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Sri Vijaya Puram, Thursday, January 15, 2026

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Pages 4

Since 1920s the Oldest Daily...

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## India's ultra-mega Atlanta Bay port plan puts North Andaman at the heart of Bay of Bengal strategy, say experts

**Designed to handle some of the world's largest dry-bulk vessels, the port, say defence analysts, can enable large warships to refuel, resupply and operate closer to key shipping lanes**

The Centre's decision to move ahead with a deep-water dry bulk transhipment port at Atlanta Bay in North Andaman marks a significant expansion of India's commercial and maritime footprint in the Bay of Bengal at a time when regional competition is intensifying, defence and strategic affairs experts have said.

The project, announced in October, and is undergoing a techno-commercial feasibility study. Andaman and Nicobar Islands Lieutenant Governor Admiral DK Joshi, a former Naval Chief, is supervising the port, highlighting the importance government attaches to it.

The Atlanta Bay port is designed to handle some of the world's largest dry-bulk vessels, including



Representational image

Capesize ships, and will have what is expected to be the longest continuous berth in the country.

While the government has positioned it primarily as a commercial facility, defence analysts say a deep-water port of this scale can also support naval and coast-guard operations by allowing large warships to refuel, resupply and operate closer to key shipping

routes.

### Strategic maritime geography

Commodore (Retd)

Uday Bhaskar, Director of the Society for Policy Studies and a former navy officer, said the Andaman and Nicobar Islands had for decades been underdeveloped despite their strategic location.

"For a long time, India lacked both the resources and the vision to develop these islands, even though they sit next to some of the world's most important sea routes linking the Malacca Strait and the Bay of Bengal," he said.

North Andaman lies close to the shipping lanes that carry a large share of global trade and most of East Asia's oil and gas imports. Any country with a strong presence here gains a clear view of what moves through these waters, giving it both

commercial and security advantages.

The islands already host India's only tri-service military command, along with airfields, naval bases, and surveillance systems.

A large port at Atlanta Bay would strengthen this setup by making it easier to move troops, equipment, and supplies in and out of the region and to keep ships deployed for longer periods.

Bhaskar said the scale of the Atlanta Bay project shows how much India's thinking has changed.

"The port is being designed to handle 200,000-tonne ships, which only a handful of ports in the world can manage. India does not have anything like this today. If the country wants to become a \$5-

(Contd. on last page)

## Island Seafood Festival to be held on Jan. 15 & 16 at Marina Park stretch road

Sri Vijaya Puram, Jan. 14  
The Andaman & Nicobar Islands are ready to celebrate the rich flavours, traditions, and cultural heritage of the sea through the Island Seafood Festival - 2026, scheduled to be held from 5.30 PM to 09.30 PM on 15th and 16th January, 2026 at the Marina Park stretch road, Sri Vijaya Puram. The festival is being organised by the Department of Fisheries, in association with the IP&T Department, Andaman & Nicobar Administration, with financial support from the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB), Hyderabad, and will place special



emphasis on Tuna Cluster Development in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Envisioned as a vibrant celebration of the islands' abundant marine wealth and fisheries-based livelihoods, the two-day festival aims to bring together fishers, entrepreneurs, scientists, chefs, tourists, and the general public on a common platform to experience the journey of seafood "from ocean to plate." The theme for the 2026 edition, "Safe, Wholesome & Sustainable Seafood for All," reflects the commitment towards promoting responsible

fishing practices, food safety, and sustainable seafood consumption.

As part of the festival celebrations, a Traditional Fishing Boat Racing Competition will be organised on 15th January, 2026 at FLC, Junglighat, starting from 10 AM, offering a spectacular display of traditional fishing skills and the maritime heritage of the islands. Adding further excitement to the programme, Mr. Chef and Mrs. Chef Competition will be conducted on 15th January, 2026 at the Marina Park stretch from 3 PM onwards, where participants will showcase their culinary

(Contd. on last page)

## Purple Fair 2026: A landmark Inclusive initiative by CRC A&N Islands, NIEPM, DEPWD & MoSJ&E

Sri Vijaya Puram, Jan. 14  
The Composite Regional Centre for Skill Development, Rehabilitation & Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (CRC), Andaman & Nicobar Islands, under the administrative control of the National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (Divyangjan), Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice &

Empowerment, Government of India, is organising Purple Fair 2026, a first-of-its-kind inclusive fair in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Purple Fair is an inclusive platform conceptualised to celebrate the abilities, aspirations, and achievements of persons with disabilities (Divyangjan). The Fair aims to promote dignity, equal participation, social inclusion, and empowerment through a wide range of

activities including sports events, cultural programmes, awareness initiatives, service facilitation, and community engagement.

For the first time ever in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, such a comprehensive and large-scale inclusive fair is being organised. Purple Fair 2026 is being organised by CRC Andaman & Nicobar Islands in association with the Andaman & Nicobar Administration, with active collaboration and

support from the Social Welfare Department and the Education Department.

As part of Purple Fair 2026, multiple activities have been planned across the Islands during the current month to ensure meaningful participation of Divyangjan while also fostering awareness and sensitivity within the wider community. Among these initiatives, the Pre-Sports Events constitute a major component of the Fair.

