

NEWS TODAY

Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) extended till 2028 with enhanced Budget outlay in Union Budget 2025-26

Launched in 2019, JJM was aimed at providing functional household tap connections (FHTC) to provide 55 litre per capita per day drinking water to all rural households in country by 2024.

- ▶ JJM emphasizes on village-level planning and community participation in all water supply decisions.
- ▶ Mission mandates that at least 50% members of Village Water & Sanitation Committee/ Pani Samiti need to be women.

About JJM

- ▶ **Background:** National Rural Drinking Water Programme was restructured and subsumed in JJM.
- ▶ **Nodal Ministry:** Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- ▶ **Type:** Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- ▶ **Funding pattern between Centre and State:**
 - ⊕ 90:10 for Himalayan (Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh) and North-Eastern States.
 - ⊕ 100% for UTs.
 - ⊕ 50:50 for rest of the States.

Key Achievements under JJM

- ▶ Over 12 crore families have gained access of piped drinking water since 2019, up from 3.23 Crore (Economic Survey 2024-25).
- ▶ States achieved 100% coverage: Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab, Telangana and Mizoram.
- ▶ UTs achieved 100% coverage: Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra Nagar Haveli & Daman Diu and Puducherry.



New MSME classification criteria announced in Union Budget 2025-26

Investment and Turnover limits for classification of all MSMEs to be enhanced to 2.5 and 2 times respectively.

- ▶ This will help MSMEs to achieve higher efficiencies of scale, technological upgradation, and better access to capital.
- Revision in classification criteria for MSMEs**

Revision in classification criteria for MSMEs		
Types of Enterprises	Changes in Investment Limit	Changes in Turnover Limit
Micro Enterprises	Rs 1 crore to Rs 2.5 crore	Rs 5 crore to Rs 10 crore
Small Enterprises	Rs 10 crore to Rs 25 crore	Rs 50 crore to Rs 100 crore
Medium Enterprises	Rs 50 crore to Rs 125 crore	Rs 250 crore to Rs 500 crore

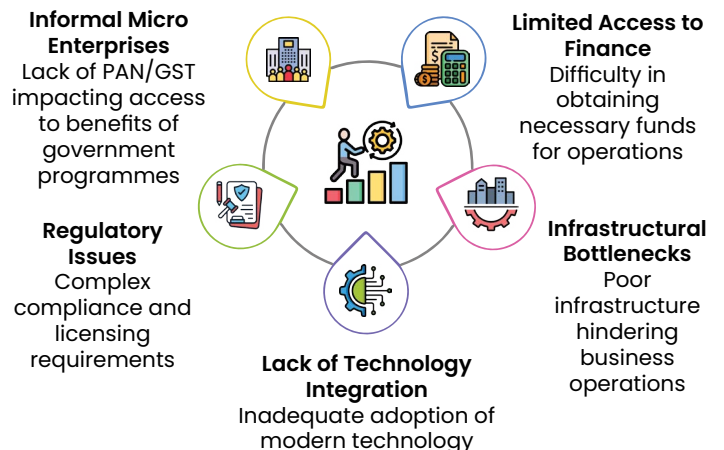
Other Initiatives announced in Budget for MSME sector

- ▶ Credit guarantee cover for micro and small enterprises enhanced from 5 crore to 10 crore.
- ▶ 10 lakh customized credit cards with 5 lakh limit for micro enterprises registered on Udyam portal to be introduced.
- ▶ Export Promotion Mission to facilitate easy access to export credit and support MSMEs to tackle non-tariff measures in overseas markets.
- ▶ New fund of funds of Rs. 10,000 crore to be set up for start-ups.

Significance of MSMEs for Indian Economy

- ▶ **Employment Generation:** India has over one crore registered MSMEs, employing nearly 7.5 crore people.
- ▶ **Share in Manufacturing:** MSMEs generate 36% of India's total manufacturing.
- ▶ **Share in Exports:** MSMEs are responsible for 45% of India's exports.

