

Viksit Bharat @ 2047: Navigating Opportunities and Obstacles

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Abstract

Viksit Bharat @ 2047 is the Government of India's visionary roadmap to transform the nation into a developed country by the centenary of its independence. It rests on four interlinked pillars Yuva (youth), Garib (poor), Mahilayen (women) and Annadata (farmers) and emphasizes inclusive growth, sustainable development, technological leadership, and good governance. Harnessing India's demographic dividend, deepening digital public infrastructure, and advancing structural reforms together create an unprecedented window for accelerated development. At the same time, persistent poverty, regional and social inequalities, capacity deficits in health and education, environmental stress, and institutional stringencies pose serious constraints.

This paper analyses Viksit Bharat @ 2047 through two lenses: (a) opportunities arising from demographic, digital, economic, and green transitions; and (b) obstacles related to human development, climate vulnerability, and governance. It then proposes sector-specific strategies in education, health, agriculture, industry, infrastructure and governance, treating social inclusion as a cross-cutting imperative rather than a residual concern.

This paper advances the argument that the success of Viksit Bharat depends on the effective translation of headline economic growth into expanded human capabilities, environmental resilience, and rule-based, participatory institutions. It contends that achieving a developed India by 2047 is shaped less by aggregate GDP targets than by the capacity to build a productive economy, an inclusive society, and a transparent, accountable, and citizen-responsive state.

Keywords: *Viksit Bharat; demographic dividend; digital public infrastructure; sustainable development; governance; social inclusion.*

1. Introduction

India's freedom struggle articulated not only a demand for political independence but also a moral claim to social justice, dignity, and economic self-reliance. The Constitution translated this normative vision into a republican promise of justice social, economic and political for all citizens. Viksit Bharat @ 2047 is the most recent attempt to operationalise these foundational commitments in the context of twenty-first-century opportunities and constraints.

As India approaches the centenary of Independence, official projections and policy documents envisage a future where India becomes a multi-trillion-dollar economy with near-elimination of extreme poverty, universal access to quality education and healthcare, and robust physical and digital infrastructure. Achieving such an outcome requires not only sustained high growth, but also deep structural transformation in productivity, institutions and social relations. The core question, therefore, is how India can simultaneously pursue rapid economic expansion and meaningful social inclusion on the path to 2047.

The vision of Viksit Bharat invokes the legacy of leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Bhagat Singh, Subhas Chandra Bose, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and countless unsung heroes who imagined an India that

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would rise from colonial subjugation to become a globally respected power anchored in equity and justice. Today that aspiration is recast in the language of demographic dividend, digital innovation, sustainable infrastructure and good governance, even as persistent poverty, inequality, environmental stress and institutional inefficiencies continue to pose formidable obstacles

Against this backdrop, the present paper examines *Viksit Bharat @ 2047* as both an economic blueprint and a socio-political project. It analyses the major opportunities created by demographic, technological and green transitions, maps the structural constraints that could impede progress, and outlines key policy imperatives needed to align rapid growth with inclusive and sustainable development.

2. The Vision and Pillars of *Viksit Bharat @ 2047*

Viksit Bharat @ 2047 is a bold, long term national vision articulated by the Government of India to mark the centenary of Independence with a country that is self-reliant, prosperous, inclusive and globally influential. It is conceived not merely as an economic growth agenda, but as a comprehensive framework that weaves together social equity, environmental sustainability, technological leadership and good governance so that development enhances the dignity and capabilities of every citizen.

Core Vision

At its core, the vision seeks to transform India into a developed nation with a projected GDP in the range of US\$30 to 34 trillion by 2047, alongside a steep reduction in multidimensional poverty. The broader goals include universal access to quality education, healthcare and basic services; resilient physical and digital infrastructure; and institutions that are transparent, accountable and rule-bound. In essence, *Viksit Bharat* aspires to an India where the gains of growth are broadly shared, natural resources are prudently managed and the country acts as a responsible global actor.