(Contd. on last page)

Partly cloudy sky with possibility of dry weather over Sri Vijaya Puram. Maximum and Minimum Weather temperature will be around 29.5°C and 21.5°C Report respectively on Thursday 15/01/2026. Maximum Temperature (°C) of Date: 29.1 Minimum Temperature (°C) of Date: 21.1 Relative Humidity (%) at 0830 IST : 060 Relative Humidity (%) at 1730 IST : 066 Sunrise time on 15/01/2026 (in IST): 0543 Sunset time on 15/01/2026 (in IST): 1714 Rainfall upto 0830 hrs of date (last 24 hrs)- in mm: 000.0 Rainfall upto 1730 hrs of date in mm: 000.0 Rainfall (Progressive total from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 upto 0830 hrs (of date) in mm: 002.0



## MESSAGE

On the occasion of Army Day, I extend my sincere felicitations and profound gratitude to all ranks of the Indian Army, our distinguished veterans, revered Veer Naris, dedicated civilian personnel, and the families whose unwavering support strengthens the resolve of our brave soldiers.



The Indian Army stands as the nation's foremost shield, embodying unparalleled courage, discipline, and selfless service. Entrusted with the supreme responsibility of safeguarding India's sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity, the Army has consistently demonstrated exemplary professionalism and steadfast resolve in the face of every challenge. Beyond its core mandate of national defence, the Indian Army has time and again risen to the call of the nation-providing critical assistance during natural calamities, humanitarian emergencies, and internal crises-thereby reinforcing its deep and enduring bond with the people of India. Its glorious legacy of valour and sacrifice remains a towering symbol of national pride.

In an era marked by evolving and complex security challenges, the Indian Army is undergoing a decisive transformation through modernisation, technological advancement, and innovation. This forward-looking vision reflects the Army's unwavering commitment to operational readiness, strategic excellence, and its determination to remain a formidable force capable of safeguarding the nation's interests under all circumstances.

Army Day offers a solemn opportunity to honour the indomitable spirit, supreme sacrifices, and unyielding devotion to duty of our soldiers. Their courage in the face of the gravest adversity and their steadfast commitment to service exemplify the highest ideals of dedication to the motherland and continue to inspire generations of Indians.

On this solemn occasion, I pay my deepest respects to our brave martyrs who laid down their lives in the supreme service of the nation and salute every member of the Indian Army for their exemplary contribution. The Indian Army's resolute spirit, professionalism, and pivotal role in nation-building shall forever remain a source of pride, confidence, and inspiration for every citizen of India.



(Admiral D K Joshi)  
PVSM, AVSM, YSM, NM, VSM (Retd.)  
Lieutenant Governor  
Andaman & Nicobar Islands  
&  
Vice Chairman, Islands Development Agency

## Shaheedi Diwas of Dr. Diwan Singh 'Kalepani' observed at Khalsa Public School

Sri Vijaya Puram, Jan. 14

The 83<sup>rd</sup> Shaheedi Diwas of Dr. Diwan Singh "Kalepani", the legendary freedom fighter, was solemnly observed with great patriotic fervour at Khalsa Public Senior Secondary School (KPSSS). Shri Bishnu Pada Ray, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, graced the occasion along with Chairperson, Sardar



Surinder Singh, parents, and members of the KPSSS, members of the Sikh Sangat. All present paid rich tributes to the revered national hero. Padma Shri Awardee Shri Naresh Chandra Lal

also joined in paying homage to Dr. Diwan Singh.

Dr. Diwan Singh, a humble doctor by profession, was a great patriot and a poet who endured immense torture during his imprisonment at the Cellular Jail. Sivarajini, a student of Class XI, enlightened the audience about the sacred life and supreme sacrifice of

(Contd. on last page)

## Implementation of Group Accident Insurance Scheme Persons engaged in fisheries and allied activities urged to register their names in NFD Platform

Sri Vijaya Puram, Jan. 14

All fishers, fish farmers, fish workers, fish vendors, Fisheries Development Corporations, Self Help Groups (SHGs), Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) in the Fisheries Sector, Fisheries Cooperatives, Fisheries Federations, and Fish Farmer Producer

Organizations (FFPOs) and persons engaged in fisheries and allied activities under South Andaman District have been requested to register their names in the National Fisheries Development Platform (NFDP) of National Fisheries Development Board to avail coverage under

the Group Accident Insurance Scheme (GAIS) implemented under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY). Eligible beneficiaries may approach their nearest Common Service Centre (CSC) for registration in NFDP portal ([https://nfdp.dof.gov.in/nfdp/](http://nfdp.dof.gov.in/nfdp/)) or approach Fishery Officers/station In-charge of their respective areas/Fisheries Sub-stations under South Andaman District/Zonal Fisheries Office for registration and further assistance, a press release from Fisheries Department said.

## CC road at Malapuram-02 under GP Mannarghat inaugurated

Sri Vijaya Puram, Jan. 14

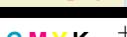
The inauguration ceremony of 'C/o CC road at Malapuram-02 under GP Mannarghat' was done by Smti Sajida Banu, Pradhan Gram Panchayat Mannarghat yesterday along with Shri P Ummer, Zilla Parishad Member in the



presence of Shri A Rajan, Panchayat Samiti Member, Shri M A Naveed, Junior Engineer

Mannarghat and Shri A P Naufal, Up-Pradhan Gram Panchayat Mannarghat. The newly constructed CC Road will provide all-weather connectivity to the residents and is expected to greatly ease daily movement. This project has been a

(Contd. on last page)



## India's ultra-mega Atlanta Bay port plan.....

(Contd. from page 1)

trillion economy, it needs a strong ocean-based trade system, and these islands will be central to that," he said.

Atlanta Bay is being developed alongside the much larger container transhipment port at Galathea Bay in Great Nicobar. While Galathea Bay is aimed at attracting global container traffic currently routed through hubs such as Singapore and Colombo, Atlanta Bay will focus on dry-bulk cargo such as coal, minerals and industrial raw materials. Together, the two ports would give India major maritime infrastructure at both ends of the Andaman and Nicobar chain.