Challenges Faced by MSMEs



Government announces key Initiatives for Agricultural Productivity and Resilience in Budget 2025-26

Specific proposals proposed to strengthen productivity and resilience in agriculture are as follows:

Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana

- **Inspired by Aspirational Districts Programme**, scheme will be launched in **partnership with states**.
- **Coverage: 100 districts** with low productivity, moderate crop intensity, and below-average credit parameters.
- **Expected Impact:** Likely to benefit **1.7 crore farmers** across India.
- **Key Focus Areas:**
 - ⊖ Enhancing **agricultural productivity**.
 - ⊖ Promoting **crop diversification and sustainable practices**.
 - ⊖ Expanding **post-harvest storage at Panchayat and Block levels**.
 - ⊖ Improving **irrigation facilities**.
 - ⊖ Facilitating **long-term and short-term credit access**.



Building Rural Prosperity and Resilience Program

- **Purpose:** launched in **partnership with states** to address **under-employment in agriculture**.
- **Key Focus Areas:**
 - ⊖ **Skilling, investment, and technology** to invigorate rural economy.
 - ⊖ **Modernizing agriculture** with improved productivity and **warehousing**.
- **Target Beneficiaries:** Rural women, young farmers, marginal & small farmers and landless families.
- **Implementation Strategy:** Adoption of **global and domestic best practices**, technical & financial assistance from multilateral development banks.
 - ⊖ **Phase-1** will cover **100 developing agri-districts**.

'Grameen Credit Score' Framework

- Public Sector Banks will develop **framework to serve credit needs of SHG members and people in rural areas**.

Other Key Initiatives in Budget

 <p>Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 6-year mission with a special focus on Tur, Urad and Masoor. ● Key Priorities: Climate-resilient seeds development, higher protein content in pulses, Improving post-harvest storage & management etc. ● Central agencies (NAFED and NCCF) will procure these 3 pulses, as much as offered during next 4 years from registered farmers.
 <p>Comprehensive Programme for Vegetables & Fruits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objective: Boost production, supply efficiency, processing, and farmer incomes in partnership with states. ● Institutional mechanisms for implementation and participation of FPOs and cooperatives will be set up.

Ayushman Bharat PM Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) scheme to Cover 1 Crore Gig Workers: Union Budget 2025-26

PM-JAY provides a cover of Rs 5 lakh per beneficiary family per year for **secondary and tertiary care hospitalization** across **public and private empanelled hospitals** in India.

- Apart from PMJAY benefits, government will also issue **identity cards and streamline e-Shram registration** for Gig Workers.

About Gig Workers

- **According to Code on Social Security, 2020**, a gig worker is a person who performs work or participates in work arrangements and **earns from such activities, outside of the traditional employer-employee relationship**.
- According to **Niti Aayog**, **7.7 million** workers are engaged in gig economy (2020–21), which is expected to expand to **2.35 crore by 2029–30**.

Challenges faced by Gig workers

- **Issues of Accessibility:** Gig economy is **restricted by access to internet** and digital technology, making it an **urban-centric phenomenon**.
- **Job and Income Insecurity:** Platform workers in India are often **paid per task and labeled as independent contractors**, denying them labor rights like **minimum wages, working hours etc.**
- **Lack of social Protection:** Lack safeguards such as Health Insurance, Employees Provident Fund etc.
- **Algorithmic management:** Workers face stress due to pressures resulting from algorithmic management practices and performance evaluation on the basis of ratings.

Initiatives for Gig workers in India

- **Code on social Security 2020:** Envisages various benefits to gig workers e.g. life and disability cover, accident insurance etc.
- **E-Shram Portal:** Establishes a **National Database of Unorganized Workers (NDUW)** and aims to enhance employability and provide them with social security scheme benefits.
- **Rajasthan Platform Based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Act, 2023:** Provides social security and other benefits to platform-based gig workers.
- **Karnataka Platform Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill, 2024:** Establish a gig workers welfare board, call for a welfare fee etc.

New 'Gyan Bharatam Mission' for manuscripts announced in the Union Budget 2025-26

The mission aims to preserve and protect manuscripts found across the country.

About Gyan Bharatam Mission

- **Objective:** To undertake the "survey, documentation and conservation" of more than one crore manuscript heritage lying with academic institutions, museums, libraries, etc.
- **Significance of Mission:** Preserving historical value, unveiling ancient Indian knowledge to world, ensuring longevity and round-the-clock access of Manuscripts, etc.
- To accommodate the new mission, budget allocation for **National Manuscripts Mission (NMM)** has been hiked from Rs. 3.5 crore to Rs.60 crore.

What are manuscripts?