Four Foundational Pillars

Official discourse highlights four constituencies as foundational pillars, reflecting both moral priority and strategic necessity:

- a) Yuva (Youth) – India hosts one of the world's largest youth populations, with an estimated 734 million people under 30 years of age. The developmental trajectory will be shaped by how effectively this cohort is educated, skilled and productively employed.
- b) Garib (Poor): Reducing vulnerability and ensuring basic security remain central, with emphasis on social protection, livelihood opportunities and reliable access to nutrition, water, sanitation and healthcare.
- c) Mahilayen (Women): Gender equality is framed as both a rights agenda and a growth strategy, with policy focus on education, labour-force participation, entrepreneurship and leadership.
- d) Annadata (Farmers): Farmers are positioned as the backbone of food security and rural employment, requiring higher and more stable incomes through sustainable agriculture, better irrigation, storage, market access and risk-mitigation instruments, with the larger goal of positioning India as a reliable “food bowl” for the world.

Together, these pillars anchor *Viksit Bharat @ 2047* as a normative and strategic project: one that seeks high growth, but insists that such growth be inclusive, environmentally responsible and institutionally grounded.

3. Opportunities: India's Springboard to 2047

India's pathway to *Viksit Bharat @ 2047* rests on a convergence of structural and technological opportunities that can accelerate the transition to a high-income, inclusive, and sustainable economy. A favourable demographic profile, a mature digital public infrastructure, deepening economic reforms, an expanding green-energy base, and emerging forms of participatory governance together create an unprecedented development moment. Harnessing this potential,

however, depends on effective policy execution, institutional capacity, and social inclusion keeping pace with ambition. The following sections outline the key opportunity domains shaping India's trajectory toward 2047.

i. Demographic Dividend :

India's age structure offers a multi-decadal window where the working-age population outnumbers dependents, creating potential for higher savings and productivity if accompanied by investments in human capital. Estimates suggest that roughly 68 percent of the population falls within the 15 - 64 age group, and nearly 20 percent of the world's youth reside in India, giving the country a unique labour-supply advantage.

Realising this demographic dividend, however, depends on quality schooling, expansion of higher education and effective implementation of programmes such as the National Education Policy 2020 and Skill India Mission. Without these, the same demographic profile could translate into large-scale underemployment and social discontent rather than accelerated growth.

ii. Digital Revolution and Innovation:

India's digital public infrastructure has expanded rapidly over the last decade, reshaping service delivery, financial inclusion and governance. Over 560 million Jan Dhan accounts have been opened, with deposits exceeding ₹2.6 lakh crore, bringing previously excluded households into the formal financial system. Aadhaar has issued biometric identities to more than 1.4 billion residents, facilitating targeted transfers and authentication for a wide range of services.

India's mobile subscriber base has surpassed 1.17 billion wireless connections (with total telephone subscribers around 1.23 billion), reflecting continued expansion of connectivity across urban and rural areas. At the same time, mobile data costs have plunged dramatically from around ₹269 per GB in 2014 to approximately ₹9 per GB in late 2025 helping accelerate adoption of digital services nationwide. The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) now processes more than 18 billion transactions per month, making India the world's largest real-time payment ecosystem. Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, 5G, Internet of Things and big-data analytics are driving new applications in smart manufacturing, fintech, health and education, offering a powerful platform for innovation and state capacity.

iii. Economic Reforms and Global Integration

Structural reforms have improved India's business environment and macroeconomic resilience. The Goods and Services Tax (GST) has broadened the tax base and reduced cascading, while production-linked incentive (PLI) schemes have attracted investments in sectors including electronics, pharmaceuticals and green technologies. The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) has strengthened credit discipline and facilitated resolution of stressed assets, although implementation challenges persist.