According to experts, for New Delhi, the stakes go well beyond trade alone. Economically, the two ports are expected to reduce India's dependence on foreign transhipment hubs and improve its control over key supply routes. (Source: <https://www.moneycontrol.com/>)

## RD Deptt. conducts capacity building prog. for Panchayat Secretaries & other functionaries of all GPs

Sri Vijaya Puram, Jan. 14

The Directorate of RD, PRIs & ULBs has conducted a capacity-building training programme on 'Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar' (MGMD), an initiative of Ministry of Culture in collaboration of Ministry of Panchayati Raj, for Panchayat Secretaries & other functionaries of all Gram Panchayat of this UT.

The technical sessions were conducted by the State Level Master Trainers (SLMTs), sessions covered the objectives of the MGMD scheme roles and responsibilities of Panchayati Raj Institutions and provided hands-on guidance on the MGMD portal. Building upon the orientation of master trainers a Level-3 District Level Online



Training Programme under Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar (MGMD) was successfully conducted today for Panchayat Secretaries and other Panchayati Raj Functionaries. The online training focused on documentation verification and digital entry of village-level heritage data enabling participants to effectively implement MGMD activities at the village level.

As part of this initiative a District Level training programme for District Level Master Trainers (DLMTs) was

conducted on Jan. 9 to equip with modalities and objective of MGMD scheme.

Earlier, the programme commenced with a welcome address by Assistant Director (RD/P), who emphasized the crucial role of Panchayati Raj Institutions and field-level functionaries in ensuring accurate data collection verification and successful

implementation of MGMD at the grassroots level, a press release from Directorate of RD PRIs and ULBs said.

## Prevailing wholesale and Retail Selling Price of Essential Commodities in the local market upto 18.01.2026

Sl. No.	ITEMS	BRAND & VARIETY	RETAIL PRICE	WHOLESALE PRICE
1.	Rice	Andhra Ponni Cycle Brand	55.00	50.00
2.	-	Raw Rice Tajmahal/Apple	50.00	45.00
3.	Rice	Ponni Raw Rice Shivaji Brand(VST/LST/SSLT)	75.00	68.00
4.	Rice	Ponni boli Rice Shivaji Brand (VST/LST/SSLT)	70.00	64.00
5.	-	Ponni Raw Rice VKR Shivaji Brand	96.00	87.00
6.	-	Ponni Boiled Rice VKR Shivaji Brand	94.00	85.00
7.	Wheat Loose	-	49.00	45.00
8.	Atta	Ashirvaad	As per MRP	65.00
9.	Atta Local	KVR	As per MRP	60.00
10.	Atta	Fortune	As per MRP	63.00
11.	Gram Dhal (01 kg)	Loose	90.00	81.00
12.	Tur Dhal (01 kg)	Special	134.00	122.00
13.	Tur Dhal (01 kg)	Chennai	117.00	107.00
14.	Moong Dhal (01 kg)	Quality 1	120.00	109.00
15.	Urad Dhal (01 kg)	Quality 1	129.00	117.00
16.	Urad Dhal (01 kg)	Quality 2	124.00	113.00
17.	Masur Dhal (01 kg)	Quality 1	96.00	88.00
18.	White Mutter(1 kg)	Loose	57.00	51.00
19.	Sugar (1 kg)	Loose	56.00	51.00
20.	Mustard Oil 1 ltr	Netaji	As per MRP	195.00
21.	Mustard Oil 500ml	Mashal	As per MRP	100.00
22.	Mustard Oil 1 ltrs	Mashal	As per MRP	200.00
23.	Mustard Oil (02 Ltrs)	Mashal	As per MRP	400.00
24.	Mustard Oil (05 Ltrs)	Mashal	As per MRP	1000.00
25.	Mustard Oil (500 ml)	Shalimar	As per MRP	95.00
26.	Mustard Oil 1 ltr	Shalimar	As per MRP	185.00
27.	Mustard Oil (02 Ltrs)	Shalimar	As per MRP	370.00
28.	Mustard Oil (05 Ltrs)	Shalimar	As per MRP	930.00
29.	Vanaspatti Per Ltr	Dalda	As per MRP	182.00
30.	Sunflower Oil Per Ltr	Dalda	As per MRP	155.00
31.	Sunflower Oil Per Ltr	Sunland	As per MRP	166.00
32.	Palm Oil Per Ltr	Roobini	As per MRP	137.00
33.	Mustard Oil 500ml	Fortune	As per MRP	100.00
34.	Mustard Oil 1 ltr	Fortune	As per MRP	200.00
35.	Mustard Oil 5 ltrs	Fortune	As per MRP	890.00
36.	Tea	BBT 1 kg Packet	As per MRP	535.00
37.	Milk	Everyday Powder 1 kg	As per MRP	600.00
38.	-	Amul/Taaza 1 ltr	As per MRP	72.00
39.	-	Amul/Spray Powder 1 Kg	As per MRP	450.00
40.	-	Good Life 1 ltr.	As per MRP	72.00
41.	Potato	Chennai	40.00	30.00
42.	Onion	Nasik	55.00	45.00
43.	Tomato	Chennai	110.00	90.00
44.	Salt (Pack)	Sapan/IFLO	As per MRP	15.00
45.	Milk	Go Milk 1 ltr	As per MRP	74.00
46.	-	Go Milk 200 ml	As per MRP	15.00
47.	Jaggery	Loose	75.00	66.00
48.	Egg	-	9.00	8.00
49.	Bajra (Whole) 1/2 Kg pkt	Loose	As per MRP	-
50.	Jowar (Whole) 1/2 Kg pkt	Loose	As per MRP	-
51.	Ragi (Whole) 1/2 Kg pkt	Loose	As per MRP	-
52.	Suji (Whole) 1/2 Kg pkt	Silver coin	As per MRP	-
53.	Maida (Wheat) 1/2 Kg pkt	Silver coin	As per MRP	-
54.	Besan 1/2 Kg Pkt	Number One/ Fortune	As per MRP	-
55.	Cow Ghee	Amul/RVC	As per MRP	-
56.	Butter (pasteurised)	-	As per MRP	-
57.	Black Pepper (powder) 0.50grm Pkt	Sakthi/Aachi	As per MRP	-
58.	Coriander (powder) 0.50 grm	Sakthi / Aachi	As per MRP	-
59.	Red Chillies (powder) 100 grm	Sakthi / Aachi	As per MRP	-
60.	Cummin (Seed/powder) 0.50 grm	Sakthi / Aachi	As per MRP	-
61.	Turmeric (powder) 100 grm	Sakthi / Aachi	As per MRP	-