- A manuscript is a **handwritten composition on paper, bark, palm leaf** etc. dating back at least 75 years that has significant scientific, historical or aesthetic value.
 - ⊕ E.g. **Bakhshali manuscript (Third or fourth century A.D.)**, an ancient Indian mathematical text written on birch bark, is considered to be earliest recorded example of use of zero.
- **Lithographs** (Drawing on a stone and then transferring the image to paper) and **printed volumes** are not manuscripts.
- **Themes** can include history, religion, literature, astrology, and agricultural practices.
- India possesses an estimated **10 million manuscripts in 80 ancient scripts** like Brahmi, Kushan, Gaudi, Lepcha, and Maithili.
 - ⊕ Of these **75% are in Sanskrit** and 25% are in regional languages.

Other initiatives for manuscript conservation in India

- **National Manuscripts Mission (NMM):** Launched In 2003, by the **Ministry of Tourism and Culture** to locate and preserve manuscripts.
- **National Library of India, Kolkata:** It has about **3600 rare and historically important manuscripts**.
- **Asiatic Society of Bengal:** Founded on Jan. 15, 1784, by Sir William Jones, undertakes **digitization of ancient manuscripts**.

Finance Minister announced proposal to raise FDI limit in Insurance sector from 74% to 100%

This enhanced limit will be available for those companies which invest entire premium in India.

- To enhance FDI limit, government will have to bring **amendments to Insurance Act 1938, Life Insurance Corporation Act 1956, and Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999.**

Significance of 100% FDI in insurance sector

- **Higher Investment:** More foreign capital for **growth and expansion.**
- **Enhanced Competition:** Better products, improved services, and competitive pricing.
- **Technological Advancements:** Adoption of **advanced tech and innovative products.**
- **Improved Penetration:** More people brought under insurance coverage and help **achieve the target of 'Insurance for All' by 2047.**

Status of India's Insurance sector (Economic Survey 2024-25)

- **Total insurance premium** grew 7.7% in FY24, reaching Rs.11.2 lakh crore.
- **Insurance penetration** declined from 4% in FY23 to **3.7% in FY24.**
- **Insurance Density** rose from USD 92 in FY23 to **USD 95 in FY24.**
 - ⊕ **Insurance penetration** is measured as percentage of **insurance premium to GDP** whereas **insurance density** is calculated as **ratio of premium to population** (per capita premium).

Challenges Faced by Insurance Sector in India

- **Absence of top companies:** Out of 25 world's top insurance firms, 20 are not present in India now.
- **Economic Constraints:** Affordability issues restrict insurance adoption.
- **Cultural Preferences:** Preference for traditional financial practices over insurance.

Measures taken for development of Insurance sector

- **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI):** To ensure orderly growth of insurance business.
- **Insurance Ombudsman Rules, 2017:** Facilitate **resolution of complaints regarding deficiencies in insurance services** in a timely, cost-effective and impartial manner.

Also In News



Samudrayaan Project

Samudrayaan project (under Deep Ocean Mission) has received **Rs 600cr in Union Budget 2025-26.**

About Samudrayaan Project

- **Ministry:** Ministry of Earth Sciences
- **Aim:** To develop a self-propelled manned submersible to carry 3 human beings to a water depth of 6000 meters for deep ocean exploration.
 - ⊕ To have an **endurance of 12 hours of operational period** and 96 hours in case of emergency.
- **Period:** 2020-2021 to 2025-2026
- **Significance:**
 - ⊕ **Exploration:** For **biodiversity assessment**, mineral resources like **manganese, cobalt, copper, nickel**, and other deep-sea deposits. Thus, contributing to **Blue Economy.**
 - ⊕ **Research:** Understanding **chemosynthetic biodiversity** in hydrothermal vents and methane seeps.



Invasive Fish Species

NGT has sought a response from Centre on two **invasive fish species** being used as biological agents for controlling mosquitoes.

- Both are **Least Concern (IUCN).**
- **Both tolerate brackish water, high salinities and temperatures.**
- About Gambusia Affinis (Western mosquitofish)**
 - **Range:** **Mississippi River basin** from central Indiana and Illinois, south to Gulf of Mexico.
 - **Characteristics:**
 - ⊕ **Found in freshwater; Survive in very low oxygen saturations.**
 - ⊕ **Viviparous** and breeds throughout summer.
 - ⊕ **Do not lay eggs**, but rather give birth to live young.
- It was among the **100 world's "worst invasive alien species"** by IUCN.
- About Poecilia reticulata (Guppy, Millionfish and Rainbow fish)**
 - **Range:** Northern South America and Caribbean islands.
 - **Characteristics:** Found in **Shallow edges of pools and streams.**

Ocean Coordination Mechanism (OCM)

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (UNESCO-IOC) signs MoU to establish Ocean Coordination Mechanism for Wider Caribbean Region.

