with nearly two-thirds of the citizenry currently under the age of 35. The vision seeks to leverage this through innovation and entrepreneurship, supported by missions like Startup India and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 ^[9]. Human capital development is prioritised to equip the youth with future-ready skills in frontier technologies such as artificial intelligence and robotics. By fostering an ecosystem of creativity and risk-taking, the youth are positioned as the primary drivers of India's progress toward a 30–40 trillion economy. Ultimately, this pillar focuses on empowering the next generation to meet both domestic and global market demands.
- The 'Garib' (Economically Disadvantaged) pillar emphasises a total transition toward a poverty-free society, where the dividends of national growth are intentionally channelled toward the most disenfranchised demographics. This shift is validated by historical data showing that approximately 415 million citizens successfully overcame multidimensional poverty during the 2005–2021 period (UNDP, 2022) ^[19]. By synchronising domestic initiatives with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals—specifically those addressing poverty and inequality—the strategy utilises mission-mode programs like the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana to deliver essential services to underserved territories. In this context, progress is redefined not merely as fiscal growth, but as the augmentation of human potential and individual agency (Sen, 1999) ^[24].

- **Mahila (Women):** The vision for "Nari Shakti" (women's empowerment) aims to transform women from passive beneficiaries into active leaders of national development. A critical goal is increasing the female labour force participation rate, which stood at approximately 37% in 2023. Legislative milestones, such as the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023, ensure that women's voices are heard through a 33% reservation in Parliament and state legislatures. Economic participation is further bolstered by the Self-Help Group (SHG) movement and targeted schemes like Mahila Shakti Kendras. Promoting gender equity and social justice is seen as an indispensable step toward a more prosperous society by 2047.
- **Annadata (Farmers/Peasants):** Modernising the agricultural sector is vital for ensuring rural prosperity and national food security. This involves transitioning labour toward higher-productivity activities while integrating technology to address persistent agrarian distress. Initiatives like the Jal Jeevan Mission and Svamitva Scheme are critical for improving rural infrastructure, property mapping, and resource management. Digital transformation, including e-commerce and precision agriculture, is expected to bridge the gap between rural production and global markets. The ultimate goal is to foster a thriving rural economy where farmers are empowered through better credit access and market linkages.

The conceptual foundation of this study is anchored in the 'Capability Approach' popularized by Amartya Sen (1999) ^[24], which posits that true progress is defined by the augmentation of individual agency and fundamental human capacities. Distinctively, this model harmonizes contemporary economic strategies with traditional Indian moral frameworks, transcending a singular reliance on fiscal indicators to foster a society that is both ethically mature and spiritually conscious. Central to this synthesis is the ethos of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam,' which prioritizes collective responsibility and dharmic duty over individual entitlement, ensuring that these indigenous values remain in lockstep with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (NITI Aayog, 2023) ^[18].

4. Results & Discussion

4.1 Economic dimensions: reaching the \$30-40 trillion milestone

To transition from a lower-middle-income status to a high-income nation, India requires sustained, high-level economic growth and structural transformation.

- **Growth projections:** India's economic trajectory toward 2047 is defined by a planned transition from a lower-middle-income classification to a high-income status, aiming for a total GDP valuation between \$30 and \$40 trillion. This objective requires a substantial escalation in individual prosperity, with per capita income targets set between \$18,000 and \$21,000. Realizing this vision is contingent upon a fundamental reallocation of human capital, specifically migrating the workforce from traditional agrarian roles into higher-value sectors like

modern manufacturing and digital services (Ministry of Finance, 2024) ^[12]. Current forecasts indicate that India will likely ascend to the position of the world's third-largest economy by 2030, a critical stepping stone toward fostering the national resilience needed to withstand global financial volatility.