(Source: Deptt. of Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs)

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## Schedule of Cruise to Barren Island for month of February announced

Sri Vijaya Puram, Jan. 14

In view of the growing interest among tourists and local residents in visiting Barren Island, the Directorate of Shipping Services has scheduled a round cruise for February, 2026. This exclusive cruise provides passengers with a rare opportunity to observe the only active volcano in South Asia, while enjoying the scenic beauty of the Andaman Sea.

The sailing schedule is as follows:

MONTH	NAME OF THE VESSEL	DATE & TIME OF DEPARTURE
FEBRUARY, 2026	NALANDA	13.02.2026 at 2100 Hrs
	NALANDA	27.02.2026 at 2100 Hrs

Tickets can be booked through the DSS e-Ticketing Portal at <https://dss.andamannicobar.gov.in/eticketing>, which will be available 24x7 with effect from 15.01.2026 from 0900 Hrs onwards. For user convenience, a QR code linking directly to the portal has also been provided.



Scan QR Code to open on mobile.

## CRC A&N Islands empowers trainees through PM-DAKSH exposure visit to Sippighat Nursery

Sri Vijaya Puram, Jan. 14

The Composite Regional Centre (CRC), Andaman & Nicobar Islands, organized an exposure visit to Sippighat Nursery as part of the PM-DAKSH Skill

Training Programme - Assistant Plant Care Taker Course, with the active participation of 30 trainees. The exposure visit was designed to provide practical field-based learning and to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and hands-on application. The trainees actively participated in bouquet making, wreath making, and garland making, gaining experience in nursery operations, plant maintenance, floral arrangement, and basic entrepreneurial skills.

The programme was enriched by the presence of officials from the Agriculture Department, including Dr. S. C. Rekha, Assistant Director (Agriculture); and other supporting staff. The Block Technology Manager, ATMA, provided an informative introduction to nursery practices such as PM-DAKSH, a press release from CRC A&N Islands said.

Ms. Sumithamol, Director, and officials of CRC A&N Islands, encouraged and motivated the trainees to pursue skill-based and sustainable livelihood options. The exposure visit reflects CRC A&N Islands' continued commitment to inclusive skill development and empowerment of Divyangjan under national flagship initiatives such as PM-DAKSH, a press release from CRC A&N Islands said.

plant maintenance, floral arrangement, and basic entrepreneurial skills. The programme was enriched by the presence of officials from the Agriculture Department, including Dr. S. C. Rekha, Assistant Director (Agriculture); and other supporting staff. The Block Technology Manager, ATMA, provided an informative introduction to nursery practices such as PM-DAKSH, a press release from CRC A&N Islands said.

## Shaheedi Diwas of Dr. Diwan Singh 'Kalepani'.....

(Contd. from page 1)

Dr. Diwan Singh. Aliya of Class VIII recited the poem "Himmat Bina", written by Dr. Sahib during the freedom struggle. The soulful recitation of the Shabd "Aisi Marni Jo Marey" by the students deeply moved the gathering.

Hon'ble MP Shri Bishnu Pada Ray congratulated the school fraternity for upholding the motto of Dr. Diwan Singh's life "Selfless Service to One and All". He also highlighted various beneficial schemes available for students and spoke about upcoming developmental initiatives for the Islanders, encouraging students to adopt innovative start-up ideas and contribute to nation-building with zero tolerance towards corruption. Shri Naresh Chandra Lal, Padma Shri motivated the staff and students to uphold the legacy and ideals of Dr. Diwan Singh. Various competitions such as Drawing, Essay Writing, and Speech on the life of Dr. Diwan Singh were organised for the students. Medals and certificates of merit were distributed to the winners. Addressing the gathering, Principal Dr. Sarabjeet Kaur Jagpal highlighted the enduring values and inspiration left by Dr. Diwan Singh for future generations.

On the occasion, rich tributes were also paid to the former Education Director and Ex-Chief Patron of KPSSS, late Sardar Beant Singh Ji, on his ninth death anniversary, a press release from MP Office said.

## Para Athletics events included in State Athletics Meet to be held on Jan. 17 & 18

### Athletes advised to submit their entries on or before Jan. 15

Sri Vijaya Puram, Jan. 14 will now be held on 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2026.

It is further informed that Para Athletics events will also be included in the State Athletics Championship on 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2026 through the Google Form. For obtaining the registration link and further details, contact: Mob: 9933248121 / 7695046951, a WhatsApp group of Athletes Association as well as a press release from ANSOA said.