About OCM:

- **Aim:** Securing a sustainable future for the Wider Caribbean region's marine ecosystems.
- **Funding:** Will receive funding from Global Environment Facility (GEF).
- **Functions:**
 - ⊕ Promoting regional cooperation among Signatories for sustainable use of marine resources.
 - ⊕ Sustainable development of Blue economy and effective use of limited resources for marine and coastal development.
- It comprises an Executive group of the International Organization and a Steering Group of Countries.

Bharatiya Bhasha Pustak Scheme

Finance Minister has introduced Bharatiya Bhasha Pustak Scheme in Union Budget 2025-26.

About Bharatiya Bhasha Pustak Scheme

- **Aim:** To provide digital form of Indian language books for schools and higher education to help students understand their subjects better.
- It is aligned with National Education Policy, 2020, wherein students across schools and universities will get textbooks, learning materials in digital formats.
- It also complements ASMITA (Augmenting Study Materials in Indian Languages through Translation and Academic Writing) initiative.
 - ⊕ It was launched by Ministry of Education and UGC in 2024 to develop 22,000 books in 22 Indian languages in next five years.



International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC)

Vessel and container traffic increased via Chabahar Port and INSTC in FY24, as per Economic Survey 2024-25.

About INSTC

- **7,200-km Multi-modal transportation route** linking Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf to Caspian Sea via Iran and onward to northern Europe via St. Petersburg in Russia.
- **Established in 2000** in St. Petersburg, by Iran, Russia and India to enhance trade and transport connectivity among countries along its route.
- Currently, there are **13 Members of INSTC** (India, Iran, Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, Belarus, Oman and Syria).
- **Bulgaria** has joined as an **Observer State**.

Highlights of Economic Survey 2024-25

Scan here to Download

Summary of UNION BUDGET 2025-26




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Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS)

DRDO has successfully conducted three successive flight-trials of VSHORADS from Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.

About Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS)

- It is a **man-portable air defence system** and developed indigenously by **Research Center Iimat, Hyderabad** in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories.
- It is **propelled by a dual thrust solid motor** and meant for **neutralizing low altitude aerial threats at short ranges**.
- Its portability and rapid deployment capabilities make it a **crucial asset for strengthening India's air defence**.

Gene Bank for Crops Germplasm

Union Budget 2025-26 announced setting up of **second National Gene Bank**, comprising a million germplasm lines for future food and nutritional security.

- A gene bank is a **repository of genetic material**, such as seeds, pollen or tissue samples **to protect them from potential extinction**.

About First National Gene Bank

- **First National Gene Bank** was set up in 1996 by the **Indian Council of Agricultural Research-National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (ICAR-NBPGR)** in New Delhi.
- This bank comprises **12 regional stations** across the country for collection and storage of vital crop germplasms.
 - ⊕ These germplasms are the **genetic constituents of plants or animals** that are used in research, conservation and crop breeding.

Place in News



Japan (Capital: Tokyo)

Japan's space agency successfully launched **navigation satellite Michibiki 6** using its new H3 rocket.

- Michibiki 6 will be fifth satellites of Japan's regional navigation system named **quasi-zenith satellite system, or QZSS**,

Political Features:

- **Land Boundaries:** Island nation with no land borders.
 - ⊕ Nearly entire land area is taken up by country's four main islands which are (North to South): **Hokkaido (Largest), Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu**.
- **Maritime Boundaries:** Pacific Ocean in east, Sea of Okhotsk in north, Sea of Japan (also known as East Sea) to the west, and East China Sea to southwest.

Geographical Features:

- **Climate:** Varies from subarctic in north to humid subtropical in south.
- **Highest Peak:** Mount Fuji (3,776 meters), an **iconic stratovolcano**.
- **Major Rivers:** Shinano River (longest), Tone River, and Kiso River.
- Experiences frequent seismic activity due to its location along **Pacific Ring of Fire**.