- **MSME and local growth:** The decentralised economic framework of India relies heavily on the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) ecosystem, which serves as a vital engine for nationwide equity. This sector currently accounts for nearly one-third of the country's total economic output and provides a livelihood for a workforce exceeding 110 million individuals (Ministry of MSME, 2023) ^[14]. By fostering local entrepreneurship, these enterprises ensure that the dividends of industrial expansion are distributed more evenly across diverse regional demographics. To ensure that economic growth is decentralised and reaches remote regions, District Industries Centres (DICs) play a pivotal role in localising development. For instance, the DIC in Tehri Garhwal supports local entrepreneurs and cottage industries, bridging the gap between rural production and larger markets. Strengthening these enterprises through better credit access and digital tools is vital for broad-based prosperity. This decentralised approach ensures that growth is not confined to urban centres but empowers communities across the country.
- **Formalisation:** The structural transition toward a formal economy in India is being accelerated by landmark policy interventions, most notably the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and the integrated JAM (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile) framework. This digital and fiscal synergy has been instrumental in streamlining financial inclusion and enhancing administrative transparency across the nation (Ministry of Finance, 2024) ^[12]. These frameworks have drastically improved fiscal transparency and broadened the national tax base, allowing for more structured economic monitoring. Furthermore, the JAM trinity has enabled efficient direct benefit transfers, ensuring that welfare reaches the intended recipients with minimal leakage. This transition into a more formalised economy is fundamental for achieving long-term fiscal stability and government accountability. By integrating digital payments and formal banking, India is creating a transparent and data-driven economic ecosystem.

4.2 Digital empowerment: the India stack and AI frontier

The democratisation of progress in India is being rapidly catalyzed by the deployment of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI).

- **The India stack:** Regarded as a global benchmark in technological governance, the India Stack functions as an advanced framework for Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI). This integrated ecosystem has redefined how a nation can leverage open-source digital architecture to deliver essential public services at massive scale

(NASSCOM, 2023) ^[16], including Aadhaar, UPI, DigiLocker, and CoWIN. This digital layer has revolutionised governance by providing transparent, efficient, and accessible services to over 800 million internet users. By facilitating billions of monthly transactions and secure digital documentation, the stack democratises technology for inclusive development. It serves as a unique public infrastructure model that is now being emulated globally to improve public service delivery. This foundation is critical for transforming India into a digitally empowered society where every citizen can participate in the digital economy.

- **Emerging technologies:** To mitigate complex societal hurdles, the Indian state is aggressively funneling resources into cutting-edge domains like decentralised ledgers, robotics, and Artificial Intelligence. Rather than pursuing purely commercial outcomes, the National AI Strategy and the associated India AI Mission prioritise a 'human-centric' deployment of technology. This approach centres on high-impact interventions within the primary sector, clinical diagnostics, and pedagogical innovation, ensuring that digital advancement yields tangible social dividends (NITI Aayog, 2023) ^[18]. Parallely, the India Semiconductor Mission seeks to build domestic chip manufacturing capacity, ensuring strategic hardware sovereignty and reducing import dependence. These technological advancements enable start-ups to reshape entire sectors, including banking and mobility, through scalable, innovative solutions. By fostering a culture of innovation, India aims to become a global leader in high-tech manufacturing and digital services.
- **Bridging the divide:** To ensure that the digital revolution includes rural and remote areas, Through the BharatNet initiative, the government is executing a large-scale logistical expansion to establish high-speed internet access across more than 600,000 rural settlements. This project serves as the backbone of rural digitization, ensuring that the benefits of the digital revolution reach the most remote corners of the country (Ministry of Finance, 2024) ^[12]. This infrastructure is vital for empowering rural communities in districts like Narendranagar with access to e-commerce, tele-medicine, and tele-education. When fully realised, digital connectivity will transform rural livelihoods by enabling precision agriculture and connecting local producers to global markets. Bridging the digital divide is seen as an essential step toward achieving social justice and reducing regional inequalities. Universal digital access is now being prioritised as a fundamental public good, similar to roads and electricity.

4.3 Environmental sustainability: path to net zero 2070

India views environmental stewardship as complementary to economic ambition, integrating climate resilience into its growth model.

- **Energy Transition:** India's commitment to a sustainable future is anchored in a comprehensive decarbonization strategy, aiming for carbon neutrality by the year 2070.