## Purple Fair 2026: A landmark Inclusive .....

(Contd. from page 1)

Accordingly, the Pre-Sports Events for Divyangjan are scheduled to be held on 16th and 17th January, 2026 at Netaji Stadium, Sri Vijaya Puram, in collaboration with the Department of Physical Education, JNRM. These sports events are exclusively organised for Divyangjan participants and aim to promote physical fitness, confidence, teamwork, and sportsmanship in an inclusive and safe environment. All necessary administrative permissions and inter-departmental coordination have been ensured for the smooth conduct of the events.

For any query or for registration in sports activities contact-9632490149, a press release from CRC, A&N Islands said.

## Road closure

Sri Vijaya Puram, Jan. 14 concerned that the road between Marina Park (from Light House residency to first junction of Govt. Girls Senior Secondary School) remain closed on 15th and 16th January, 2026 for organizing Second Edition of the Islands Seafood Festival, a notification information of all issued by DM (SA) said.

## Ummat Public School hosts Annual Athletic Meet

Sri Vijaya Puram, Jan. 14 reflected the school's strong emphasis on co-curricular development. The guest of honour, Shri I. A. Khan, lauded the efforts of both students and staff, emphasizing the importance of sports in building physical strength, mental resilience, and moral character. The Principal, Smt. Zohra Begum, welcomed the gathering while the event concluded with the vote of thanks proposed by the Headmistress, Ms. M. Thamarai Selvi, a press release received here said.

## 4<sup>th</sup> Khelo India Khelo Open International Karate Championship 2026 held

Sri Vijaya Puram, Jan. 14 The 4<sup>th</sup> Khelo India Khelo Open International Karate Championship 2026 was organised by Shito Ryu Karate Do Federation on Jan. 3 &

# Viksit Bharat- G RAM G Bill 2025

## "Reforming MGNREGA for Viksit Bharat"

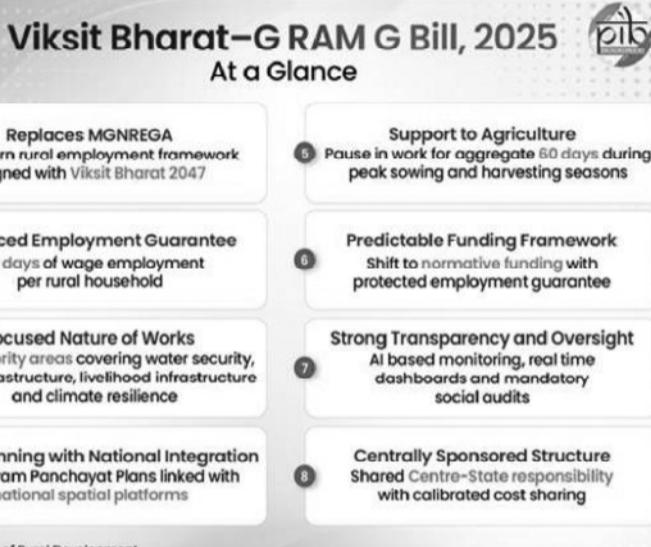
### Key Takeaways

- The Viksit Bharat- G RAM G Bill, 2025 replaces MGNREGA with a new statutory framework aligned with Viksit Bharat 2047.
- The employment guarantee is enhanced to 125 days per rural household, strengthening income security
- Links wage employment with durable rural infrastructure across 4 priority areas.
- Strengthens decentralised planning through Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans and nationally integrated through the Viksit Bharat National Rural Infrastructure Stack.
- The shift to normative funding and a centrally sponsored structure improves predictability, accountability and Centre-State partnership.

### 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, stabilising 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 Government has proposed the Viksit Bharat- Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Bill, 2025, also referred to as Viksit Bharat- G RAM G Bill, 2025. The Bill 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 Scheme for 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.

### MGNREGA Evolution and the Limits of Incremental Reform

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was a flagship programme aimed at enhancing livelihood security by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment each year to rural households willing to undertake unskilled manual work. Over the years, a range of administrative and technological reforms strengthened its implementation, leading to notable improvements in participation, transparency, and digital governance. Women's participation rose steadily from 48 per cent to 58.15 per cent between FY 2013-14 and FY 2025-26, Aadhaar seeding expanded sharply, the Aadhaar-Based Payment System was widely adopted, and electronic wage payments became nearly universal. Monitoring of works also improved, with a large expansion in geo-tagged assets and a growing share of individual assets created at the household level.

The experience under MGNREGA also highlighted the critical role played by field-level staff, who ensured continuity and scale of implementation despite working with limited administrative resources and staffing. However, alongside these gains, deeper structural issues persisted. Monitoring across several states revealed gaps such as work not found on the ground, expenditure not matching physical progress, use

of machines in labour-intensive works, and frequent bypassing of digital attendance systems. Over time, misappropriation accumulated, and only a small proportion of households were able to complete the full one hundred days of employment in the post pandemic period. These trends indicated that while delivery systems improved, the overall architecture of MGNREGA had reached its limits.

