

PRESS NOTE

Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) **[VB-G RAM G]**

The Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin): VB-G RAM G Act, 2025 will come into effect from 1 July 2026, replacing the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005.

To operationalise the Act in the State, the Panchayats & Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal, has notified the Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Scheme, West Bengal on 29 June 2026. The Scheme will come into force from 1 July 2026 and will be applicable to all notified rural areas of the State.

Aligned with the national vision of Viksit Bharat @2047, the Scheme is expected to benefit around 2.56 crore job card holders across West Bengal. It guarantees 125 days of wage employment to every eligible rural household in a financial year. Planning of rural works will be undertaken through the Viksit Gram Panchayat Plan, prepared by Gram Panchayats and integrated with the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan.

The Scheme will be funded in the ratio of 60:40 between the Central and State Governments, respectively. The Ministry of Rural Development has approved a normative Central share of ₹8,508 crore, and the State Government has made a provision of ₹5,672 crore as state share. Wage payments will be made through the DBT-SPARSH system, while non-wage payments will be processed through the SNA-SPARSH module.

Works under the Scheme will focus on four thematic areas, namely water security through water-related works, core rural infrastructure, livelihood-related infrastructure, and works for the mitigation of extreme weather events. The Scheme also provides ample opportunities for convergence with various Government departments to maximise development outcomes.

The expenditure pattern under the Scheme will comprise a 60% wage component and a 40% material (non-wage) component. To maximise employment generation, the use of labour-displacing machinery has been restricted.

For effective implementation, the District Magistrate has been designated as the District Programme Coordinator, while the Sub-Divisional Officer will function as the Sub-Divisional Programme Coordinator. The Block Development Officer will act as the Programme Officer, and Gram Panchayats will be primarily responsible for registration of beneficiaries, preparation of plans, execution of works, and maintenance of records.

To ensure adequate availability of agricultural labour during peak farming seasons, an aggregate period of 60 days in a financial year, covering the sowing and harvesting seasons, will be notified as a mandatory no-work period.

Every adult member of a registered household whose name appears in the Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Card will be entitled to demand unskilled manual work from the Gram Panchayat. Employment must be provided within 15 days of such demand, failing which unemployment allowance will become payable in accordance with the provisions of the scheme. Workers will also be entitled to delay compensation if wages are not credited within 15 days of the closure of the muster roll.

The Scheme incorporates robust measures to ensure transparency, accountability, and efficient service delivery. These include annual physical and financial audits, mandatory social audits in every Gram Panchayat, an effective grievance redressal mechanism with an Ombudsperson in each district, and mandatory inspections at all administrative levels, namely 100% of works by Gram Panchayats, 60% by Blocks, 10% by Districts, and 2% by the State.

The Scheme also leverages digital technologies through Yuktdhara-based geospatial planning, geo-tagging of assets, SECURE software for digital estimate preparation, biometric face-authenticated attendance, MIS-based monitoring, and public disclosure of programme records to promote transparency and accountability.

At the State level, the West Bengal State Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Council, chaired by the Minister-in-Charge, Panchayats & Rural Development, will review, monitor, and advise on the implementation of the Scheme. A State Level Steering Committee, headed by the Chief Secretary, will oversee planning, convergence, district performance, and preparation of the consolidated State Plan.

The Scheme marks a paradigm shift from a wage employment programme to a comprehensive rural development mission by integrating guaranteed employment with sustainable infrastructure, livelihood promotion, climate resilience, and digital governance. Having completed all statutory and administrative preparations, the Government of West Bengal is fully prepared to implement the Scheme across the State from 1 July 2026.