

Pathways to a Developed India: Strategies and Challenges for Vikasit Bharat 2047

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Abstract

This paper examines the national vision “Vikasit Bharat 2047” — India’s declared goal of becoming a developed nation by the centenary of independence — by synthesizing official strategy documents, recent policy-think pieces, and academic analyses. We propose an integrated multi-sectoral strategy built around (1) sustained high-growth, manufacturing and services upgrading, (2) human capital and skilling, (3) green and digital transitions, (4) institutional and governance reform, and (5) inclusive social infrastructure. We also identify binding constraints — macroeconomic stability, escaping the middle-income trap, infrastructure gaps, fiscal federalism and governance capacity, climate risks, and inequality — and present targeted policy levers and metrics to monitor progress. The article closes with an actionable roadmap and priority indicators for policymakers, states, private sector and civil society. Key source documents from NITI Aayog, DARPG and recent research are used to ground recommendations.

Keywords: *Vikasit Bharat 2047; Economic Transformation; Human Capital Development; Governance Reform; Green and Digital Transition; Inclusive Growth*

1. Introduction

By articulating Vikasit Bharat 2047, the central government and multiple public institutions have signaled a long-horizon national development target: to attain “developed-country” status by 2047 through economic, social and governance transformation. The idea has been taken up across ministries, state vision documents, and policy think tanks; NITI Aayog and DARPG have published foundational discussion and vision papers that frame priorities and institutional roles for the coming decades. This article synthesizes that corpus into an executable strategy and highlights practical challenges that could derail progress if not addressed early (NITI AAYOG).

2. Literature review and policy context

Existing documents and analyses reveal common pillars in the Vikasit Bharat narrative: rapid and sustained GDP growth led by manufacturing and tradable services; large-scale human capital investment (education, skilling, health); digital infrastructure and e-governance; green transition and climate resilience; and governance transformation to improve public delivery and accountability. Think-tank and academic work stress the need to avoid the middle-income

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trap by raising productivity, boosting R&D and building innovation ecosystems. State-level visions (e.g., Telangana, Uttar Pradesh) and civil society pieces add the federal dimension — states are critical implementers (Viksit India, 2024).

Notable publications: a NITI Aayog working paper on “unshackling job creators,” DARPG’s administrative reform vision documents, and multiple independent academic/policy papers mapping sectoral pathways (education, industry, green tech). These form the evidence base used below (NITI AAYOG).

3. Objectives

- To analyze India’s long-term vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047.
- To identify strategic pillars—economic, social, governance, and environmental—that can drive this transformation.
- To assess key challenges such as the middle-income trap, infrastructure gaps, climate vulnerability, and inequality.
- To propose actionable policy recommendations and measurable indicators for tracking progress.
- To synthesize insights from official documents (NITI Aayog, DARPG) and academic/policy research into a coherent roadmap.

4. Conceptual framework and methodology

The paper adopts a policy synthesis approach, which includes:

- Reviewing official vision documents, think-tank reports, and academic analyses on India’s development pathways.
- Distilling cross-cutting strategic objectives across sectors.
- Mapping sectoral priorities to binding constraints identified in the literature (NITI AAYOG).

5. Strategic pillars to achieve Vikasit Bharat 2047

5.1 High-productivity growth & industrial transformation

- Objective

Achieve sustained real GDP growth with structural change into high-value manufacture and tradable services (targeting long-run per-capita income uplift and job creation).

- Key levers

Strengthen Make-in-India into globally competitive value chains, scale MSME productivity programs, targeted industrial corridors, export-promotion with easier logistics, and R&D tax incentives. Public-private investment partnerships and land/energy reforms are important enablers (ISID, 2023).

- Indicator examples

Manufacturing value-added share, export/GDP ratio, labor productivity growth (sect oral).

5.2 Human capital — education, skilling, health

- **Objective**

Close skill gaps and upgrade educational outcomes to meet the needs of modern industry and services.

- **Key levers**

Reform higher education toward industry-aligned curricula, scale vocational training with apprenticeships, measure learning outcomes (not just enrollment), universalize primary healthcare access, and strengthen maternal/child health to improve long-term productivity. Collaboration with industry for modular, stackable credentials can accelerate upskilling at scale (IJPREMS, 2025).

- **Indicator examples**

Learning-adjusted years of schooling, share of workforce with certified skills, healthcare coverage metrics.

5.3 Digital and green transitions

- **Objective**

Use digital platforms to improve governance and services, and decarbonize growth paths to build resilience.