At the external level, "China+1" strategies and new trade agreements offer opportunities to integrate more deeply into global value chains. India's share of global services exports has increased, and there is renewed policy emphasis on manufacturing-led growth to raise the industrial share of GDP and create quality jobs.

iv. Green Growth and Energy Transition

India has made notable progress in expanding clean energy. By November 2025, total installed power capacity stood at around 505 GW, of which approximately 262 GW or 52 percent came from non-fossil sources, including solar, wind, hydro, bioenergy and nuclear. Renewable energy capacity has more than tripled since 2014, and India now ranks among the top countries globally in solar and wind installations.

India's "Panchamrit" commitments 500 GW of non-fossil capacity by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2070 position green growth as a central development strategy. If aligned with just-transition policies for coal-dependent regions and

green-skills programmes, the energy transition can generate substantial employment and rural development while enhancing energy security.

v. Social Transformation and Participatory Governance

Flagship programmes such as Swachh Bharat Mission and Beti Bachao Beti Padhao have contributed to improvements in sanitation coverage and gender indicators in targeted districts. Direct benefit transfers linked to Jan Dhan accounts and Aadhaar have reduced leakages in welfare delivery and enhanced the timeliness of payments.

Digital platforms such as MyGov and e-Gram Swaraj enable citizen feedback and local-level planning, while social audits and community monitoring are increasingly institutionalised in select schemes. These innovations, though uneven across states, illustrate the potential of participatory governance to improve accountability and service delivery.

4. Obstacles: Structural and Emerging Challenges

Despite considerable progress, a set of deep-rooted obstacles could still derail the 2047 vision if not systematically addressed.

i. Persistent Poverty and Inequality

Despite India has achieved unprecedented poverty reduction, yet structural and spatial inequalities remain a major obstacle to the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision. Following the World Bank's revision of the International Poverty Line from \$2.15/day (2017 PPP) to \$3.00/day (2021 PPP), India's extreme poverty rate declined sharply from 27.1% in 2011–12 to about 5.25% in 2022–23. The World Bank's Spring 2025 Poverty and Equity Brief estimates that 171 million people exited extreme poverty over the last decade, while poverty at the \$3.65/day threshold fell from 61.8% to 28.1%, lifting nearly 378 million people. Similarly, multidimensional poverty declined from 53.8% in 2005–06 to 16.4% in 2019–21, reflecting broad improvements in access to basic services.

However, income poverty reduction has outpaced progress in multidimensional deprivation, particularly in rural, tribal, and historically marginalised regions. Persistent regional disparities, especially across several central and eastern states, alongside rising urban informality and intra-urban inequality, have produced a “two-speed” India that constrains social mobility. Unless these structural inequalities are systematically addressed, they risk undermining inclusive growth and diluting the aspirations of Viksit Bharat @ 2047.

ii. Human-Capital Deficits

Human-capital constraints constitute a critical obstacle to achieving Viksit Bharat. While access to education has expanded, quality, equity, and employability gaps persist. India's Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education (ages 18–23) rose to 28.4% in 2021–22, up from 23.7% in 2014–15, with total enrolment reaching 43.3 million students. Despite this progress, India remains well below the levels of advanced economies and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 target of 50% GER by 2035.

More critically, learning outcomes remain weak, with repeated assessments highlighting deficiencies in foundational literacy and numeracy, particularly at the school level. At the tertiary stage, misalignment between educational outputs and labour-market requirements has resulted in graduate unemployment and underemployment, especially among youth. Persistent skill mismatches undermine productivity and innovation, threatening to convert India's demographic dividend into a demographic liability unless substantial improvements are made in education quality, vocational training, and industry-linked skill development.

iii. Health-System Capacity Constraints

Limited health-system capacity remains a structural obstacle to the *Viksit Bharat* vision, as population health is foundational to productivity, human development, and inclusive growth. Public health expenditure in India continues to hover around 1.9% of GDP in FY 2024–25, with projections for FY 2025–26 remaining near this level, well below the National Health Policy (2017) target of 2.5% of GDP by 2025. Although absolute budgetary allocations have increased, relatively low spending constrains the delivery of universal, equitable, and high-quality healthcare, particularly in underserved regions.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed enduring gaps in primary healthcare, disease surveillance, supply chains, and health-workforce capacity, particularly in rural and peri-urban areas. At the same time, the growing burden of non-communicable diseases, mental-health conditions, and environmental health risks is intensifying pressure on an already constrained system. Without sustained investment and systemic reforms in preventive care, workforce strengthening, and health governance, these deficits risk reducing labour productivity, widening inequality, and slowing progress toward *Viksit Bharat @ 2047*.