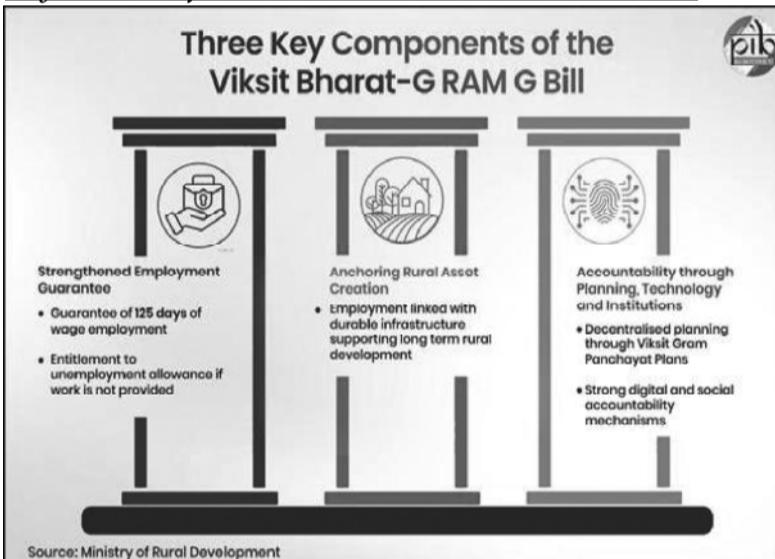
The Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission Gramin Bill responds to this experience through a comprehensive legislative reset. It strengthens the implementation framework by increasing the administrative expenditure ceiling from 6 per cent to 9 per cent, providing greater support for staffing, remuneration, training, and technical capacity. This shift reflects a practical and people-centred approach to programme management, moving towards a more professional and adequately supported system. Stronger administrative capacity is expected to improve planning and execution, enhance service delivery, and reinforce accountability, ensuring that the objectives of the new framework are achieved consistently at the village level.

### Rationale for a New Statutory Framework

The need for reform is also rooted in broader socio-economic changes. MGNREGA was built in 2005, but rural India has transformed. Poverty levels declined from 27.1 per cent in 2011-12 to 5.3 per cent in 2022-23, supported by rising consumption, improved financial access, and expanded welfare coverage. With rural livelihoods becoming more diversified and digitally integrated, the open-ended and demand-driven design of MGNREGA no longer aligns fully with contemporary rural realities.

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

### Key Features of the Viksit Bharat- G RAM G Bill, 2025



The Bill guarantees 125 days of wage employment per rural household in each financial year to such rural households whose adult members volunteer to undertake unskilled manual work, contributing to income security beyond the earlier 100-day entitlement, with an aggregated 60-day no-work period to ensure the availability of agricultural labour during peak sowing and harvesting season. Workers continue to receive 125 guaranteed days of employment within the remaining 305 days, ensuring that both farmers and labourers benefit. The disbursement of daily wages shall be made on a weekly basis or, in any case, not later than a fortnight after the date on which such work was done. Employment creation is integrated with infrastructure development through four priority verticals:

- "Water security through water-related works
- "Core-rural infrastructure
- "Livelihood - related infrastructure
- "Special works to mitigate extreme weather events



All assets created are aggregated into the Viksit Bharat National Rural Infrastructure Stack, ensuring a unified, coordinated national development strategy. Planning is decentralised through Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans, which are prepared locally and spatially integrated with national systems such as PM Gati Shakti.

### MGNREGA vs VIKSIT BHARAT- G RAM G Bill, 2025

The new Bill represents a major upgrade over MGNREGA, fixing structural weaknesses while enhancing employment, transparency, planning, and accountability.

### The Financial Architecture

The shift from a central sector scheme to a centrally sponsored framework reflects the inherently local nature of rural employment and asset creation. Under the new architecture, states share both cost and responsibility through a normative allocation framework, creating stronger incentives for effective implementation and preventing misuse. Planning

is grounded in regional realities through Gram Panchayat Plans. At the same time, the Centre continues to set standards, while states execute with accountability, resulting in a cooperative partnership that improves efficiency and strengthens outcomes.

The total estimated annual requirement of funds on wage, material, and administrative components is Rs.1,51,282 crore, including the State share. Of this, the estimated Central share is Rs.95,692.31 crore. This transition does not impose an undue financial burden on states. The funding structure is calibrated to state capacity, with a standard cost-sharing ratio of 60:40 between the Centre and states, enhanced support of 90:10 for North Eastern and Himalayan states, and 100 per cent central funding for Union Territories without legislatures. States were already bearing a share of material and administrative costs under the earlier framework, and the move to predictable normative allocations further supports sound budgeting. Provisions for additional assistance to states during disasters and stronger oversight mechanisms also help reduce long term losses arising from misappropriation, reinforcing fiscal sustainability alongside accountability.

### Benefits of the Viksit Bharat- G RAM G Bill

The Bill strengthens the rural economy by linking employment generation with productive asset creation, leading to higher household incomes and improved resilience. Priority is given to water-related works, supporting agriculture and groundwater recharge. Investment in core rural infrastructure, such as roads and connectivity, improves market access, while livelihood infrastructure, including storage, markets, and production assets, enables income diversification. Climate resilience is strengthened through works focused on water harvesting, flood drainage, and soil conservation. The guarantee of 125 days of employment raises household earnings, stimulates village-level consumption, and helps reduce distress-driven migration, supported by digital attendance, wage payments, and data-driven planning.

Farmers benefit from assured labour availability through state-notified pauses in public works during peak sowing and harvesting seasons, prevention of wage inflation, and improved irrigation, storage, and connectivity. Labourers gain from higher potential earnings, predictable work through Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans, secure digital wage payments, direct benefits from the assets they help create, and a mandatory unemployment allowance. Where work is not provided, a daily unemployment allowance becomes payable after 15 days, with liability resting on the States. The rates and conditions are to be prescribed through rules, ensuring flexibility while safeguarding workers' rights and promoting the timely provision of employment.

### Implementing and Monitoring Authorities

The Bill establishes a clear institutional framework to ensure coordinated, accountable, and transparent implementation of the Mission across national, State, district, block, and village levels.