Central to this trajectory is a 45% reduction in the carbon footprint per unit of GDP by the end of this decade, supported by an aggressive scaling of renewable infrastructure to reach a 500 GW capacity (Ministry of Power, 2024). This transition is governed by the National Action Plan on Climate Change, which prioritizes solar expansion and systemic efficiency to ensure that 50% of the nation's power is derived from non-fossil sources. Ultimately, this pivot toward green energy represents more than an ecological necessity; it is a strategic maneuver to bolster national economic durability in a climate-constrained global market.

- **Regional vulnerability:** The Himalayan ecosystem, including states like Uttarakhand, is uniquely vulnerable to climate change, facing risks from glacial retreat and extreme weather events. These environmental shifts pose existential risks to mountain communities, impacting water security and rural livelihoods. In response, India has launched dedicated missions to ensure sustainable mountain habitats and protect fragile ecosystems. Initiatives like the Jal Jeevan Mission combine social equity with resource management by providing tap water connections to rural households. Addressing these regional vulnerabilities is critical for ensuring that the journey toward 2047 remains inclusive and climate-resilient.
- **The circular economy:** India's transition toward a circular economic framework represents a strategic departure from linear 'take-make-waste' models, prioritizing the optimization of resource lifecycles and the reduction of industrial externalities. This commitment is evidenced by fiscal interventions like the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes for sustainable technologies, including green hydrogen and photovoltaic production (Ministry of Commerce and Industry, 2023) [8]. By framing environmental preservation and fiscal expansion as synergistic rather than adversarial, the 2047 roadmap aims to separate national growth from ecological degradation. This model fosters a culture of 'green lifestyles' at the grassroots level, positioning sustainable resource management as a prerequisite for long-term national prosperity (NITI Aayog, 2023) [18].

4.4 Human capital and NEP 2020: leveraging the demographic dividend

The nation's demographic architecture, characterised by nearly two-thirds of the citizenry being younger than thirty-five, constitutes its most significant strategic endowment. This concentration of youth represents a pivotal reservoir of human capital that, if properly harnessed, serves as the primary engine for long-term economic transformation (United Nations Population Fund, 2024) [25].

- **NEP 2020:** Central to the vision of a modernised India is the comprehensive overhaul of the educational ethos as mandated by the NEP 2020. This policy discards rigid academic silos in favour of a holistic, multidisciplinary approach that emphasises analytical reasoning and the

integration of professional skill sets into mainstream learning (NITI Aayog, 2023) [18]. The objective is to produce a workforce equipped with advanced digital literacies, including artificial intelligence and green engineering, to drive the nation's technological sovereignty. By institutionalising flexible learning pathways and tech-enabled education, the policy addresses the diverse requirements of the 'Yuva' (youth) population, ensuring that human capital development remains the primary catalyst for the 2047 developmental milestones.

- **Demographic Dividend:** India's demographic profile, characterized by nearly two-thirds of the citizenry being younger than thirty-five, constitutes its most significant strategic endowment. To capitalize on this 'youth bulge,' the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) has successfully delivered vocational instruction to more than 30 million individuals (Ministry of Skill Development, 2023) [15]. Under the 'Skill India' mandate, the nation seeks to reposition itself as a global hub for technical expertise by synchronising local training with international labour market requirements. Sustained investment in emerging domains, such as decarbonised energy and advanced computing, is essential for maintaining the workforce's external competitiveness. By prioritising the professional development of its younger generation, the state effectively transitions a potential demographic hurdle into a permanent driver of national economic growth.
- **Higher Education Access:** Survey data indicate that educational accessibility is improving, with the national Gross Enrolment Ratio reaching 28.4% during the 2021-22 period, All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE, 2022) [1]. Within this framework, accredited institutions such as Dharmanand Uniyal Government Degree College—recognized for its NAAC B+ standing—are instrumental in delivering academic excellence to underserved and mountainous demographics. By integrating specialized career guidance, vocational training, and localized research initiatives, these colleges act as catalysts for regional socio-economic mobility. Prioritizing such equitable learning opportunities is a prerequisite for bridging social gaps and ensuring that a broad-based, skilled citizenry can drive the 'Viksit Bharat' objective.