iv. Environmental Stress and Climate Risk

Escalating environmental stress and climate vulnerability pose a major structural obstacle to achieving *Viksit Bharat @ 2047*. India ranks 9th globally in the Germanwatch Climate Risk Index 2026 (1995–2024), reflecting sustained exposure to heatwaves, floods, cyclones, droughts, and erratic monsoons, which have caused over 80,000 deaths and economic losses exceeding USD 170 billion despite improvements in disaster preparedness.

Rapid and often unplanned urbanisation has intensified air pollution, water stress, heat exposure, and waste-management challenges, undermining public health, productivity, and urban livability. Simultaneously, climate variability and sea-level rise threaten agriculture, coastal livelihoods, and food security, particularly in vulnerable regions. While renewable energy capacity has expanded significantly, investment in climate adaptation, resilience, and climate-proof infrastructure remains insufficient. Without accelerated adaptation and integrated environmental governance, climate risks could erode development gains, widen regional inequalities, and slow India's transition to a resilient and inclusive *Viksit Bharat*.

v. Governance and Institutional Rigidities

Governance weaknesses and institutional rigidities constitute a major structural obstacle to achieving *Viksit Bharat*. Persistent corruption and judicial inefficiencies continue to undermine state capacity, investor confidence, and citizen trust. In the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2025, India ranked 96th out of 180 countries with a score of 38/100, indicating limited improvement in public-sector integrity over the past decade, reinforced by survey evidence of widespread bribery in service delivery.

Judicial delays further compound these challenges. As of late 2025, over 5 crore cases remain pending in lower courts, with higher courts also severely burdened. Prolonged case resolution raises transaction costs, sustains rent-seeking, and weakens the rule of law, constraining economic efficiency and social justice.

Although e-governance initiatives including e-Courts and the National Judicial Data Grid have improved transparency and access, progress remains uneven. India's UN E-Government Development Index rank improved to 97th in 2024, yet digital divides, infrastructural gaps, and weak institutional accountability limit systemic transformation. Without comprehensive administrative reforms, judicial capacity enhancement, and effective anti-corruption enforcement, governance rigidities risk slowing inclusive growth and diluting the vision of *Viksit Bharat 2047*.

5. Sectoral Strategies and Governance Imperatives

Achieving *Viksit Bharat @ 2047* requires coordinated sectoral strategies underpinned by strong, accountable institutions. The following priority areas highlight both what must be done and how governance must enable delivery.

i. Education and Skills

Building a globally competitive and inclusive workforce demands a sharp focus on learning outcomes and employability. Priorities include universalising foundational literacy and numeracy, expanding access to quality secondary and higher education, and embedding digital, vocational, and life skills aligned with emerging sectors such as artificial intelligence, green technologies, healthcare, and care services. Policy imperatives include outcome-based funding for public institutions, stronger industry-academia collaboration, and a national qualifications framework that enables seamless mobility between academic and vocational pathways.

ii. Health and Nutrition

Human-capital formation is critically dependent on population health. Strengthening primary healthcare through Ayushman Bharat-Health and Wellness Centres, tele-medicine, and integrated disease surveillance systems is essential. A sustained increase in public health expenditure toward 3% of GDP, improved centre-state fiscal coordination, and convergence of nutrition, sanitation, and maternal-child health schemes especially for women, children, and tribal communities are vital to improving productivity and reducing intergenerational deprivation.