"Central and State Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Councils provide policy guidance, review implementation, and strengthen accountability.

"National and State Steering Committees drive strategic direction, convergence, and performance review.

"Panchayati Raj Institutions lead planning and execution, with Gram Panchayats implementing at least half of the works in terms of cost.

"District Programme Coordinators and Programme Officers manage planning, compliance, payments, and social audits.

"Gram Sabhas play a strengthened role in conducting social audits and ensuring transparency through access to all records.

### Transparency, Accountability, and Social Protection

The Bill equips the Central Government with clear enforcement powers to ensure compliance and protect public funds. It authorises the Centre to investigate complaints relating to implementation, suspend fund releases where serious irregularities are detected, and direct corrective or remedial measures to address deficiencies. These provisions strengthen accountability across the system, maintain financial discipline, and enable timely intervention to prevent misuse.

The Bill also establishes a comprehensive transparency framework covering every stage of implementation. It enables the use of artificial intelligence and biometric authentication to identify irregularities early, supported by Central and State Steering Committees that provide continuous guidance and coordination. A focused approach through four clearly defined rural development verticals allows closer tracking of outcomes. Panchayats are assigned an enhanced role in supervision, complemented by GPS and mobile-based monitoring of works in real time. Real-time MIS dashboards and weekly public disclosures ensure public visibility, while social audits mandated at least once every six months reinforce community participation and trust.

### Conclusion

The Viksit Bharat- Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Bill, 2025, represents a decisive shift in India's rural employment policy. While MGNREGA achieved significant gains in participation, digitisation, and transparency over time, persistent structural weaknesses limited its effectiveness. The new Bill builds on past improvements while addressing their shortcomings through a modern, accountable, and infrastructure-focused framework.

By expanding guaranteed employment, aligning work with national development priorities, and embedding strong digital governance, the Bill repositions rural employment as a strategic instrument for sustainable growth and resilient livelihoods, fully aligned with the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. (Source: PIB)

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## HIGH COURT FORM No. (P) 5

(Order 5, Rule 20 (1 a), Code of Civil Procedure)

DISTRICT: ANDAMANS

IN THE COURT OF THE CIVIL JUDGE SENIOR DIVISION

AT PORT BLAIR

Other Suit No. 98 of 2025

Smti. Hira Devi ....Plaintiff

-Versus-

Shri Pandikannan ....Defendant

To,  
 Shri Pandikannan,  
 S/o R. Raju  
 R/o Prothrapur  
 Port Blair  
 South Andaman.

Whereas, the above named plaintiff Smti. Hira Devi, W/o Late Ananda Kishen, R/o Vijay Baugh Road, Near Maricar Hospital, Junglighat has filed a suit for eviction and recovery of possession from the shop room in the ground floor with respect to an area of 3 Mtrs. X 9 Mtrs. In the RCC Building standing over the land bearing Survey No. 22/2/1, measuring an area of 140 Sq. Mtrs. Situated at Junglighat Village under Port Blair Tehsil, South Andaman.

You hereby summoned to appear in this Court in person or by a pleader duly instructed and able to answer all material questions relating to the Suit (or who shall be accompanied by some person able to answer all such questions) on the 9th day of March, 2026 at 9' O'Clock.

To state whether you contest or do not contest, the claim either in whole or in part and if you contest to receive directions of the Court as to the date on which your written statement is to be filed the witness or witnesses upon whose evidence you intend to rely in support of your defense are to be produced the document(s) upon which you intend to rely are to be filed also the date to trial and other matters. Take Notice that in the event of your admitting the claim either in whole or in part the Court will forthwith pass Judgment in accordance with such admissions, or in the event of the claim not being contested the Suit shall be decided at once.

Taken Notice that in default of your appearance on the day before mentioned the appeal will be heard and determine in your absence.

Given under my hand and Seal of the Court on this 2nd day of January, 2026.

Seal of Court

Judge  
 By Order of Court  
 Sd./-  
 NAZIR  
 District & Sessions Court  
 A & N Islands



ANDAMAN & NICOBAR STATE COOP BANK. LTD.  
 98 MAULANA AZAD ROAD,  
 Sri Vijaya Puram - 744101

## POSSESSION NOTICE

(For immovable property)

(Rule 8(1), security interest (enforcement) rule, 2002)

Guarantor  
 Shri S. Balaguru  
 S/o BK Selva Raj  
 Telugu Basthi, Haddo  
 Sri Vijayapuram

To,  
 Smti. Jamuna  
 W/o S S. Balaguru  
 C/o S. Haneefa Store  
 Telugu Basthi, Haddo  
 Sri Vijaya Puram,  
 South Andaman.  
 Ph 9474209883/9679544718

The undersigned being the Authorised Officer (Region-2) of the Andaman and Nicobar State Cooperative Bank Ltd. under the Securitisation and Reconstruction Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 issued a Demand notice dated 29th May, 2020 calling upon the borrower Smti. Jamuna C/o S. Balaguru C/o S. Haneifa Store, Telugu Basthi, Haddo, Sri Vijayapuram, South Andaman on 25-04-2023 to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.21,16,273.00 (Rupees Twenty One Lakhs Sixteen Thousand Two Hundred Seventy Three Only) including interest calculated upto 21-04-2023 within 60 days from the date of the said notice. The borrower/guarantor having failed to pay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower/guarantor and the general public that the undersigned had taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule (9) of the said Rules on this 13th day of January in the Year 2026.