- **Key levers**

Expand broadband and digital ID services, decarbonize electricity with renewables plus storage, promote green manufacturing and sustainable cities, incentivize green finance instruments, and pilot climate-resilient agriculture practices. Digitalization should be paired with data governance and cybersecurity safeguards (viksitindia.com, 2024).

- **Indicator examples**

Renewable energy share, digital adoption metrics, emissions intensity per GDP.

5.4 Governance, institutions and fiscal federalism

- **Objective**

Improve public service delivery, regulatory efficiency, and centre-state coordination.

- **Key levers**

Implement DARPG's administrative reform recommendations (process re-engineering, outcome-based budgeting), decentralize functions to capable local bodies, reform public procurement to lower transaction costs, and strengthen independent regulatory institutions. Fiscal rules should be re-designed to incentivize productive capital investment while maintaining macro stability (darpg.gov.in, 2023).

- **Indicator examples**

Public service delivery time indices, ease of doing business (subnational), fiscal deficit composition (capex vs. revenue).

5.5 Inclusion and social safety nets

- **Objective**

Ensure growth is equitable across regions and demographics, preventing concentrations of disadvantage.

- **Key levers**

Targeted social protection (conditional cash transfers that preserve labor incentives), pro-poor urban planning, rural livelihood diversification, and gender-focused programs (labor force participation, entrepreneurship support). Emphasis on regional balancing (investment in lagging states) is crucial to national cohesion (Artha Global, 2025).

- **Indicator examples**

Gini coefficient, regional per-capita income variance, female labor force participation.

6. Major challenges and binding constraints

- Middle-income trap & productivity stagnation. India must raise TFP through technology adoption, better management, and R&D; otherwise per-capita gains will slow (EGROW Foundation).
- Infrastructure deficits and urbanization pressures. Transport, energy, water, and urban services need large, efficient investments. State capacity varies widely; financing models must be innovative (The Times of India).
- Fiscal space and public finance quality. Balancing debt sustainability with large capex needs requires reallocation toward growth-enhancing spending and mobilizing private finance (NITI AAYOG).
- Governance and implementation gaps. Vision documents are numerous; coherent execution across Ministries and states is the bottleneck. DARPG and NITI-type reforms are necessary but must be implemented at scale (darpg.gov.in).
- Climate vulnerability. Agriculture, coasts and urban systems face climate risks; transition costs must be planned to avoid stranded assets and social dislocation (ISID, 2023).
- Inequality and labor market mismatch. Without inclusive policies, growth could exacerbate disparities and social tensions (journalijdr.com).

7. Policy recommendations — an actionable roadmap toward 2047)

7.1 Near term (0–5 years)

Institutionalize a cross-ministry Viksit Bharat Delivery Unit with state representation and clear KPIs; publish quarterly progress dashboards (NITI AAYOG).

Reorient a share of centre and state capital budgets to high-productivity capex (transport, power, digital).

Launch national apprenticeship expansion and outcomes-based funding for higher education (IJPREMS).

Scale green financing instruments (sovereign green bonds, blended finance pilots) for renewables and resilient cities (ISID).

7.2 Medium term (5–15 years)

Create special economic corridors focused on advanced manufacturing clusters and export hubs; incentivize industry-academia R&D partnerships (Artha Global, 2025).

Deliver administrative reforms at scale: outcome budgeting, e-grievance redressal, performance-linked transfer systems for civil servants (darp.gov.in).

7.3 Long term (15–25 years)

Universalize high-quality primary health and foundational education; institutionalize lifelong learning ecosystems aligned with technological change.

Achieve decarbonization trajectories for power and transport aligned with climate science while protecting vulnerable communities via transition assistance.

8. Monitoring, evaluation and metrics

A credible Viksit Bharat program needs a compact set of public KPIs updated annually: GDP per capita (PPP), manufacturing share of GDP, learning-adjusted schooling years, renewable energy share, greenhouse gas intensity of GDP, state-level capability index, and an inequality metric. A transparent independent audit and peer review (including civil society and academia) should publish progress toward 5-year milestones (NITI AAYOG).

9. Conclusion

Viksit Bharat 2047 is ambitious but achievable if the country prioritizes productivity-raising reforms, invests heavily and smartly in human capital and infrastructure, manages a just green transition, and transforms governance for delivery. The challenge is not only technical policies but political economy: aligning incentives across multiple levels of government and the private sector. Early wins — demonstrable improvements in education outcomes, infrastructure delivery, and startup-scale manufacturing clusters — will build credibility for the long arc to 2047. The recommendations here synthesize official vision documents and recent policy research into an actionable roadmap with measurable milestones.

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