iii. Agriculture and Rural Transformation

Transforming the rural economy is central to inclusive development. Key priorities include scaling micro-irrigation, strengthening Farmer Producer Organisations, expanding post-harvest and cold-chain infrastructure, and promoting crop diversification and climate-resilient farming practices. Reforms must address land records and tenancy security, rationalise input subsidies, strengthen crop insurance and risk-management tools, and deepen digital and physical rural connectivity to integrate farmers with markets and value chains.

iv. Manufacturing, Services and Infrastructure

Employment-intensive growth hinges on revitalising manufacturing and modern services. Deepening PLI schemes and cluster-based manufacturing, upgrading MSMEs through credit access and technology adoption, and investing in logistics corridors, multimodal transport, urban infrastructure, and affordable housing are central to productivity gains. Simplified compliance regimes for small firms, improved urban governance, and mainstreaming ESG standards can enhance competitiveness while aligning growth with sustainability.

6. Green Growth and Energy Transition

India's development trajectory must be climate-resilient and resource-efficient. Accelerated investment in renewable energy, electric mobility, energy efficiency, green hydrogen, and storage technologies is essential to meet climate and energy-security goals. Complementary reforms include introducing carbon-pricing instruments, strengthening environmental impact assessment processes, and designing just-transition frameworks for coal-dependent regions to manage social and regional impacts.

i. Governance and Institutional Strengthening

Good governance is the critical enabler that determines whether sectoral strategies translate into outcomes. Priorities include expanding digital governance through single-window platforms and online grievance redressal, enhancing transparency via open-data systems, and strengthening social audits. Structural reforms greater devolution to local governments, improved civil-service performance management, and enhanced judicial efficiency are essential to build a state that is capable, accountable, and citizen-centric.

ii. Social Inclusion and Equity

The normative core of Viksit Bharat lies in ensuring that growth translates into dignity, security and opportunity for all sections of society.

Women-led development: Raising female labour-force participation through affordable childcare, safe public transport, strict anti-discrimination enforcement and targeted entrepreneurship support can unlock significant productivity and welfare gains.

Dalits, Adivasis and minorities: Strengthening the implementation of the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, tribal sub-plans and region-specific development authorities is essential to address historical exclusion and spatial disadvantage.

Urban poor and migrants: Expanding portable social-protection benefits, rental housing and urban employment programmes can reduce precarity in fast-growing cities.

Youth participation: Institutionalising youth parliaments, hackathons and local civic labs can embed young voices in policy design and foster a culture of democratic problem-solving

iii. Good Governance as the Cross cutting Enabler

International experience shows that countries which made the leap from middle income to developed status combined high investment with accountable institutions. For India, good governance implies:

Transparency: Use of real-time dashboards, citizen report cards and open-data portals to make performance visible and verifiable.

Accountability: Strengthened Lokpal/Lokayukta mechanisms, independent regulators and outcome-based budgeting frameworks.

Participation: Empowered Gram Sabhas, urban ward committees and digital feedback mechanisms that allow citizens to co-produce policy and monitor implementation.

Rule of law: Predictable regulations, time-bound dispute resolution and effective protection of civil liberties and property rights.

Without these institutional underpinnings, even well designed programmes risk leakage, capture or implementation failure, undermining the aspiration of Viksit Bharat @ 2047.

7. Conclusion

Viksit Bharat @ 2047 signifies India's aspiration to translate political independence into substantive freedom, opportunity, and dignity for all. India approaches this goal with notable strengths demographic potential, expanding infrastructure, ongoing reforms, and a growing green-growth agenda yet persistent challenges such as inequality, uneven human-capital formation, climate vulnerability, and institutional weaknesses threaten to dilute these gains.

This paper contends that achieving Viksit Bharat requires a simultaneous transformation of the economy, society, and the state. Economic growth must be productive and employment-intensive, social progress capability-enhancing and equitable, and governance transparent, accountable, and citizen-centred. These dimensions are mutually reinforcing: without inclusion, capacity, and effective institutions, growth lacks durability. With sustained political commitment, cooperative federalism, and broad societal participation, Viksit Bharat @ 2047 can move from aspiration to a resilient, inclusive, and democratic development pathway.

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