The borrower/guarantor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealing with the properties will be subject to the charge of the Andaman and Nicobar State Cooperative Bank Limited for an amount of Rs.21,16,273.00 (Rupees Twenty One Lakhs Sixteen Thousand Two Hundred Seventy Three Only) as on 25-04-2023 together with further interest at the contractual rate of 13.75% + 2% Penal Interest on the aforesaid amount along with incidental expenses, costs, charges etc., would be applicable till for the realisation of Andaman & Nicobar State Cooperative Bank Limited's dues.

## Description of the Immovable Property:

All that part and parcel of the property consisting in Survey. No. 2A/7/1 measuring area 0.0144 hectares Classified as House Site situated at Haddo village, Under Sri Vijaya Puram, South Andaman District within the registration Sub-registrar, Sri Vijaya Puram.

Date: 13th January, 2026

Place: Sri Vijaya Puram

Authorised Officer (Region-2)  
 A&N State Cooperative Bank Ltd.,  
 98, Maulana Azad Road  
 Sri Vijaya Puram

Reg No: 19039/LC/2024

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 Reg. No. UDYAM-AN-01-0012523

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 Contact No. 9933238915 & 9474262402

## PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, EMLISIYA SARITA KERKETTA, Wife of Late Rudra Narayan, R/o Rainbow Colony, Nayagaon Village, Post, Shadipur, under Sri Vijaya Puram Tehsil, South Andaman District, Andaman & Nicobar Islands -744106 declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as SARITA in my Aadhaar Card bearing No. 2548 7012 8812. The actual name of mine is EMLISIYA SARITA KERKETTA, which may be amended accordingly.

That the above stated statements furnished by me are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Place: Sri Vijaya Puram

Date: 12.01.2026

## DEPONENT

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the general public that a Sale Agreement dated 09.08.2024 and a General Power of Attorney both Notarized on 09.08.2024 executed by Shri G. Velan Kanni, Resident of New Bimblitan Village in favour of Shri Ali Khan, S/o Late Khan Bahadur, R/o Model Village, Kanyakumari, Ferrangunj, stand cancelled and revoked due to continuous breach of contractual obligation by the purchaser-cum-Attorney. I am the recorded owner of ROR land bearing Survey No. 255/P area 0.7500 Hectares, situated at Bimblitan Village, Sri Vijaya Puram. That as per the Terms of sale Agreement dated 09.08.2024 the purchaser paid an Advance of Rs. 20 Lakhs. The purchaser was required to further pay Rs.35 Lakhs in May, 2025 and remaining Rs.1 Crore at the time of registration of sale deed. The purchaser failed to pay the mandatory Amount of Rs. 35 Lakhs in May, 2025 and therefore violated clause 3 and 6 of the agreement due to the said breach the sale agreement dated 09.08.2024 stands cancelled and the advance amount paid stands forfeited as per the terms of the agreement. Since the purchaser has failed to honor his obligations and has acted contrary to the vendor's interest the said Power of Attorney dated 09.08.2024 is hereby revoked and cancelled in its entirety with immediate effect. Consequently, Shri Ali Khan has no authority whatsoever to act, represent, transact or deal with the above-mentioned property on behalf of the executors.

The general public is hereby strictly cautioned NOT to deal with Shri Ali Khan or any person claiming through him in respect of the above said land. Any Transaction entered into with him shall be null, void and at the sole risk of the person so dealing and the executors shall not be responsible or liable for the same.

G. Velan Kanni

R/o New Bimblitan Village

Mobile No. 890900731

Sd/-

DIPANIWTA HALDER B.A. LLB

Advocate

District and Sessions Court Complex

Port Blair

Mobile No. 9679549346

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Reg. No. UDYAM-AN-01-003653

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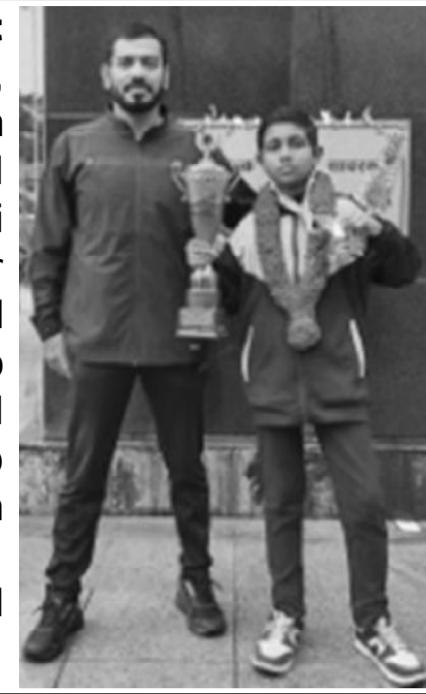
Contact No.: 9933260099 /

9434260066

## CONGRATULATION

## Master Ankit

Kishen of Class VI, Kamaraj English Medium School, Brookshabad and his coach Sensui Abdul Islam Sir for winning two silver Medal in 4th Khelo India Khelo Open International Karate Championship 2026 held in Kolkata on 4th January.



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## AFFIDAVIT

I, Mangal Ram, S/o Late Kishen Chand, R/o Chakkargao Village under Sri Vijaya Puram Tehsil, South Andaman District, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under:-  
 1. That I am permanent Resident of these Islands.  
 2. That my mother namely Neela Wati expired on 20/04/2025 and my father namely Kishen Chand expired on 12/08/1995.  
 That my Mother left behind the following legal heirs:-

Sl. No.	Name	Relationship to the deceased	Age
1.	MANGAL RAM	Son	60

3. That this affidavit is sworn for obtaining family member certificate / legal heirs Certificate for all official purpose.  
 4. That the statements made in paragraphs 1 to 5 are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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