5. Conclusion and policy recommendations

The journey toward Viksit Bharat@2047 is a civilisational endeavour where economic, social, and environmental objectives are deeply interconnected. Success depends on the transition to high-productivity sectors and active citizen participation (Jan Bhagidari).

5.1 Actionable policy pillars

- **Institutionalised inclusive growth:** India must institutionalise mechanisms to ensure that fiscal policy, public expenditure, and welfare schemes systematically target the most marginalised populations. Particular

attention is required for hill communities and tribal groups who face unique challenges such as geographic isolation and migration. Targeted welfare approaches, exemplified by the Pradhan Mantri Janman Yojana for vulnerable tribal groups, must be expanded to bridge persistent socio-economic gaps. Achieving zero poverty requires addressing chronic deprivation in lagging states and ensuring that the benefits of national growth reach the poorest segments. Inclusive growth must also focus on reducing regional disparities between urban and rural areas through context-sensitive policy interventions. Ultimately, development is conceptualised as the expansion of human freedoms and capabilities across all diverse social groups.

- **Accelerated green transition:** The urgency of India's decarbonization efforts hinges on established regulatory frameworks and robust public investment to realize the 500 GW renewable threshold by 2030. To fulfill its 2070 carbon neutrality pledge, the state must weave climate adaptation directly into its fundamental economic architecture (Ministry of Power, 2024). A paramount concern in this transition is the preservation of fragile biomes, specifically the Himalayan corridor, which faces existential threats from accelerated deglaciation and volatile climate patterns. Furthermore, the national industrial strategy—exemplified by PLI initiatives for green hydrogen—must synthesize manufacturing output with ecological responsibility. By framing resource efficiency not as a constraint but as a catalyst for growth, India can decouple its fiscal expansion from environmental degradation (NITI Aayog, 2023) ^[18].
- **Universal digital infrastructure:** Digital infrastructure must be treated as a fundamental public good, with universal broadband connectivity prioritised as urgently as physical infrastructure like roads and electricity. The BharatNet project is essential for bridging the digital divide by providing high-speed connectivity to over 600,000 villages. Ensuring parity between rural and urban access will empower remote communities through tele-medicine, tele-education, and e-commerce. The continued expansion of the "India Stack" (Aadhaar, UPI, DigiLocker) provides a robust foundation for transparent governance and inclusive digital empowerment. Rapid digital transformation enables "digital leapfrogging," allowing India to bypass traditional developmental bottlenecks through technology. Universal access to the internet and digital literacy are required to ensure every citizen can participate meaningfully in the modern digital economy.
- **Education as a local engine:** Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) must be empowered to serve as primary engines for local development, regional research, and entrepreneurship support. The full implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 ^[9] is necessary to shift the educational paradigm toward multidisciplinary and vocational learning. Local colleges play an indispensable role in extending quality education and

career counselling to geographically marginalised populations in remote regions. HEIs should foster a thriving ecosystem of innovation through collaborative partnerships between academia, industry, and the government. Integrating vocational pedagogy with mainstream academics will better equip students with the practical skills needed to lead the national developmental agenda. Continued investment in skilling for frontier technologies, such as AI and green tech, ensures that the demographic dividend remains a productive asset.

- **Equitable multilateralism:** At the core of India's modern diplomacy is the pursuit of an equitable global architecture that addresses the structural inequalities faced by developing nations. The legacy of India's G20 leadership rests on its ability to mainstream critical issues like digital accessibility and sustainable finance for the broader global community. The expansion of the G20 to include the African Union serves as a testament to India's role as a bridge-builder in an era of heightened geopolitical friction. Maintaining a versatile diplomatic stance allows the nation to navigate trade disruptions while strengthening its influence in strategic alliances and regional trade agreements. This service-oriented global posture, rooted in the philosophy of universal kinship, positions India as a stabilizing force in the 21st-century international arena (Ministry of Finance, 2024) ^[12].

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